

July 19, 2008

Dear family and friends,

A few weeks after my beloved Roger went to be with Jesus, I was going through some of his bibles. In his NIV bible, I found the following handwritten message he had prepared both in English and Spanish. This message must have been prepared before 2001, because after his eye surgeries in 2000/2001, he had to use a large-print bible.

The Spanish version looks like it had been reviewed and completed. He most likely did a draft in English to make it easier for him to translate into Spanish. The English version does not have the finishing touches, nevertheless, it's a message he had on his heart and I want to share it with you. Except typing it on the computer, I have made no changes to his draft. I hope it blesses you like it blessed me.

Denise

IS IT POSSIBLE TO BE HOLY?

by: Rev. Roger Deschamps

In the book of Leviticus, chapter 19, verse 2, the Lord commands His people to be holy. He said: "You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy."

At first glance, this commandment seems out of reach for most of us. I think it is fair to say, that most of us would think that it is impossible to keep that commandment. Is it really possible for us to be holy? Is it possible to live a holy life? to be holy as the Lord our God is holy.

Allow me to define what it means to be holy. It means to be separated or set apart to God. It is the being separated or set apart to God that makes us holy.

I said it makes us holy. It is not something that we do or strive for. We are not made holy by doing good things. It would be natural for a man to do good things in order that he might become holy. But, it does not work that way.

What is that supernatural thing that makes us holy? It's our faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. We are made holy by our faith in Jesus Christ, just as we are saved by our faith in Him.

One might question the veracity of what I am saying just because I quoted from the Book of Leviticus, a book in the Old Testament. We all know how miserably the Israelites failed to apply this commandment to their own lives.

One might say: "If these people who had God in their midst could not be holy, what about me? How can I be holy?"

Let us move on to the New Testament and see what the apostle Paul has to say on this subject. In Romans 8:29, Paul says: "for whom He (God) foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His own son."

This verse speaks of God's purpose for His people.....for us. He wants us, believers, to be conformed to the image of His Son, Jesus Christ. He wants us, believers, to be like Christ, He wants us to be holy.

My brothers and sisters, I want to tell you that being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ is not an impossible goal to set for ourselves. It is possible for us to reach that goal because the One who does the conforming, the One who does the work in us, is God. He would not have commanded us to be Holy if it were not possible to be Holy.

#2

This is not a "man thing" it is a "God thing"; In Romans 8, Paul continues to say in verse 30: "Whom He (God) called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, those He also glorified." Notice that it is God who does the work of calling, of justifying and of gloryfying. Man cannot do these things. It is the work of God.

Now, I don't mean to say that we have no part to play in this. We do have a part to play. We must have faith in Jesus Christ alone. We must accept to be counted as one of His followers. We cannot be ashamed of His gospel. We must look up to Jesus as our Lord and Savior. We must think about Him, pray to Him, study the Scriptures, seek to obey Him and follow His

example. As we do this, we become like Him. We begin to think like Him. Bad things we used to enjoy and do in the past, we no longer even want to do. Not doing them is not a sacrifice; we just don't enjoy doing them anymore. And good things we never even thought of doing, we enjoy and want to do. Now, it is possible to do good because we have been changed. We have been made holy by the One who is Holy.

Is one changed overnight? Is one made holy overnight? The answer is yes and no. God sees us as holy but we still have to deal with our carnal nature. The change in us is a process over a period of time. We call this process "sanctification". Our conforming to the image of Christ, our becoming like Him takes place gradually.

In 2 Corinthians 3:18 Paul says: "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord." He is saying that as we behold (look too) the glory of the Lord, we are continually transformed into the same image, His image, by the Spirit of the Lord.

As we look to the Lord and see His glory, we are being gradually and continually transformed into His image. As we look to Him, we come to reflect His glory. We must first look to Him and see His glory, then, the Holy Spirit does the transforming work in us so that we become like Him.

For those of you who have made a serious commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ, I say: "Don't get discouraged with the process of sanctification if it does not go as fast as you would like. Just know that He, who has begun a good work in you will complete it (Philippians 1:6) if you are willing to let Him have lordship over your life.

#3

To those of you who have never made a commitment to Christ because you felt you had to clean up your life first, I say: "You can't do it on your own." You are not the first ones who have delayed coming to Christ because you felt unworthy.

God's plan for you is to be holy as He is holy. He wants first of all to cleanse you from your sins. He wants to cleanse you in the Blood of the Lamb.....Him who was crucified and paid the penalty for your sins. Then, as

you look to Jesus, pray to Him, study His Word, He wants to change you. He wants to conform you to the image of His Son. He wants to give you what you need so that you may live a holy life.

Why don't you commit your life to Him today? Then allow Him to change you.

Pastor Roger Deschamps.