

Discipleship And Holiness

Neal Parker

Disciples of Jesus Christ?

■ Matthew 4:18-22

- “...Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men...”

■ Considerations

- The word ‘disciple’ is used 268 times in the NT: 238 times in the gospels and 30 times in the book of Acts, for a total of 268.
- The word ‘disciple’ disappears completely after the book of Acts. In other words, there is a total absence of the use of the word ‘disciple’ after the book of Acts.



The Idea of “Discipleship” Continues

■ I Corinthians 11:1

- “Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ”
- “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ”

**‘You follow me in the same way that I follow Christ.’
Definitely, the concept of discipleship.**



Introduction of “Saints”

■ Romans 1:7

- To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints

■ I Corinthians 1:2

- To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints...



Introduction of “Saints”

■ Ephesians 1:1

- To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus...

■ What is the meaning of the word “Saint”?

- This word ‘saint’, or ‘holy’, hagios in Greek,
- Paul uses it 76 times in his epistles.
- And there are 3 other words for holiness, all of which are almost exclusively used by Paul.

Where Does “Holiness” Come From?

■ Acts 9:1-6; 22:6-11; 26:9-20

- Putting the three accounts together, the details of this amazing experience come together.
- Paul’s understanding of holiness comes from books that he has read; his concept of holiness is based on his experience.
- When Paul met with God in Christ on the Damascus road, that put an imprint upon his soul about what holiness is. He came away from there, having been blinded by the light of God’s holiness. He came away shaking, trembling. He had met with God!

Goodness and Severity of God

■ Romans 11:1-5, 16-22, 25-27

- God's goodness expresses itself on a one hand in salvation, and on the other hand in judgment because He cannot tolerate anything that is evil.
- Paul experienced God. He experienced God's holiness. He understood that God is holy and good in the sense that he will not compromise with what is bad.



Where Does “Holiness” Come From?

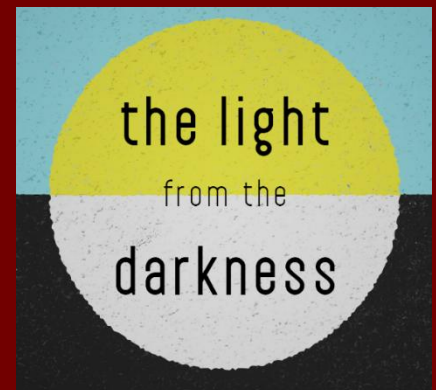
■ Acts 26:18/Romans 11:16/John 15

- God is also good in the sense that He is prepared to make others good those who repent of their sins.
- God’s goodness that can be transferred to His people and that must be transferred to His people if they are to be His people at all.
- Though we are not totally sinless, we are in a position of holiness before God because of what Christ did for us.
- If the root is holy, so must the branches be holy also. If the root is holy, and God is that root, then the branches, the disciples, must be holy.
- We are those branches, attached to Him in the same way that the branches are attached to the vine. If the vine is holy, and if you are truly one of its branches, then clearly you must also be holy. Because God has transferred His holiness unto you.

“Saints” Instead of “Disciples”?

■ II Corinthians 6:17

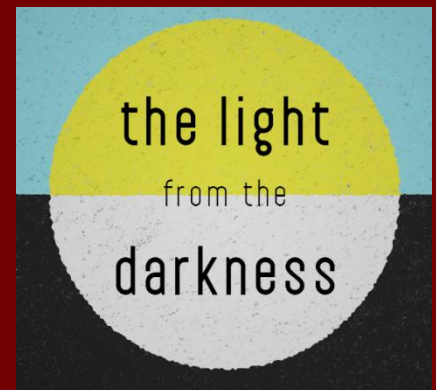
- When a person comes to God, God separates him out of the world. He called Israel out of Egypt.**
- Egypt represents the world.**
- God separates people out of the world in order that they may serve Him.**
- This separation from the world is what holiness is about.**
- Separation from all uncleanness is what holiness is all about.**



“Saints” Instead of “Disciples”?

■ I Corinthians 6:20

- The people that God separates, He redeems them.**
- The Israelites are spoken of as God’s redeemed people.**
- You are redeemed from your old way of life.**
- You don’t belong to yourself anymore.**
- You belong to God in the sense of being His possession.**
- And to be holy means to belong to God.**



“Saints” Instead of “Disciples”?

■ II Corinthians 6:16

- The redeemed people are the people who now live under God’s covenant and God’s command to holiness.**
- The redeemed people are the people with whom God dwells.**
- The redeemed people are holy because they become His dwelling place, His temple.**



“Saints” Instead of “Disciples”?

■ Ezekiel 11:19

- God’s holiness is expressed in a concern to impart this holiness to His people by the power of His Holy Spirit.**
- Holiness is to have a heart of stone transformed into a heart of flesh, according to God’s righteous standards.**

■ Ephesians 4:24

- With our change into a new creature, it gives us the responsibility to live according to God’s holiness.**

“Saints” Instead of “Disciples”?

■ Ezekiel 18:30

- God’s holiness will be expressed in judgment upon His holy people if they don’t live a life that is in line with God’s sanctifying work in them.**
- God called His people to holiness in order that His name be glorified.**
- And failure to live the kind of life to which He called His people will bring condemnation.**



“Saints” Instead of “Disciples”?

■ I Corinthians 11:31-32

- Being a saint and disciple does not exempt you from judgment.**
- When Paul says that we are saints, he doesn't just mean that we have a special position called 'holiness'.**
- He means also that our conduct must fit those who are called saints.**
- As Paul says again and again, 'let your manner of conduct be worthy of your calling.'**

WALKING WORTHY OF YOUR
CALLING
Ephesians 4:1-6

CONDUCT WORTHY OF
THE GOSPEL
PHILIPPIANS 1:27

Be Holy, For I Am Holy

■ I Peter 1:15

- The notion of holiness emphasizes not only the relation to God, but also the corresponding moral conduct.
- Holiness implies a relationship with God that is expressed through a behaviour that rightly responds to God.



Discipleship and Holiness

■ Jeremiah 2:2-3

- Israel was holy to the Lord.
- Israel was once God's disciple because they followed Him in the wilderness.
- And because they followed Him, they were then holy.



Discipleship and Holiness

- **Do you see the connection between discipleship and holiness?**
 - Paul noticed this connection in the Old Testament.
 - In the New Testament, Paul's letters stressed not so much the external manner of following, **but the spiritual following after God in holiness.**
 - Paul understood discipleship.
 - **Paul's emphasis about discipleship is matter of holiness in the life of the disciple of Jesus Christ!**
 - Our encounter with God is what should make such an impact in our life that it affects our walk with Him.