

Be Ye Holy

by G.B. Williamson

Dr. G.B. Williamson emphasizes the importance of holiness in reflecting God's character and providing meaning to life.

Duration: 8:17

Topics: "Holiness"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of holiness in the lives of believers. He argues that the emptiness and meaninglessness of life lead people to indulge in destructive behaviors such as alcohol, drugs, violence, and crime. However, having a concept of holiness and a sense of being called by God to be holy gives life meaning and purpose. Living a holy life means being different from the world, practicing self-discipline, and living righteously before others. The speaker references the Bible, particularly the first epistle of Peter, to support his points and highlights the importance of humility and integrity in living a holy life.

Transcript

This message, Be Ye Holy, was preached by Dr. G.B. Williamson at the Nazarene Bible College Chapel at Colorado Springs. It is based on 1 Peter 1, 13 through 21, especially verses 15 and 16. Dr. G.B. Williamson pastored for 16 years in churches of the Nazarene in Farmington, Iowa, Chicago, and Cleveland.

He served as college president of Eastern Nazarene College from 1936 to 1945 when he was called to pastor Kansas City First Church of the Nazarene. The next year, Dr. Williamson was elected general superintendent and served for 23 years. Williamson, more than any other single individual, challenged the church to establish the Nazarene Bible College, a school that has trained more than 20 percent of the present workforce of pastors.

In 1968, after his retirement from the general superintendency, Dr. and Mrs. Williamson moved to Colorado Springs and taught for nearly 10 years at the Nazarene Bible College. From the first epistle of Peter, and I'm in the first chapter, beginning at verse 13, wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation, or all manner of living.

Because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy. By way of introduction, I would raise the question and seek to give you some suggestive answer, at least, as to why holiness is of such supreme importance for us, in personal consideration, and for our ministry, and for the Church, and for the world. Why is it so important? Well, first of all, because God is holy, and in God it is self-willed purity.

There are no defects in the character of our holy God, and that is sufficient reason for us to seek for holiness, for us to demonstrate it in our lives, and proclaim it to the world. And if that be true, then certainly nobody ought to blush at the idea of preaching holiness. If God is holy, then why should we ever hesitate to speak of it, or to proclaim it, and that it is available to men by the grace of God? Men tend to become like what they worship.

If men deify their own passions and vices, then they tend to become vicious. If they look up to a high holy God and worship him, then there must be some reach of the soul in faith to be like him. Sufficient reason.

But another is that God has commanded that men shall be holy, and if he has made the command, he must have made also the provision. And this is what we read here in these verses 18 and 19. For as much as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but by the precious blood of Christ as a lamb without blemish and without spot, having given to men the ideal in himself, and the commandment that is evidently the expression of his purpose for man, God provided that man should be cleansed from sin and made holy.

But still another reason for the importance of holiness and its emphasis is that it does give purpose and meaning to life. A certain professor, I believe identified with the University of California at Berkeley, a while ago was asked, in one word, what would you say is the problem of mankind today? His reply was, emptiness. But life is not empty.

If you have a concept, a scriptural concept, of holiness, it gives meaning to life. That emptiness, that meaninglessness of life causes people to turn to alcohol and drugs and degenerate themselves with all kinds of fleshly indulgence and turn to violence and crime, because they say, what meaning is there in life anyhow? But if you have a concept of a holy God and have the sense of God call to you to be holy, and if you're reaching out to be like him, then life becomes noble. Life has a high purpose.

It has its fulfillment in God and in God-likeness. And if you are really seeking to live a holy life, you are willing to be different. You are different in the spirit and practice from the world.

You are not caught up in enslavement to its sensuality. You live soberly. You live a disciplined life by the help of the spirit.

You bring all of your own desires into line with the holy character of God by the help of the spirit in self-discipline. And you live righteously before men. John Wesley's description of holiness in the lives of men was, first of all, with humility.

Different, different in speech. Let your yea be nay, yea, and your nay, nay, for whatsoever more cometh of evil. Different in appearance, different in dealing with men.

Live honestly toward them that are without. Don't make promises you break. Be different.

Live in the world. And, you know, there's something about this life of holiness that adds charisma. There's something attractive about it.

It isn't boastful, but it is a life that is hid with Christ in God. And Christ is our life. And Christ in you is the hope of glory.

Amen. That means Christ radiates out of your personality. And that means a redeeming influence in the world.

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