

MINISTERIAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

SEMINAR II

Theme: “The Foundations for Pentecostal Faith and Practice.”

Spirituality and Holiness

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INTRODUCTION

In Christ we have been sanctified through the work of the Holy Spirit and begotten unto a lively hope by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance, which is in corruptible and undefiled that fadeth not away (I Peter 1:2-4).

The hallmark of maturity in Christ is a boldness of faith and a peace of mind. As believers, we pray that our lives will be vibrant witnesses to the love of God and a life of holiness. Humility and sensitivity to the Holy Spirit keep us pure and free from condemnation. We must guard our hearts and keep them with all diligence in order to maintain both spirituality and holiness.

I. SPIRITUAL STRENGTH AND ANOINTING

Paul said, “Live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of your sinful nature” (Galatians 5:16). Holiness requires that we remain dependent on the Holy Spirit through prayer, humility, and feeding on the Word of God.

Holiness of life cannot be attained without the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. Under the New Covenant, God has put His Spirit within His people. The

baptism of Jesus and the Spirit of God descending on Jesus like a dove modeled for future disciples that God's plan is for all who are called to ministry to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

In His last promise to His disciples, Jesus tells them, "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses" (Acts 1:8). The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost demonstrated to the disciples in supernatural terms the truth of Christ's promise.

The indwelling power of the Holy Spirit bears witness that we are children of God and that we are called to live holy and reflect like mirrors the glory of the Lord. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit upon the early church was an answer to Christ's prayer for the sanctification of His followers/disciples.

Pentecost thus represents the full manifestation of the presence of the Trinity in the lives of believers under the New Covenant. God's presence and glory revealed throughout the Old Testament was but only a foreshadowing of the full manifestation of God's presence. The full manifestation of God's personal presence in the world was first revealed in the coming of Jesus in the incarnation and then in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

The call of God is for His people to follow after righteousness and holiness of life. We are called to "seek good and not evil...to establish justice" (Amos 5:14). God desires of us righteousness not ritual, commitment not complacency. In the Old Testament, God used the Law to show people their sinfulness and then to drive them to God for His glorious salvation.

The Law had attached to it the penalty of death (Galatians 3:10); and to break one command was to be guilty of all (James 2:10). Since people had broken the Law, they were under the curse of death. God's righteousness and holiness demanded that the penalty be paid. It was for this reason that Jesus came into the world to pay the penalty by His death. Though sinless, Jesus gave His life for the guilty. By trusting in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, we are free from the penalty of death.

II. THE HIGHER RIGHTEOUSNESS

The righteousness demanded by the Law is fulfilled in those "who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit" (Romans 8:4). The teachings of Jesus set an even higher standard of righteousness than that set by the Law. The Law commanded, "Do not murder;" but Jesus said, "Do not even hate." Jesus also taught that our righteousness must surpass the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees.

The higher righteousness of Jesus is seen in His command that we love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. Jesus even commanded that we return good for evil (Matthew 5:43-48).

The words of Jesus are very practical concerning righteousness in our lives. We are warned in Matthew 6 not to perform charitable deeds for the purpose of being seen by others because God will not reward hypocrisy. Hypocrites noisily attract attention to themselves; their charitable deeds should have been done for God, not to gain notoriety.

Jesus also warned that we should not use public prayer as a means to impress people of our piety. We should pray with sincerity and humility (Matthew 6:5-8), not with vain repetitions. In prayer, let us communicate with God and acknowledge our dependence upon Him.

In Matthew 6:9-15, Jesus taught the righteous how to pray.

Our Father in Heaven — Prayer begins by acknowledging the sovereignty of God in our lives.

Hallowed be Your Name — We begin prayer with true worship and praise.

Your Kingdom come — The righteous seek to fulfill God's agenda and not their own personal agenda.

Your will be done — The righteous acknowledges that God knows what is best and they surrender their will to His will.

On earth as it is in Heaven — This statement acknowledges that we should seek to allow things on earth to be as they are in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread — The righteous depend upon God for basic existence.

And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors — Righteousness demands our ability to forgive the wrongdoings of others.

And do not lead us into temptation — The righteous recognize their own ability to be tempted and to fail; therefore, they seek God's preservations in order to walk holy.

But deliver us from evil — The righteous cry out daily to be kept from sin by the power of the Holy Spirit.

For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever — The righteous recognize that God alone is our foundation for holiness and that our prayer must be to walk in the Spirit and in the glory of God.

The righteousness demanded by God in the Old Testament is fulfilled in converted believers who thus walk according to the Spirit (Romans 8:4).

III. THE WAY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The Lord warns that the gate of Christian discipleship is narrow and difficult (Matthew 7:13, 14). But those whose life is built on the solid rock and who follow His way find the abundant life. The Bible says that the wide gate and the broad way lead to destruction (Proverbs 16:25), and that the narrow gate and difficult way lead to life. Jesus Christ is both the gate and the way to righteousness and eternal life (John 14:6).

Whenever a person lives according to the words of Jesus, the world calls him a fool but God calls him wise. People have always been astonished by the teaching of Jesus. Jesus appeals to us for a new morality and a holy walk.

The apostle Paul describes the way of the unrighteous in Ephesians 4:

- They walked aimless in the futility of their minds (v. 17).
- Their understanding was darkened (blind) and they could not understand the things of the Spirit (v. 18).

- They were shameless and sordid. They were past feeling the pain of sin and descended to unparalleled depths of depravity (v. 19).
- They grew corrupt through deceitful lusts (v. 22).

But the way of the righteous is to put off the old man and to put on the new man by the renewing of the spirit in our minds (Ephesians 4:24). The new man created according to God is manifested in true righteousness and holiness. The righteous person seeks to put away bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking, and malice. The way of the righteous is to manifest kindness, tenderheartedness, humility, forgiveness, and love (Ephesians 4:32).

The way of the righteous is to forsake all forms of sexual immorality (Ephesians 5:3). The righteous understand that these sins bring the wrath of God upon the disobedient; therefore, let us not walk in darkness, but let us walk as the children of light (Ephesians 5:8). For those who walk in the light have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. Paul urged in Ephesians 5:15-21 to:

- Walk not as fools but as wise
- Not be drunk with wine but be filled with the Spirit
- Encourage one another and submit to one another in the fear of God

When the righteous walk in the power of the Holy Spirit they will:

- Be bold in rebuking sin and in testifying for the Lord

- Have power with God for service
- Not be selfish
- Seek to exalt Christ, rather than to exalt themselves
- Do the will of God from the heart

Paul also described the way of the righteous as a warfare (Ephesians 6:10-20). On our own we are no match for the devil; therefore, we should be continually strengthened in the Lord and in the boundless resources of His might. We thus put on the divine armor of God:

- the belt of truth
- the breastplate of righteousness
- the shield of faith
- the helmet of salvation
- the sword of the Spirit

The divine armor of God assures us of victory knowing that “If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31).

IV. THE CALL TO HOLINESS

God has made full provision for us to live a life of holiness. This provision is evidence that His divine power enables us to live holy and godly lives.

The power to live a holy life comes through the knowledge of Him who has called us. The divine power of God at work in the believer is our source of holiness.

Peter said that we have been called:

- Out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)
- To follow Christ's pathway of suffering (1 Peter 2:21)
- To return blessing for railing (1 Peter 3:9)
- To His eternal glory (1 Peter 5:10)
- To exceeding great and precious promises (1 Peter 1:7)

To those who live a life of holiness, God has promised:

- **Freedom** from sin's dominion (Romans 6:14)
- **Grace** that is sufficient (2 Corinthians 12:9)
- **Power** to obey His commands (Philippians 4:13)
- **Victory** over the devil (James 4:7)
- **Escape** when tempted (1 Corinthians 10:13)
- **Forgiveness** when we confess our sins (1 John 1:9)
- **Response** when we cry out (Psalm 50:15)

The promises of God are precious and great as we, through faith in God, develop godliness. Godliness is characterized by virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, brotherly kindness, and love. These all represent **practical holiness**.

Failure to persevere in the development of Christian character (holiness) leads to:

1. **Barrenness** – The guidance of the Holy Spirit eliminates barrenness.
2. **Unfruitfulness** – Disobedience to the Word of God causes unfruitfulness.
3. **Shortsightedness** – Living for self or for the present produces spiritual blindness.
4. **Forgetfulness** – We must never forget that we were dead in our sins when God's great grace redeemed our lives from destruction.

The apostle Peter exhorts us to make our calling and election sure. Living a holy life will keep us from stumbling and backsliding. The peril lies in disobedience, stubbornness, and blindness. Happy is the person who submits to the Lord, who delights in His commandments, and proves it by obeying them. A lifestyle of practical godliness, honesty, diligence, and frugality assures the blessing of God.

Holiness of life produces people who are gracious, full of compassion, generous, trustworthy, and discreet. These are people whose lives are built on a stable foundation and walk in confidence.

V. SPIRITUAL POWER FOR HOLINESS

In light of the holiness of God, we are commanded to walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh. The Spirit and the flesh are in constant conflict, a perpetual war, which will continue until we are taken home to Heaven. Our part in this conflict is to yield to the Holy Spirit. Paul said that those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh (Galatians 5:24).

Spiritual experiences must be kept fresh, alive, and renewed. The sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit must not become static but remain perpetual. Holiness of life is a life of separation and consecration. Total commitment to God is reasonable and possible. Holiness demands that we be separated from the world and transformed by the renewing of our mind. This transformation enables us to follow after God's good, acceptable, and perfect will (Romans 12:1-2).

The grace of God "teaches us to say no to ungodliness and worldly passions" (Titus 2:11-12). Those who sin are described in Scripture as lawless (1 John 3:4). Lawlessness refers to a state of the heart that is rejecting the law, that is, the will of God.

Spiritual power for holiness of life is imparted by the divine guidance of the Holy Spirit. "Because those who are led by the spirit of God are the sons of God" (Romans 8:14).

The indwelling life of the Holy Spirit brings us out of the old life of sin into divine sonship with God. This awakens in us a spirit of faith and hope. Because of

this powerful work of the Holy Spirit, holiness is not just a theory but a personal hope of unspeakable sweetness and power. The power of the Holy Spirit influences our thinking, controls our passions, and lifts us above our trials and temptations.

The Holy Spirit is preparing us as the holy people of God to be ready for the coming of the Lord and the gathering of His saints.

As holy people, we are able to pray in the Spirit because we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, who prays for us. The Holy Spirit is also our advocate within, who prays in us, inspiring our petitions through Christ to God. “Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God” (Romans 8:26-27).

We need this powerful work of the Holy Spirit because we know not what to pray for, but He breathes in the holy heart the desires of the Spirit even though we may not comprehend.

The Holy Spirit is at work in our lives in response to our consecration to God. Paul urged that we present our bodies as living sacrifices to God (Romans 12:1a). We desire to do this, not because of the fear of punishment but because we remember the mercies of God and we are glad to respond in holiness of life. Our total being is to be yielded to the Spirit. This offering is “holy and pleasing (acceptable) to God” (Romans 12:1).

The effects of our consecration on the life of holiness are:

1. Separation

Our consecration sets us apart and separates us for God's use. "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12:2a). True separation from the world transforms and renews our minds. Jesus Christ had no affinity for the world or for sin. In the New Testament, the supreme example of consecration is Christ Himself. The Spirit of God in our hearts draws us to God and away from the unholy things of the world.

2. Knowing the will of God

Coming into the will of God is a result of our consecration to the life of holiness. We are to test and to clarify God's good, pleasing, and perfect will. A life of holiness is possible as we remain consecrated to a life of obedience to God's Word and His will. Samuel emphasized that God's pleasure was not in sacrifice but in obedience (1 Samuel 15:22). Obedience to the will of God brings grace, peace, and righteousness (Romans 5:12-21).

3. Self-renunciation

“For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith” (Romans 12:3). The highest spiritual life is the humble life of dependence on God, self-renunciation, and self-forgetting. Commitment to a life of self-denial, humility, and holiness produces in us the character of God and the mind of Christ.

4. True individuality

“For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them” (Romans 12:4-6). Consecration leads to true individuality. We seek to clarify our calling and gifts while receiving our strength and sufficiency from Christ. The power of the Holy Spirit at work in us individually, enables us to function out of our unique gifts.

5. Fellowship and cooperation

The secret of true fellowship and cooperation is to see God's grace at work in one another and to focus on the divine love of God. "We are all members of one body" (Ephesians 4:25). "Iron sharpens iron . . ." (Psalm 27:17). We impact each other because we love, forgive, and even reprove one another in the spirit of love. If we live consecrated, holy lives we will work for and pray for unity and cooperation.

6. Commitment to ministry

Consecration to holiness of life motivates us to see life as an opportunity to do ministry for Christ, whether as a lay minister or as a clergy. We understand that every ministry is important and reflects a divine call from God. Living holy and maintaining our commitment to ministry will always be intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually demanding. We may even experience betrayal from our fellow Christians. Our commitment to ministry will be a reflection of our consecration.

7. Practical theology

Consecration to be holy demands that our theology is one of practice and demonstration. "Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor

what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion” (Romans 12: 9-21).

A consecrated believer will be:

- sincere (v. 9)
- devoted to one another in brotherly love (v. 10)
- joyful in hope (v. 12)
- patient in affliction (v. 12)
- faithful in prayer (v. 12)
- sensitive to the joys and sorrows of others (v. 15)
- considerate and humble (v. 16)
- honest in all relationships (v. 17, 18)
- an over-comer of evil with good (v. 21)

VI. THE AUTHORITY OF THE MINISTRY

The apostle Paul explained that ministers are trustees or stewards of the treasures of the Lord. We are invested with great responsibility and stand under tremendous accountability.

Because of the anointing and the seal of the Holy Spirit upon our ministry, we should be successful and fruitful. We are to minister through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. We must never reduce Christianity to a form of human culture. The church and the Christian must function in the gifts of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the source of these gifts and the divine agent who exercises them in the church and through its members (1 Corinthians 12:11).

We know that we are on forbidden ground when we see the Spirit on self-display, human exaltation, the advertising of men, and the glorifying of self. A Supernatural endowment of the Spirit is not an exclusive privilege of a favored few. To each of us is given the Holy Spirit in His fullness. We should eagerly desire the greatest gifts (1 Corinthians 12:31).

A ministry empowered by the Holy Spirit will demonstrate the love of God. The qualities of the love of God manifested in a holy life are clarified in 1 Corinthians 13, which says that love:

1. Does not envy
2. Does not boast
3. Is not puffed up
4. Is not rude
5. Is not self-seeking

6. Is not easily angered
7. Keeps no record of wrongs
8. Does not delight in evil
9. Is kind
10. Rejoices with the truth
11. Trusts
12. Always hopes

Ministry has no authority or integrity outside of the love of God. Love is preeminent above other gifts. It is not recorded in Scripture that God is faith, or power, or wisdom, or even holiness. God has all of these attributes, but it is said that “God is love” (1 John 4:16). Therefore, Christian character is love. Without love, the apostle says, “I am nothing” (1 Corinthians 13:2).

We follow the way of love and also desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy (1 Corinthians 14:1). This gift is specifically designed that we may speak words of strengthening, encouragement, and comfort. We edify, exhort, and bind up the broken hearted as obedient servants of God.

Another important endowment of the Spirit is the gift of tongues. Tongues are for our personal edification as a prayer language for worship and intercession. When interpreted they are for the edification of the Church. God’s object in everything He does is to benefit the Church in practical ways.

VII. HOLINESS OF LIFE—A TRIUMPHAL PROCESSION IN CHRIST

“But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ...” (2 Corinthians 2:14).

The life of the follower of Jesus Christ is sometimes filled with conflicts, ordeals, and struggles. However, we know that in Christ we have victory over sorrow, fear, anger, enemies, and satan.

“Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart. But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God. But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing” (2 Corinthians 4:1-3).

Holiness and victory demand that we understand that our competency comes from God and not ourselves (2 Corinthians 3:5). We see in Jesus Christ our resources and gifts come from the graces of the Holy Spirit. It is God who has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant (v. 6).

The life of practical holiness and victory means:

1. Separation from evil associations (2 Corinthians 6:14-17)
2. Cleansing (2 Corinthians 7:1)
3. Reverence for God (2 Corinthians 7:1)
4. Walking in the Spirit (Romans 8:1)

5. Manifesting the fruit of the Spirit (2 Peter 1:5-7)
6. Overcoming the world (1 John 5:4)
7. Praying in the Spirit (Ephesians 6:18)
8. Demolishing strongholds (2 Corinthians 10:4)
9. Guarding our hearts and minds (Philippians 4:7)
10. Staying strong in the Lord and in His mighty power (Ephesians 6:10)
11. Being rooted and established in love (Ephesians 3:17)
12. Walking worthy of our calling (Ephesians 4:1)

CONCLUSION

Holiness of life demands that we seek to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Also, that we put on the full armor of God so that we can take our stand against the devil's schemes (Ephesians 6:10).

We are in a struggle against principalities, powers, rulers of darkness, evil spiritual forces, and satan himself. Our only true defense is to be strong in the Holy Spirit, to hide God's Word in our hearts, to walk in truth, and to have complete faith in God and His holy Word. Thus shall this "mind be in [us] which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5).

The Amsterdam Declaration was a "Charter for Evangelism in the twenty-first century," agreed upon by thousands of evangelical leaders gathered in 2000 in Amsterdam. Concerning holiness and evangelism the Charter stated:

“The servant of God must adorn the Gospel through a holy life . . . We should be held accountable for our lives, our doctrine, and our ministry. The Church should ensure that those whose lives dishonor God and the Gospel will not be permitted to serve as its evangelists. The holiness and humility of evangelists give credibility to their ministry and leads to genuine power from God and lasting fruit.”