*THE PRACTICE of GODLINESS* by Jerry Bridges

**Chapter Ten– “HOLINESS” – 1 John 1:5**

**“This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.” (1 John 1:5NASB)**

*“The outward evidence of godliness is Godlike character. Although it is this character that is usually thought of as godliness, as we have seen in earlier chapters, Godlikeness in character is built upon the foundation of God-centeredness: devotion to God…If we want to develop godly character, we must learn what the Bible says about the character of God Himself.” (pg.119)*

Let’s together take a brief look at some of the essential elements in the pursuit of holiness:

***HOLY CHARACTER*** - “*God is Light” (1 Jn.1:5)* “Light symbolizes the flawless perfection of God” God is absolutely holy. In Him there is no sin. He is infinitely perfect in His holiness. (pg.120)

***HOLY CALLING*** - God has said, *“but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behaviour…” (1 Peter1:15-16).* “Paul tells us that we have been called to live a holy life; we have been redeemed for that purpose. Any Christian not earnestly pursuing holiness in every aspect of his life is flying in the face of God’s purpose in saving him.” (pg. 120)

***HOLY COMMANDS*** – When Paul was instructing the Ephesian Christians about the importance of holiness, he said, *“I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles (the ungodly/unregenerate pagans) do” (4:17).* He insisted on holiness and he did so with the Lord’s authority. Holiness is not an option but a must for every Christian.” (pg. 121)

***HOLY CONVICTIONS*** – Paul instructs the believers at Ephesus by saying, *“Be made new in the attitude of your minds” (Eph. 4:23)* and to the Christians at Rome he said, *“Be transformed by the renewing of your mind (Rom.12:2)*. “This process of renewing our minds involves establishing Bible-based, Spirit-developed convictions. As we prayerfully read the Scriptures, we begin to understand what God’s will is regarding our conduct and character.” (pg. 123)

***HOLY COMMITMENTS*** – “We must commit ourselves to obeying God in all of His commands…The psalmist recognized the seriousness of any and all sin when he said, *“You have laid down precepts that are to be fully obeyed” (119:4).* He recognized that partial obedience—is actually disobedience. He longs that his ways will be steadfast in obeying God’s decrees (vs.5)…Clearly, he solidified his convictions about God’s will with a determined commitment to obey it.” (pg.’s 125-126)

***HOLY CHOICES*** – How do we say ‘NO’ to *“ungodliness and worldly desires” (Titus 2:11-12)*?

 How do we *“put to death the misdeeds of the body” (Romans 8:13)*?

“We do this by the choices we make. In our daily pursuit of holiness we must choose to not only pray constantly for His enabling grace to say NO to temptation but choose to say YES to feeding upon the scriptures so we can by His enabling grace do the will of God.” (pg.126)

***HOLY CONFIDENCE*** – “The pursuit of holiness does not depend upon our own willpower or our own strength of character. Nothing is further from the truth. We are both *personally responsible and totally dependent* in our practice of godliness. We must realize that though we cannot change our hearts, we can be confident and dependent upon the Spirit of God to use the Word of God to transform us within *(Ps. 119:36-37; Philippians 4:11-13).”* (pg.’s 127-128)

***HOLY CRAVINGS*** – “We must be careful that the motivation of our hearts to live holy lives is because we have God-centered desires for holiness *(2 Cor.5:14-15; Col.1:10; Rev.4:11)* instead of self-centered desires for holiness (Jn. 12:42-43; Matt.6:1-7).” Developing God-centered desires for holiness in our conversation, conduct and character requires much prayer, patience, practice and His enabling power! (pg.129)

Ladies, may I close with an exhortation from Jerry Bridges for all of us, ***“Our responsibility to pursue holiness, even in the midst of a wicked society, is just as great as was the first century Christians. Yes, it gets more difficult each year; the temptations seem more numerous, the ridicule of the ungodly toward those who seek to live a godly life grows more abusive. But we are still called to be holy as He is Holy. We cannot and must not evade God’s standard for us.” (pg.122)***

Pressing onward and looking upward in our pursuit of holiness and our practice of godliness,

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