

Ole Miss FCA Weekly Devotional: 11/30/09

The Power and Passion of the Master Coach, Elliot Johnson



Thought of the Week:

God is holy.

Verse of the Week:

Exalt the LORD our God and worship at His holy mountain, for the LORD our God is holy.
Psalm 99:9

A good manager is able to coach players who may have extremely different personalities. Teams need the bold, aggressive play of an extroverted star. But many stars are quiet and withdrawn, and their skills are equally important. The outstanding manager of men will ignore neither. He will blend both together to form a strong, cohesive unit.

If there is one attribute of God that modern man ignores, it is His holiness. Most of man's sermons are based upon God's love. Though God is love, it is equally true that God is holy. These two attributes do not rival each other, but they blend perfectly together. Nowhere do we see this blend more clearly than in the crucifixion of our Lord. God's holiness was displayed as He poured out His wrath upon Christ. Likewise, nowhere was His love more perfectly displayed than when the Lord Jesus took the sin of mankind upon Himself. Jesus said, "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). God's love is not wishy-washy but is complemented by His perfect holiness. Time and time again, the patriarchs, the prophets, the righteous kings of Israel, the disciples, and the apostles describe God as holy. They agree with the angels of heaven who sing, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of His glory" (Isaiah 6:3).

God's holiness has two dimensions. First, He is set apart. The Hebrew word for holy is *qadosh*, which means to "be marked off" or "withdrawn from common use." It could also be translated "to be separate." The word holy was used for objects or places, which were set aside for worship. Even the pagan religions used the word holy to describe their objects of worship. Holy carries with it the idea of separateness or distinctness from ordinary or common use. It was this attribute of God that Moses, after seeing the great deliverance of God from the hands of the Egyptians, proclaimed, "Who is like you among the gods, O LORD? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in praises, working wonders?" (Exodus 15:11). As Isaiah compares the nations of the world to God, the Holy One says, "To whom, will you compare me? Or who is my equal?" (Isaiah 40:25). Our God is far above all creation. There is no one like Him in all the universe. No one can give Him counsel. Who told Him how to create the world?" No one! No nation can overcome Him, for they are as a "drop in the bucket" to Him. God is holy, and whatever He separates for His use becomes holy. Man must have an attitude of awe and praise for the One who sits atop the universe. Awesome is our God! Psalm 99:3 says, "Let them praise your great and awesome name! He is holy." When God is present, even the ground becomes holy (Exodus 3:5). The place in the tabernacle/temple where God met the priests once a year was called the Most Holy Place (Exodus 26:33; 1 Kings 6:16). People, places, and things that are set aside for God's use are called holy, for anything God becomes involved in is made holy.

The second dimension of God's holiness involves His imputation of "sainthood" to man! In the New Testament, believers are called saints. The word saint is the Greek noun *agios*, which comes from the Greek verb *agiazō*, which means "to be set apart as sacred to God; made holy; consecrate." Believers are set apart as sacred to God and are to be used for His purposes! The Apostle Peter describes believers as, "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people

for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9 NAS). What a privilege He has conferred upon us!

God's holiness means that He is morally pure and without the spot or stain of sin. In 1 John 1:5, John says, "God is light; in Him there is no darkness at all." Wow! God is absolutely pure! Habakkuk 1:13 says, "Your eyes are too pure to look upon evil; you cannot tolerate wrong."

Because God is perfectly holy, He hates sin (Zechariah 8:17). He can't even be tempted by evil (James 1:13). God is so pure that not even one single thought of evil or sin can ever enter His mind. Because He is perfectly holy, it is impossible for Him to sin. That's the way He desires us to live, free of sin. What a comfort to know the God who is holiness personified! What a privilege to live for Him!

Time Out:

- 1) What does 1 Peter 1:13-16 tell us about the proper response to the holiness of God?
- 2) Romans 12:1-2 tells us we are to live holy lives. Study the action words in these two verses. What action should you take? In view of God's command, how does the way you compete in athletics differ from the world's way of competing?
- 3) Read the resolve of David in Psalm 101. Living a life pleasing to God involves saying yes to His commands and saying no to false ways. List things to which God wants you to say yes. Now list things to which God wants you to say no.
- 4) What motivates you? Meditate upon the holiness of God. As you do so, praise will flow from your lips and a deep desire to please Him will follow.