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The Harvest that comes from Holiness: Consecrating Ourselves for Service

A Commentary by Jason Curry



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Recently, I was struck by a passage of scripture that was written by Paul and appeared in the book of Romans: "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." The passage of scripture was of particular importance to me because it emphasized one of the goals of the Christian life: holiness. It also suggested that there were "fruits" or benefits that were associated with living a holy life. People have even suggested that our efforts to live holy lives will eventually yield a harvest (e.g., fruits) which are blessings that can only come from God.

One would assume that holiness (e.g., being in a right relationship with God and our neighbors through our thoughts and actions) would naturally occur in the life of the Christian. However, it is possible to go through the rituals of the Christian faith (e.g., attending worship services and helping or being kind to others) even though our hearts are not totally de-

voted to God. When we hear of church members fighting inside or outside of church, refusing to welcome visitors, giving a financial offering with a grudging heart as if God needs our money, refusing to engage in ministries as if we were not beneficiaries of someone's ministry, we miss the mark of holiness established by Jesus Christ, and as Paul reminds us in the book of Acts, our actions, efforts and ministries will bear no fruit because they do not reflect holiness or the love of God.

There is a stanza in a famous hymn by Fanny J. Crosby which says: "Consecrate me now to thy service Lord by the power of grace divine. Let my soul look up with a steadfast hope and my will be lost in thine." As members of a Christian community, we are always in a perpetual process of consecration as we prepare to serve the Lord and His people. As we continue to consecrate ourselves for service to God and our neighbors, let us remember that holiness is and will

always be a goal for the lives of the Christian. In fact, Hebrews 12:14 declares: "Follow peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord." Before Jesus was tempted by the devil, he fasted and prayed for forty day and nights (Matthew 4:2)." As the disciples began to established new churches in the book of Acts they fasted and prayed with the elders of the church (Acts 14:23)." Fasting, praying, loving and forgiving will always be hallmarks of a holy life. Let us continue to display the fruits of the spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) as we prepare to serve.