

# Steps to Holiness

by John Sung

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of being filled with the love of Christ and following Jesus' steps to holiness, which include being saved, preserved, nurtured, and witnessing for Him.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 9:1

**Topics:** "Holiness", "Love Of Christ"

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## Description

John Sung emphasizes that the path to holiness is through being filled with the love of Christ, which empowers believers to overcome sin and witness for Him. He illustrates this through the story of a paralytic whom Jesus healed, highlighting how many Christians today are spiritually bound and need to be set free by Christ's love. Sung encourages believers to actively engage in Bible reading, prayer, and witnessing, as these are essential for spiritual vitality. He warns against the dangers of complacency and the importance of nurturing one's faith through the Scriptures. Ultimately, he calls for a commitment to follow Jesus and become laborers in His harvest, filled with His love.

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## Transcript

Matt. 9

To attain holiness one's heart must be filled with the love of Christ. Emptied of every sin one delivers everything to the Lord. So the steps to holiness are none other than being filled with the love of Christ.

Why do I stand before this pulpit today? For no other reason than being constrained by the love of Christ. I have come to Golden Well, and my desire is to see you all filled with the love of Christ.

This chapter may be divided into five sections.

I. Jesus saves me. Vs 1 - 8

It is recorded here that Jesus came to His own city. In the city there was a paralytic, very pitiful. He had two hands and two feet, but they could not move in the least. He could eat, he could see, but he could not move. How did he become like that? Satan bound him. Satanic chains bound his hands and feet. He was assaulted half dead by Satan. He looked a living person, but in fact he was a dead man. Alas! There are many Christians in such condition today. Their hands and feet are also Satan bound. What hands? Two are their number. Christians also have two hands: One is Bible-reading; the other is prayer. What are a Christian's two feet? One is faith and the other is witness for Christ. A Christian not reading his Bible and

not praying is like one having no hands. No hands mean inability to work. No faith, no witness, is like having no feet. No feet, no strength. Such a Christian appears living, but he is dead. Alas! There are today many Christians' Bibles snatched away by Satan. Before they loved the Word, but now they've grown cold. Though Bibles in hand, they are nodding over them. Though Bible in hand in Bible-study, their hearts are snatched away by Satan. They look but see not. They read but understand not. Satan has snatched their understanding.

Moreover there are those whose prayers are bound. They pray but dare not open their mouths. They merely think a passing thought. That is all. Some have ceased to pray altogether.

As to feet: One foot of a Christian is faith. The other is witness. Now, the more one witnesses the more one has faith. The more faith, the more witness. In this way only can a Christian become a strong soldier. It is a pity many Christians are lame. They dare not witness. They are shy. They're afraid of criticism. They're afraid they have no eloquence. This results in lack of faith. Isn't it a pity many, say they have weak faith, no strength. Weak faith, fearing to witness, is having one's feet bound by Satan.

Today there is a group, which says women cannot preach. They don't realize that only eating without working results in dropsy. This paralytic has four precious members snatched by Satan. He can eat, he can cry, cry and cry. Can he come by himself to Jesus? No! He needs four men to carry him. Praise the Lord! Jesus wants to save him. Jesus says, "Your sins are forgiven." That is to say, without sins forgiven, this man could not move. But the scribes jeered at Jesus, "How could Jesus forgive sins?" Jesus said, "I have authority. I can save him." Jesus said immediately to the paralytic, "Get up!" Why ask him to get up? Because Jesus wanted him to testify. With sin, he dared not testify. So he became paralyzed. Jesus diagnosed his sickness. He told him to get up and testify courageously, for his sins were forgiven. The paralytic was no more paralyzed. His hands could work, his feet could move. He could read the Bible and pray. He had faith and a strong heart to witness.

Praise the Lord! Wherever I go I've met those who neither read the Bible nor pray, faithless, fearful to witness. Within two hours they become thoroughly changed! The old ladies of Chuanchow and Changchow who feared to witness and read the Bible and pray are able to do all these now. Last year I visited Chuanchow. The students and doctors of Puay Guan and Puay Eng all came to the meetings but brought no Bibles along. Now they are not only fervent students of the Word but also zealous in the preaching band. Was this change merely emotional? It was a release by the Holy Spirit. This paralytic was also set free. He now can carry others. Truly let God be praised!

## II. Jesus preserves me. Vs 9 - 13

As Jesus went on he saw Matthew being bound by society, bound by money. Jesus said, "Matthew, rise up, follow me! Don't gather coffers (coffins). Go and preach!" Praise the Lord! Jesus not only saves us, but He wants us to follow Him. Jesus told Matthew not to remain sedentary, dozing away, but to rise and walk about. Praise the Lord! Matthew truly got up to follow the Lord. He moreover made a feast for Jesus, seated with his friends. He not only wanted to be saved himself, but his whole family and friends as well. So he invited Jesus to his home. He had great hopes. As to Jesus He entered Matthew's house --- to preserve him. He not only wanted to save Matthew but also preserve him. So Jesus entered Matthew's heart to be his Lord, to guide him. Therefore anyone who wants to be preserved must ask Jesus to come into the deepest recesses of his heart, to be king.

The scribes jeered at Jesus. Why should he eat with sinners? A sinner's place is most unclean. Yet Jesus went to eat there. Jesus answering their criticism said, "I come not to call the righteous but sinners, for the healthy need no doctor, but the sick. God loves mercy and not sacrifice. You go and think over this statement. Why did not the scribes want to eat with sinners? Because they were not born again. A person born again has the love of Christ filling him. Now the doctors of Chuanchow form into a preaching band. They eat with sinners. They save sinners. God loves such service. He does not like outward forms and ceremonies. To cover the head is not important. To be immersed again is not important. But love is. If you love you will assuredly preach to save souls.

### III. Jesus warns. Vs 14-26

What are important in the eyes of the Pharisees? The Pharisees regard fasting, covering the head, re-immersion and other outward forms as most important. As to Jesus: Jesus says, "Fasting is optional. When I'm here, fast is not necessary. When I'm not here, then fast." New wine cannot contain in old wineskins, but in new. We who are Christians must become new, for old wineskins cannot contain new wine. We must be renewed in every aspect. For Jesus wants us to throw away the old skins, smelly skins, and deathly skins. With new skins to receive the Holy Spirit! There's a class of people like the Pharisees. They say a born again person must be immersed again, must cover the head, and must leave the Church. These are outward things. Jesus says, "Without me, what's the use of these practices?"

Vs. 18 to 26 tells of a woman with an issue of blood. This person had received Jesus' salvation before. His precious blood filled her heart, which became fervent as during a revival meeting. Not long after, the blood issued forth. Her fervency was gone out; she also committed sin. He hereby warns us. A person not preserved after revival will lose his blood. What a danger! Though such is the case, Jesus loves still. The moment this woman touched the hem of His garment, her issue of blood stopped. What is to touch the hem of His garment? It is to read the Bible, prayer, faith and testimony, these four things. When a person feels the blood giving out, if he will immediately read the Bible, pray with faith, and witness, then he will see immediate results. Praise the Lord! The woman returned home smiling. Though she came hampered by many troubles, she was not afraid. With faith only, she received Jesus' comfort. Whomever our Lord comforts, his heart is filled with joy. If Satan enters a person's heart his heart becomes sorrowful and sad. In our heavenly walk, when our heart is sorrowful and sad, that is the time Satan's evil spirit has entered our heart. Let us be watchful, and be led by the Holy Spirit.

### IV. Jesus nurtures me with the Bible (open eyes). Vs 27-31

After a man is born again, "his eyes are still shut". There are many of this class. Why? Because they lack nurture. What are the eyes? The Bible. We have two eyes, not three. Why? For the Bible have only the Old and New Testaments. Jesus guides us with the Holy Spirit. The Church nurtures her members with the Bible, that they may not be led astray by heresies. I hope many eyes are opened this time. No blind ones. Regretfully, after I came here the first time, many eyes became blind. They couldn't distinguish between true and false. The Little Flock led them astray. Praise the Lord! This blind man being touched by our Lord had become brightly enlightened. May the Lord's holy hands make us all bright ones.

### V. Jesus lets the Dumb speak for a witness. Vs 32-34

Jesus told the dumb man to speak out. Before she could not testify, but now she could, preaching with an evangelistic band. But many are still dumb today. Most regrettable of all is the dictate of a certain class that woman cannot preach. Let me ask the sisters, "Do you like to be dumb?" It is agonizing not to be able

express oneself well. How much more to remain dumb. Whoever does not witness is dumb.

Not only does Jesus tell the dumb to speak, but also to do many signs and wonders. But the Pharisees accuse her of being possessed by the devil and evil spirits. Many who see the miracles the Lord has done have accused Mr. Sung of being possessed by evil spirits. This is very wrong. Jesus is an evil spirit? If I'm an evil spirit, I won't preach at all. Praise the Lord! He is not discouraged. He has power to cause the dumb to speak. He wants us all today to speak up. Will you?

Conclusion. Vs 35-38

Jesus having finished his work goes on to other cities, sometimes preached in the synagogues, sometimes healing, for He saw the multitudes as sheep without shepherd and He pitied them. China today is the same. I have a hundred requests in my hand inviting me to speak. Are these not like sheep without shepherd? Jesus says to His disciples, "The harvest is plenteous but laborers are few. So pray the Lord of harvest to send out laborers to reap the harvest." May the Lord fill our hearts with His love that we may all become laborers.

The Lord not only saves us, but also preserves us. Will you be so?

The Lord not only preserves us, but when we slip and fall He will caution us. Will you let Him?

The Lord loves us. He nurtures us with the Bible, to give light to our eyes. Will you receive it?

Praise the Lord! He not only gives us hands, feet, eyes all wholesome, He gives speech from mouth. Will you testify for Him?

The five steps we have stated for holiness are yours if you follow them.

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