

## Introduction:

No doubt, there is a sense in which nothing we do can make us holy. We can develop all kinds of seemingly holy disciplines, but without the blood of Jesus we are defiled people scratching and clawing our way out of the pit but only sinking deeper in it. It is wonderful to know the blood of Jesus Christ sanctifies us, that is, sets us apart as holy, cleansing us from our sins (**Hebrews 9:11-14**). However, we must remember God has not set us apart as holy so we can simply continue in impurity, but so we can actually pursue holiness (**I Thessalonians 4:7**). We who have been set apart by the blood of Christ must recognize there is more to pursuing holiness than floating along each day trying to make it through the month with our bills paid and avoiding any egregious sins. Pursuing holiness takes effort. It takes devotion. It takes time. With that thought in mind, I'd like for us to consider a song most of us have sung all our Christian lives. It is an old song. But it is one we would do well to remember and let guide us: "Take Time to Be Holy."

## Discussion:

### I. Make time to be holy.

- A. "Take time to be holy, speak oft with thy Lord; abide in Him always, and feed on His Word. Make friends of God's children, help those who are weak, forgetting in nothing His blessing to seek."
- B. As we pursue holiness, we need to pursue activities that feed holiness. Consider **Galatians 6:7-8**. We will reap what we sow. It goes without saying if you sow tomato seeds, you'll grow tomato plants. If you sow apple seeds, you'll grow apples plants. If we want the holiness that comes from the Holy Spirit, we have to sow to the Spirit. We have to sow the seeds that produce the fruit of the Spirit.
- C. Spending time in communication with God, reading His Word and praying are integral. As **Acts 20:32** and **I Thessalonians 5:16-18** demonstrate, we need to make these disciplines our habits. More than that, we need to recognize one of the great tools God has given us for holiness is one another. Serving one another, encouraging one another, being encouraged by one another (**I Thessalonians 5:11**), are all part of the process of holiness.
- D. But whether we are talking about these particular habits or any others that sow the seeds of holiness, the key we need to grasp is these things don't happen on accident. They happen on purpose. They happen when planned. If we are waiting around for these things to just kind of happen on their own, they never will. We have to make time to be holy. We have to make time to pursue these habits that will help us pursue holiness.

### II. Slow down to be holy.

- A. "Take time to be holy, the world rushes on; spend much time in secret, with Jesus alone. By looking to Jesus, like Him thou shalt be; thy friends in thy conduct His likeness shall see."
- B. We live in a frantic and frenzied world. Time management seminars are intended to teach us how to get more done. Self-help books are written to show us what we need to do next. We want to see more, do more, accomplish more. We are always on the run. Many of us feel guilty if we aren't busy doing something. Especially if we can look around and see things that need doing. I don't know how many people I've heard claim they just can't sit still, they've got to be busy. And in many ways that is a good thing. However, in some it can be very detrimental to spirituality and holiness.
- C. In fact, some of the same people I've heard make these claims are the ones who tell me they struggle making time to be holy. Praying doesn't seem like doing. Most of us want to spend more time in the Word, but with dishes needing done, bills needing paid, grass needing cut, children needing loved, jobs needing completed, projects needing tweaking, and so much more, sitting down to read seems like doing nothing.
- D. Look to our Master. In **Luke 5:15-16**, we are told that the report about Him went far and wide and more and more were gathering to Him. There was plenty for Jesus to do. In fact, it looked like He had unending work. But He would slip away and withdraw to desolate places in order to pray. He had enough to do to keep Him busy for days, months, years. But He would slow down to take time to be holy.

### III. Wait to be holy.

- A. "Take time to be holy, let Him be thy guide; and run not before Him, whatever betide. In joy or sorrow, still follow the Lord, and, looking to Jesus, still trust in His Word."

- B. If we want to be holy we have to wait on the Lord. We need to wait on Him no matter what anyone else is doing. No matter how we are being treated. No matter what our goals are. Whether times are good or bad. Consider what is said in **Psalm 37:1-9**. Rather than fretting because evildoers seem to prosper, we can wait on the Lord to set things right. As we strive to figure out what direction to pursue in life, we need to trust the Lord to fulfill His promises. We need to listen to His Word.
- C. Sadly, many people today aren't waiting on the Lord, but are trusting in their interpretation of signs, circumstances, and feelings. I can't help but think of David in the cave with Saul in **I Samuel 24**. In **I Samuel 24:4**, David's men essentially said, "It's a sign from God. This is the day God has delivered Saul into your hand. Surely something like this wouldn't happen unless God intends for you to kill Saul." But David didn't wait for signs or feelings. He waited for the Lord. He knew the Lord had forbidden to lift a hand against the Lord's anointed (**I Samuel 24:6**). He would wait for the Lord. The Lord would defeat David's enemy in the Lord's Time. The Lord would enthrone David in the Lord's time. Don't run ahead of the Lord. Trust His Word, not your feelings or your circumstances. Wait on the Lord in order to be holy.

#### IV. Calm down to be holy.

- A. "Take time to be holy, be calm in thy soul, each thought and each motive beneath His control. Thus led by His Spirit to fountains of love, Thou soon shalt be fitted for service above."
- B. One of the great enemies of holiness is our own anxiety. Getting caught up in worry often takes us away from the habits of holiness. It is hard to devote my attention to the Scriptures if my mind is overwhelmed by worry about my job, my family, my next meal. But listen to Jesus's direction in **Matthew 6:25-34**. Don't be anxious, trust in the Lord.
- C. As Paul encourages in **Philippians 4:4-9**, take your anxieties to God in prayer. Hand them off to Him and devote your thinking toward His things, things that are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, excellent, and worthy of praise. When we do that, the peace of God, which we cannot even fathom, will guard our hearts and minds. When we do this, it will be well with our souls and we will be able to take time to be holy without worry or anxiety.

#### Conclusion:

We are pursuing holiness. This pursuit will not happen accidentally. It will only happen on purpose. It will only happen when we take time to pursue holiness. It will only happen when we take time to be holy. Are you taking time?