

## Crossroads Community Church

Sunday January 18th, 2015

White snow covered us once again as we entered God's sanctuary to praise and worship Him. Pastor Don Shared announcements, and Prayed, dear Father God we are so grateful for all you do for us every day, forgive us when we fail to notice you are in control of all things and that you are mighty and holy, teach us to be like you, in Jesus name, Amen. Our friend and Brother Bob taught us about Holiness God's way.

When we hear the word Holy, what do we think of? Sanctimonious, smugness, holy rollers or a boring alienated from the world monk? For many it invokes negative feelings causing to ask what makes us holier than thou. For others it may mean goodness and selflessness. From the beginning, God has always wanted us to be holy but not boring. God created us in His image so it is natural that from within we all long for a sense of wholeness and goodness, we need it like we need to breathe, (Genesis 1:27). God's goodness is the only thing which frees us from all that plagues us. It is crucial to understand and believe that God created both man and woman in His image to be Holy. Jesus confirms it too in Matthew 5:48, But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.

This is a tall order for anyone to live by, but Mother Theresa simplified it when she said, Holiness does not consist of doing extraordinary things but consists of accepting with a smile what Jesus sends us, accepting the will of God. Many describe life as a journey, the prophet Isaiah describes the journey like this, And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness; it will be for those who walk in God's ways. The unclean will not journey on it; wicked fools will not go about on it. Isaiah 35:8. When we choose to live our lives for God and follow his path to holiness it will change our lives, set us free and bring us peace.

So why be holy, and why make things holy, what good is it anyway? Some may wonder if they are even capable of being holy, they may think it is for the elite, the highly religious and devoted to prayer 24/7. Although some may be called to do those things, it is not of ourselves, nothing that we do, it is God who sets us apart to reveal His holiness through us to those who don't yet know Him, (Ezekiel 36:23). God also commanded us to keep one day a week holy, to reverence Him and to give us rest, don't we all want rest at the end of our week? (Exodus 20:8).

Many religious leaders were too rigid when it came to the Sabbath, thinking it would make it holier, there were many added unrealistic stipulations to the command Keep the Sabbath Holy. However Jesus even healed people on the Sabbath; showing grace and mercy to those who need it shows God's holiness much more than striving to keep man made rules which only brings praise to man instead of God, (John 5:2-16). Now does this mean we should stop praying, reading our Bibles or attending Church on Sunday? Of course not, those things are not what make us or the day Holy, but we do them to glorify God and to learn how to be holy like Him. We set time apart to focus on Him and listen to what he wants us to do for Him and for others, we keep a time of Sabbath Holy because He himself chose us before the beginning, (Ephesians 1:4).

Beloved it is God's love that makes us holy it is nothing that we have done or can do. He loves us so much that He gave His son that through him we would receive forgiveness. Although our sins were as scarlet He washed them white as snow; all our sins were crucified with Christ and it is no longer us that live but Jesus living through us; that is Holiness. The more we love Him and acknowledge Him the holier He makes us. The holier we are the more freedom we have in Him to accomplish whatever it is He sets us apart to do. Hear the Apostle Paul's words, Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose. --In your life surrender then to God's love and Holiness will be part of who you are, Asherey Shalom!

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