

I. Introduction and review.

- A. What is your approach to the Christian life?
- B. Some focus upon duty and are in danger of legalism (moralism).
- C. Other focus upon grace and are at risk of antinomianism (libertinism).
- D. Balance is very hard to maintain.

II. Pursue sanctification. v. 14b

- A. Of what kind of holiness is our author speaking?
 1. Hebrews 1-10 explains our positional sanctification (justification) by which we are once and for all perfected (made fit for God's presence) based upon what Jesus has done for us on the cross. 2:11 9:13-14 10:10 13:12
 2. Here the reference is to progressive sanctification which is the process by which God is working in us to make us holy in a practical sense. 12:10 10:14 I Th. 4:3-7 I Pe. 1:15-16 Phil. 1:6 2:12-13
- B. Holiness (sanctification) is to be diligently pursued.
 1. Progressive sanctification is not something that happens to you while you passively sit back and wait for God to zap you.
 2. Sanctification is God's work, but you are responsible to work at it. Phil. 2:12-13
 3. The idea of pursuit brings back to mind the imagery of a strenuous race. 12:1-3
 4. Something is pursued because it is highly valued. 11:6,25 Gen. 29:20
- C. Why should we pursue holiness?
 1. Mere guilt is an inadequate motivator to holiness.
 2. Our pursuit of holiness is grounded in what God has already done for us in Christ. 10:10,14 I John 4:19 I Cor. 1:30-31
 3. Christ gives us the positional holy perfection God requires, plus He gives the motivation and the power we need to progress in practical holiness. 10:14 12:2
 4. We should encourage one another to holiness in a biblical way.
- D. How are we to pursue holiness?
 1. The holiness God seeks is internal, not merely external. Mark 7:6,18ff Pr. 4:23
 - a. The holiness God seeks is not merely ceremonial.
 - b. Nor is it merely moral. Phil. 3:7-9
 - c. Nor is it merely intellectual. Js. 2:19
 - d. Seek a transformed heart which will lead to a changed life. Mt. 23:26
 2. The holiness God seeks does not come suddenly through a religious experience.
 3. Pursue holiness by actively considering what Christ has already done for you. Rom. 6:11ff Phil. 2:3ff I John 4:10-11 Phil. 2:3ff I Cor. 6:20
 4. Seek God in His Word and in prayer. Ps. 119:97 42:1-2a John 17:17
 5. Enjoy the blessings of being with God's people. 10:24-25 3:13 13:15
 6. Put off that which is unholy. 12:15-17 13:4-5 Eph. 4:17-22,25a,28a,29a 5:3ff II Tim. 2:21-22a Mt. 29-30
 7. Put on that which is holy. 13:15-16 Eph. 4:23-24,25b,28b,29b II Ti. 2:22b Js. 1:27
 8. Learn the valuable lessons of holiness through divine discipline. 12:4-11

III. Without holiness you will not see the Lord. v. 14c

- A. How can our author say that those who don't pursue holiness will not see God?
1. Jesus said something similar. Mt. 5:8 *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*
 2. Our author is not saying that we earn the right to God's presence by our holiness. 10:10 Rom. 5:1 8:1 Eph. 2:8-9: Eph. 2:10
 3. He is saying that the fruit of the new birth and justification is sanctification. II Cor. 5:17 I Cor. 6:9-11 Eph. 2:10 Mt. 7:17ff
 4. The person who does not care about pursuing holiness has not yet been regenerated and justified. I John 2:3-4 3:9 4:7-8
 5. This does not mean that we must be sinlessly perfect. Phil. 3:12 I John 1:8-2:2
- B. In what sense will we see God?
1. We enjoy present fellowship with God by faith. 11:1,27 4:16 II Co. 4:18 5:7 3:18
 2. We will be in His presence, seeing Him face to face for eternity. 9:28 10:37 I Jo. 3:2 I Co. 13:12 Rev. 22:4
 3. This hope motivates us to pursue holiness. I John 3:3

IV. Concluding applications. Pursue holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

Discussion questions

1. What is the place of obedience in the Christian life?
2. What is the relationship between the gospel and our obedience?
3. What are the two aspects of holiness (sanctification) spoken of in the book of Hebrews?
Which aspect is addressed in 12:14b?
4. Why is mere guilt an inadequate motivator to holiness?
5. What is the supreme motivation for the pursuit of sanctification?
6. What are some wrong views of how holiness is to be pursued?
7. What can you do to pursue holiness?
8. Is the author saying that your pursuit of holiness earns the right to see God?
In what sense is the pursuit of holiness necessary for all who would see God?
9. In what sense do those who pursue holiness see God now?
10. In what sense will those who pursue holiness see God in the future?