

Romans 8:2-4 - How to Be Holy- 13 Nov 2011

I'd like us to start with this question: 'Do you know what occupational hymns are? Occupational Hymns. These are Christian songs that people of particular jobs or occupations may like to sing. Let me give you some examples:

If you are a Baker, maybe you would like to sing 'I Need Thee Every Hour'. (Laughter). A bit of a corny start but we will have more of that, alright?

The next one, if you are a Medical Technician, you may say 'Revive Us Again'.

This one is easy: If you are a Dentist, you will sing 'Crown Him With Many Crowns'. (Laughter)

The next one may be a bit harder ~ Gossiper. What would you sing? Anyone? Gossiper? (a member shouted out the answer). "Wah, very smart, Veneeta." ~ 'Oh, For A Thousand Tongues'. I now know who the gossiper in our church is. I'm just kidding. I'm just kidding.

Alright. Next one: A Politician. What do politicians like to sing? Well, politicians love to make promises. And so 'Standing On The Promises'.

Next one, a Shopper. I am sure there are many shopaholics in modern day Singapore. A shopper loves this song ~ 'Sweet By And By'. (Laughter).

And the last one: A Tailor. A tailor loves to sing: 'Holy, Holy, Holy'.

Well, I hope this is a light-hearted way to get your attention. As we focus on the wonderful majestic theme of holiness. Holiness is a glorious teaching in the scripture. Why? Because God is holy. The bible tells us that when the angels declare God, they say 'Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts. The whole earth is full of His glory. He is the thrice-holy God: Holy, Holy, Holy. And God Himself said in 1 Peter: "Be ye holy for I am holy." So God is holy and He also calls for man to be holy. He says to us. He says to the world: "Be ye holy". You say why? Why should I be holy? The reason: "For I am holy." If man is to know God, if man is to have an intimate relationship with God, if man is to have deep intimacy with the God of the Heavens, he must be holy. Because the bible says in Hebrews 12: "Without holiness, no man shall see God". So there is a great reason and motivation for us to be holy because He is holy and that's what is needed in order for us to have sweet communion with Him. But then, what is holiness?

03:32

In this modern day society, when we mention the word 'holy' or when we say 'you are a holy man', you tend to squirm. 'I don't want to be a holy man. I don't want to be called holy because to me holy is a weird word, it's a strange word. It's not cool to be holy. Because the stereotypical image of a holy man is this ~ he is bald, he wears white robes, he walks around barefooted. He doesn't eat much. He doesn't sleep much. He likes to live in caves and mountains. He talks funny, he walks funny. He is just a weird guy. And being holy is just not cool to us.

However, can I say to you holiness is super cool? This is modern day young people's lingo. It is super cool. It's awesome, dude. It is great. Why? Because holiness is not about shaving your head or walking around barefooted. Holiness is cool, is beautiful, is majestic. Because holiness is thinking like God and being like God. How cool is that? It's being like Jesus. It's thinking like Jesus. And I think holiness is a beautiful, attractive thing.

C.S. Lewis said: 'How little people know who think that holiness is dull. When one meets the real thing, it is irresistible.'

Because holiness is being like God. And there's nothing more attractive, nothing more majestic and beautiful than God. And so holiness is beautiful. It's not strange. It's not weird. It is awesome. It is cool.

The question now is 'how can you and I be holy'? God is holy and in order to have intimacy with Him, He calls us to be holy. We want to be holy but how can I be holy. That is the theme of our thinking this morning 'How to be Holy'.

If you want to be holy, the first thing you need to know is that you can't make yourself holy, ok? You say, 'what kind of a start is that, Pastor? Well, that's how the bible starts. That's how the word of God teaches us. If you want to be holy, recognise this: you can't make yourself holy. Shaving your head or wearing a white sash won't make you holy. You have no power to make yourself holy. Why? Romans 8 and verse 3, the basis of our thinking this morning, says "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh...". I can't make myself holy because the flesh is weak. In and of ourselves, there is no power; there is no ability to meet up to the standards, the requirements, of the holy law of God.

06:36

I've no power. There's a power failure here. Now the law of God is beautiful, it is holy; it is just, it is good, according to Paul in Romans 7. It's got to be good because the law is an expression of who God is. The problem is that we cannot reach up or attain that standard because in us, in our flesh, there is no power to obey. There is no power to obey consistently. There is no power to obey completely. There is no power to obey whole-heartedly. So, in a sense, the law is good but it cannot make us holy because we cannot find that strength and ability within us. And so it is said that the law of God can reveal your sins but it cannot remove your sins. You have no power to look at the mirror and then remove the stains of your life. It can only show you, but it cannot save you. The law of God can help you detect your sins but it cannot help you defeat your sins. The flesh is weak. Power failure. There's a quote, again I'll flash it up for you to see:

'The Law of Sin has Might, but not Right
The Law of Moses has Right, but not Might.'

'The Law of Sin has Might, but not Right'. You know sin is powerful? It has gotten the whole world in its grip. If you are outside of Jesus Christ, you are under the grip and dominion of sin. Sin is powerful. But it is not right. It is wrong. What about the law of God? What about the law of Moses? Well, the law of Moses has Right, but it has not Might. It is the right thing, it is the holy, the just, the good thing but it has not the power to change me. And so Paul begins in verse 3 by saying you can't make yourself holy because this is 'mission impossible' for you. The flesh is weak.

'For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh..' ~ Rom 8:3

Now seeing that man is weak, impotent and unable to change his life, unable to make himself an inch closer to God, God now steps in. The bible tells us in verse 3 that God sent "His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.." Huh? When we are in misery, when we are helpless and in sin, God steps in and gives us His Son. You know something? God did not just give us a message. He did not just give us a star. He didn't give us just an angel or even an archangel. He gave us His own Son. Look at the words there ~ 'own son'. The tenderness, the compassion, the love and mercy of God encapsulated in that singular word 'own' because He loves us. And sees us helpless, hopeless, He initiates salvation's plan.

09:52

I want you to note also the precision of the word of God, how accurate the bible is. Paul specifically says that Jesus came 'in the likeness of sinful flesh'. Beautiful. You

change it any way, you are going to corrupt something. Why? Let me show you. If Paul says that Jesus is 'in the likeness of flesh', take away the word 'sinful' in the likeness of flesh. You have a problem because you are saying that Jesus is a like man. But He is not like man. He is man. He IS man. Hundred percent man. So Paul is careful to preserve that.

On the other hand, if you take away 'likeness' ~ 'He comes in sinful flesh'. You are again going into trouble. Why? Because you are saying that Jesus has sins in His life. So, no, Paul is careful to preserve both understanding that Jesus came 'in likeness of sinful flesh'. Hundred percent man, hundred percent with the infirmities of man in that He thirsted, He hungered, He was weak, He was tired, He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. The likeness of sinful flesh. He got to be hundred percent man. He got to be hundred percent pure in order to be our perfect sacrifice. And this is what Jesus did 'For sin condemned sin in the flesh'. He defeated sin on the cross. He paid the price, the penalty of sin and He broke us free from the bondage of sin. Jesus dealt sin a death blow on the cross.

11:40

You see, man cannot make himself holy. That's why God sent, not an angel, not a message, but sent His Son to defeat sin for us. Now why did God do that? Why did God do that? Look at verse 4. The bible tells us He did that so 'That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us'. Jesus didn't die so that you may continue to live in sin. Jesus didn't die so that now you can do whatever you want. Jesus died so that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us. Jesus died so that you and I may be holy.

I like what Augustine had to say. Augustine said, years ago, that 'Grace was given for one reason, that the law might be fulfilled'. Why did Jesus come? Why did God send His Son? That men and women today might fulfil the law of God. That men and women today may be like Jesus. Jesus fulfilled the law. He came not to destroy the law of the prophet. He came to fulfil. And being like Jesus, being like God requires the fulfillment of the law. And grace was given for this purpose that we might fulfil the law.

We live in a day and age that thinks from a man's point of view all the time. It's not theocentric. It is not based on what God has to say. It is based on what I want. And so in churches today when we share the gospel, when we share the word of God, we tend to start from where man is. And this is how we preach the gospel, we say, 'God wants

you to be happy' and we preach it as if that is the primary objective of the gospel. I believe, certainly, if we come to Jesus Christ, we have joy, we have peace, we have hope, we have happiness, we have all this that is found in Christ. But be careful about putting the cart before the horse.

It is true that Matthew 5:6 tells us "Blessed are the pure in heart." Happy are the people who are pure in heart. Holy people will be happy people but the primary objective of the gospel is not first happiness, but first holiness, you see. Let me give you a quote from an author I've just read and I think he puts it well.

He says, 'when preachers preach or speak as if God's chief desire is for man to be happy, then multitudes with problems flock to Jesus. Those who have ill health, marital troubles, financial frustrations and loneliness look to the Lord for the desires of their hearts, each conceives of joy as being found in health, peace, prosperity or companionship. But in search of illusive happiness, they are not savingly joined to Jesus Christ. Unless man will be holy, God is determined that they shall be forever miserable and damned.'

Jesus came that the righteousness of the law be fulfilled. Without genuine repentance from sin to God, there is no true salvation, you see. And there are flocks of people today who name the name of Jesus, who call themselves Christians, who regularly attend church, and all they want are the goodies from Christianity. But they are not willing to turn from sin into a life of holiness and likeness to God. It's like the multitudes that flock to Jesus when He walked on earth. They followed Him because they wanted bread. They wanted to see His miracles but they didn't want Jesus. They didn't want to turn from their sins. And so when the church and when the people of God put the cart before the horse, we run into trouble because we have no real evangelism. There is no real discipleship.

Again, let me say this clearly. I believe holy people will be happy people. Blessed are the pure in heart. But the primary objective is not happiness but holiness. Grace is given that the law of righteousness will be fulfilled. That's why the Holy Spirit is not called the jolly Spirit. It's the Holy Spirit. He's not here to satisfy your wants and desires. It's primarily to lead us to likeness with Jesus Christ, with God. I believe if you today are born again, you're a child of God, you've truly trusted in Jesus as your Saviour, you've repented, turned from sin unto Him; you have understood what I've just said. In fact, I think you would agree because in your heart is that divinely implanted new nature, a new desire that says 'God, I want to obey you. I delight in the word of God.' Why? 'Because you've given me a new nature that seeks after you.'

03:23

I believe you look at the law of the bible and say this is sweet. This is good. This is what I want. And you will love what God loves and you will hate what God hates because that's the nature He has created in you as you came to Jesus. You hate sin because it is hateful to God. You hate sin because it is sins that nailed your Saviour to the cross. And so you will, I believe, in your life, countless times, determined, resolved in your life to say 'Lord, I am going to obey you. I am going to live for you. I will not sin. I will keep my mouth shut when I am tempted to scold or to be angry. Lord, I promise you today, I will live for you.'

And so you go to your quiet time in the morning. You begin praying to God, reading the bible and you say 'God I am going to honour you today. I will not sin. I will not shout at my wife anymore. I will not be an angry driver.' I'm going to be a good boy because I really want to obey you. And so you go downstairs and you have your breakfast with your wife and your children. Sweet time you have. You have your toast, orange juice and whatever else you have. You have sweet communion. You have a sweet time of breakfast. You are such a sweet husband. Last time you were grouchy but now you say 'I am going to be a good husband'. So you lovingly cherish your wife, say sweet things, and everyone was happy.

And now you are about to bring them to their school and to their workplace and so you drive all in a sweet pink car. (Laughter) You just imagine a bright sunny day and you say to yourself 'it is a good day. I am living for Jesus. I am not going to sin. I am going to love my family. I am going to obey God'. Wah, in a bright pink car on a bright sunny day. Everything is so nice and the conversation in the car is so sweet. Oh, you are so lovey-dovey. Then you drive and you drive and, suddenly, a red sports car cuts in front of you, cuts in your lane and jam brakes right in front and you are almost going to kiss his backside. That close. You are about to crash. And so you determined in yourself 'I am going to teach that red sports car driver how to drive.' So you downshift the gear, you step on the pedal and you overtake him; look at him as you overtake him and you cut into his lane and brakes right in front of him. You say, see, this is the way you should do it.

The red sports car knowing that you have done this on purpose now downshifts as well, accelerates and because his is a sports car and yours is a 'lau pok chia' (a Hokkien phrase meaning 'rickety old car'), (Laughter), very quickly he overtakes you and does the same thing to you and now slowly moves along hogging the lane that you are in. Now you are really saying 'you want to challenge me, huh?' And so you

again downshift to gear one, you floor the pedal you overtake not just the red sports car but the police car in front. (Laughter). You want to teach all of them how to drive. Oh, this time you are red, steam is coming out of your head. The children are all petrified and your wife just shakes her head and says, 'tsk tsk tsk, there you go again.'

06:50

Oh, those words. Those words are worse than the red car jam braking in front of you and you fly into a rage of fury and you turn into Incredible Hulk but red in colour, not green. And you begin an enormous shouting match in the car. Your kids are crying at the back. You dropped your kids off to school. You drive onwards to your wife's workplace, you drop her off at the workplace and she slams the door in front of you and you 'ekkk..' still shouting at her.

And now you are all alone in the car. You are going to drive off to where you work and in the car, in the stillness, in the quietness in the car; you said to yourself 'what in the world just happened? Why did I lose it? I started the day saying 'God, I want to honour you. God, I will not shout at my wife. Lord, I will not be an angry driver but what just came over me? I sincerely wanted to live for you, Lord. I tried, but now I am defeated. I am discouraged. I feel deflated, 'pung-jek' (a Malay word meaning 'punctured'). And, by the way, this story is not a once-in-a-lifetime story. This is a story like an old movie keeps replaying over and over and over again in your life.

You say, 'what's wrong?' You say, 'I know. I know how to get myself fixed now. I need to go for more bible conferences. I need to go for more church camps. I need to go for more preaching. And so you sign up for many, many conferences and in the conference, you are awaiting the great pastor preacher preach a motivational message and you say, 'now I know how to get right with God'. And so when the preacher says, 'for those who want to consecrate their life and live for Jesus, would you step forward?' And you step forward. If he asks you to step sideward, you will also step sideward. Whatever he tells you to do, you'll do. If he asks you to raise your right hand, you will raise. Left hand, you will raise. Both hands you will raise. Even if he tells you to stand on your head and spin, you will also do it because you really want to live for Jesus Christ. And so you do all that.

But the next day when you go back to your world, your family, your workplace, in Chinese we call this 'Da Hui Yuan Xing', meaning you are the same guy as you were before you went for the conference. You are still losing it. You are still flying into a rage of fury. You are still indulging in sexual immoralities. You say 'What's up? Lord,

I know I ought to obey. I want to obey. I tried to obey but I just can't seem to do it. I'm defeated. I'm deflated. I'm discouraged.' You say 'Why?' Let me tell you why. I think we go into these cycles of trying and failing, and then trying and failing, and then trying and failing because we fail to realize and remember the first premise. You cannot make yourself holy.

10:30

Sheer will power alone cannot cut it. There is no D-I-Y Christianity that is taught in the scriptures. You can't. You remember Peter? The man who always puts his foot in his mouth. Jesus said, 'Hey, you guys got to watch and wait, watch and pray.' Peter says, 'nah, no need. Even if everyone is offended in you, I will not be offended because I am Peter.... Peter.' Aw, that confidence in himself. Jesus says 'Hey, you got to pray. We are now at the Garden of Gethsemane. You got to pray that you will not enter into temptation.' Peter probably thought 'What pray?' I am Peter ~ the great Peter. The man who is given the keys to the kingdom of God. What pray? Sleep. And so he went into dreamland. And because he was so confident in and of himself, you read of him failing the Lord so miserably when he denied the Lord three times. Why? Because he was confident in himself. But, you see, this is exactly why we fail over and over and over again. There is a sincere desire but we resort to the flesh. We resort to ourselves and that's where we fail. So Paul is careful. He tells us Jesus died for us:

'That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.' ~ Romans 8:4

The flesh is weak. There's power failure but He gave you the Holy Spirit. You know what a blessing this is? When you received Jesus into your life, not only did He make you a new creature, a new man, a new creation; He changed your heart, He changed your desires, He changed your inner man. He also gave you His Holy Spirit. What an amazing thing this is that the God of the Heavens, the Spirit of the Living God, lives in me today. Why? Because we have no power to live the Christian life. And He has given us all power in His Spirit.

Andrew Murray is a deep thinker and writer. And this is what he had to say. Thankfully this is simple. He says here:

'They think that, because they have the will, it is enough, and that, now, they are able to do.' But he says, 'This is not so.'

Having the will alone is not enough. You are still unable to do.

'The new will is a permanent gift and attribute of the new nature, but the power to do is not a permanent gift, but must be received each moment from the Spirit.'

The will, the new desire, nature, is given permanently within your soul. Yes, you may struggle with the desires of the flesh but it is always there.

However, the power to live that Christ-like life, though it's in the Holy Spirit, it must be accessed moment by moment. You see the person of the Holy Spirit is with us forevermore but the power to do so must be accessed by faith when we are conscious of our own impotence and we receive each moment from the Spirit. He goes on to say

'It is the man who is conscious (cognizant) of his own impotence as a believer who will learn that by the Holy Spirit he can lead a holy life.'

It's got to be the work of the Holy Spirit. Not only the desire must be right, our dependence must be right. Dependence not in ourselves but in the Spirit of God. You see, the bible tells us:

'For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.' ~ Romans 8:2

There are two laws in your life today. The law of sin and death that is still residing in the flesh, not removed from us today. And the other law which is the law of life in Christ Jesus. Two laws that can be exerted in your life. The law of sin and death is like gravity. It constantly wants to pull you down. It's a power that seems to drag you, pull you away from God. But there is that power that is in the Spirit of Christ residing in us.

Let me illustrate this: There's a boy who asks his daddy, 'Daddy, what is gravity?' And Daddy says, 'Well, it's a force of nature that pulls everything that is high up there downwards. For example, if you throw a stone, gravity will pull it down. That's gravity, son.' And the son then asks, 'But, Daddy, why is it then that the tulips, the flowers, are growing upwards and pointing upwards?' Daddy says, 'Ah, because there is a law of life in the flowers that causes it to grow upwards. Cut that tulip off its stalk and it will fall straight to the ground.'

02:40

Christians will fall straight to the ground when we have not the life in the Spirit. You see, it is when we are connected, looking to the Spirit of God that there is the life of the Spirit of God in us spiraling upwards, spiraling us onwards to Christlikeness and holiness. So, you see, my friends, it's not about you having a D-I-Y, do-it-yourself, brand of Christianity. It's about the life in the Spirit. That's why, I think, scripture is very precise. In verse 4 it says : "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled IN us..." (and not fulfilled BY us). It's not us. It's fulfilled in us as we walk after the Spirit. It's "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit," saith the Lord. Man has no might, no power, spiritually speaking, that can make himself an inch closer or holier before God.

I read about a pastor. His name is Ray Stedman. I have mentioned him several times before. And when he first graduated from bible seminary, he longed for power from God. He wanted to be used by God in great ways. And so he determined to find the secret of power. He first looked to men ~ great men, bible-teaching men, men whom God has used. And he started to ape them, or copy them, or imitate them. There was a man in his life that was influential then. And he was Dr. J. Vernon McGee. And he copied Dr. J. Vernon McGee. When he wore red shirts (J. Vernon McGee was said to keep wearing red shirts), Ray Stedman thought that is the secret of his power and he also kept wearing red shirts only to find that there is no power in red shirts. He tried imitating other men but he didn't find that that was the secret or that was the answer to his pursuit. He then felt or thought that maybe the power lies in the messages. The sermons great men preach. And so he memorised, he tried to remember what the message is about. He tried to regurgitate it in various conferences. He said to himself: 'if I were to just master the message and repeat it in this conference, there will be great power'.

05:15

More often than not, he falls flat on his face. The messages just didn't have the power, the hand of God, upon it. So, at the end of the day, this is what Ray Stedman had to say. He said, 'at last, baffled and defeated, I learned the lesson that power does not reside in man or the message. Power belongeth unto God - Psalm 62:11 - and God never gives it to anyone. He will live it through man but He never gives it to anyone. Power belongs to God. It is in the Holy Spirit today, in our lives. It's not a part from Him, but it is in Him.

What are you and I to do in response to what God has to say in Romans 8 where the bible tells you that you are to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. That is to

say, you are to trust, you are to depend, you are to keep looking to the Spirit. Let me tell you a secret to holiness. Most of us strive to be holy by keeping the law, isn't it? I mean, I want to be holy so I keep the law. And that becomes my primary starting point. I believe holiness is by law-keeping. The answer is no. The key, and the secret, to holiness is first walking in the Spirit because if you look to keeping the law you will fail because you are doing it in your flesh. And it is powerless. But when you look to the Spirit He is the one who enables you to fulfil the law. So it is not law-keeping that makes you holy. It is walking in the Spirit.

An example: A temptation comes into your life. What do you do? Say, I can do this. I can defeat the temptation. Let me just obey. Sheer willpower. I am a stronger man, willpower-wise, compared to others. I can take it. And when you say I can do it that is when you will fall miserably like Peter. But when temptation comes you say 'Lord, I can't do this. I need your Spirit to do this'. Not law-keeping but walking in the Spirit. You see, if someone irritating comes into your life, you have not in yourself the love to love him. You have not. The works of the flesh are manifest. It's selfish. But when you are walking in the Spirit, then the fruit of the Spirit is love. The key is not law-keeping. It's walking in the Spirit. And he bears forth that fruit through your life ~ love, patience, long-suffering, meekness. See, the secret is you can't meet temptations in the flesh by willpower. You got to be walking in the Spirit ~ Romans 8:4.

Remember the quote I gave you:

'The Law of Sin has Might, but not Right
The Law of Moses has Right, but not Might.'

You try to obey in your flesh. It is not going to help you.

But this is the secret: 'The Law of the Spirit has both Right & Might.'
Walk in the Spirit.

I was with my son this week. And he was supposed to practice drawing circles. He has some fine motor skill co-ordination issues and we need to help him through. And so he has to practice drawing circles. Now, I was with him, beside him; but not really helping him. I was just doing my work and I gave him a task: 'Shawn, you got to finish drawing the circles on this page before you could move on to play your games.' My son is a typical procrastinator (he was moving about making 'ee-ee-ee' sounds) and he just dilly-dally the whole time, highly distracted and couldn't get a single circle off. And I said, 'Shawn, you got to do this.' My voice was a bit louder. He looked at me for a while but just went back to his 'ee-ee-ee' mode. I sort of gave him a threat:

'Shawn, if you don't draw this, you are not going to play your games.' And he tried a little bit harder but still he couldn't get anything off. I cheekily 'piak' (patted) his backside just to remind him 'Shawn, you'd better listen to Daddy'. But still he struggled and could not do it.

And then I stopped my work and I asked, 'Shawn, do you want Daddy to help you?' And from 'ee-ee-ee' that kind of a frowning face, he brightened up with the brightest smile you could imagine. He says 'Yes!'. He exclaimed 'Yes!'. So happily I came behind and beside him, my arms wrapped around him. He is a left-hander. I held his hand and together we drew the most beautiful circle. (Laughter). Very nice. And Shawn says, 'Daddy, one more. I want to try again.' And he tries again. He says 'one more'. And he kept drawing and drawing and he really enjoyed that process. I enjoyed that time with him.

02:18

I wish more Christians would learn to be like my son who would rejoice that God is here to help me. The Law keeps telling you what you need to do but you have no ability to draw the circle. You cannot be holy. You cannot be wholesome. You can't draw it well. But you know something? God is there. God is not like me. I am distracted. I have my things to do and I did not come alongside Shawn readily. But God today is right in your life. And living that Christian life is one of joy ~ 'one more circle, God. One more victory, God. One more conquest, God. Lord, you can help me.' And you know what? That is a sweet relationship of partnership and intimacy as your God comes alongside you and lives His life ~ the life of Christ ~ through you.

My friends, God desires your holiness because that's the greatest blessing, that you'll be like Him, and that you will enjoy Him in intimacy as a result. And God is fully devoted to this objective in your life. You know why? Because the three persons of the Godhead are fully involved in the process of sanctification in you. I see this here. God sent His Son. God the Father, in His love, sent, and it is the Son, the second person of the Godhead who died on the cross. And today, it is the Holy Spirit who lives in you that you may be holy.

As Christians, as people of God, today you know what you need to do? You simply need to receive that by faith. You first look to Jesus that He will give you salvation. He gives you positional holiness. And ever so often, daily, moment by moment in your life, you look to the Spirit and He gives you practical holiness. My friends, God is fully devoted in the process of sanctification in your life. The objective of the gospel

is that we will be a holy people to show forth praises unto His name. Let us pray like Robert Murray M'Cheyne 'Lord make me as holy as a saved man can be.' Let's bow for a word of prayer.

This morning, God is calling us to a beautiful understanding of scripture. Our God is not here to whack us, as we have studied last Sunday, but is here to desire the best for us. The best that includes, that must be, about turning away from sin that is destructive and damaging, to that which is beautiful and lovely ~ God Himself.

05:38

My dear friends, if you are here with us for the first time and you do not know Jesus, scripture tells us that you cannot reach God by yourself. The flesh is weak, you can't. You can't make yourself acceptable. You can't make yourself worthy of God. But you need to stop and realize that God has already done it. He has already sent His Son who has already died on the cross for the sins of all those who would believe in Him. And He calls you today to receive, to believe and to trust in Jesus Christ. And as you do so, you have positional righteousness. God sees you in His Son and you are forever forgiven. You are never to be condemned and you are saved from your sins. Would you do that? We will pray that the Spirit of the Living God will help you to have that new birth that you would be born again.

But, my friends, if you today have been a believer. You are saved. You know that Jesus is your saviour but, like what we have described earlier, you are like that man that keeps trying and failing, trying and failing, and you feel deflated, discouraged and you throw your hands up into the air and say 'Lord, I will never make it.' My friends, you are right. You will never make it. But His Spirit will make it. His Spirit is the Spirit of Life. The Spirit of holiness. The Spirit of Christ. He will spiral you towards Christlikeness as you yield yourself to Him. Why does He do all that? Again, so that you may have intimacy with God. So, let us pray.

Father, we thank you today for your word. And we do ask that, beyond just knowledge and facts and truths that we hear of today, would you allow us to make choices of faith? So work in our hearts that we would live that life of victory in your Spirit. We thank you again that this is your desire and we can be confident that you who have begun this good work in us will perform it unto the day of Christ Jesus. We are thankful, dear Lord, that Father, Son, Holy Spirit are fully devoted to this process in our lives and may your church be a church of holy people that will bring the good

news in our lives to the lost and dying world. We pray all this now, humbly, in Jesus' name. Amen. God bless.