

Holiness

A Reflection

At times “holiness” has seemed an unattractive word to me - rigid and unfriendly. How could I be “holy” and still live freely and naturally? How could I ever relax and be myself?

At times “holiness” has been a theological word. The Bible convinces me that God wants us to live a holy life and has made that life available to us. But when I've listened to theological teaching and compared it to the Bible, I don't always hear the same things. “Holiness” has involved some theological struggle for me.

And at times “holiness” has been a frustrating word. What Bible verse is more intimidating than this one? *“Like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior.”* (1 Peter 1:15, NASB). Any who have tried to discipline themselves into a holy life have known plenty of frustration.

But “holiness” has changed for me over the years. It's not unattractive or frustrating. As I've begun to know Christ better and enjoy Him as a living Friend, I find I don't want to interrupt that relationship. It means too much to me. I've experienced the difference He makes in me, and I want to be led by Him and molded by Him alone. I like myself better when He is shaping me.

Holiness has become a living relationship with Jesus as a personal being. It is the freedom of being guided and formed completely by Him. Do you know how exciting that is after years of struggling with my own weakness?

I'm not perfect. The more I know Him, the more I realize I fall short. But when I do, it's because I've not prayed and depended on Him. When I don't look to Him, I grow self-centered, and my thoughts and actions reflect it.

But forgiveness is immediately available. And when I trust Him, He responds to me and helps me respond to Him. He changes my feelings and reactions toward Him and toward those around me.

That makes me love and trust Him and desire His constant working in me all the more. Our relationship keeps growing. Praise to You, Lord!