

Holiness Unto The Lord

No Pleasure In Death

By Rev. George Leon Pike Sr.

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Introduction

I believe that one of the greatest mistakes of the church world today is their lack of understanding concerning the things of God. When someone does not thoroughly understand their Creator, they cannot properly relate to Him. It is like a little chick that has been separated from the hen, or that which has mothered it. It cannot find its way back into that warm, consoling environment, and so it becomes greatly alarmed. Fear and frustration strike the heart, when perhaps the mother hen is just around the corner of the barn and is diligently searching for the little chick.

Confusion always brings about that feeling of insecurity, that loneliness of being all alone in a great big world where no one cares, and where no one will offer a helping hand in the time of need. Oh my! That's such an awesome feeling! Terror begins to strike, and Satan begins to undermine the foundation of man. A person begins to stumble and stagger like a man drowning, clutching to a straw while he begins to lose sight of all the principles upon which life is founded. In that he has not been thoroughly indoctrinated with the Word of life, suddenly, he becomes aware of the fact that all hope is gone. He is at a total loss and doesn't know what to do.

There is a time when all of the additives of life fail, and there are no available means by which you may cope with the situation. The circumstantial environment of the web in which you are caught has become such a hideous prison until it seems impossible to retain sanity. It is at this point of desperation that you scream out in utter defeat, "Oh, dear God! Have mercy on me!"

It is then, and only then, that God can actually begin to relate to you, and you likewise, to God. When your ability, your powers of ingenuity, and all other sources have failed, it is at that time that Christ Jesus comes to your rescue, for it is written in the Scriptures that it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Remember that God has no pleasure in death. God is not pleased in seeing you defeated in your purpose or cause, so long as it is according to biblical standards, for He desires to strengthen and help you. The Bible teaches that God will not pervert a man in his cause.

Out of human weakness, godly strength is born. Out of the depths of despair, hope in Christ will create a possibility. To believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is to find a real refuge in the time of storm. To accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior is to find an eternal guide that knows the way through the shadows of death and deep despair.

This is why the Bible teaches us that we should call upon Him while He may be found. We can see the deepening shadows of tribulation as they begin to fall across the pathways of mankind.

Even the greatest leaders throughout the world have exhausted every means, and yet the problem still remains unsolved. They cannot find the answer, yet Christ is the answer. If you've never given Christ a chance at your life, let me encourage you to do so, for the time of His coming is at hand.

The Bible teaches, "Be ye also ready." May the Lord bless you. We are praying for you.

No Pleasure In Death

You know, it tells us here in the Word (Ezekiel chapter 18) that God has no pleasure in them that die. So many times, we deal with the subject, God the Spirit of life, and Jesus the Prince of life, and we try to emphasize that God hath no fellowship with death. God has a plan for death, but the one thing that we really need to get in our minds and settle deep down in our hearts is that God is not the instigator of death. God is not the one that sent death into the world. Death never came by God. It's never been God's plan. God had nothing to do with it, and He certainly has no pleasure in them that die. I want you to understand that. I've ministered so many times concerning life, and I've tried to impress upon you the importance of being able to understand and believe that God is life. There is a great need in your heart that you should believe that God is the Spirit of life, and God is concerned about life. If you don't believe this, then the devil can confuse you, take advantage of you, misuse you, and steal all of the blessings that God has for you in life. There are no blessings in death. There are blessings only in life, because God is the Spirit of life. Anything that is not life does not hold any blessings, because blessings exist within the realms of life. If there is no realm of life present, there are no blessings present, because there are no blessings in confusion. There are no blessings in death. All of the blessings of God are in the realms of life and in the world of light. We are the children of light, and we dwell in the world of light, and we are children that live in the Spirit of God, because we are born of the Spirit of God. Hallelujah! This is why God emphasizes to us in the Word that we should live holy and we should live righteously.

What are the benefits of living holy? What benefit do I get in walking before God or doing the right things? What benefit is it to me, in that I'm saved by faith? A lot of people ask, "Well, Brother Pike, you're saved by faith in God. What difference does it make?" It makes all the difference in the world, because faith will not work in a wicked heart. Faith will not come forth from a careless heart. Faith in God will not work in an unrighteous person. You must live right. You must give your deeds to God. Give Him your service. You must surrender your whole life to God if you're going to have faith, and to be saved, you must have faith. Faith will not work in a heart of iniquity. Faith will not come forth in a heart of unrighteousness; therefore, you must live right. You must do your best to keep your deeds right, to make your life conform to the ways of God, if you are ever going to have a heart that will produce faith, or a conviction that God loves and cares for you and has made a place for you.

So then, we must live right; otherwise, our hearts will condemn us. Now, the Bible tells me that if my heart condemns me, God is greater than my heart. He knoweth all things. He knows that I've been born of the Spirit, but He said that if my heart condemns me not, then I would have faith toward God, that whatever I ask of God, then I would receive of God. If I stumble and stagger when I know that I'm doing my very best, then I should never let condemnation overwhelm me. I should never be swallowed up by condemnation, because I have done my best. I have tried my best to please God; therefore, if I stumble, I should not condemn myself, but I should repent and say, "My God, forgive me. I made no plans to do that. It wasn't my purpose and desire, but God, Satan cunningly prepared a trap and caught me in it. O God, I beg of You to forgive me for it, and just put this thing behind me." Then I should go on with God.

Now, the Bible tells us that if we turn away from righteousness, that God will not remember all the good we've done. You know, a lot of people love to believe that if they've ever done anything good, that God is going to remember it when they come to the judgment, and if they've ever lived a few years for God or tried to do anything right, they love to believe that God, on the strength of that, is going to take them into heaven, no matter what they do for the rest of their life. I want you to know something friend, that God in His Word tells us that if you don't continue to do right, then all that you've ever done will be forgotten, and God will not remember any of your righteousness, but in your sins ye shall die.

Now you say, "But Brother Pike, what are we going to do with predestination?" We're going to do the same thing that Paul did. What did Paul do? Paul taught that we are predestinated in Christ. So then, if you are in Christ, you are predestinated unto God, and that, unto good works. My brother, if your deeds are not found in Christ, then your life is not found in Christ, and your predestination is not unto the kingdom of God nor unto eternal life. If your deeds and ways and desires are found in this world, your foreknowledge and predestination is unto eternal damnation and separation from God. Our predestination rests within Christ, if it be godly predestination.

The Bible tells us, "He that endureth unto the end shall be saved." If I hold on to what God has given me, if I continue to walk upright, and if I do everything I can to please God, then faith is going to be in my heart. If I struggle against this old outer force, which is my flesh, this power of evil that comes against me that is always harassing my mind; if I struggle against the outer man, the Adamic or natural man, and I fight against it with all that I have within me, then I can overcome it, and I can come into the great and wonderful inheritance of God.

The Bible teaches to abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul. Every one of us has a fleshly body or temple. We are tabernacling as an inner man in an outer body of clay. In this little temple or tabernacle, we go through the earth, and inasmuch as this inner man is on the inside, he is struggling against the outer forces of Satan. Paul speaks of corruptible flesh and he tells us that within our flesh (body) there dwelleth no good thing. Now, one thing that we've got to understand, brothers and sisters, is that you, me, or anybody else, it doesn't matter what church, organization, body of people, or whatever, we are all classified as corruptible flesh in the sight of God, and there is no good thing in the flesh. Paul tells us that to will is present, but the performance of that which is willed by the inner man, he couldn't find. He said, "I find that when I would do good, evil is present with me." Paul found in his outer man a law, warring against his inner man and against his inner mind, and that law, being strengthened by the powers of Satan, closed in on him, and when that force came, he found it harassed his mind and overrode his ability in the outer man. He couldn't make the outer man do anything, because that power was so great, and his human senses were subject to the passions and things of this world. The powers of oppression were so great that he couldn't manage them. Paul might have said, "I've got to have some kind of super strength or inner ability, some kind of divine intervention. I've got to have something that comes from somewhere that will rise up on the inside of me and put this outside being to silence." He did say, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" He said that his body was a living

death, and that he was caught within this body. He thanked God that He had sent His Son, Jesus, to die at Calvary, to take the corruptible flesh and nail it to Calvary, to put the middle wall of partition out of the way, thus making an end to that old outer man. It did away with that outer you, and there is no more outer you or outer me in the sight of God. As long as we walk in the Spirit, that outer you and outer me is dead, because it's been buried in the name of the Lord, and it does not exist in the sight of God anymore.

When God sees us after our new birth, He sees us as the body of the Lord Jesus Christ, bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh. Pilate said that he found no fault in this just person. So then, Paul added, "It's not I that liveth, but Christ that liveth within me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the Son of God. It pleased God to reveal His Son in me." This is the revelation of Jesus Christ.

You know, we who are the body of the Lord Jesus Christ are nothing less than the revelation of Jesus Christ made manifest to the world! Hallelujah! We should stand up for God and let the world see what God is doing for our inner man by overcoming the outer man.

Let me tell you something, friend. When you walk according to the passions of the body and the desires of the flesh, you might shout, dance, speak in tongues and confess Christianity all you want to, but you're going to die and go to hell. There is no escape for you, because God said that it would be that way. See, that outer man is condemned to die, for the Bible says that they that are in the flesh cannot please God, but ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now, if the Spirit of God dwells in you, then He shall quicken your mortal body by His Spirit, for with the same Spirit that He used to raise up Christ from the dead, He shall also quicken your mortal body.

So then, we see that Israel could not please God. This is why God chided with Israel, and was continually at variance with them. What was wrong with Israel? Israel did everything that they knew to do, but you see, they still couldn't please God. Why? Because ritualistics aren't going to please God. Trying to do things in the natural isn't going to please God, because at your very best efforts, it's going to be as filthy rags in the sight of God. Now, when you get full of the Holy Ghost, and your cup is running over with godliness, then you're going to find out that the old outer man is going to take a bow to the inner man, and God is going to do something very special for you.

Nevertheless, if I walk after the flesh, I must die, because I am condemned to die. But, I have escaped death. How did I escape death? By the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am now free from the bondage of the flesh. I am now free from the law of sin and death, free from that which hath a penalty of death upon the flesh, because the law hath no power over him that is dead. There is no power nor authority of the law over the man that is dead, because he is dead to the law. If I am dead to the law, then I can never die, because I am free from the law of sin and death. Hallelujah! The Bible tells us that death came because of sin, for the sting of death is sin, and sin gets its strength by the law; but if the law is folded up, laid away, then it hath no power or sting. So then, if it hath no sting, then it hath no power to kill me. If sin hath no power over me, then the sting of death is not there, because sin is the sting of death. If there is no sin, there is no death. Do you know what I'm saying, friend? The Bible says whosoever is born of God cannot sin. It didn't say that maybe he wouldn't sin if he got a case of do better, or if he tried to hold on, but it said he cannot sin. Then, if he cannot sin, he cannot die, because the sting of death is sin. Therefore, we have passed from death unto life, and shall never come into condemnation.

Now then, you say, "Brother Pike, how then do you account for what you just said: 'If a man does righteously and falls away?'" The Bible said that Judas also obtained part of this ministry. Is that right? The Bible also tells us that the spirit of Satan did not enter Judas until the supper, when Jesus gave him the sop. Then Jesus said, "That thou doest, do quickly!" Amen! Do you understand what I am saying? Somebody would say, "But Brother Pike, if you do righteously, and then turn and do wickedly, all of your righteousness shall not be remembered, and in your sins you shall die. How do you account then for what you are saying?" The Bible says that if they'd been of us, they, no doubt, would have continued with us, but they went out from us, that it may be manifest that they were never of us. Somebody might ask, "Now, do you mean to tell me, Brother Pike, that they can do righteously and still not be of us?" They certainly can! A man can come and do righteously, but he still may not be born of God. He may come in and do good almsdeeds and still not be born of God. The Bible tells us that the satanic ministers of our day can transform themselves into ministers of light. These have the ability, by the transforming of their minds, to minister the Word of light to you, but that does not mean that they are right with God.

Paul said that after you have come to the knowledge of the truth, having been partakers of the Holy Ghost, and having tasted of the heavenly gift and the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, then if you fall away, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but only the fearful looking forward to the fiery indignation of God that shall devour His adversaries. So then, we understand that once we receive a knowledge of God, it is required of us. You cannot go back into the world, and as you say, backslide, and turn around and say, "Well, God said to be hot or cold! I'm not going to be a hypocrite! I'm just going to be cold, and God will have mercy on me." I want you to know that when you come to the knowledge of God, you can never be cold again. People that are cold are those that are considered not to know anything about God. God will have mercy because of their ignorance, but friend, when you come to know God, you can never be cold again. If you turn away from God, you are only in between. You are in the place where God will spew you out of His mouth, and you are in the place where you will reproach God and the world will see it. Knowing that you have been with God, and then to turn back to the beggarly elements of this world, you stir up the wrath of God and He will literally destroy you. The Bible says, "Beware, ye that forget God, lest I tear you into pieces."

All right, look at Israel. What has caused the Lord to be so wroth with Israel, who are termed the apple of His eye? It is simply because they had learned about the things of God. They were better off never to have known the way than to come into the ways of God and then turn around.

Oh friend, let me tell you something right now. You that have come to the knowledge of God, whether you be young, middle aged, or elderly people: the greatest mistake you ever made in your life was coming to the knowledge of God if you are not going to serve Him. Did you know that the worse thing that ever happened to Israel was when they received the law? Israel was doing fine until they received

the law. The mercies of God were with Israel. God led Israel like a son. He loved them, but when God gave Israel the law, and it said that thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not covet, thou shalt not do these things, then when Israel continued to do it, having those things in their mind and heart, it caused God's wrath to burn against them like a flame of fire. Just think, four hundred and thirty years before the law ever came, God gave our father Abraham a plan. Hallelujah! It wasn't by the law, because by the law no flesh shall be justified. By the law came the knowledge and strength of sin. Death came by sin, although four hundred and thirty years before the law ever came, God looked down from heaven, took a man of faith and said, "Thou art My friend, because you believe in Me. You did not withhold that which was dear to your heart. Thou art the friend of God." The Bible says that God justified Abraham by faith. Years before that, when Enoch came along, he walked with God for over three hundred years, and was not, for God took him. When we get the record of it, Paul tells us in the New Testament that before Enoch's translation, he had this testimony, that he pleased God and was translated by faith that he should not see death. I know there are Bible scholars in the world that lack understanding. They say that Enoch must come back and die, and that every man must taste of death. Now, I've said many times that if Enoch comes back and dies, it will break the Scriptures, and the whole Bible will be in error. The Scriptures would be broken, but the Bible tells us that the Scriptures cannot be broken. You say, "Where did you get that?" Paul said, "By faith, Enoch was translated that he should not see death." Brother, if he has to come back and die, then it's going to change the whole situation.

So then, when we think about the glory, power, and ability of God, and what He does by faith, it's such a great moment that we're living in! Hallelujah! When the law came, sin and death came. The Bible tells us that if there had been any kind of law that God could have given that would have saved mankind, He would not have caused Christ to come into this world and die.

Paul and Peter once had a dispute, because Peter got turned around. Some of the apostles came together, and it shook Peter up, and he turned and began to withdraw from them that were walking by faith. Paul the apostle, just as bold as a lion, stepped out into the midst of them, and said, "I know you've got the keys to the kingdom, Peter, but I blame you to your face because you're to be blamed. If salvation, or the grace of God, is come by the law, then Jesus Christ died in vain, and all hope is gone. But I'm not going to frustrate the grace of God. If there had been a law that could have saved man, God wouldn't have sent His Son down here to die." Glory to God! Paul had the revelation of Jesus Christ. He understood what he was doing, where he had been, and what he was telling them. Peter didn't say anything, because he knew that God was with Paul. Peter in turn said, "I tell you, Paul says things that are hard to be understood, and they that are unlearned take them and wrest them to their own destruction." Notice, Peter didn't fuss or find fault with Paul, because he knew he had erred. The Bible states that if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

Hallelujah! What a day we're living in! I can't fathom that anyone would go back into Egypt (the world) and desire to return to the beggarly elements, especially in the day we're living in. The Bible states but now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, God having delivered you from those things, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

Would you then follow that outer man that hath the sentence of death on him? Would you then walk in the corruptible flesh of this world and in the ways of the wicked and return and be entangled in death again, when God has put life before you? Would you do that? Oh, I tell you, this is the most beautiful hour that man has ever known. This is an hour when man can have life. God hath no pleasure in death. He did not put death in the world. The Bible says that God did not send death, neither is He the friend of death. Death is the enemy of God, and the Bible tells us that death came by man and not by God. Man brought death into the world, not God. Glory to God! In knowing that I don't have to fellowship death, and knowing that God doesn't want me to die, it makes me feel real good, because I don't like death. Hallelujah! Death and I have nothing in common. Glory to God, I like to live! David said, "I can't praise You, God, if You put the dirt in my face and put me down in the dungeon of death, but as long as I live, as long as I can walk, and as long as I can stand in Your presence, I can praise You, God." Hallelujah! Don't you know that makes God feel good?

The Bible says that God hath no pleasure in the death of him that dieth. How can God have pleasure in Brother Frank Taylor if he can't say, "I love you, Jesus!?" How can God have any pleasure when you go down into the dungeon of the chambers of despair, where you can't hear His lovely name and can't tell people about His greatness? The Lord hath no pleasure in them that die, but glory to God, when we stand and tell about Jesus and praise Jesus and love Him and we tell all the world about Jesus and His great and mighty deeds, this makes God feel good, because that's God's pleasure. God hath pleasure in them that live. Let's live, brethren! Hallelujah! Let's live! God doesn't want you to die.

Let's use our faith in God to overcome sickness, poverty, death: for all of these are the enemies of God. Let's live, not only for a few years, but eternally. Paul said, "Behold, I show you a mystery! We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed." Hallelujah! We shall be changed. Somebody's going to discover that God and the spirit of death are not friends. Did you know that? I said, somebody, some generation, is going to discover that God and death are not partners, and that they do not have any fellowship. They don't get along at all! They're just as contrary to one another as they can be. That generation is going to turn their backs on death and walk on with life. Like Enoch, one day the world is going to start looking for them, and they're not going to find them, because they'll be like Enoch, who was not because he was translated that he should not see death. Before Enoch's translation, he had a testimony. What kind of testimony was it? He had this testimony, that he pleased God, and the Bible says that without faith, it's impossible to please God. I'm talking about believing in His Word. That's what faith is.

You know, people everywhere believe in everything, from any direction, but when you talk about faith, you're talking about believing what Jesus said. What did He say? Jesus said, "I've come that you might have life, and that more abundantly." The word "abundant" means

filled up and overflowing. Jesus is the Prince of life. He's come so that you can keep on living. Hallelujah! Don't you believe Jesus died at Calvary so you could keep on living? Don't you believe that? If I didn't believe that, you'd have to put me in a strait jacket. Jesus died at Calvary so I could keep on living. Hallelujah! Remember, the Bible said that He is the Prince of life, and that He has come that you might have life filled up and overflowing. He made you to live! Hallelujah! Death came by man, not by God. Keep on living, folks! If you enjoy living, keep on living. Live in a greater way and in a greater measure.

Don't base your life on a calendar and say, "January, February, and March, and I'm thirty-five years old. April, May, June, and I'm sixty-five years old. Oh, I hope my insurance is paid up!" Don't be foolish! What does January and February have to do with it? God didn't put us on a time table. You say, "Well, who did?" The devil! If your faith is in the devil, you just keep on doing what you're doing. Out in the world they tell you to keep on trucking. Remember, if you've got faith in the devil, you're headed for the same place he's headed. Paul said, "We use great plainness of speech."

If you've got faith in God, just keep on living, because God did not instigate death. He is not the friend of death. You say, "How then can I escape death?" Just keep on living, for how is a man going to die if he just keeps on living? Now, if he quits living, he's going to die. Just keep on living. Somebody said, "But Brother Pike, you can't do that!" The Bible says that by faith, Enoch kept living. We'll all do like Enoch did one day. Paul said, Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all sleep. Somebody is going to discover that we can keep on living.

Let's keep on living, folks! Hallelujah! I could go on and on talking about the wonderful things of God. It thrills my soul, but the thing is, let's just keep on living. One brother said in his prophecy, "You haven't seen anything yet." You know, that reminds me of a singer named Al Jolson. He filled up large auditoriums across the nation and world, and he would sing until the crowds were just literally spellbound. Then, he'd throw out his chest and throw back his head and say, "You ain't seen nothing yet!" Glory to God! That's confidence, isn't it? That's the way it is with Jesus. You've seen all of this, and you haven't seen anything yet.

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