

# SOLA FIDE

## Communicable Attribute of God: Holiness

Let's set the stage. Bob, a Christian, works in an environment where gossiping is the norm. Even though Bob knows he is not supposed to, he often gives in to gossip when he is with his co-workers. So, Bob prays before work for the Holy Spirit to help him to not conform to the norms of the workplace, rather be different from his co-workers.



Why would Bob have to be different from the rest of his co-workers? It is because Bob follows God, who is different from the rest of the world. God of the Bible has various characteristics or attributes that make Him distinctly God. There are two categories of God's attributes – incommunicable and communicable. Incommunicable attributes are characteristics only God has, that is not shared with human beings such as omnipotence (all-powerful), omniscience (all-knowing), and omnipresence (all-present). On the other hand, communicable attributes are characteristics that human beings share with God, such as love, patience, justice and so on. What Bob is praying for is the conformity to God's communicable attribute known as "holiness." Holiness can be defined as being set apart and sacred.<sup>1</sup>

Then the question is, how are we to be holy (to be set apart)? The answer is in Romans 12:2, which states "do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind..." Christians' nonconformity to this world is a natural outcome of the transformation of both the mind and heart (in this article, I will only talk about the transformation of the mind). For a person to not conform to the patterns of this world, the renewal of the mind must first take place. There are three components to the renewal of the mind.

<sup>1</sup> Paul Tripp, "The Doctrine of Holiness", article posted on September 10, 2018.



## Eric Liddell

There are various examples of holiness. One example of holiness is keeping the Lord's day as a day of worship. Eric Liddell, a well-known missionary in China, was an athlete in the 1924 Paris Olympic. Though his aim was to run the 100-meter race, once he found out that the event would be held on a Sunday, he switched to the 400-meter race and still won the race. He did not compromise the Lord's day regardless of his life circumstances or his personal goal. Liddell's story reminds us that Christians are set apart to be holy. Corporate Worship is one of the important aspects of Christian holiness we must prioritize. Let us actively respond to the Holy Spirit's leading to holiness by prioritizing the corporate worship on the Lord's Day.

The first component of the renewal of the mind is that it only occurs to people who have been born again. Being born again refers to a person being completely transformed inside out as a result of placing his or her faith in Jesus Christ as the person's Lord and Savior. Consequentially, he or she lives a different life with new interest, understanding, and view towards life.

The second component is the ongoing renewal process of the mind operated by the Holy Spirit, which begins in the moment of salvation. The Holy Spirit works through different means to renew the believers' mind, such as prayer, fellowship, worship and so on. However, the primary way the Holy Spirit renews the believer's mind is through the Word of God (since the topic of this newsletter is not on the Word of God, please refer to the March edition of the newsletter for more information regarding the importance of the Bible). Therefore, it is necessary to be immersed in the Word of God to be renewed by the Holy Spirit.

The last component is the need for a believer to actively respond when the Holy Spirit is renewing his or her mind. A Christian's active response to the Holy Spirit can be played out by actively adjusting one's lifestyles (e.g. prioritizing corporate worship, actively engaging in church, and forgoing sinful tendencies), and disciplining oneself (e.g. daily devotions and daily prayer). Ultimately, as the Holy Spirit works to renew a Christian's mind, the proper response of a Christian is to actively engage in the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Let us remember that acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior is only the beginning of the Christian life. A Christian person has to live out the rest of his or her life as a Christian, and part of that Christian life is life of holiness. As Christians, we are called to be holy because God is holy (1 Peter 1:16). Thus, let us pursue holiness through the renewal of the mind.

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