

A REVELATION OF.....

THE WAY OF

HOLINESS

**ONE OF A SERIES OF REVELATIONS ON VARIOUS
ASPECTS OF SCRIPTURE, AS INSPIRED BY THE
HOLY SPIRIT.**

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A NOTE FROM DAVID.....

The pursuit of holiness is at the centre of the Christian faith, yet it is also one of its least understood principles.

Over the years I have struggled with its meaning, and more importantly, its life application! Like us all!

The interesting thing is that it can't be laid out simply in points 1 through 10, as many people make the mistake of trying to do. Rather, holiness is a life learning and development process during which the individual grows more into the image of Jesus.

This is not a theological presentation of 'the principles of holiness', for I am not a theologian, and would not attempt it. Nor would it likely do much good! For the real problem is in living it!

Rather, this is a revelation of some of the principles the Lord has shown me and which I am doing my best to apply to my own life. I am not presenting them as the super secret of, "do this and you will be holy!" The purpose is that you will take the principles and apply the lessons they contain, to help you deepen your 'walk with Jesus'.

The Lord has given me a large number of sayings, which I call 'David's Doodlings'. As you can see, I like alliteration! One doodling, in particular, seems to sum up the mystery, the dichotomy, and the experience of our pursuit of this ultimate goal.

"The closer I get to God, the further away I find I really am."

Yes, the pursuit of holiness is a lifetime walk, a journey that our Lord so much desires each pilgrim to take. I trust that this may help you a little as you walk with Jesus.

His servant and yours,
David Tait

PART 1: THE BACKGROUND

DEFINITION OF TERMS

HOLINESS — in the highest sense belongs to God (Isa. 6:3; Rev. 15:4), and to Christians as consecrated to God's service, and in so far as they are conformed in all things to the will of God (Rom. 6:19, 22; Eph. 1:4; Titus 1:8; 1 Pet. 1:15). Personal holiness is a work of gradual development. It is carried on under many hindrances, hence the frequent admonitions to watchfulness, prayer, and perseverance (1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 4:23, 24). (See SANCTIFICATION.) 1

SANCTIFICATION — involves more than a mere moral reformation of character, brought about by the power of the truth: it is the work of the Holy Spirit bringing the whole nature more and more under the influences of the new gracious principles implanted in the soul in regeneration. In other words, sanctification is the carrying on to perfection the work begun in regeneration, and it extends to the whole man (Rom. 6:13; 2 Cor. 4:6; Col. 3:10; 1 John 4:7; 1 Cor. 6:19). It is the special office of the Holy Spirit in the plan of redemption to carry on this work (1 Cor. 6:11; 2 Thess. 2:13). Faith is instrumental in securing sanctification, inasmuch as it (1) secures union to Christ (Gal. 2:20), and (2) brings the believer into living contact with the truth, whereby he is led to yield obedience "to the commands, trembling at the threatenings, and embracing the promises of God for this life and that which is to come."

Perfect sanctification is not attainable in this life (1 Kings 8:46; Prov. 20:9; Eccl. 7:20; James 3:2; 1 John 1:8). See Paul's account of himself in Rom. 7:14–25; Phil. 3:12–14; and 1 Tim. 1:15; also the confessions of David (Ps. 19:12, 13; 51), of Moses (90:8), of Job (42:5, 6), and of Daniel (9:3–20). "The more holy a man is, the more humble, self-renouncing, self-abhorring, and the more sensitive to every sin he becomes, and the more closely he clings to Christ. The moral imperfections which cling to him he

1Easton, M. G., M. A. D. D., *Easton's Bible Dictionary*, (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.) 1996.

feels to be sins, which he laments and strives to overcome. Believers find that their life is a constant warfare, and they need to take the kingdom of heaven by storm, and watch while they pray. They are always subject to the constant chastisement of their Father's loving hand, which can only be designed to correct their imperfections and to confirm their graces. And it has been notoriously the fact that the best Christians have been those who have been the least prone to claim the attainment of perfection for themselves.”, Hodge's Outlines. 2

HOLINESS, HOLY, SAINTS. There is probably no religion without a distinction between holy and profane, and in most, if not indeed in all, the religious man is the one to whom something is holy. This receives impressive illustration in Scripture.

The principal words are Heb. *qāḏōš* in the OT and Gk. *hagios* in the NT, both words of uncertain derivation. If the main root *qdš* is derived from the simple root *qd*, meaning to cut or separate, it denotes apartness, and so the separation of a person or thing from the common or profane to a divine use. The NT terminology suggests the distinction between the holiness which is God's very being and the holiness which marks out the character of his people. The terms *semnos*, that which invokes reverence (1 Tim. 3:8), *hieros*, sacred, having relation to deity (2 Tim. 3:15), and *hagnos*, that which is pure or chaste (2 Cor. 11:2), are used with reference to God's people, while the terms *hosios* (Rev. 15:4) and *hagios* (Jn. 17:11) are applied in the first instance to God, as denoting a character that is in absolute antithesis to that of the world.

a. Holiness as separation and ethical purity

It is clear that, in Scripture generally, holiness means separation, and the term is used with reference to persons or things that have been separated or set apart for God and his service. Thus we have in Exodus mention of holy ground (3:5), holy assembly (12:16), holy sabbath (16:23), holy nation (19:6) and holy place (29:31), to mention but a few. In these and similar cases the word does not directly imply ethical attributes, but

2Easton, M. G., M. A. D. D., *Easton's Bible Dictionary*, (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.) 1996.

mainly consecration to the Lord and his service, and so separation from the common sphere. It is God who causes this separation and so conveys the holiness that may be implied by the separation. For example, the 7th day was designated holy, negatively because it was separated from the other 6 days of the week, and positively because it was dedicated to God's service. When the word is applied to a certain place it is because of a divine association with that place. There was given to Moses at Horeb, before the burning bush, the injunction: 'Put on your shoes from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground' (Ex. 3:5). The ground was holy because it was at that moment the place of divine revelation. Similarly God sanctified the people of Israel by separating them from all the nations of the earth and entering into covenant with them, but this involved giving to them a knowledge of the divine law, moral and ceremonial. Thus the ethical is imparted. These two aspects of holiness are generally present, since it was understood that being holy meant not only living a separate life, but bearing a character different from that of the ordinary man. Thus the word attained a distinct ethical implication. Holiness is therefore recognized as belonging to what has been chosen and set apart by God and given a character that conforms to God's law.

b. The holiness of God's character

From what has already been said it becomes clear that holiness is not so much a relation of the creature to the Creator as of the Creator to the creature. In other words, it is the holiness of God that underlines that separation of life and distinctiveness of character that belong to God's people. This gives point to the distinction noted above, that different terms are applied to the holiness of God and that of his people. Holiness belongs to God as divine, and he would not be God without it. In that respect 'there is none holy like the Lord' (1 Sa. 2:2). The ethical quality in holiness is the aspect most commonly to the forefront when the word is applied to God. It is basically a term for the moral excellence of God and his freedom from all limitation in his moral perfection (Hab. 1:13). It is in this respect that God alone is holy and the standard of ethical purity in his creatures.

Since holiness embraces every distinctive attribute of Godhead, it may be conceived of as the outshining of all that God is. As the sun's rays, combining all the colours of the spectrum, come together in the sun's

shining and blend into light, so in his self-manifestation all the attributes of God come together and blend into holiness. Holiness has, for that reason, been called ‘an attribute of attributes’, that which lends unity to all the attributes of God. To conceive of God’s being and character as merely a synthesis of abstract perfections is to deprive God of all reality. In the God of the Bible these perfections live and function in holiness.

For these reasons we can understand why holiness is expressly attributed in Scripture to each Person in the Godhead, to the Father (Jn. 17:11), to the Son (Acts 4:30), and especially to the Spirit as the one who manifests and communicates the holiness of God to his creatures.

c. The holiness of God in relation to his people

The OT applies the word ‘holy’ to human beings in virtue of their consecration to religious purposes, *e.g.* priests who were consecrated by special ceremonies, and even to the whole nation of Israel as a people separated from the nations and consecrated to God. Thus it was relationship to God that constituted Israel a holy people, and in this sense it was the highest expression of the covenant relationship. This idea is not altogether absent from the NT, as in the passage in 1 Cor. 7:14, where the unbelieving husband is sanctified in virtue of his relationship to the believing wife and vice versa.

But as the conception of holiness advanced, alongside the progressive revelation of God, from the outside to the inside, from ceremonial to reality, so it took on a strong ethical significance, and this is its main, and practically its exclusive, connotation in the NT. The OT prophets proclaimed it as pre-eminently God’s self-disclosure, the testimony he bears to himself and the aspect under which he wills his creatures to know him. Moreover, the prophets declared that God willed to communicate his holiness to his creatures, and that, in turn, he claims holiness from them. If ‘I am holy’ is the divine self-assertion, lifting God immeasurably above his creatures, so ‘Be holy’ is the divine call to his creatures to ‘share his holiness’ (Heb. 12:10). It is this imparting of the divine holiness which takes place in the soul of man in regeneration and becomes the spring and foundation of holy character.

Christ in his life and character is the supreme example of the divine holiness. In him it consisted in more than mere sinlessness: it was his entire

consecration to the will and purpose of God, and to this end Jesus sanctified himself (Jn. 17:19). The holiness of Christ is both the standard of the Christian character and its guarantee: 'He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified have all one origin' (Heb. 2:11).

In the NT the apostolic designation for Christians is *saints* (hagioi), and it continued to be used as a general designation at least up to the days of Irenaeus and Tertullian, though after that it degenerated in ecclesiastical usage into an honorific title. Though its primary significance was relationship, it was also descriptive of character, and more especially of Christlike character. The NT everywhere emphasizes the ethical nature of holiness in contrast to all uncleanness. It is represented as the supreme vocation of Christians and the goal of their living. In the final assessment of human destiny the two categories known to Scripture are the righteous and the wicked.

d. The eschatological significance of holiness

Scripture emphasizes the permanence of moral character (Rev. 22:11). It also emphasizes the retributive aspect of the divine holiness. It involves the world in judgment. From a moral necessity in God, life is so ordered that in holiness is welfare, in sin is doom. Since the divine holiness could not make a universe in which sin would ultimately prosper, the retributive quality in the divine government becomes perfectly plain. But retribution is not the end; the holiness of God ensures that there will be a final restoration, a *palingenesia*, bringing to pass a regeneration of the moral universe. The eschatology of the Bible holds out the promise that the holiness of God will sweep the universe clean and create new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness will dwell (2 Pet. 3:13).

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³*The New Bible Dictionary*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1962.

KNOWING GOD

As we mature in our relationship with our heavenly Father we get to know Him more deeply. Gradually we start to appreciate in a deep way what a tremendous Father we have. Also how unlike Him we truly are, for His magnificence surpasses all our understanding.

The more I discover about God the more I realise there is to know.

oooOooo

The closer I get to God, the more I realise how big He is and how small I am.

oooOooo

While God graciously accepts me as I am, His desire is for me to become more like Him.

oooOooo

When God moves, the results are beyond our imagination. Why then do we try and do His work ourselves?

oooOooo

Sanctification is 'the means', holiness 'the end'.

Extracted from "David's Doodlings", a book of sayings on many different subjects from the 'mysterious mind' (there goes that alliteration again!) of David Tait.

THE HOLINESS MOVEMENT

The Holiness Movement grew out of the life and teachings of John Wesley (1703 - 1791), a giant of the faith, fully committed to Jesus.

Like all of us, he had his strengths and weaknesses. He was not perfect although he desired to be and believed he could become so. A frail, little, man in the physical, yet a huge giant in the Spirit in his 100% pursuit of holiness, which he considered to be God's gift. In many areas of his life he was a living example, though he did not always manage to achieve the perfection he desired, particularly in his marital relationships. Wesley believed that after being saved from sin, God could transform the individual into a saint, able to lead a perfect, unflawed life.

A loyal Anglican to the end, although ostracized by most of the church, his followers eventually separated and set up the Methodist Church, so named because John and his brother Charles were very methodical in their approach to life and religion.

As is often the case when the visionary dies, it did not take long for the Methodists to move away from the difficult lifestyle and commitment level Wesley required. So it was left to the Holiness Movement, primarily based in the United States from the 1840's onwards, to perpetuate and popularize the Wesleyan message of sanctification (the means by which holiness is attained) within Christian circles. The teaching was, that to achieve, and remain in, a state of holiness, requires intense, sustained effort, constant self denial, careful observance of the Word, a reliance upon God's forgiving grace, looking for God's glory in everything, and exercising love. Some streams worked in Holy Spirit anointing, others not, but the 'second blessing' as it is widely known, was considered to be sanctification.

Early 20th Century Pentecostalism, when God outpoured His Holy Spirit in a major way back into the church, sprung out of the Holiness Movement. However while generally accepting sanctification as part of the 'second blessing', greater emphasis was placed upon the baptism of the Holy Spirit, signified by speaking in tongues, than in sanctification. During the 20th

Century, Pentecostalism got stronger and the influence of the Holiness Movement waned.

THE PROBLEM WITH HOLINESS CHURCHES

I have been blessed to preach and teach in a wide range of church situations, from Traditional (e.g. Anglican and Lutheran) through Evangelical (e.g. Baptist), Pentecostal (e.g. AOG, Independents) as well as others in the Holiness stream.

Each grouping has its own flavour, emphasis and revelation. My practical experience of Holiness churches has been in line with general comment generally about the Holiness Movement. For it has become divided, moving in two different directions.

Some Holiness Churches have watered down the holiness message in order to become accepted within the general Christian evangelical community, remaining Holiness Churches in name only.

On the other hand, others have become very legalistic and generally judgmental, whether accepting the power of Holy Spirit anointing or not. They live by rules, normally very conservative ones, where items such as hair length and the wearing of jewelry assume greater importance than Holiness itself. They are typically highly judgmental and intolerant of others who don't abide by 'their' rules.

It has been my privilege to be available and used in seeing a breakdown of this rigidity. In exciting times when the Holy Spirit has taken over and released the people from their 'religious' limitations. For as in all church movements, religious form so easily takes over from the original, Spirit inspired substance. Holiness Churches are very susceptible to this.

PART 2: A REVELATION OF..... THE WAY OF HOLINESS

THIS REVELATION'S PURPOSE

This is a 'revelation', or more correctly a series of revelations, on the meaning of holiness. They will be presented as given by God. Experience tells me that God doesn't generally give revelation in an organised theological format! For better or worse, it is people who take His revelations and put them 'into order'!

So here, we are not going to get a 1-20 presentation of the way to achieve holiness. Of all faith areas, holiness is the least likely to work that way. This will become obvious as we proceed.

We will get glimpses from both the Old and New Testaments, from dreams and allegory, and whatever else the Lord in His grace gives, to build up a broad picture of the real holiness God desires from His people today.

The Lord willing and guiding, we will then place it all in some form of pattern, bringing together all the bits into a coherent whole. Getting a glimpse of the glorious future the Lord has for His people and His Church. A church prepared to sacrifice everything for Him.

I write, not as one who has 'got there', but as a pilgrim with a deep desire to be all in my God that I can possibly be. Hence I am on a journey, seeking personal Holiness and desiring to see the Church move forward to become the Bride for whom Jesus is to return.

MOSES TABERNACLE - THE JOURNEY TO HOLINESS

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Only the briefest of descriptions of the Tabernacle can be given here. For a fuller explanation, see the book 'Eagles Fly High!'

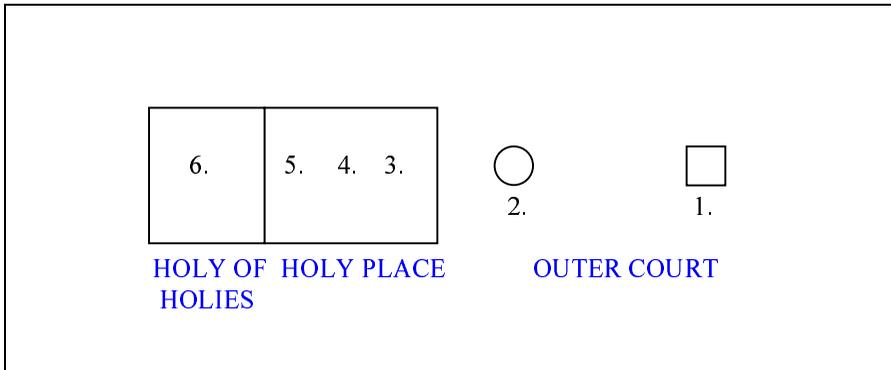


Replica of Moses Tabernacle situated in the south of Israel.

The incredible Tabernacle of Moses, detailed architectural and building instructions for which were given by God himself to Moses on Mt Sinai, as detailed from Exodus 25 onwards.

⁸ “Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them.
⁹ Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you. (Exodus 25:8-9) 4

LAYOUT OF MOSES TABERNACLE



- | | |
|------------------|------------------------|
| 1. BRONZE ALTAR | 4. LAMPSTAND |
| 2. WASHING BASIN | 5. INCENSE ALTAR |
| 3. THE TABLE | 6. ARK OF THE COVENANT |

The Tabernacle was God's first church. Prior to the Israelites entering Egypt they were a nomadic people, travelling from place to place in small family groups in order to feed their flocks of sheep and goats. During the 400 years in Egypt, Jewish society developed, settled agriculture skills were learned and a written language acquired. Now God could reveal more of Himself. And Moses could record His church building instructions.

But even more than being the Jews first church, the reason for all the detail was that Moses' Tabernacle was to be a pattern of the Church, past present and future. And a pattern too, for our individual lives. Amazing, really! But true!

4 All Bible quotations are from *The New International Version*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House) 1984 unless otherwise stated.

So how does this relate to holiness? Let's have a brief look at the layout of the Tabernacle and see.

First of all, the priests and people all had to come in through a single gate. (Where the photo above is taken from.) As can be clearly seen there are no other entrances. The gate is at the right hand end of our diagram. The open area is called the **OUTER COURT** and is the only area into which people, other than priests, were allowed.

The first item of furniture inside the gate was the **Brazen Altar**. Upon this altar, blood sacrifices were made. These animal sacrifices were symbolic of that which Jesus would make on the cross, 1500 years later.

Then we move to the **Washing Basin**. Here the priest washed himself before making a sacrifice. This symbolizes both baptism and the washing of the water of the Word.

To reach the remaining items of furniture it is necessary to enter the **Tent**. Once again, the tent has but one entrance. A waterproof awning, most likely made out of Sea Cow (a relative of the manatee) skins, covered the tent. It had a bluish tinge to it, and was naturally impregnated with oil. The colour blue and oil are both symbolic of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The Tent was divided into two. The first two-thirds was called the **HOLY PLACE**. Only the priests were allowed inside to attend to the three items of furniture it contained. Inside the door was the **Table of Shewbread**. It was on this table that each week the priests would place 12 fresh loaves of bread, representing the 12 Tribes of Israel. The bread removed stayed fresh supernaturally, for the priests to eat. This Table represents the 'revelatory' Word of God. The words between the lines, the special understanding the Lord gives to those who move in the realm of the Spirit.

Then we move on to the golden **Lampstand**. Each morning and evening the priest on duty had to trim the wicks of the seven oil burners of the 'minora' and fill them with oil. The lamp was never allowed to go out. The Lampstand stands for the 'gifts of the Spirit' that Spirit-filled Christians

receive from God. These include such things as tongues, prophecy and healing, and the ministry gifts, as the Lord determines.

Finally in the Holy Place, there is the **Altar of Incense**. On this Altar the priest offered up a specially formulated incense mixture, God's recipe given to Moses. The incense today symbolizes our offerings to God, of praise, worship and prayer.

The final, smallest room was called the **HOLY OF HOLIES**. The home of the **Ark of the Covenant**, where the very presence of God dwelt between the two Cherubim on top of the Atonement Cover, or lid, of the Ark itself. The Ark contained three, most precious items to the people of Israel, for each in its own way represented God's supernatural provision and power.

The first was the **Jar of Manna**. It held a sample of the light, flaky, bread-like substance God provided 6 days a week, to feed the people during the 40 years they spent wandering in the desert, before entering the Promised Land.

The second item was **Aaron's Rod**. This rod was symbolic of God's authority vested in Aaron. When the people rebelled against Aaron's authority, God made the 'dead' rod bud, blossom and produce ripe almonds - all in a single day!

Finally, the Ark was home to the twin **Tablets of the 10 Commandments**. These were twice given to Moses on the mountain. The first time God provided the tablets and wrote on them. They were broken when Moses came down the mountain, finding the people worshipping the golden calf. God made Moses drop them, for He cannot live in the presence of sin. The second time Moses made the tablets and God wrote on them. As these replacements were a mixture of God and man, they could remain whole in the presence of the sin they instructed the people against.

OUR PERSONAL JOURNEY TO HOLINESS

Our walk with Jesus is a progressive journey, not a one-time event. We have the ability though, to stop at any point along the way. However, God's

desire is for us to become holy, to become like Jesus. Amazingly, the steps we need to take are illustrated by taking a walk through the Tabernacle of Moses. Let's see how.

Brazen Altar: As we come in through the gate, the first and largest piece of furniture we will meet, is the Brazen Altar. Today, it represents the Sacrifice of Jesus, who shed His precious blood for each of us on the Cross of Calvary. Our only available starting point is at the Altar of the Cross of Jesus. There is no other way to holiness except through Jesus and the sacrifice He made for you and me. Good works? No! But by Jesus? Yes!

Washing Basin: From the Altar we move to the Washing Basin which stands for believers baptism and the washing of the Word. The priests would not dream of entering the Tent without first purifying themselves in the Basin. The symbolic cleansing of baptism, where we publicly put aside the old life and put on the new, while allowing God's word to cleanse and change us, are logical and necessary steps, not for salvation, but on our walk towards holiness.

The Tent: The need to enter the Tent is a stumbling block for many people. For the Tent represents the baptism, the infilling, or release of Holy Spirit power in our lives to teach and change us, so that we might approach the Ark in the Holy of Holies, where true holiness is to be found. Simple human effort will not get us to holiness. Good works, living a good life, people's striving, have been tried so often but always found wanting. This misplaced human effort has been the basic problem of the Holiness Movement. There is only one entrance into the Tent. To get into the Holy of Holies you must enter via the Holy Place.

Table of Shewbread: It was on the Table of Shewbread (Showbread) that the priests placed the 12 loaves of bread each week, one for each tribe. These supernaturally stayed fresh and were able to be eaten by the priests after being replaced. The bread represents the Word of God, but this time, as we are now in the realm of the Holy Spirit, it is the 'revelatory' Word. The words between the lines! The understanding of the deeper layers of meaning God's Word contains.

The Lampstand: Or candlestick. The Minora, was a lamp whose flame was not allowed to go out. It had to be filled with oil and its wicks trimmed, morning and evening, so the flame would continue to burn. This process represents God's anointing and the Spiritual Gifts He gives us once we enter the Tent, the Holy Spirit's realm.

Incense Altar: At this Altar the Priests offered up to God the special incense Moses had given the formula for. This speaks of praise, worship and prayer, today's offerings to our Lord for what He has done for us.

ENTERING THE HOLY OF HOLIES

There are twin keys to understanding holiness to be found in the Holy of Holies.

THE WAY IN

Day of Atonement: Entrance to the Holy of Holies was restricted to the High Priest, once a year, upon the Day of Atonement. On this day he sought and received forgiveness for the sins of all the people of Israel. However, he was not able to go straight in and do it! For to enter into the very presence of God, he had to be pure himself. Remember God cannot live in the presence of sin. So, before entering, the High Priest humbled himself by taking off his grand robes in front of the people, highly humbling, before putting on a plain white, simple, linen (symbolic of righteousness) garment, more like an undershirt than the magnificent clothing he usually wore. Then he went to the Brazen Altar and offered a sacrifice for his own sins, before daring to enter God's presence. Once he had made this sacrifice for himself, he was able to do so for the Israelites.

There are three lessons for us here. Firstly, to enter God's presence we must humble ourselves by stripping away those parts of our life that are displeasing to God. Humility is not, as many imagine, putting oneself down as being of no consequence, but recognising that God's way is best every time.

Secondly, this humility leads to righteousness, to being a servant to the Father and others, as Jesus was.

Finally, we must understand that we cannot do this in our own power. For without coming through the ultimate act of grace provided by the sacrifice of Jesus, as represented by the Brazen Altar, we simply won't make it. For no matter how hard we try, we will never attain holiness through our own efforts. Many try. Good works are not enough. All sin must go and that can only happen through the forgiveness of the Cross. The High Priest had to make a sacrifice for himself before entering into God's presence.

THE RESULT

The Ark of the Covenant contained three items that today, give us a picture of what true holiness really is. For unless these items represented holiness, they could not have existed in the Ark itself, for God's presence dwelt there.

Each item relates to an article of furniture in the Holy Place, illustrating the difference between living in the realm of the Holy Spirit, where Spirit filled believers dwell, and the holiness that the Father desires for each of us.

Jar of Manna: Six days a week, God supernaturally provided manna, basically an ingredient with which the Jews could make a form of bread. A small, round, like coriander seed when it fell, the manna looked like hoarfrost on the ground and tasted like wafers made with honey. It could be ground in mills or beaten in a mortar to make flour that could be baked or boiled. On Friday a double quantity fell, which remained usable for the Sabbath the next day. The other days, it would become infested with worms within 24 hours.

As we have seen earlier, bread is symbolic of the Word of God. In the Outer Court, at the Washing Basin, we understand the words 'written on the page'. In the Holy Place, the revelation is of the words 'between the lines'. Yet, like the 12 loaves of bread, we need to keep topping up with reading the Bible daily, or we will lose what we have.

However, in the Holy of Holies our lives become the 'living word', where the Word, like the manna, is supernaturally growing within us on an ongoing basis. The Word, and we become one. This is holiness.

Aaron's Rod: The Budded Staff grew fruit supernaturally. With this staff, God confirmed to His people that the Levites were His chosen priesthood. Of course, today we are all to be priests and are given Spiritual Gifts as God decides and provides. The rods used by Moses and Aaron were symbolic of God's authority and power. But what did Aaron's Rod grow? It grew fruit. For it is the Fruit of the Spirit that represent holiness, not the Gifts.

The Lampstand, to which the Budded Staff relates, had to be topped up with oil and its wick trimmed on an ongoing basis. It is the same with the Holy Spirit and us. We need regular 'top ups' of the Holy Spirit or else we will drift away as the Spirit leaks from us. This is simply spiritual reality! But the more we submit to the Spirit's leading, the greater His power and presence will be within. So too, will our gifts be greater, for we will be able to be trusted with more.

Spirit filled Christians spend a lot of time praying for more gifts, but Aaron's Rod illustrates that in order to get greater gifts, we need first to develop bigger and tastier fruit in our lives. For it is fruit that brings holiness, while the gifts reflect and enhance the witness of the fruit in our life. So instead of asking for more gifts, we should be developing the fruits of character.

As we mature into Christ-likeness in the Holy of Holies, so we can be entrusted with greater Spiritual gifts. This is holiness.

Tablets of the Law: Contrary to popular belief, each tablet contained all 10 Commandments, written on the front and back of each tablet. They represented God's 'covenant' with His people. A covenant is similar, but not identical, to a contract today. When we buy and sell a house, there are two copies of the contract, one for the seller and another for the buyer. In

this case, God and mankind's copies were both kept in the same place - inside the Ark.

Moses broke the original copies, supplied and written on by God.

¹⁵ Moses turned and went down the mountain with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hands. They were inscribed on both sides, front and back.

¹⁶ The tablets were the work of God; the writing was the writing of God, engraved on the tablets. ¹⁷ When Joshua heard the noise of the people shouting, he said to Moses, "There is the sound of war in the camp."

¹⁸ Moses replied: "It is not the sound of victory, it is not the sound of defeat; it is the sound of singing that I hear." ¹⁹ When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, his anger burned and he threw the tablets out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain. (Exodus 32:15-19)

The destruction of the tablets was not simply a voluntary act of Moses, as sin cannot live in the presence of a holy God. It had to happen, for the tablets represented God!

The second set however was provided by Moses and written on by God.

The LORD said to Moses, "Chisel out two stone tablets like the first ones, and I will write on them the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke. ² Be ready in the morning, and then come up on Mount Sinai. Present yourself to me there on top of the mountain. (Exodus 34:1-2)

When Moses came down the mountain the second time, the people were still not perfect, but as the tablets were now a combination of both God and man, they did not need to be broken this time.

So here we have a picture of man, represented by the tablets, being perfected, written on, by God. As we allow our behaviour to be molded to God's perfection, as symbolized by the 10 Commandments, so we have a picture of holiness, ultimately resulting in perfection.

John Wesley believed perfection was possible in this life through the grace of Jesus, as a gift from God.

⁹ *He replied, "Go your way, Daniel, because the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end. ¹⁰ Many will be purified, made spotless and refined, but the wicked will continue to be wicked. None of the wicked will understand, but those who are wise will understand. (Daniel 12:9-10)*

Others believe that perfection cannot fully be attained until the life to come.

Putting aside this argument, it is clear that holiness comes as we move towards living a sin free life. This is holiness.

SUMMARY

As we move on from the Holy Place and into the Holy of Holies, our character must change. Sin must decrease in our lives, in order that we might grow more and more into the likeness of Jesus.

As we develop into the 'living word', our Christ-likeness enables us to be trusted with greater spiritual gifts. As we move towards living a sin free life, so we are participating in the process of attaining holiness. Holiness is not an instantaneous event, but a challenging lifetime process, to be approached one step at a time.

PARABLE OF THE SOWER

NB: For a detailed explanation of this parable, see 'A Revelation of... The Parable of the Sower.'

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. ² Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. ³ Then he told them many things in parables, saying: “A farmer went out to sow his seed. ⁴ As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. ⁵ Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. ⁶ But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. ⁸ Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. ⁹ He who has ears, let him hear.” (Matthew 13:1-9)

Jesus spoke to His followers in parables. The parables contained 'hidden' messages that were, and still are, applicable to believers. Unbelievers do not understand them.

This parable was one of the few Jesus explained, which shows its importance. In the following verses Jesus explained the differences between the types of soil. Crucially however, he left meaning of the final part, the real point of the parable '*a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown*', for the Holy Spirit to reveal to us.

The main point of the parable was this. Although all the 'Christian' seed is sown in the highly fertile good soil, some produces a 30-fold crop, some a 60-fold crop and the remainder, a stupendous, 100-fold harvest. So the real question is, “What causes or determines the differences in the harvest?” Here, Jesus is saying not all Christians are the same, but that some bear more fruit, or grain in this case, than others. This is the ‘Kingdom’ truth He was truly revealing.

Viewing cropping in the natural, we can see that of the four elements that make a crop successful, two can be immediately ruled out. For it is all good seed. And the 'soil' is of the same fertility for all the 'Christian Harvest.' So that leaves two remaining requirements of 'Crop Care' and 'Acts of God.'

Acts of God, or circumstances beyond our control, of God making some more fruitful than others, has a certain appeal as an explanation. Personal responsibility for our actions, or often, inaction, is absolved. It's always convenient to blame our lack of performance in life on God. Although it's true that the 'Gifts of the Spirit' are given out in differing quantities and type as God pleases, we all have equal opportunity to develop the 'Fruit of the Spirit' in our lives! We decide to produce a 30 fold, 60 fold or 100 fold harvest. Yes, the harvest in this parable is about fruit, not gifts.

This leaves the one remaining element of 'Crop Care.' Here the analogy with the natural breaks down a little. For instead of the farmer in the natural looking after the crop to achieve an even result overall, in the spiritual we, the seed, are individually responsible for the production of our own fruit. We must fertilize and water, that is to nurture, the spiritual seed planted in us at the time of our salvation, to produce our 30, 60 or 100 fold crop.

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything." (James 1:2-4)

Yes, it is the development of the Fruit of the Spirit in our life that brings us to maturity, that determines of the size of our spiritual harvest. It is through the development of the Fruit of the Spirit in our lives that we can attain a 100-fold crop, the picture of holiness.

SUMMARY

Jesus made the point that not all would attain holiness. For many will limit themselves to 30-fold or 60-fold harvests. But to grow to maturity, to come

to holiness, a 100-fold crop is required. Therefore holiness is not desired or attained by all believers.

APPLICATION OF HOLINESS TO OUR LIVES (Revelation 12:11)

There are numerous examples Biblical patterns of three that relate to our lives. However we are going to limit ourselves to one that succinctly and beautifully sums up the basis of God's plan of how we should walk with Him, how to attain holiness. It's found in one, small, 29 word verse, tucked away in the middle of the last 'Book of Revelation'. Incidentally it's the verse on which Walking With Jesus Ministries is based, defining the pathway leading to holiness.

One day I, in my usual, unusual fashion, was feeling good with myself for nearing my goal of finishing reading the Bible from beginning to end. But the Lord stopped me at Revelation 12:11. He told me to base a ministry upon this verse and went on to explain what it meant. Once I got over the initial shock, I did!

This special verse talks about a particular, some would say, 'peculiar' group of people able to overcome satan, the ultimate fulfilment of holiness. We know from experience that these are not your normal Christian, for our lives surely reflect the obvious - that in most of us, satan has not yet been fully overcome. Yet through these simple 29 words, Jesus reveals how it is to be done.

"They overcame him (i.e. satan. See verse 10) by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death." (Revelation 12:11)

Here we are given a cumulative three-step process as the means by which we can attain holiness. To become fully reconciled with the Father! To become reflections of Jesus! As taught by the Holy Spirit!

What Jesus did 'positionally', spiritually, for us on the cross, we still have to apply 'experientially', practically, to our lives. This dilemma of the

ongoing battle within us between our old earthly and new heavenly natures, is described vividly by the Apostle Paul .

" I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it." (Romans 7:15-20)

So let's now have a look at the 3 steps towards holiness.

THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB (Jesus)

Belief in Jesus, is the first and foundational step in our Christian experience. The words used by John the Baptist in announcing the ministry of Jesus were:

"The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)

And of course we are forgiven through the blood that represents life. His life for our life, as God requires.

"In him we have redemption through his blood (His life), the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding." (Ephesians 1:7-8)

So we take the first step on our walk through believing and personally accepting that Jesus died for us, as 'the blood of the Lamb'. We cannot earn our salvation through living a good life, but are accepted back into relationship with God the Father through the blood of Jesus. Jesus is our one and only 'hope' of salvation.

THE WORD OF OUR TESTIMONY (Holy Spirit)

Receiving forgiveness for our sins though, is just the beginning of our Christian walk. We next have to grow into the likeness of Jesus, not physically, (fortunately ladies!) but spiritually. To help us do this, Jesus promised that the Father would send the Holy Spirit. He arrived 50 days after Jesus rose from the dead, having overcome Satan and sin on our behalf, on the day of the Jewish 'Feast of Weeks', which we call the Day of Pentecost. ('Pente' meaning 50)

"All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you." (John 14:25-26)

The Holy Spirit empowers us to make the necessary adjustments and changes in our lives required to become more and more like Jesus. As Paul said:

"Therefore I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God. I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done — by the power of signs and miracles, through the power of the Spirit." (Romans 15:17-19)

"But how do we relate, 'the word of their testimony' to the Holy Spirit," I can hear you asking? Well, that was my question of the Lord too, when he first stopped me at this verse. And as usual, He had the answer! He took me to Matthew 12:34.

"You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks."

The book of James similarly tells us that *"no man can tame the tongue (3:7)"*. Yes, in the end, no matter how we try to cover things up, when tested, the words we speak reflect our heart attitude. And our heart, the symbolic seat of our emotions or feelings, is the realm of the Holy Spirit. That is why, when we are baptized in or released into the power of the

Holy Spirit, our ability to express our emotions in our worship, in the adoration of our God, increases amazingly.

“so that with one heart and mouth (by the Holy Spirit) you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Romans 15:6)

The power of 3 once again! The Holy Spirit builds the reality of Jesus into our life. He increases our level of 'faith'. I have found this to be reality, when looking at individual Christians and churches. For those empowered by the release of the Holy Spirit, while still having lots of faults, are usually more open to allowing Him to change them, generally showing a greater dedication towards the expansion of God's Kingdom.

OBEDIENCE EVEN UNTO DEATH (The Father)

The ultimate goal of the mature Christian is holiness, becoming like Jesus. The key difference in His life to ours was his 100%, absolute obedience to the will of God the Father - even though it would ultimately cost Him his life. This is perfectly illustrated in the hours before His death.

*“Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, **“Sit here while I go over there and pray.”** He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, **“My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.”** Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, **“My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”**” (Matthew 26:36-39)*

Yes, Jesus was literally prepared to sacrifice His life for the Father's will. So too, we are to deny our own human desires, to do His will. For most of us this, at least until now, has not required literal martyrdom. However, it's equally difficult living a life of total obedience as it is facing death for the cause. So for most of us, the death talked about in this verse is 'death to self.' It is hard and it is painful, but it reaps the richest of rewards.

"Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons.

Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it." (Hebrews 12:7-11)

And confirmed in:

"The mind controlled by the spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. (v16) Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey – whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience which leads to righteousness?"

(Romans 8:6-8,16)

And which forms the basis of the Golden Rule, the 'new commandment' of Jesus.

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these."

Mark 12:30-31.

Yes, the precious ones throughout the ages who have sought holiness, those who have been prepared to commit their all to Jesus by doing the Fathers will as revealed by the Holy Spirit, are those whom truly display God's 'love.' These are the hearts that God truly desires. For 'love' is the greatest of all.

"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." (1 Corinthians 13:13)

Holiness is built upon love. And true love is the sacrifice of self to God's will, serving the needs of others.

SUMMARY:

Holiness cannot be attained in an instant, but grows within us as we truly learn to submit our will to God the Father, as Jesus did. It isn't a matter of following rules, but rather, reflecting Jesus. He sacrificed His life for others while living, and was obedient to His Father, unto death. He overcame satan, and we are to follow experientially in His footsteps. Truly learning to walk in holiness.

THE DREAM - HOLINESS AND FRUIT

Prior to a visit to Africa, the Lord gave me a dream. Must be an old man!

It has remained clearly in my mind, probably because it has been used so often, with moving and profound affect upon the hearers. Please just remember though, that it is only a dream, not theology!

THE DREAM

Two people died and went up to heaven. Upon arrival they knocked at the Pearly Gates. (Definitely not theological!) Saint (servant!) Peter came out and asked, "Why should I let you in?"

The first person was a beautifully dressed pastor, as pastors are wont to be. He said to Peter, "I have led the largest church in town for 20 years. I've seen 10,000 people saved and 20,000 healed. My people loved me and looked up to me as being next to God. I have done so much for God I should be let in."

The second of the two was a cleaning lady. She was dressed in a dirty, blue, shapeless smock. Very shy, she said quietly to Peter when asked why she should be let in, "I haven't done much for God, I'm afraid. Not like the pastor over there. For I haven't had spiritual gifts, like him. But I have cleaned out the church each week - and cleaned the toilets too, for no one else would do them. And, when my neighbour was sick, I would look after her children and take her some meals. Really Peter, I haven't done much for the Lord. But please, please let me in."

Then Peter said a most unusual thing! "Take your clothes off!"

"Pardon?" said the pastor, his sensibilities most offended!

"If you wish," replied the cleaning lady.

"But why?" queried the pastor. "It's simple," stated Peter. "Your clothes represent the Spiritual Gifts given to you for the time you were on earth. Now that you have died, they must be returned to God."

The pastor was very sad about this, for his clothes, his gifts, were very beautiful and precious to him. They were the image he had portrayed to his people over all those 20 years. But reluctantly, he went along with it.

As he took his clothes off, he was found to be fat and flabby underneath. (When travelling, it is amazing how often you can pick out who the pastor is by the size of their stomach!) For the pastor had been relying upon his spiritual gifts to do his work.

Once upon a time he had had a good relationship with Jesus. But as the years went on, he got busier and busier with his people, and would say, "Oh God, I have had such a busy day today. I am too tired to spend time with you. You will understand God, for I work for you all day." God cried. And as time went on, he didn't even bother speaking to God at all, except occasionally, when crying out in a desperate situation. But with his gifts, he was able to resolve the problem without God's intervention.

Because the pastor had the pastoral gift of caring for his flock, he still looked like the perfect 'Christian' to his people. Yet the inside was not at all like the outward appearance.

The cleaning lady on the other hand, was delighted to dispose of her dirty, blue, shapeless smock. For, to her, it was a symbol of being looked down upon by others.

And when she took it off, underneath she had a beautiful, firm and shapely body, for she had been working out in the gymnasium of the Fruit of the Spirit all her life. The dream ended.

A CONFIRMATION

The second country visited, out of nine, was Botswana, in southern Africa. There I stayed with a pastor, Henry by name, and his family. They had a

servant lady dressed in a blue smock, just as I had seen in my dream. I spoke to her and she was quite shy. However, when it was time for her to leave for the day, she took off the smock, and underneath she had on a tight fitting top and blue jeans. She was a beautiful young lady!

A wonderful example of the natural, confirming the spiritual!

APPLICATION

The primary application is found in the theme that is so difficult for us, in our humanness, to understand.

³⁰ *But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.*
(Mathew 19:30)

³⁵ *Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all."* (Mark 9:35)

And in the case of the pastor, it helps explain another difficult passage of scripture.

²¹ *"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'"* (Matthew 7:21-23)

SUMMARY:

True holiness comes, not through the law, but by growing the 'Fruit of the Spirit' in our lives. Developing into the image of Jesus.

²² *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.* (Galatians 5:22-24)

FROM 'FRUITFUL SERVANTHOOD' - TO 'FRUITLESS SELF SERVING' - AND BACK AGAIN

It is no accident that the '*tree of the knowledge of good and evil*' (Genesis 2:17) grew fruit. For fruit represents our character traits - both good and bad.

¹⁵ *“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. ¹⁶ By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them. (Matthew 7:15-20)*

Adam was put in the Garden of Eden to serve God.

¹⁵ *The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; ¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.” (Genesis 2:15-17)*

When Adam and Eve ate of the fruit, they died spiritually and in due course, physically. For up until that moment, they were living in a world without time. A world, in which one would not grow old, where the ravages of age we experience, were absent.

¹⁷ *To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat of it,’ “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. ¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food*

until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.” (Genesis 4:17-19)

But Jesus came to reverse this situation.

⁴⁵ So it is written: “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. (1 Corinthians 15:45)

He came that we might once again serve God by following His example, by returning to servanthood.

²⁵ Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ²⁶ Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— ²⁸ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Matthew 20:25-8)

We do this by producing good fruit in our life, which leads to righteousness (Right living in God's sight).

¹⁷ But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. ¹⁸ Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness. (James 3:17-18)

In turn, this righteousness leads to holiness. (Perfection in God's sight.)

¹⁹ I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness. (Romans 6:19)

SUMMARY

Holiness comes through the development of the Fruit of the Spirit in our lives. Which can be summarised in a single word, 'servanthood'. As Jesus confirmed in the 'Golden Rule.'

²⁸ *One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?”* ²⁹ *“The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.* ³⁰ *Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’* ³¹ *The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” (Mark 12:28-31)*

Holiness personified!

KING DAVID - A PICTURE OF HOLINESS

This revelation blew me away! Not because we share names, but how could a man who was an adulterer, a murderer, and whose family went astray be considered, even for a moment, holy? Yet King David was God's favourite person! The one he called, 'a man after his own heart.' First stated in the Old Testament:

¹⁴ But now your kingdom will not endure; the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the LORD's command." (1 Samuel 13:14)

And confirmed in the New:

²² After removing Saul, he made David their king. He testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.' ²³ "From this man's descendants God has brought to Israel the Savior Jesus, as he promised. (Acts 13:22-3)

David was far from perfect, as we all know. But when he did wrong, as soon as he realized his mistake, he repented and sought God's forgiveness. He understood the deep truth that when he sinned; he was sinning not against man, but against God himself! When Nathan confronted him over his sin with Bathsheba, he confessed:

¹³ Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." (2 Samuel 12:13)

But the primary reason he was so loved by God was that, "*He will do everything I want him to do.*" He was obedient to God's will in his life.

But the young King David was not even considered by the prophet Samuel and his own father, as even being worthy of consideration for kingship!

⁶ When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, “Surely the LORD’s anointed stands here before the LORD.” ⁷ But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.” (1 Samuel 16:6-7)

A small lad, he was a simple shepherd boy.

¹⁰ Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, “The LORD has not chosen these.” ¹¹ So he asked Jesse, “Are these all the sons you have?” “There is still the youngest,” Jesse answered, “but he is tending the sheep.” Samuel said, “Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives.” ¹² So he sent and had him brought in. He was ruddy, with a fine appearance and handsome features. Then the LORD said, “Rise and anoint him; he is the one.” (1 Samuel 16:10-12)

But David had the strength of character and integrity that Saul lacked.

⁹ But an evil spirit from the LORD came upon Saul as he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand. While David was playing the harp, ¹⁰ Saul tried to pin him to the wall with his spear, but David eluded him as Saul drove the spear into the wall. That night David made good his escape. (1 Samuel 19:9-10)

God however saw things in David that the others missed, using him to build the Kingdom of Israel. And to provide, on one occasion, the most perfect picture of human holiness, found in the Bible.

THE PERFECT PICTURE OF HOLINESS

This revelation of the ultimate picture of holiness is of King David taking the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem.

¹² Now King David was told, “The LORD has blessed the household of Obed-Edom and everything he has, because of the ark of God.” So David went down and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to

the City of David with rejoicing. ¹³ When those who were carrying the ark of the LORD had taken six steps, he sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf. (2 Samuel 6:12-13)

David put God first, by returning the Ark to God's holy city of Jerusalem. At the same time, making the sacrifice, symbolizing repentance.

¹⁴ David, wearing a linen ephod, danced before the LORD with all his might, ¹⁵ while he and the entire house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouts and the sound of trumpets. (2 Samuel 6:14-15)

Normally the ephod was fancily embroidered and worn over the tunic and outer garment. It consisted of 2 pieces, hung round the neck, one to the back, the other to the front, joined together over the shoulder by clasps or buckles of gold and precious stones. Also held together at the waist by a "*skillfully woven waistband..... of one piece with the ephod and made with gold, and with blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and with finely twisted linen.*" (Exodus 28:8)

But David wore only a simple, white linen ephod, directly on his body. Linen speaks of righteousness.

⁷ Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. ⁸ Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.) (Revelation 19:7-8)

The fact that David wore it next to his body expresses an attitude of tremendous humility, as commented on by his wife, Michal.

²⁰ When David returned home to bless his household, Michal daughter of Saul came out to meet him and said, "How the king of Israel has distinguished himself today, disrobing in the sight of the slave girls of his servants as any vulgar fellow would!" (2 Samuel 6:20)

Now, that was not the normal way for the king to behave! Or a priest! But David didn't care. For he was 100% 'sold out' to worshipping his God.

He went on to place the Ark in a simple tent, known as David's Tabernacle.

¹⁷ They brought the ark of the LORD and set it in its place inside the tent that David had pitched for it, and David sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before the LORD. (2 Samuel 6:17)

And:

⁴ He appointed some of the Levites to minister before the ark of the LORD, to make petition, to give thanks, and to praise the LORD, the God of Israel: ⁵ Asaph was the chief, Zechariah second, then Jeiel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed-Edom and Jeiel. They were to play the lyres and harps, Asaph was to sound the cymbals, ⁶ and Benaiah and Jahaziel the priests were to blow the trumpets regularly before the ark of the covenant of God. (1 Chronicles 16:4-6)

David was a real worshipper, setting up the world's first 'worship service' in front of the Ark. So, today, we enter into God's presence through worship.

²¹ David said to Michal, "It was before the LORD, who chose me rather than your father or anyone from his house when he appointed me ruler over the LORD's people Israel—I will celebrate before the LORD. ²² I will become even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes. But by these slave girls you spoke of, I will be held in honor." ²³ And Michal daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death. (2 Samuel 6:21-3)

Michal is a picture of the 'religious' person. Her father, King Saul, was the ideal king from a worldly viewpoint. Tall, handsome and intelligent!

² He had a son named Saul, an impressive young man without equal among the Israelites—a head taller than any of the others. (1 Samuel 9:2)

Religious people neither understand nor are tolerant of true holiness. For the 'form' of holiness they display is threatened and shown up for what it truly is by the 'substance' of truly godly righteousness and holiness as displayed by David that day.

SUMMARY

There were at least five aspects of behaviour David displayed that day illustrating a perfect picture of human Holiness.

1. **Obedience to God's will** in taking the Ark to Jerusalem.
2. **Repentance** illustrated through sacrifice.
3. **Righteousness**, symbolized by the wearing of the linen ephod.
4. **Humility**, through discarding his kingly robes.
5. **Complete, sold out, Worship of God** with shouts, dancing and music.

All of which 'religious' people hate - then and now!

CONCLUSION - THE PATTERN OF HOLINESS

I don't pretend to have all the answers. Probably why the Lord is showing me these things. For I still have a lot to learn and even more to apply!

So this isn't an 'A-Z' explanation of the way of holiness.

However, we can see patterns emerging that provide some practical guidelines towards holy living (Listed in alphabetical order).

A PATTERN OF... CHOICE

Not all Christians will desire, nor attain, holiness.

8 Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. (Matthew 13:8)

A PATTERN OF... CHRIST

Transformation into the likeness of Jesus is a common thread throughout.

18 And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:17)

A PATTERN OF... THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Holiness comes not through the Gifts of the Spirit, but in the development of 'character' in our lives. The Fruit of the Spirit characterizes our character!

19 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and

self-control. Against such things there is no law. 24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. 25 Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.
(Galatians 5:19-25)

A PATTERN OF... GOD'S GRACE

It is a gift of grace. Holiness cannot be attained simply through our own effort.

28 He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, 29 so that no one may boast before him. 30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. (1 Corinthians 1:28-30)

A PATTERN OF... THE HEART

It is a matter of heart attitude of submission and obedience, not legal observance. Holiness cannot be found through living by a series of rules.

21 I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!” (Galatians 2:21)

A PATTERN OF... HUMILITY

Of not seeing ourselves as being holier than we really are!

5 Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” 6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. (1 Peter 5:5-6)

A PATTERN OF... OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S WILL

Holiness is as much a matter of what we do - as well as what we don't!

11 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, 12 to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. (Ephesians 4:11-13)

A PATTERN OF... ONGOING REPENTANCE

Until perfection is reached, we must rely upon God's grace and forgiveness to overcome our humanness.

*21 So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. 22 For in my inner being I delight in God's law; 23 but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. 24 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? 25 Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!
(Romans 7:21-4)*

A PATTERN OF... PROGRESSION

Holiness is an ongoing process of getting our lives right (sanctification) with our Lord. It is not instantly attainable.

13 Since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool, 14 because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy. (Hebrews 10:13-14)

A PATTERN OF... RIGHTEOUSNESS

Being 'right' before our God at all times.

*24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.
(1 Peter 2:24)*

A PATTERN OF... SERVANTHOOD

Of placing God's desires and man's needs before our own.

6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, 7 but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. (Philippians 2:6-7)

A PATTERN OF... WORSHIP

Worshipping God with the whole of our being at all times.

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. (Romans 12:1)

Finally, of key importance to all His disciples:

A PATTERN OF... THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

For whom Jesus is returning.

17 The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life..... 20 He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." (Revelation 22:17, 20)

Let's seek it together, shall we!