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March 25, 2012 10:15 a.m.

"The Church Is Built on Holiness"

R.C. Sproul was asked what is the greatest need in the church today. He responded, "There are so many needs in the church today that it is difficult to single out one as the greatest. However, if I had to pick one, I would say the most fundamental need is an ever-growing awareness of the holiness of God."

My friend, Tom Barber, recently said to me this comparsion:

Revival is when the church is impacting the world.
Apostasy is when the world is impacting the church.

In light of that, do you believe we are in revival or apostasy?

* Masons have their special hand shake and other secret things that go on behind closed doors.
* Red Hat Soceity have their special hats of red and purple.
* Sports fans have their special colors, logos, and cheers.

Is the church different? Should the church be different?

That is what holiness is all about.

I. Defining Characteristic of God

Leviticus
Isaiah 6
Luke 5:8 Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees saying,

"Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."
Revelation

II. Defining Characteristic of the Body

Holiness should be the defining characteristic of the church.

We are predestined to be in the image of His Son.
Ephesians 5:27 He has promised that we would be a bride without spot and without blemish.

III. Distinguishing Characteristic of the Body

Holiness not been about culture, character and conversion. Your lifestyle.

If you were immoral, you were considered an outcast. Now if you are moral, you are considered weird and an outcast.

As we become more like Jesus, we will be more attractive.

In light of that, let me give you some quotes by Dr. Charles Stanley from his book The Wonderful Spirit filled life:
The fruit of the Spirit is the most effective evangelistic tool we have. Nothing is more powerful than the life characterized by love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. The most powerful sermon in the world can't match the power of a fruit-filled life. Why? Because unbelievers are not nearly as impressed with what we believe and preach as they are with how we act, especially under pressure. (page 118)

The life characterized by the fruit of the Spirit cannot help be noticed. It stands out like a candle in a dark room. It draws attention. It makes some people uncomfortable. It makes others mad. But it will consistently capture the curiosity of a few. There will always be a handful who say, "There's something different about you. What is it?" (page 119)

March 3, 2009 Dr. Chuck Kelley, President, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, said in chapel:

"In the New Testament world, they lived differently than their neighbors. That's why there were called Christians. It was a term of derision."

"The problem with our churches is that we don't witness to our neighbors, its that more of us do not look and live like Jesus."

"When was the last time you heard a joke about Baptists? It's not a good thing."

"We are blending in more than we are standing out."

Then he said, "Southern Baptists are becoming the new Methodists." Methodists made holy living a core value, but now they are debating the normalcy of homosexuality. There are experiencing the fastest loss of membership in the history of the United States.

He went on to say (my paraphrasing) "We watch the same movies and TV shows. It is as likely for drunkenness to appear at a Baptist wedding as any other."

IV. Dangerous Caution

We desire holiness, not hyprocrisy.

Is the church helping you to be a hyprocrite or holy?