

Holy and Righteous All the Days of His Life

by G.W. North

Jesus' holiness and righteousness are the source of His power over death and the key to salvation for men.

Scripture: John 14:16-17, Romans 1:4, Romans 8:11, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Galatians 5:22-23, Ephesians 1:13-14, Philippians 3:10, Hebrews 4:15, 1 Peter 1:15-16, 1 John 3:9

Topics: "Righteousness", "Holiness"

Description

G.W. North emphasizes the holiness and righteousness of Jesus Christ throughout His life and death, illustrating how His perfect life qualified Him to conquer sin and death. He explains that Jesus' resurrection was a testament to His righteousness, proving that He was fit to bear the sins of the world and rise again. North highlights that God's ultimate desire is for humanity to transition from sin to righteousness through the Holy Spirit, who empowers believers to live holy lives. The sermon underscores that the holiness of God permeates the entire plan of redemption, affirming that Jesus was both born and raised in holiness. Ultimately, the message calls for believers to embrace the Spirit of Holiness to reflect the life of Christ within them.

Transcript

Jesus is declared by God to be the Son of God with power; He strove against sin, was thereby proved fit to bear it away, resisted unto blood, therefore made sin by God and finally died to it. Not only had He kept Himself unspotted from the world for thirty-three years, He had remained unspotted from sin on the cross also; there He had no power but His own holiness to protect Him, and no foundation on which to stand but upon His own righteousness; all His great power lay within Himself in the life He had lived. The resurrection was a demonstration of the strength He had shown before and during his death. In a single stroke He shattered the power of all-conquering death, but that was as logical as it was inevitable. Death, not Rome, was the unchallengeable power that conquered and carried away all men, but when it came to the test, death was found to be unequal to His great power. The secret of this almighty power over death lay in Christ's righteousness; His holy life and undefeatable strength rose from that. Thirty-three years of perfect living had satisfied the Holy Spirit that He was worthy, and that He deserved to rise from the dead. There was never any doubt that He would break the bands of death if He was righteous enough to do so; the final test was the 'fitness' test; He had to be fit to die -- that was the crucial point. Before He could become the Saviour of the world the man Christ Jesus had to satisfy God that He was the right person with the correct qualifications for the task.

The salvation of God for men is from sin and sinning into righteousness and holiness; this is God's greatest concern for us. He wants men to have His eternal life, a life not affected by or subject to death and corruption. For this, men must receive the Spirit of Holiness; the sacred work of reproducing in us the life of the Son of God is entrusted to the Holy Spirit. The life He produces in us must be powerful enough to exist without sin in all God's sons, as in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, or we shall not, cannot, be the sons of God. Jesus proved He was able to rise from the dead; He had power to do that; in the sight of God His Father His life was sufficient justification for it. With the coming of the Holy Spirit to a man comes the power to live this holy life of Jesus in flesh also, that God may be justified in raising us from the dead to live with Him too.

Referring back to the earlier discussion about the abstract element or neuter gender of the word spirit used here: if that interpretation of the word is rejected in favour of this personal and masculine definition we may arrive at a more certain conclusion about what Paul meant by his statement. He is surely saying that Christ's resurrection was part of the all-pervasive holiness of God; in this attitude of mind and condition of spirit the whole plan of redemption was conceived and carried through in its entirety. In this Peter would most heartily concur, for he begins his first letter with a declaration in kind. He opens his message to the elect strangers with the most wonderful news that, according to the foreknowledge of their God and Father, they were chosen in holiness of the Spirit. There is nothing abstract about that; Peter is speaking about the person of the Holy Spirit. Everything about the Spirit's person and activities is absolute holiness, and all He does may be said to be done in the spirit of holiness. The same is true about the Father and the Son; whether in conception or achievement, everything is holiness in every detail. So it is then, that if Paul is not directly speaking of the Spirit of holiness, that is, the Holy Spirit Himself, he is speaking of the holiness of the spirit which pervades all God's works. According to this spirit of holiness, Christ is the Son of God, and the power of the Son of God is also according to the spirit of holiness; the resurrection proved this.

There is also another factor about the resurrection of Christ, in consideration of which it is possible that Paul may have introduced the abstract form of speech about the Holy Spirit. The apostle had just made reference to the fact that Jesus Christ was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and we know that this seed was not holy. The virgin Mary, though born of such exalted lineage, was nevertheless a fallen creature, yet when the Seed was born He was holy. This was because the spirit in which all was accomplished was most holy; it was holiness unto the Lord. He was born of the flesh, He had to be, but it was flesh uniquely sanctified unto the Lord. The Holy Spirit came upon Mary and touched the springs of human life in her flesh to generate the babe, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her whole being to protect the child as it was formed within her. It was a miracle most holy and most powerful, absolutely unique. When He was begotten in the flesh Jesus was most holy; when He was raised from the dead He was still most holy. Everything was carried out in the spirit of holiness; every detail had to be according to that spirit

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