

The High Calling of God!

Seeking Alignment
With Jesus Christ
and His Holiness



By Rod Handley

Have you ever had someone refer to you as “holy”? One time a person called me a “holy man” and I mumbled in response, “You have no idea how unholy I really am.” Underneath the outward appearance is my soul, which hides the secrets of my heart. When it comes to holiness, I know what I am and the horrible things I’m capable of doing and saying. It’s not a pretty picture, especially when I compare myself to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Jesus Christ. I know I’m a sinner, saved only by God’s grace.

According to Charles Jefferson, “Only Jesus Christ is great enough to hold the title of ‘holiness.’ Holiness cannot be claimed by great artists, poets, philosophers, scientists and politicians.”

By definition, “holiness” means wholeness and full-orbed perfection. A holy man is a man without a fleck or flaw, a character without a blemish or stain. Jesus certainly qualifies as one who is holy. Scripture, however, challenges us to be holy. In 1 Peter 1:16 it says “Be holy, because I am holy.” How can we do that?

Our Role Model

Scripture tells us Jesus was without sin. Not a single thought was stained. Every motive, even his deepest thoughts, were in line with God’s will. Every word and action were absolutely right in God’s sight—including when he drove the merchants out of the temple, and when he cursed the fig tree.

There was nothing in Jesus’ consciousness indicating guilt. No trace anywhere of regret or remorse. Throughout the Gospels, he’s seen as serene, jubilant, confident and free. Sin has a way of casting a heavy shadow over our conscience, but there’s nothing to indicate this was the case with Jesus.

Jefferson says, “Virtually everyone agrees, Jesus was a good man—exceedingly good and beyond this, extraordinarily good. Many admit he was the best man who ever lived. But if you admit this, you have to go a great deal farther. For in the same proportion as his spiritual sense is keen to sin, the consciousness of the sin becomes disturbing and appalling. The higher a man rises in spiritual attainment, the more knowledgeable he is of his sin.”

Isaiah, Job, John, Paul and Peter—each was aware of the sin that resided within his heart. Every human being who has taken a good hard look at his humanness cries out like the Psalmist, “Have mercy upon me, O God...blot out my transgressions...wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin...for my sin is always before me” (Psalm 51:1-3).

Christ’s Impact on Others

Peter was a godly man, a tireless worker for the church, but when it came time to die, he requested to be crucified upside down because, due to his sin, he felt unworthy to die as Jesus did. Paul, too, was distraught by his earlier life in persecuting believers. He identified himself as the “chief of all sinners.”

Jesus was different than these men because he *was* holy. There was never any need for him to be ashamed of his human condition because he was without sin.

The extraordinary effect Jesus had on others confirms his holiness. John the Baptist was initially reluctant to baptize him because Jesus was without sin. Jesus’ reply to him wasn’t, “I’m a sinner, therefore I must be baptized.” No, he said, “It’s proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness” (Matthew 3:15).

Peter was with him day and night, and he says, “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth” (1 Peter

2:22). John says, “in him is no sin” (1 John 3:5). These men were with Jesus. They ate and drank with him, seeing him in all conditions and in various circumstances. They saw him hungry, angry, stern, surprised, disappointed, amazed, yet they testified he committed no sin. In

perfect, but Jesus of Nazareth, the head of the church, is stainless and triumphant. We worship him as God because he is holy and perfect.

Jesus, the Lamb of God, died for us so we might become holy. Colossians 1:22 says, “He has now reconciled [you]

It may seem odd for this term to be used of believers who were struggling with all kinds of sin. When you read Paul’s epistles, he addresses them as saints and then rebukes them for their foolish and sinful behavior. The saints in Scripture were called saints, not because they were already pure, but because they were people who were set apart and called to purity.

“Be holy for I am holy.” This simple command is for everyone who claims to be a Christian. It’s the high calling of God on our lives, enabling us to lead organizations, manage people and conduct our daily affairs with integrity and holiness. It’s recognizing our need to draw close to Jesus Christ for everything, and not putting ourselves in inappropriate situations.

The character quality of holiness can only be attained when we’re in total alignment with the holy one—Jesus Christ. Are you totally aligned with Jesus Christ and his holiness?

This article is part of a series, exploring the character traits of Jesus and applying them to our lives as Christian leaders and managers.

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Hebrews 4, we’re told Jesus was tempted in all ways as we are, yet he was without sin.

The only one who can claim perfection is Jesus Christ. His life was full of suffering and persecution, including a horrible death, yet his soul was radiantly holy. Nothing creates gloom in this world like sin. Even the vilest of sinners knows the war raging deep down in his soul when sin is unchecked. Literally, sin makes our spirit droop and no relief is found in our conscience.

Jesus’ sinlessness explains his joyfulness. We’re drawn to him because of his holiness. His sinlessness gives the Christian church its power. There’s only one perfect person in the church, and it’s Jesus Christ. The church is far from

in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him.” The sinless Christ never turns away from us, no matter how sinful we are. He says, “Come to me.” He is willing to wash away the stain. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, thereby choosing to make us holy.

Struggling Saints

Christians in the early church are often referred to as saints. The word “saint” conjures up images of a super-righteous person—a person of extraordinary piety and spiritual power. Yet in the New Testament, all God’s people are referred to as saints. The word simply means “holy one.”