

Holy, Holy, Holy...

By Teresa Hampton

We often sing the song, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty,” about our awesome, holy God. Do we remember, though, that God has called *us* to be holy? The apostle Peter wrote, *but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy”* (1 Peter 1:15-16). Peter was quoting what God said to the Israelites, as recorded by Moses (Leviticus 11:44-45).

God has *always* required his chosen people to be holy. Peter began by telling how to prepare oneself for holiness. He said to set your minds for action. Keep sober in spirit. Fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Do not be conformed to the former lusts, and be holy yourselves in all your behavior (verses 14-15).

God does not ask us to do something we are unable to do. Becoming holy is achievable—*I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship* (Romans 12:1). *For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness* (1 Thessalonians 4:7).

Paul wrote Timothy that God, *saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began* (2 Timothy 1:9). Paul similarly wrote the Ephesians, *even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him* (Ephesians 1:4).

In Paul’s second letter to the Corinthians he said Christians should cleanse themselves from every defilement of body and spirit, and control themselves. *Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God* (2 Corinthians 7:1). He wrote other Christians, *that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor* (1 Thessalonians 4:4).

Paul rebuked the church at Corinth because they were still immature, carnal, and divisive. He said, *Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple* (1 Corinthians 3:17). Holiness also doesn’t allow one to be “on the fence” about questionable positions or actions, because the fence belongs to... *Satan!*

Peter said that in God’s spiritual house, his temple, we are holy priests offering acceptable sacrifices through Christ, *you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light* (1 Peter 2:5, 9). The church is a holy nation, sanctified, or set apart from the world. Jesus’ desire on the final day of judgment is to, *present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish* (Ephesians 5:27).

As we live in a sin darkened world, may we always keep these scriptures before us. Consider the words of another great song, “More Holiness give Me.” The third verse: More purity

give me, More strength to o'ercome, More freedom from earth-stains, More longing for home.
More fit for the kingdom, More used would I be, More blessed and holy—More, Savior, like
thee.”

Today's Verse: *Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will
see the Lord* (12:14).

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Holy, Holy, Holy—lyrics: Reginald Heber 1826

More Holiness Give Me—lyrics *and music*: Philip Paul Bliss, 1838–1876.