

Cultivating Holiness: An Antidote for Worldliness

The godly farmer who plows his field, sows seed, fertilizes, and cultivates is acutely aware that, in the final analysis, he is utterly dependent on outside forces for an assured crop. He knows he cannot cause the seed to germinate, the rain to fall, or the sun to shine. But he pursues his task with diligence nonetheless, looking to God for blessing and knowing that if he does not fertilize and cultivate, his crop will be meager at best.

Similarly, the Christian life is like a garden that must be cultivated in order to produce the fruits of holy living unto God. “Theology is the doctrine or teaching of living to God,” wrote William Ames in the opening words of his classic, *The Marrow of Theology*.¹ God Himself exhorts His children, “Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Pet. 1:16). Paul instructs the Thessalonians, “God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness” (1 Thes. 4:7). And the author of Hebrews writes, “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14). The believer who does not diligently cultivate holiness will neither have much genuine assurance of his own salvation nor be obeying Peter’s call to seek it (2 Pet. 1:10).² In this chapter I will focus on the Christian’s scriptural call to cultivate Spirit-worked holiness by diligently using the means God has provided to assist him.

The Call to Cultivate Holiness

Holiness is a noun that relates to the adjective *holy* and the verb *sanctify*, which means to “make holy.”³ In both biblical languages *holy* means separated and set apart for God. For the Christian, to be set apart means, negatively, to be separate from sin, and, positively, to be consecrated (i.e. dedicated) to God and conformed to Christ. There is no disparity

between Old Testament and New Testament concepts of holiness, though there is a change in emphasis on what holiness involves. The Old Testament stresses ritual and moral holiness; the New Testament stresses inward and transforming holiness (Lev. 10:10-11; 19:2; Heb. 10:10; 1 Thes. 5:23).⁴

Scripture presents the essence of holiness primarily in relation to God. The focus of Scripture's sacred realm is God Himself. God's holiness is the very essence of His being (Is. 57:15);⁵ it is the backdrop of all else the Bible declares about God. His justice is holy justice; His wisdom is holy wisdom; His power is holy power; His grace is holy grace. No other attribute of God is celebrated before the throne of heaven as is His holiness: "Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts" (Is. 6:3). "Holy" is prefixed to God's name more than any other attribute.⁶ Isaiah alone calls God the "Holy One" twenty-six times. God's holiness, John Howe wrote, "may be said to be a transcendental attribute that, as it were, runs through the rest, and casts lustre upon them. It is an attribute of attributes,... and so it is the very lustre and glory of His other perfections."⁷ God manifests His majestic holiness in His works (Ps. 145:17), in His law (Ps. 19:8-9), and especially at the cross of Christ (Matt. 27:46). Holiness is His permanent crown, His glory, and His beauty. It is "more than a mere attribute of God," says Jonathan Edwards. "It is the sum of all His attributes, the outshining of all that God is."⁸

God's holiness denotes two critical truths about Himself: first, it denotes the "separateness" of God from all His creation and from all that is unclean or evil. God's holiness testifies of His purity, His absolute moral perfection or excellence, His separateness from all outside of Him and His complete absence of sin (Job 34:10; Is. 5:16; 40:18; Hab. 1:13).⁹

Second, since God is holy and set apart from all sin, sinners cannot approach Him apart from holy sacrifice (Lev. 17:11; Heb. 9:22). He cannot be the Holy One and remain indifferent to sin (Jer. 44:4); He must punish it (Ex. 34:6-7). Since all mankind are sinners through both our tragic fall in Adam and our daily transgressions, God can never be appeased by our efforts. We creatures, once made after the image of our holy Creator, voluntarily chose in our covenant-head Adam to become unholy and unacceptable in the sight of our Creator. Atoning blood must be shed if remission of sin is to be granted (Heb. 9:22). Only by the perfect, atoning obedience of a sufficient Mediator, the God-man Mediator Christ Jesus, can fulfill the demands of God's holiness on behalf of sinners (1 Tim. 2:5). And blessed be God, Christ agreed to accomplish that atonement by the initiation of His Father and accomplished it with His full approbation (Ps. 40:7-8; Mark 15:37-39). "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21). As the Dutch Reformed Lord's Supper Form states, "The wrath of God against sin is so great, that (rather than it should go unpunished) He hath punished the same in His beloved Son Jesus Christ with the bitter and shameful death of the cross."¹⁰

By free grace, God regenerates sinners and causes them to believe in Christ alone as their righteousness and salvation. Those of us who are among these blessed believers are also made partakers of Christ's holiness by means of divine discipline (Heb. 12:10). As Christ's disciples, we are called by God to be more holy than we shall ever become by ourselves during this life (1 John 1:10).¹¹ He calls us to separate from sin and to consecrate and assimilate ourselves to Himself out of gratitude for His great salvation. These concepts—separation from sin, consecration to God, and conformity to Christ—

make holiness comprehensive. Everything, Paul tells us in 1 Timothy 4:4-5, is to be sanctified, that is, made holy.

In the first place, personal holiness demands total consecration. God never calls us to give Him only a piece of our hearts. The call to holiness is a call for our entire heart: “My son, give me thine heart” (Prov. 23:26).

Second, holiness of heart must be cultivated in every sphere of life: in privacy with God, in the confidentiality of our homes, in the competitiveness of our occupation, in the pleasures of social friendship, in relation with our unevangelized neighbors and the world’s hungry and unemployed, as well as in Sunday worship. Horatius Bonar writes:

Holiness...extends to every part of our persons, fills up our being, spreads over our life, influences everything we are, or do, or think, or speak, or plan, small or great, outward or inward, negative or positive, our loving, our hating, our sorrowing, our rejoicing, our recreations, our business, our friendships, our relationships, our silence, our speech, our reading, our writing, our going out and our coming in—our whole man in every movement of spirit, soul, and body.¹²

The call to holiness is a daily task and an absolute, radical call, involving the core of religious faith and practice. John Calvin put it this way: “Because they have been called to holiness, the entire life of all Christians must be an exercise in piety.”¹³ In short, holiness is the commitment of a whole life to live “God-ward” (2 Cor. 3:4), to be set apart to the lordship of Jesus Christ.

Thus, holiness must be inward, filling our entire heart, and outward, covering all of life. “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thes. 5:23). “Holiness,” Thomas Boston maintained, “is a constellation of graces.”¹⁴ In gratitude to God, a believer cultivates the fruits of holiness, such as meekness, gentleness, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, mercy, contentment, gratitude, purity of

heart, faithfulness, the fear of God, humility, spiritual-mindedness, self-control, and self-denial (Gal. 5:22-23).¹⁵

This call to holiness is not a call to merit acceptance with God. The New Testament declares that every believer is sanctified by the sacrifice of Christ: “By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Heb. 10:10). Christ is our sanctification (1 Cor. 1:30); therefore, the church, as the bride of Christ, is sanctified (Eph. 5:25-26). The believer’s *status* before God is one of sanctity in Christ, on account of His perfect obedience which has fully satisfied the justice of God for all sin.

The believer’s status, however, does not infer that he has arrived at a wholly sanctified *condition* (1 Cor. 1:2). Several attempts have been made to express the relationship between the believer’s status and his condition before God, foremost among them being Luther’s well-known *simul justus et peccator* (“at once righteous and a sinner”). That is to say, the believer is both righteous in God’s sight because of Christ and remains a sinner as measured according to his own merits.¹⁶ Though from the onset of Christian experience (which coincides with regeneration), the believer’s status makes an impact on his condition, he is never in a perfectly sanctified condition in this life. Paul prays that the Thessalonians may be sanctified wholly, something that still had to be accomplished (1 Thes. 5:23). Sanctification received is sanctification well and truly begun, though not yet perfected.

This explains the New Testament’s emphasis on holiness as something to be cultivated and pursued. New Testament language stresses vital, progressive

sanctification. The believer must strive for sanctity, for holiness (Heb. 12:14). Growth in holiness must and will follow regeneration (Eph. 1:4; Phil. 3:12).

Thus, true believer, you are holy before God in Christ, and yet you must cultivate holiness in the strength of Christ. Your status in holiness is conferred; your condition in holiness must be pursued. Through Christ you are made holy in your standing before God, and through Him you are called to reflect that standing by being holy in daily life. Your context of holiness is justification through Christ; your route of holiness is to be crucified and resurrected with Him, which involves the continual “mortification of the old, and the quickening of the new man” (*Heidelberg Catechism*, Question 88). You are called to be in life what you already are in principle by grace.

The Cultivation of Holiness

Concretely, then, what must you cultivate? Three things.

1. *Imitation of the character of the Jehovah.* God says, “Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Pet. 1:16). The holiness of God Himself ought to be your foremost stimulus to cultivate holy living. Seek to be like your Heavenly Father in righteousness, holiness, and integrity. In the Spirit, strive to think God’s thoughts via His Word, to be of one mind with Him, and to live and act as God Himself would have you do.¹⁷ As Stephen Charnock concludes: “This is the prime way of honouring God. We do not so glorify God by elevated admirations, or eloquent expressions, or pompous services for him, as when we aspire to a conversing with him with unstained spirits, and live *to* him in living *like* him.”¹⁸

2. *Conformity to the image of Christ.* This is a favorite Pauline theme, of which one example must suffice: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who...made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant,...and...humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:5-8). Christ was humble, willing to give up His rights in order to obey God and serve sinners. If you would be holy, Paul is saying, be like-minded.

Do not aim for conformity to Christ as a condition of salvation, however, but, rather, as a fruit of salvation received by faith. We must look to Christ for holiness, for He is the fount and path of holiness. Seek no other path. Follow the advice of Augustine who contended that it is better to limp on the path than to run outside of it.¹⁹ Do as Calvin taught: Set Christ before you as the mirror of sanctification, and seek grace to mirror Him in His image.²⁰ Ask in each situation encountered: “What would Christ think, say, and do?” Then trust Him for holiness. He will not disappoint you (James 1:2-7).

There is unending room for growth in holiness because Jesus is the bottomless well of salvation. You cannot go to Him too often for holiness, for He is holiness *par excellence*. He lived holiness; He merited holiness; He sends His Spirit to apply holiness. “Christ is all, and in all” (Col. 3:11)—holiness inclusive. As Luther profoundly set forth, “We in Christ = justification; Christ in us = sanctification.”²¹

3. *Submission to the mind of the Holy Spirit.* In Romans 8:6, Paul divides people into two categories—those who let themselves be controlled by their sinful natures (i.e. the carnally minded who follow fleshly desires) and those who follow after the Spirit (i.e. those who *mind* “the things of the Spirit,” Rom. 8:5).

The Holy Spirit was sent to bring the believer's mind into submission to His mind (1 Cor. 2). He was given to make sinners holy; the most holy increasingly bow as willing servants under His control. Let us beg for grace to be willing servants more fully and more consistently.

How does the Spirit work this holy grace of submission to His mind, thereby making us holy?

- He shows us our need for holiness through conviction of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8).
- He implants the desire for holiness. His saving work never leads to despair but always to sanctification in Christ.
- He grants Christ-likeness in holiness. He works upon our whole nature, molding us after Christ's image.
- He provides strength to live a holy life by indwelling and influencing our soul. If we live by the Spirit, we will not gratify the desires of our sinful nature (Gal. 5:16); rather, we will live in obedience to and dependence on that Spirit.
- Through humble feeding on Scripture and the exercise of prayer, the Spirit teaches us His mind and establishes an ongoing realization that holiness remains essential to being worthy of God and His kingdom (1 Thes. 2:12; Eph. 4:1) and for fitness in His service (1 Cor. 9:24-25; Phil. 3:13).

Ephesians 5:18 says, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." Thomas Watson writes: "The Spirit stamps the impression of his own

sanctity upon the heart, as the seal prints its likeness upon the wax. The Spirit of God in a man perfumes him with holiness, and makes his heart a map of heaven.”²²

How to Cultivate Holiness

That believers are called to holiness is indisputably clear. But the cardinal question remains: How does the believer cultivate holiness? Here are seven directions to assist us.

1. *Know and love Scripture.* This is God’s primary road to holiness and to spiritual growth—the Spirit as Master Teacher blessing the reading and searching of God’s Word. Jesus prayed, “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:17). And Peter advised, “Desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (1 Pet. 2:2).

If you would not remain spiritually ignorant and impoverished, read through the Bible at least annually. Even more importantly, memorize the Scriptures (Ps. 119:11), search (John 5:39) and meditate upon them (Ps. 1:2), live and love them (Ps. 119; 19:10). Compare Scripture with Scripture; take time to study the Word. Proverbs 2:1-5 sets before us the following principles involved in serious personal Bible study: teachability (receiving God’s words), obedience (storing God’s commandments), discipline (applying the heart), dependence (crying for knowledge), and perseverance (searching for hidden treasure).²³ Do not expect growth in holiness if you spend little time alone with God and do not take His Word seriously. When plagued with a heart prone to be tempted away from holiness, let Scripture teach you how to live a holy life in an unholy world.

Develop a scriptural formula for holy living. Here is one possibility drawn from 1 Corinthians. When hesitant over a course of action, ask yourself:

- Does this glorify God? (1 Cor. 10:31)
- Is this consistent with the lordship of Christ? (1 Cor. 7:23)
- Is this consistent with biblical examples? (1 Cor. 11:1)
- Is this lawful and beneficial for me—spiritually, mentally, physically? (1 Cor. 6:9-12)
- Does this help others positively and not hurt others unnecessarily? (1 Cor. 10:33; 8:13)
- Does this bring me under any enslaving power? (1 Cor. 6:12)

Let Scripture be your compass to guide you in cultivating holiness, in making life's decisions, and in encountering the high waves of personal affliction.

2. Use the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper diligently as means of grace to strengthen your faith in Christ. God's sacraments complement His Word. They point us away from ourselves. Each sign—the water, the bread, the wine—directs us to believe in Christ and His sacrifice on the cross. The sacraments are visible means through which He invisibly communes with us and we with Him. They are spurs to Christlikeness and therefore to holiness.

The grace received through the sacraments is not different from that received through the Word. Both convey the same Christ. But as Robert Bruce put it, "While we do not get a better Christ in the sacraments than we do in the Word, there are times when we get Christ better."²⁴

Flee often to Christ by Word and sacrament. Faith in Christ is a powerful motivator for holiness, since faith and the love of sin cannot mix. Be careful, however, not to seek your holiness in your experiences of Christ, but in Christ *Himself*. As William

Gurnall admonishes: “When thou trustest in Christ *within* thee, instead of Christ *without* thee, thou settest Christ against Christ. The bride does well to esteem her husband’s picture, but it were ridiculous if she should love it better than himself, much more if she should go to it *rather than to him to supply her wants*. Yet thou actest thus when thou art more fond of Christ’s image in thy soul than of him who painted it there.”²⁵

3. *Regard yourself as dead to the dominion of sin and as alive to God in Christ* (Rom. 6:11). “To realize this,” writes Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, “takes away from us that old sense of hopelessness which we have all known and felt because of the terrible power of sin.... I can say to myself that not only am I no longer under the dominion of sin, but I am under the dominion of another power that nothing can frustrate.”²⁶ That is not to imply that because sin no longer reigns over us as believers, we have license to forego our duty to fight against sin. Bridges rightly admonishes us, “To confuse the *potential* for resisting sin (which God provided) with the *responsibility* for resisting (which is ours) is to court disaster in our pursuit of holiness.”²⁷ Westminster’s *Shorter Catechism* balances God’s gift and our responsibility when stating, “Sanctification is the work of God’s free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness” (Question 35).

Seek to cultivate a growing hatred of sin *as sin*, for that is the kind of hatred against sin that God possesses. Recognize that God is worthy of obedience not only as the Judge, but especially as a loving Father. Say with Joseph in temptation, “How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” (Gen. 39:9).

Look for heart-idols. Pray for strength to uproot them and cast them out. Attack all sin, all unrighteousness, and all devices of Satan.

Strive for daily repentance before God. Never rise above the publican's petition, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13). Remember Luther's advice that God would have His people exercise "lifelong repentance."

Believe that Christ is mighty to preserve you alive by His Spirit. You live through union with Christ, therefore live unto His righteousness. His righteousness is greater than your unrighteousness. His power to save is greater than your sinfulness. His Spirit is within you: "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4). Do not despair: you are strong in Him, alive in Him, and victorious in Him. Satan may win many skirmishes, but the war is yours, the victory is yours (1 Cor. 15:57; Rom. 8:37). In Christ, the optimism of divine grace reigns over the pessimism of human nature.

4. *Pray and work in dependence upon God for holiness.* No one but God is sufficient to bring a clean thing out of an unclean (Job 14:4). Hence, pray with David, "Create in me a clean heart, O God" (Ps. 51:10). And as you pray, work.

The Heidelberg Catechism (Question 116) points out that prayer and work belong together. They are like two oars, which, when both utilized, will keep a rowboat moving forward. If you use only one oar—if you pray without working or you work without praying—you will row in circles.

Holiness and prayer have much in common. Both are central to the Christian life and faith; they are obligatory, not optional. Both originate with God and focus upon Him. Both are activated, often simultaneously, by the Spirit of God. Neither can survive without the other. Both are learned by experience and through spiritual battles.²⁸ Neither is perfected in this life, but must be cultivated lifelong; they are easier to talk and write

about than to exercise. The most prayerful often feel themselves to be prayerless; the most holy often regard themselves as unholy.

Holiness and work are also closely related, especially the work of nurturing and persevering in *personal discipline*. Discipline takes time and effort. Paul exhorted Timothy, “Exercise thyself rather unto godliness” (1 Tim. 4:7). Holiness is not achieved sloppily or instantaneously.²⁹ Holiness is a call to a disciplined life; it cannot live out of what Dietrich Bonhoeffer called *cheap grace*—that is, grace which forgives without demanding repentance and obedience. Holiness is *costly grace*—grace that cost God the blood of His Son, cost the Son His own life, and costs the believer daily mortification so that, like Paul, he dies daily (1 Cor. 15:31).³⁰ Gracious holiness calls for continual commitment, continual diligence, continual practice, and continual repentance.³¹ “If we sometimes through weakness fall into sin, we must not therefore despair of God’s mercy, nor continue in sin, since... we have an eternal covenant of grace with God” (*Baptism Form*).³² Rather, resolve with Jonathan Edwards: “Never to give over, nor in the least to slacken, my fight with my corruptions, however unsuccessful I may be.”³³

These two things, *fighting against sin* and *lack of success*, appear contradictory but are not. Failing and becoming a failure are two different matters. The believer recognizes he will often fail. Luther said that the righteous man feels more often like “a loser than a victor” in the struggle against sin, “for the Lord lets him be tested and assailed to his utmost limits as gold is tested in a furnace.”³⁴ This too is an important component of discipleship. Nevertheless, the godly man will persevere even through his failures. Failure does not make him quit; it makes him repent all the more earnestly and press on in the Spirit’s strength. “For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again:

but the wicked shall fall into mischief” (Prov. 24:16). As John Owen wrote, “God works in us and with us, not against us or without us; so that his assistance is an encouragement as to the facilitating of the work, and no occasion of neglect as to the work itself.”³⁵

Let us never forget that the God we love, loves holiness. Hence the intensity of His fatherly, chastising discipline (Heb. 12:5-6, 10)! Perhaps William Gurnall says it best: “God would not rub so hard if it were not to fetch out the dirt that is ingrained in our natures. God loves purity so well He had rather see a hole than a spot in his child’s garments.”³⁶

5. *Flee worldliness.* We must strike out against the first appearance of the pride of life, the lusts of the flesh and eye, and all forms of sinful worldliness as they knock on the door of our hearts and minds. If we open the door and allow them to roam about in our minds and take foothold in our lives, we are already their prey. “Daniel purposed *in his heart* that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s meat, nor with the wine which he drank: *therefore* he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself” (Dan. 1:8; emphasis added). The material we read, the recreation and entertainment we engage in, the music we listen to, the friendships we form, and the conversations we have all affect our minds and ought to be judged in the context of Philippians 4:8: Whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report, “think on these things.” We must live *above* the world and not be *of* the world while yet *in* the world (Rom. 12:1-2).

6. *Seek fellowship in the church; associate with mentors in holiness* (Eph. 4:12-13; 1 Cor. 11:1).³⁷ The church ought to be a fellowship of mutual care and a community of prayer (1 Cor. 12:7; Acts 2:42). Converse and pray with fellow believers whose godly

walk you admire (Col. 3:16). “He that walketh with the wise shall be wise” (Prov. 13:20). Association promotes assimilation. A Christian life lived in isolation from other believers will be defective; usually such a believer will remain spiritually immature.

Such conversation, however, ought not exclude the reading of godly treatises of former ages which promote holiness. Luther said that some of his best friends were dead ones. For example, he questioned if anyone could possess spiritual life who did not feel kinship with David pouring out his heart in the psalms. Read classics that speak out vehemently against sin. Let Thomas Watson be your mentor in *The Mischief of Sin*; John Owen, in *Temptation and Sin*; Jeremiah Burroughs, in *The Evil of Evils*; Ralph Venning, in *The Plague of Plagues*.³⁸ But also read J. C. Ryle’s *Holiness*, Octavius Winslow’s *Personal Declension and Revival of Religion in the Soul*, and John Flavel’s *Keeping the Heart*.³⁹ Let these divines of former ages become your spiritual mentors and friends.

7. *Live present-tense, total commitment to God.* Form habits of holiness. Pursue harmony and symmetry in holy living. By the grace of the Spirit, root out all inconsistencies and enjoy godly activities. Be committed to not being sullied by this world’s temptations and to remain clean by forgiveness from and consecration to your perfect Savior.

Don’t fall prey to the “one-more-time” syndrome. Postponed obedience is disobedience. Tomorrow’s holiness is impurity *now*. Tomorrow’s faith is unbelief *now*. Aim to not sin at all (1 John 2:1); ask for divine strength to bring every thought into captivity to Christ (2 Cor. 10:5), for Scripture indicates that our “thought-lives” ultimately determine our character: “For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Prov. 23:7a). An old proverb says it this way:

Sow a thought, reap an act;
Sow an act, reap a habit;
Sow a habit, reap a character.

Encouragements for Cultivating Holiness

The cultivation of holiness is demanding. Thomas Watson called it “sweating work.” Happily, God provides us with several motivations to holiness in His Word. To encourage us in the pursuit of holiness, we need to keep our eyes focused on the following biblical truths.

1. *God has called you to holiness for your good and His glory.* “For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness” (1 Thes. 4:7). Whatever God calls us to is necessary. His call itself, as well as the benefits which we experience from holy living as described below, should induce us to seek and practice holiness.

Holiness augments our spiritual well-being. God assures us that “no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly” (Ps. 84:11). “What health is to the heart,” John Flavel noted, “that holiness is to the soul.”⁴⁰ In Richard Baxter’s scarce work on holiness, the very chapter titles are enlightening: “Holiness is the only way of safety. Holiness is the only honest way. Holiness is the most gainful way. Holiness is the most honourable way. Holiness is the most pleasant way.”⁴¹

But most importantly, holiness glorifies the God you love (Is. 43:21). As Thomas Brooks affirmed, “Holiness makes most for God’s honour.”⁴²

2. *Holiness makes you resemble God and preserves your integrity.* Watson wrote: “We must endeavour to be like God in sanctity. It is a clear glass in which we can see a

face; it is a holy heart in which something of God can be seen.”⁴³ Christ serves here as a pattern of holiness for us—a pattern of holy humility (Phil. 2:5-13), holy compassion (Mark 1:41), holy forgiveness (Col. 3:13), holy unselfishness (Rom. 15:3), holy indignation against sin (Matt. 23), and holy prayer (Heb. 5:7). Holiness cultivated, to resemble God and be patterned after Christ, saves us from much hypocrisy and from resorting to a “Sunday only” Christianity. It gives vitality, purpose, meaning, and direction to daily living.

3. *Holiness gives evidence of your justification and election, and fosters assurance.* Sanctification is the inevitable fruit of justification (1 Cor. 6:11). The two may be distinguished, but never separated; God Himself has married them. Justification is organically linked to sanctification; new birth infallibly issues in new life. The justified will walk in “the King’s highway of holiness.”⁴⁴ In and through Christ, justification gives God’s child the *title* for heaven and the boldness to enter; sanctification gives him the *fitness* for heaven and the preparation necessary to enjoy it. Sanctification is the personal appropriation of the fruits of justification. B. B. Warfield notes, “Sanctification is but the execution of the justifying decree. For it to fail would be for the acquitted person not to be released in accordance with his acquittal.”⁴⁵ Consequently, the justifying decree of Christ in John 8, “Neither do I condemn thee,” is immediately followed by the call to holiness, “Go, and sin no more” (v. 8:11).

Election is also inseparable from holiness: “God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit” (2 Thes. 2:13). Sanctification is the earmark of Christ’s elect sheep. That is why election is always a comforting doctrine for the believer, for it is the sure foundation that explains the grace of God working within

him. No wonder our Reformed forebearers deemed election to be one of the believer's greatest comforts.⁴⁶

Calvin insisted that election should discourage none, for the believer receives comfort from it and the unbeliever is not called to consider it—rather, he is called to repentance. Whoever is discouraged by election or relies upon it without living a holy life is falling prey to a satanic misuse of this precious, encouraging doctrine (cf. Deut. 29:29). As Ryle asserts, “It is not given to us in this world to study the pages of the book of life, and see if our names are there. But if there is one thing clearly and plainly laid down about election, it is this—that elect men and women may be known and distinguished by holy lives.”⁴⁷ Holiness is the visible side of their salvation. “Ye shall *know* them by their fruits” (Matt. 7:16).

Consequently, holiness fosters assurance (1 John 2:3; 3:19). “Everyone may be assured in himself of his faith by the fruits thereof” (*Heidelberg Catechism*, Question 86). Reformed divines agree that most of the forms and degrees of assurance experienced by true believers—especially daily assurance—are reached gradually in the path of sanctification through careful cultivation of God's Word, the means of grace, and corresponding obedience.⁴⁸ An increasing hatred of sin, by means of mortification, and a growing love for obeying God by means of vivification, accompany the progress of faith as it grows into assurance. Christ-centered, Spirit-worked holiness is the best and most sound evidence of divine sonship (Rom. 8:1-16).

The way to lose a daily sense of assurance is to forego the daily pursuit of holiness. Some believers live too carelessly. They treat sin lightly or neglect daily devotions and study of the Word. Others live too inactively. They do not cultivate

holiness, but assume the posture that nothing can be done to foster sanctification, as if holiness were something *outside* of us except on rare occasions when something very special “happens” *inside*. To live carelessly or inactively is to ask for daily spiritual darkness, deadness, and fruitlessness.

4. *As a believer, holiness alone can purify you.* Conversely, “unto them that are defiled is nothing pure” (Titus 1:15). Holiness cannot be exercised where the heart has not been fundamentally transformed through divine regeneration. Through the new birth, Satan is deposed, the law of God is written upon the heart of the believer, Christ is crowned Lord and King, and the believer made “willing and ready, henceforth, to live unto Him” (*Heidelberg Catechism*, Question 1). Christ in us (*Christus in nobis*) is an essential complement to Christ for us (*Christus pro nobis*).⁴⁹ The Spirit of God not only teaches the believer what Christ has done, but actualizes the holiness and work of Christ in his personal life. Through Christ, God sanctifies His child and makes his prayers and thanksgivings acceptable. As Thomas Watson said: “A holy heart is the altar which sanctifies the offering; if not to satisfaction, to acceptance.”⁵⁰

5. *Holiness is essential for your effective service to God.* Paul joins sanctification and usefulness together: “If a man therefore purge himself, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work” (2 Tim. 2:21). God uses holiness to assist the preaching of the gospel and to build up the credit of the Christian faith, which is dishonored by the carelessness of Christians and hypocrites who often serve as Satan’s best allies.⁵¹ Our lives are always doing good or harm; they are an open epistle for all to read (2 Cor. 3:2). Holy living preaches reality. It influences and impresses like nothing else can; no argument can match it. It displays the

beauty of religion; it gives credibility to witness and to evangelism (Phil. 2:15).⁵²

“Holiness,” writes Hugh Morgan, “is the most effective way of influencing unconverted people and creating within them a willingness to listen to the preaching of the gospel” (Matt. 5:16; 1 Pet. 3:1-2).⁵³

Holiness manifests itself in humility and reverence for God. Such are those whom God looks to and uses (Is. 66:2). As Andrew Murray notes:

The great test of whether the holiness we profess to seek or to attain is truth and life will be *whether it be manifest in the increasing humility it produces*. In the creature, humility is the one thing needed to allow God’s holiness to dwell in him and shine through him. In Jesus, the holy one of God who makes us holy, a divine humility was the secret of his life and his death and his exaltation; the one infallible test of our holiness will be the humility before God and men which marks us. Humility is the bloom and the beauty of holiness.⁵⁴

6. *Holiness fits you for heaven* (Rev. 21:27). Hebrews 12:14 says, “Follow [literally: *pursue*]. . . holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.” As John Owen wrote:

There is no imagination wherewith man is besotted, more foolish, none so pernicious, as this—that persons not purified, not sanctified, not made holy in their life, should afterwards be taken into that state of blessedness which consists in the enjoyment of God. Neither can such persons enjoy God, nor would God be a reward to them. Holiness indeed is perfected in heaven: but the beginning of it is invariably confined to this world. God leads none to heaven but whom He sanctifies on the earth. This living Head will not admit of dead members.⁵⁵

Obstacles to Cultivating Holiness

The cultivation of holiness will inevitably meet with numerous obstacles. Much impedes holiness. Five common problems against which we need to be on guard are these:

1. Our attitude to sin and life itself is prone to be *more self-centered than God-centered*. We are often more concerned about the consequences of sin or victory over sin

than about how our sins grieve God. The cultivation of holiness necessitates hating sin as God hates sin. Holiness is not merely loving God and our neighbor; it also involves hatred. The hatred of sin is elemental to holiness. Those who love God hate sin (Prov. 8:36). We must cultivate an attitude that views sin as always being preeminently against God (Ps. 51:4).⁵⁶

Low and distorted views of sin reap low and distorted views of holiness. “Wrong views about holiness are generally traceable to wrong views about human corruption,” J. C. Ryle asserted. “If a man does not realize the dangerous nature of his soul’s diseases, you cannot wonder if he is content with false or imperfect remedies.”⁵⁷ Cultivating holiness demands a rejection of the pride of life and the lusts of the flesh as well as the prayer, “Give me the single eye, Thy Name to glorify” (Psalter 236, stanza 2).

We fail when we do not live with our priorities consciously centered on God’s Word, will, and glory. In the words of the Scottish theologian, John Brown, “Holiness does not consist in mystic speculations, enthusiastic fervours, or uncommanded austerities; it consists in thinking as God thinks, and willing as God wills.”⁵⁸

2. Our progress is hindered when we misunderstand “living by faith” (Gal. 2:20) to imply that *no effort towards holiness is commanded of us*. Sometimes we are even prone to consider human effort sinful or “fleshly.” Bishop Ryle provides us with a corrective here:

Is it wise to proclaim in so bald, naked, and unqualified a way as many do, that the holiness of converted people is by faith only, and not at all by personal exertion? Is this according to the proportion of God’s Word? I doubt it. That faith in Christ is the root of all holiness no well-instructed Christian will ever think of denying. But surely the Scriptures teach us that in following holiness the true Christian needs personal exertion and work as well as faith.⁵⁹

We are responsible for holiness. Whose fault is it but our own if we are not holy? As Ralph Erskine counsels, we need to implement the *fight-or-flight* attitude with regard to sinful temptations. Sometimes we simply need to heed Peter's plain injunction, "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Pet. 2:11). *Abstain*—often it is that simple.

If you have put off the old man and put on the new (Eph. 4:22-32), live accordingly (Col. 3:9-10). Mortify your members (i.e., unholy habits) and seek those things which are above (Col. 3:1-5)—not as a form of legalism, but as a repercussion of divine blessing (Col. 2:9-23).⁶⁰ Make a covenant with your eyes and feet and hands to turn from iniquity (Job 31:1). Look the other way; walk the other way. Put away uncontrolled anger, gossip, and bitterness. Put sin to death (Rom. 8:13) by the blood of Christ. "Set faith at work on Christ for the killing of thy sin," wrote Owen, "and thou wilt... live to see thy lust dead at thy feet."⁶¹

3. On the other hand, we fail miserably when we *take pride in our holiness and think that our exertions can somehow produce holiness* apart from faith. From beginning to end holiness is the work of God and His free grace (*Westminster Confession of Faith*, Chapter 13). As Richard Sibbes maintained, "By grace we are what we are in justification, and work what we work in sanctification."⁶² Holiness is not partially God's work and partially our work. Holiness manufactured by our heart is not holiness after God's heart. All working out of the Christian life on our part is the fruit of God working in us and through us: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:12-13). "The regenerate have a spiritual nature within that fits them for holy action, otherwise there

would be no difference between them and the unregenerate,” wrote A.W. Pink.⁶³ Nevertheless, self-sanctification, strictly speaking, is non-existent.⁶⁴ “We do good works, but not to merit by them (for what can we merit?), nay, we are beholden to God for the good works we do, and not He to us” (*Belgic Confession of Faith*, Article 24). As Calvin explained, “Holiness is not a merit by which we can attain communion with God, but a gift of Christ which enables us to cling to him and to follow him.”⁶⁵ John Murray put it this way: “God’s working in us is not suspended because we work, nor our working suspended because God works. Neither is the relation strictly one of cooperation as if God did his part and we did ours.... God works in us and we also work. But the relation is that *because* God works we work.”⁶⁶

*And every virtue we possess,
And every conquest won,
And every thought of holiness,
Are His alone.*

Kenneth Prior warns: “There is a subtle danger of speaking of sanctification as essentially coming from our own effort or initiative. We can unconsciously do this even while acknowledging our need for the power of the Holy Spirit, by making the operation of that power dependent upon our surrender and consecration.”⁶⁷

Our dependence on God for holiness ought to humble us. Holiness and humility are inseparable.⁶⁸ One of the most common traits they share is that neither one recognizes itself. The most holy complain of their impurity; the most humble, of their pride. Those of us called to be teachers and examples of holiness must beware of subtle and insidious pride working its way into our supposed holiness.

Holiness is greatly impeded by any number of wrong views of holiness in its relation to humility; for example:

- As soon as we think, speak, or act as if our own holiness will somehow suffice without being clothed with Christ’s humility, we are already enveloped in spiritual pride.

- When we begin to feel complacent about our holiness, we are far from both holiness and humility.
- When self-abasement is lacking, holiness is lacking.
- When self-abasement does not make us to flee to Christ and His holiness for refuge, holiness is lacking.
- Without a life dependent on Christ, we shall possess no holiness.

4. *Embracing unscriptural, erroneous views about holiness* can greatly impede our holiness. The need to experience “the second blessing,” or various charismatic gifts such as speaking in tongues or faith healing, an earnest search for our own special gift of the Spirit, and the acceptance of Jesus as Savior but not as Lord—these are but a few of many erroneous interpretations of Scripture that can skew a proper understanding of holiness in our personal lives. Though addressing these issues lies beyond the scope of this chapter, allow me to quote three summary statements. Concerning the first error mentioned above, it is not just *the* second blessing that the believer needs, but he needs *a* second blessing, as well as a third and fourth and fifth—yes, he needs the continual blessing of the Holy Spirit in order to progress in holiness so that Christ may increase and he may decrease (John 3:30). Concerning the second error mentioned above, John Stott wisely comments that “when Paul wrote to the Corinthians that they were not lacking in spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 1:7), he makes it clear that the evidence of the Spirit’s fullness is not the exercise of His gifts (of which they had plenty), but the ripening of His fruit (of which they had little).”⁶⁹ And with regard to the third error of separating the Savior from His lordship, the Heidelberg Catechism provides a summary corrective in Question 30: “One of these two things must be true, that either Jesus is not a complete Savior or that they, who by a true faith receive this Savior, must find all things in Him necessary to their salvation.”

5. We are prone to shirk *the battle of daily spiritual warfare*. No one likes war. The believer is often blind to his own real enemies—to a subtle Satan, to a tempting world, and especially to the reality of his own ongoing pollution which Paul so poignantly expresses in Romans 7:14-25. To be holy among the holy takes grace; to be holy among the unholy is great grace. Maintaining personal holiness in an unholy world with a heart prone to backslide necessitates a perpetual fight. It will involve conflict, holy warfare, struggle against Satan, a battle between the flesh and the spirit (Gal. 5:17). A believer not only has peace of conscience, but also war within (Rom. 7:24 to 8:1). As Samuel Rutherford asserts, “The devil’s war is better than the devil’s peace.”⁷⁰ Hence the remedies of Christ’s holiness (Heb. 7:25-28) and of His Spirit-supplied Christian armor (Eph. 6:10-20) are ignored at our peril. True holiness must be pursued against the backdrop of an acute awareness of the indwelling sin that continues to live in our hearts and to deceive our understanding. The holy man, unlike others, is never at peace with indwelling sin. Though he may backslide far, he will again be humbled and ashamed because of his sin.

The Joy of Holiness Cultivated

A holy life ought to be one of joy in the Lord, not negative drudgery (Neh. 8:10). The idea that holiness requires a gloomy disposition is a tragic distortion of Scripture. On the contrary, Scripture asserts that those who cultivate holiness experience true joy. Jesus said, “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you that your joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full” (John 15:10-11). Those

who are obedient—who are pursuing holiness as a way of life—will know that the joy which flows from communion with God is a supreme joy, an ongoing joy, and an anticipated joy.

1. *The supreme joy: fellowship with God.* No greater joy can be had than that of communion with God. “In thy presence is fulness of joy” (Ps. 16:10). True joy springs from God as we are enabled to walk in fellowship with Him. When we break our fellowship with God by sin, we need to return, like David, with penitential prayer to Him: “Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation” (Ps. 51:12). The words Jesus spoke to the thief on the cross represent the chief delight of every child of God: “Today shalt thou be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:43).

2. *The ongoing joy: abiding assurance.* True holiness obeys God, and obedience always trusts God. It believes, “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God” (Rom. 8:28)—even when it cannot be seen. Like faithful workers on a Persian carpet, who blindly hand up all colors of strand to the overseer working out the pattern above them, God’s intimate saints are those who hand Him even the black strands He calls for, knowing that His pattern will be perfect from above, notwithstanding the gnarled mess underneath. Do you know this profound, childlike trust in believing the words of Jesus: “What I do thou knowest not now: but thou shalt know hereafter” (John 13:7)? Such ongoing, stabilizing joy surpasses understanding. Holiness reaps joyous contentment; “godliness with contentment is great gain” (1 Tim. 6:6).

3. *The anticipated joy: eternal, gracious reward.* Jesus was motivated to endure His sufferings by anticipating the joy of His reward (Heb. 12:1-2). Believers too may look forward to entering into the joy of their Lord as they pursue holiness in the strength

of Christ throughout their lives. By grace, they may joyously anticipate their eternal reward: “Well done, thou good and faithful servant. . . . Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord” (Matt. 25:21, 23). John Whitlock noted: “Here is the Christian’s way and his end—his way is holiness, his end, happiness.”⁷¹

Holiness is its own reward, for everlasting glory is holiness perfected. “The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness” (*Westminster Shorter Catechism*, Question 37). But also their bodies shall be raised immortal and incorruptible, perfect in holiness and complete in glorification (1 Cor. 15:49, 53). The believer shall finally be what he has desired to become ever since his regeneration—perfectly holy in a triune God. He shall enter into the eternal glory as a son of God and fellow-heir with Jesus Christ (Phil. 3:20-21; Rom. 8:17). He shall finally be like Christ, holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:25-27), eternally magnifying and exalting the unfathomable bounties of God’s sovereign grace. Truly, as Calvin stated, “the thought of the great nobility God has conferred upon us ought to whet our desire for holiness.”⁷²

Concluding Application

I once read of a missionary who had in his garden a shrub that bore poisonous leaves. At that time, he had a child who was prone to put anything within reach into his mouth. Naturally he dug the shrub out and threw it away. The shrub’s roots, however, went very deep. Soon the shrub sprouted again. Repeatedly, the missionary had to dig it out. There was no solution but to inspect the ground every day and to dig up the shrub every time it surfaced. Indwelling sin is like that shrub. It needs constant uprooting. Our hearts need continual mortification. As John Owen warns us:

We must be exercising [mortification] every day, and in every duty. Sin will not die, unless it be constantly weakened. Spare it, and it will heal its wounds, and recover its strength. We must continually watch against the operations of this principle of sin: in our duties, in our calling, in conversation, in retirement, in our straits, in our enjoyments, and in all that we do. If we are negligent on any occasion, we shall suffer by it; every mistake, every neglect is perilous.⁷³

Press on in the uprooting of sin and the cultivation of holiness. Continue to fight the good fight of faith under the best of generals, Jesus Christ; with the best of internal advocates, the Holy Spirit; by the best of assurances, the promises of God; for the best of results, everlasting glory.

Have you been persuaded that cultivating holiness is worth the price of saying “no” to sin and “yes” to God? Do you know the joy of walking in God’s ways? The joy of experiencing Jesus’ easy yoke and light burden? The joy of not belonging to yourself, but belonging to your “faithful Savior Jesus Christ,” who makes you “sincerely willing and ready, henceforth, to live unto Him” (*Heidelberg Catechism*, Question 1)? Are you holy? Thomas Brooks gives us sixteen marks on “how we shall know whether we have real holiness,” which include marks like these: The holy believer “admires the holiness of God,... possesses diffusive holiness that spreads itself over head and heart, lip and life, inside and outside,... stretches himself after higher degrees of holiness,... hates and detests all ungodliness and wickedness,... grieves over his own vileness and unholiness.”⁷⁴ It is a daunting list, yet a biblical one. No doubt we all fall far short, but the question remains: Are we striving for these marks of holiness?

Perhaps you respond, “Who is sufficient for these things” (2 Cor. 6:16)? Paul’s ready answer is, “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God” (2 Cor. 3:5). “Would you be holy?... Then you must *begin with Christ*.... Would you continue holy? Then *abide in Christ*.”⁷⁵ “Holiness

is not the way to Christ; Christ is the way of holiness.”⁷⁶ Outside of Him, there is no holiness. Then every list of marks of holiness must condemn us to hell. Ultimately, of course, holiness is not a list; it is much more—it is a life, a life in Jesus Christ. Holiness in believers proves that they are joined to Christ, for sanctified obedience is impossible without Him. But in Christ, the call to holiness remains within the context of *sola gratia* (grace alone) and *sola fide* (faith alone).⁷⁷ “If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared” (Ps. 130:3-4).

“Since Christ cannot be known apart from the sanctification of the Spirit,” Calvin writes, “it follows that faith can in no wise be separated from a devout disposition.”⁷⁸ Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, holiness, grace, and faith are inseparable. Make it your prayer: “Lord, grant that I might cultivate holiness today—not out of merit, but out of gratitude, by Thy grace through faith in Christ Jesus. Sanctify me by the blood of Christ, the Spirit of Christ, and the Word of God.” Pray with Robert Murray M’Cheyne, “Lord, make me as holy as a pardoned sinner can be.”⁷⁹

¹*The Marrow of Theology*, trans. and ed. John D. Eusden (1629; Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1968), p. 77.

²Jerry Bridges, *The Pursuit of Holiness* (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1978), pp. 13-14.

³This is apparent from the Dutch word for sanctification, *heiligmaking* (literally: “holy-making”).

⁴Cf. Lawrence O. Richards, *Expository Dictionary of Bible Words* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985), pp. 339-40.

⁵See especially Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, trans. J. W. Harvey (London: Oxford University Press, 1946).

⁶Stephen Charnock, *The Existence and Attributes of God* (repr. Evansville, Ind.: Sovereign Grace, 1958), p. 449.

⁷*The Works of the Rev. John Howe* (1848; repr. Ligonier, Penn.: Soli Deo Gloria, 1990), 2:59.

⁸*The Works of Jonathan Edwards* (1834; repr. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1974), 1:101; cf. R. C. Sproul, *The Holiness of God* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1985).

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- ⁹R. A. Finlayson, *The Holiness of God* (Glasgow: Pickering and Inglis, 1955), p. 4.
- ¹⁰*The Psalter* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), p. 136.
- ¹¹Stephen C. Neill, *Christian Holiness* (Guildford, England: Lutterworth, 1960), p. 35.
- ¹²Horatius Bonar, *God's Way of Holiness* (repr. Pensacola, Fla.: Mt. Zion Publications, 1994), p. 16.
- ¹³Quoted in Donald G. Bloesch, *Essentials of Evangelical Theology* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), 2:31.
- ¹⁴Quoted in John Blanchard, *Gathered Gold* (Welwyn, England: Evangelical Press, 1984), p. 144.
- ¹⁵Cf. George Bethune, *The Fruit of the Spirit* (1839; repr. Swengel, Penn.: Reiner, 1972); W. E. Sangster, *The Pure in Heart: A Study of Christian Sanctity* (London: Epworth Press, 1954); John W. Sanderson, *The Fruit of the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972); Jerry Bridges, *The Practice of Holiness* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1983); Roger Roberts, *Holiness: Every Christian's Calling* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1985).
- ¹⁶Cf. *Heidelberg Catechism*, Question 1 (the believer's status) and Question 114 (the believer's condition).
- ¹⁷A. W. Pink, *The Doctrine of Sanctification* (Swengel, Penn.: Bible Truth Depot, 1955), p. 25.
- ¹⁸Charnock, *The Existence and Attributes of God*, p. 453.
- ¹⁹Aurelius Augustine, *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians*, 3.5.14, in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, first series, ed. P. Schaff (repr. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 5:404.
- ²⁰John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), 3.14.4ff.; cf. Thomas Goodwin, *The Works of Thomas Goodwin*, D. D., ed. John C. Miller (Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1864), 6:220.
- ²¹Quoted in John Blanchard, *More Gathered Gold* (Welwyn, England: Evangelical Press, 1986), p. 147.
- ²²Thomas Watson, *A Body of Divinity* (1856; repr. Grand Rapids: Sovereign Grace Publishers, 1970), p. 173.
- ²³Bridges, *Practice of Holiness*, p. 52.
- ²⁴Robert Bruce, *The Mystery of the Lord's Supper*, trans. and ed. Thomas F. Torrance (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1958), p. 82.
- ²⁵Quoted in Joel R. Beeke, *Holiness: God's Call to Sanctification* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1994), pp. 18-19.
- ²⁶D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Romans: An Exposition of Chapter 6--The New Man* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1972), p. 144.
- ²⁷Bridges, *Pursuit of Holiness*, p. 60.
- ²⁸James I. Packer, *Rediscovering Holiness* (Ann Arbor: Servant, 1992), p. 15.
- ²⁹Cf. Jay Adams, *Godliness Through Discipline* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973), p. 3.
- ³⁰Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, trans. R. H. Fuller (London: SCM Press, 1959).
- ³¹Bridges, *Practice of Holiness*, pp. 41-56.

³²*The Psalter*, p. 126.

³³For Edwards' seventy resolutions to promote holiness made at nineteen years of age, see *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, 1:xx-xxii.

³⁴*Luther: Lectures on Romans*, trans. and ed. William Pauck (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), p. 189.

³⁵Owen, *Works*, 6:20.

³⁶Quoted in I. D. E. Thomas, *The Golden Treasury of Puritan Quotations* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1975), p. 140.

³⁷See *Belgic Confession of Faith*, Article 28.

³⁸Thomas Watson, *The Mischief of Sin* (1671; Pittsburgh: Soli Deo Gloria, 1994); John Owen, "Temptation and Sin," in *The Works of John Owen*, vol. 6 (1851; repr. London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1967); Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Evil of Evils; or The Exceeding Sinfulness of Sin* (1654; Pittsburgh: Soli Deo Gloria, 1992); Ralph Venning, *The Plague of Plagues* (1669; repr. London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1965).

³⁹John Charles Ryle, *Holiness: Its Nature, Hindrances, Difficulties, and Roots* (repr. Greensboro, N.C.: Homiletic Press, 1956); Octavius Winslow, *Personal Declension and Revival of Religion in the Soul* (1841; repr. London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1960); John Flavel, "Keeping the Heart," in *The Works of John Flavel*, 5:417-507 (1820; repr. London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1968).

⁴⁰Blanchard, *Gathered Gold*, p. 144.

⁴¹"The Spiritual and Carnal Man Compared and Contrasted; or, The Absolute Necessity and Excellency of Holiness," *The Select Practical Works of Richard Baxter* (Glasgow: Blackie & Son, 1840), pp. 115-291.

⁴²Blanchard, *More Gathered Gold*, p. 149.

⁴³Watson, *A Body of Divinity*, p. 172.

⁴⁴Owen, *Works*, 11:254ff.; Joel R. Beeke, *Jehovah Shepherding His Sheep* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 1997), pp. 186-88.

⁴⁵B. B. Warfield, *Perfectionism* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1958), p. 100.

⁴⁶Cf. Walter Marshall, *The Gospel Mystery of Sanctification* (repr. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2000), pp. 220-221.

⁴⁷Ryle, *Holiness*, p. 27.

⁴⁸Joel R. Beeke, *Assurance of Faith: Calvin, English Puritanism, and the Dutch Second Reformation* (New York: Peter Lang, 1991), pp. 160ff.; cf. *Westminster Confession*, Chapter 18, and the *Canons of Dort*, Head 5, for an appreciation of the intertwining of holiness and assurance.

⁴⁹Cf. Bonar, *God's Way of Holiness*, chapter 2.

⁵⁰Watson, *A Body of Divinity*, p. 167.

⁵¹Ryle, *Holiness*, p. 62.

⁵²Leonard J. Coppes, *Are Five Points Enough? Ten Points of Calvinism* (Manassas, Va.: Reformation Educational Foundation, 1980), pp. 94-96.

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- ⁵³Hugh D. Morgan, *The Holiness of God and of His People* (Bridgend, Wales: Evangelical Press of Wales, 1979), p. 9.
- ⁵⁴Andrew Murray, *Humility: The Beauty of Holiness* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Revell, n.d), p. 40.
- ⁵⁵Thomas, *Puritan Quotations*, p. 141.
- ⁵⁶William S. Plumer, *Psalms* (1867; repr. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1975), p. 557.
- ⁵⁷Ryle, *Holiness*, pp. 1-2.
- ⁵⁸John Brown, *Expository Discourses on 1 Peter* (1848; repr. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1978), 1:106.
- ⁵⁹Ryle, *Holiness*, p. viii.
- ⁶⁰Sinclair Ferguson, "The Reformed View," in *Christian Spirituality: Five Views of Sanctification*, ed. Donald L. Alexander (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1988), p. 64.
- ⁶¹Owen, *Works*, 6:79.
- ⁶²Blanchard, *More Gathered Gold*, p. 152.
- ⁶³*Ibid.*, p. 149.
- ⁶⁴Peter Toon, *Justification and Sanctification* (Westchester, Ill.: Crossway, 1983), p. 40.
- ⁶⁵Blanchard, *More Gathered Gold*, p. 148.
- ⁶⁶John Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955), pp. 184-85.
- ⁶⁷Kenneth Prior, *The Way of Holiness: A Study in Christian Growth* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1982), p. 42.
- ⁶⁸Cf. G. C. Berkouwer, *Faith and Sanctification*, trans. John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), chapter 6.
- ⁶⁹John Stott, *The Baptism and Fullness of the Holy Spirit*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1975), p. 50.
- ⁷⁰Samuel Rutherford, *The Trial and Triumph of Faith* (Edinburgh: William Collins, 1845), p. 403.
- ⁷¹Thomas, *Puritan Quotations*, p. 140.
- ⁷²Blanchard, *More Gathered Gold*, p. 153.
- ⁷³Owen, *Works*, 3:310.
- ⁷⁴"The Crown and Glory of Christianity: or Holiness, The Only Way to Happiness," in *The Works of Thomas Brooks* (1864; repr. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1980), 4:103-150. I have summarized Brooks's marks. His entire treatise on holiness (446 pages) is an invaluable classic, but has been strangely neglected in contemporary studies on holiness.
- ⁷⁵Ryle, *Holiness*, pp. 71-72.
- ⁷⁶Blanchard, *Gathered Gold*, p. 146.
- ⁷⁷Cf. Berkouwer, *Faith and Sanctification*, chapter 2.

⁷⁸*Institutes*, 3.2.8.

⁷⁹Blanchard, *Gathered Gold*, p. 146.