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The Underlying Principle Of Holiness

God has always demanded holiness of those who would approach Him. The reason is clear--He is holy. Thus, those who would come into His presence and have fellowship with Him must be holy (Heb. 12:14; Rev. 21:27; 1 John 1:6-10). The apostle Peter penned these words: "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Pet. 1:15-16).

Peter's inspired quotation comes from the Old Testament book of Leviticus. In it, the word holy and its cognates appear 131 times, and the related word clean and its cognates appear 186 times.¹ In this sense, cleanness is essential to holiness under the Old Testament law. The principle of man's reciprocal holiness, based upon and responding to God's inherent holiness, is one often stated in the third book of the Pentateuch (Lev. 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7, 25-26; 21:6-8).

Not only is God holy, but unlike man, He is eternally, inherently, infinitely holy. Holiness is a characteristic of His very nature which is wholly in keeping with His deity (Isa. 6:3). Were He to lack in holiness, He would not be God (Hab. 1:13).

Holiness is the watchword of Leviticus. In this inspired book, God declared the truth and revealed His will regarding the most holy offerings (2:3), holy place (6:16), holy crown (8:9), holy people (11:44-45), holy God (11:44-45), holy garments of the priests (16:4), holy sanctuary (16:33), holy fruit (19:24), God's holy name (20:2), holy priesthood (21:6), holy things (22:2), holy convocations (23:4), holy bread (24:5-9), holy jubilee (25:11-12), holy house (27:14), holy possessions (27:22-23), most holy devoted things (27:28), and holy tithe (27:32).

These occurrences and the number of them should impress upon us the importance of holiness and the principle of holiness, that continue in man's relationship to God today. The various requirements such as of diet and separation, as taught in Leviticus, were to show to the Israelites that great care was to be taken by His people and priests, as He said, "that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between clean and unclean" (10:10).

What is holiness? In regard to man, holiness entails separation, dedication, and consecration. Basically, to be holy is to be set apart. Since things connected with God are counted holy, holiness is absolutely essential if man would be connected with God. Leviticus shows how sinful man can come to have fellowship with the sinless God.

Leviticus symbolically sets forth the basic principles which underlie all dealings between God and men. The principles have not changed. The Levitical priesthood and sacrifices have been fulfilled in Christ and hence abolished; but the spiritual realities which they pictorially presented abide for all time.²

The specific commands, given in Leviticus and peculiar to the Old Law, to regulate, restrict, and require what was to be done (or not done) in order for one to be holy are not binding under the Law of Christ (Gal. 6:2; Col. 2:14). Nevertheless, there are principles, upon which these commands were given, which apply today. One of these is the principle of holiness. As then, so today, we are to be holy. Why? For God is holy.

Bobby Liddell

1. James E. Smith, *The Pentateuch* (College Press, 1992), p. 350.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 354.

"To Seek And To Save"

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WHAT CAN WE DO TO PROTECT OUR CHILDREN?

Jerry L. Martin

None of us will ever forget the horror of September 11, 2001. The unthinkable became a real life experience for thousands of our fellow citizens, and a nightmare that the rising of many Suns will not erase from the minds of family and friends. We were all made eyewitnesses (via television). We have been forced to stare hate in the face, and to fight to keep from giving it a place to take seed in our own hearts. We have been forced to share other's pain. Those who once were total strangers to us, we now consider members of our own family. Freedom that many of us have considered our inherited right has become a prized gift that is worth fighting to keep. With so many thoughts flooding our minds, many have asked, "What can we do to protect our children from being overwhelmed by this kind of tragedy"?

Let them see our confidence in God. When others panic in chaos, Christians should react with calmness because of our knowledge of our Lord's promise, "...for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb. 13:5-6). Timothy's confident faith came from what he saw in his grandmother, mother and his older brother in the faith, Paul (2 Tim. 1:5-6; 3:14-17; 4:5-8). Our children will look to us to reassure them of their security.

Let them see consistency in our lives. Children's anxieties heighten when normal schedules and behaviors are abandoned during uncertain times. If they are surrounded by mature Christian parents and mentors who continually trust and faithfully serve the Lord, children can survive any disaster. We must not falter in our life's work. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58). Our light must not dim, and our work must not cease (Mat. 5:14-16).

Let them see open communication. We should talk to our children, and encourage them to talk to us. God has always demanded such communication. "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up (Deu. 6:6-7; cf. v. 20; Jos. 4:21-24; Eph. 6:4). True communication takes place when real questions are answered. Surely, as Christians, if we are to be ready to answer every man, we should be ready to answer our children. "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pet. 3:15). Our love should be communicated to our children by the warmth and regularity of our embrace, by the quality

and availability of our time to listen, and by the readiness and wisdom of our answers.

Let them see the care of others. When their innocent eyes are open to the horrors of hate it becomes our responsibility to magnify the many acts of goodness that are the outgrowth of love. "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:21). Evil, murderous acts are fathered by Satan, and are propelled by his poisonous lies (John 8:44). In stark contrast, everything that is good and perfect comes down from the loving Father of lights, and is perpetuated by His purifying "word of truth" (Jam. 1:17-25; 1 Pet. 22-25). We need to limit our children's exposure to the graphic images of destruction and death. We must, rather, magnify the deeds of those who, in the hour of tragedy, seize the opportunity to do good (Gal. 6:1-10). Perfect love will cast out fear, and God is the only source of such love (1 John 4:18-21). We need to assure our children that, in God's family, they will be surrounded by people who will love and protect them (Rom. 12:9-10). When our children witness such care being demonstrated toward others they will abhor evil and cleave to good. Our endless reservoir of spiritual strength and guidance will be the source of our children's protection from evil.

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Thanks so much, dear brethren, to all who have responded to our plea with, either one-time or monthly support for our students, and to all who have given so generously for student housing. We are deeply appreciative for every contribution, whether large or small.

We have a good number of students accepted to begin the Fall Quarter (August 25), and we have several others who are in the process of being accepted. Many of these good men are in desperate need of monthly support. They are giving up their jobs, and leaving their homes behind--because they are committing themselves to two years of intensive study and preparation to take the message of salvation to a lost world. They want to preach the gospel, and they need our help.

Can you, or the congregation where you are, respond to this need? Any funds given will be helpful as they seek the ability to provide for themselves and their families, while here, the basic needs of life.

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