

## **HOLINESS OR HELL? WHICH ONE?**

We are living in a period of time when many religious people don't even believe you can live Holy. The dictionary says that holiness means being free from sin. We read in Hebrews 12:14, "Follow peace with all men and holiness. Without which no man can see God." Many church members are blindly going along believing no one can live Holy in this life. Let us see what the Bible says, in Luke 1:74-75, "That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." According to this scripture we are to live holy right here in this life. In Titus 2:11-12 we have these words, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." This would teach the honest heart that he will have to live Godly in this present life. In everything we do or say, we are to live holy (free from sin). In 1 Peter 1:15-16, "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." There is such a great need of holy conversation today among religious people. We hear them cursing, telling smutty stories and using vulgar language but yet claiming to be Christians. Peter tells us in 1 Peter 2:21-22, "For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow in his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." Living holy in Christ Jesus means simply living free from sin. In 1 Corinthians 15:34 the apostle Paul writes, "Awake to righteousness and sin not." "SIN NOT" seems to be God's standard. Look at John 8:11. Jesus speaks these words, "Go and sin no more." Then in John 5:14 we find Jesus talking to the crippled man that was healed, He said, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee."

We must also remember that the Holy Ghost hadn't come yet. Surely if those folks were able to live free from sin without the Holy Ghost, we ought to be able to live free from sin with the help of the Holy Ghost. In 1 John 2:1, "My little children these things write I unto you that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." In verse 6 of this same chapter, He says, "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk, even as he walked." Peter tells us in 1 Peter 2:21-22 how he walked; without guile, and without sin. Paul in 2 Timothy 2:19 says, "Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." It seems very clear from these scriptures that God requires a sinless life. Paul in writing to the Romans in chapter 6:1-2 says, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" The Holiness opposers will pick up texts like Ecclesiastes 7:20 and see if we can get some understanding. This verse says, "For there is not a just man upon the earth that doeth good and sinneth not." That was true of that particular time. This was about 1000 years before Christ. At this time sins were just atoned for, not washed away. They came with their sin offering, a lamb, bullock or whatever they could bring

and it was killed at the brazen altar and the blood was sprinkled upon the horns and poured around the base of the altar. Not until Jesus came was any man able to live free from sin. This was his purpose of coming into the world. Read Matthew 1:21, "And she shall bring forth a son and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins." Then holiness opposers will refer you to Romans 3:10, "As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one." If you will carefully read on down a few verses you will find out that he is not talking about Christians but unbelievers. Look at verse 11 "There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God." This couldn't be a child of God because his is seeking after God. Every verse will tell you that he is not talking about Christians. Look at verse 14 "Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness" Then verse 17 says, "And the way of peace have they not known." Then these folks were never saved. Another pet text that is often misquoted is 1 John 1:8 which reads, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." John wrote this for the benefit of the Jews who said he didn't need to be born again. For the moral man that sees no need of being saved from sin, for the self-righteous and virtuous individual. This scripture is dealing with us before we come to Christ. Actually when we get down in the scripture of 1 John 1:8 he is dealing with the carnal nature. Listen to verse 6 and 7, Verse 6 says, "If we say that we have fellowship with him, (in other words call ourself a Christian) and walk in darkness, (live in sin) we lie, and do not the truth." So verse 8 cannot be interpreted that everybody sins regardless of whether they have been born again or not. 1 John 3:9, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin: for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin." As long as you have Christ dwelling within, you don't desire to sin. This does not mean you won't be tempted with sin, but thank God you won't have to yield to this temptation. In verse 8 of 1 John 3 the word says, "He that committeth sin is of the devil: for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." Then if we are not able to live free from sin today, Jesus failed in his mission. I know he didn't fail, so the holiness opposers must be wrong. Now let us go back and finish verse 7 in 1 John chapter 1. Verse 7 says, "But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." If the blood cleanseth us from all sin would there be any left? Isaiah 59:1-2, "Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy that it cannot hear: But our iniquities have separated between you and our God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. Psalm 66:18, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." John 8:31, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshiper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth." 1 Corinthians 6:18, "Every sin that a man doeth is without the body." Ezekiel 18:20 says, "The soul that sinneth shall die." The body may carry out the act of sin, but the soul is guilty of sin whether the body ever carries out an act or not. We learn this from Jesus' own preaching when he said, "But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. Matthew 5:28. When a heart decision to sin is completed, the person is a sinner though he many not know when he will be able to

carry out the act. In 1 John 3:15, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." He doesn't have to even threaten him. He may just have bitter hatred in his heart. Here again the soul is sinning when the body doesn't carry out a single act. You can be a liar and not tell the lie with your mouth. Just as soon as you resolve--- "When they ask me about the matter, I will lie;" You are already a liar because you resolved you would lie. Sin then is resolving to do wrong. A man may decide in his mind, "If I ever get a chance I will steal that thing," though he never gets a chance to actually steal the article he is yet guilty of an evil thought. In Luke 15:7, "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth; more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." People who are saved (born again of the spirit of God) don't need to repent of sins. In Proverbs 28:13, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Here the scripture again is telling us we must forsake our sins to obtain mercy from God. We hear the term used so much about sinning Christians. There is no such thing. The word Christian means Christ like within, so anyone who follows Christ and adheres to His teachings is a Christian. It will produce you an honest thief and a truthful liar. The very fact that one lies makes him untruthful; the very fact that a thief steals proves he is not honest. A person who sins cannot, while sinning, be a Christian. A Christian does not commit sin. If he commits sin, then he is a sinner. It all boils down to this; it is either Holiness down here or Hell hereafter. When God made man in the beginning, He said, "Let us make man in our image." The soul of man was made in the image of God, holy. In Colossians 3:10, "And have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." Holiness is the minimum standard for God's people. In 1 Thessalonians 4:7, "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." Finally, He says, "Be ye Holy for I am Holy." Then remember God provided for this by sending His son, Jesus, to "save His people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21).

Publisher's comments: We should remember that mistakes with no evil intent, no hatred, no covetousness, no discontent (1 Timothy 6:6) are not sin. Sin is willful transgression-----or a will-----purpose-----to transgress.

Also temptations are not sin. Jesus was severely tempted in the wilderness, (Luke 4:2) but didn't yield, nor purpose to yield and was sinless. He persistently resisted the tempter and made not even one decision in Satan's favor. He was Holy and He was, and is our perfect example.