

Remain in me, and I will remain in you... If a person remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. *John 15:4-5*

If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. *John 15:10*

Fortunately we are not simply what we inherit from our parents. The Lord created us. We have a heavenly parentage. The Lord is in the inmost of our being giving us life constantly. We come to know this as we learn about him and live his way. His presence, his love, 'grows' as our 'holiness' increases. This is a new self that we are to love and live from, a new heart that he has given us, one in which the Lord dwells, where he delights to be, he in us and we in him.

We have always been the Lord's dwelling. The wonder and joy is in becoming aware of it and remaining in it.

Prayer

Connect with the Lord within and speak with him in your own way. This may be a beginning:

Lord, may I keep you at my centre. Remind me that you are in my inmost being, that you are my steadying. I don't have to go anywhere to look for you, simply within, letting go of distractions and focussing, to find peace and guidance, direction, a real knowing. Amen



Loving ourselves - as the Lord's dwelling

Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy ... love your neighbour as yourself.

Leviticus 19:2,18

Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me ... My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.

John 14:21,23

'Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy...' A stunning statement! Yes, God is holy. The Bible is holy. Jerusalem is a holy city. But 'Be holy' - me? How can I be holy?

Pause - and reflect on what holiness means to you and what you associate with it. What would you be like if you were holy and the Lord made you his home or dwelling place?

Might you love your neighbour as yourself? This is another command given in Leviticus 19, which is also challenging. Who is your neighbour and can you love them as you love yourself?

Loving ourselves

You might find it hard to love yourself having been put off by teaching that those in hell are motivated by a love of self and the world. You might not want to live in a hellish way. The heavenly way for us is to love the Lord and the neighbour as oneself.

Also you might find it difficult to love yourself if you have been taught that there is no good in you. You can't seem to be lovable if that is the case. If people call us names and we have difficulty in thinking well of ourselves, we may not see ourselves as lovable - Mercifully the Lord allows us to do good things **as if** of ourselves. When later we learn that

all good is from God, not ourselves, we can acknowledge that it is the Lord acting in us that does the good and thank him.

A person cannot begin to think about good or to will it, and so cannot do good, unless the Lord is the source. *Arcana Caelestia* 39

No-one is good - except God alone. *Luke 18:19*

And yet the Lord created us and loves us, so we need to accept and love ourselves as he does. If we don't love ourselves, we stifle the love in us and we shrivel up and have little to offer others.

Teaching focus

Two distinct loves

In heaven there are two distinct loves, love to the Lord and love towards the neighbour ... They both go forth from the Lord, and they both make heaven ... To love the neighbour does not mean loving a companion in respect to his person, but loving the truth that is from the Word; and to love truth is to will and do it. *Heaven and Hell* 15

So the neighbour we are to love is the truth within a person, truth from God's Word, God's holy Word. We are to love the truth in them as we are to love the truth in us. 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' This is different from loving yourself above everyone else, which is what we have to learn not to do, being contrary to the Lord's way.

Holiness

I, the Lord your God, am holy. *Leviticus 19:2*

Since divine truth proceeding from the Lord is meant by 'holy', therefore the Lord is called in the Word 'the Holy One'... and it is also

615	PSALM 119:24
22 ^c <i>Cred. Mart.</i>	when I learn 'your righteous
21:42; Mark 12:10;	rules.
11; Luke 20:17;	8 I will keep your statutes;
106; 20:15; Acts	" do not utterly forsake me!
4:11; Eph. 2:20;	
1 Pet. 2:4-7;	BETH
26; Matt. 23:9;	9 How can 'a young man keep his
23:38; Mark 6:11; 9;	way pure?
Luke 13:35; 19:38	By guarding it according to your
19; 12:28	word.
27:9; 16:28	10 " With my whole heart I seek you;
97:11; 154b; 8:16;	let me not 'wander from your
1 Pet. 2:9! 'See Ex.	commandments!
27:2	11 I have 'stored up your word in my
28 ^c <i>See Ps. 96:5</i>	heart,
29 ^c <i>See 1</i>	that I might not sin against you.
Psalm 119	12 Blessed are you, O LORD;
1:17; Rom. 11:20; 13:6	'teach me your statutes!
19; 10:12; 49:15;	13 With my lips I "declare
128:1; Gen. 17:1;	all the rules of your mouth.
2 ^c <i>See 241</i> 19;	14 In the way of your testimonies
18:1; 1 <i>See 10</i>	I "delight
2 <i>See 152</i>	as much as in all 'riches.
3 ^c <i>John 3:8; 1:18</i>	15 I will "meditate on your precepts
4 ^c <i>Ps. 108</i>	and fix my eyes on your 'ways.
5 ^c <i>Ps. 37:1; 119:109;</i>	16 I will 'delight in your statutes;
105:46; 102:31	I will not forget your word.
6 ^c <i>See 382</i> 1 <i>John</i>	
2:21	GIMEL
7 ^c <i>See 62; 106:Ex.</i>	17 # Deal bountifully with your servant.
24:1	
8 ^c <i>Ps. 102:1; 71:8; 18</i>	
9 ^c <i>Ps. 25:1</i>	
10 ^c <i>See 10:1; Chr.</i>	
11:21; 119:103	
11 ^c <i>Luke 2:1; 5:1;</i>	
12 ^c <i>See 19; 25:1</i>	
13 ^c <i>See 26; 64; 68;</i>	
108; 124; 135; 171;	
150; 76; 264	
137 ^c <i>See 1029; Doct.</i>	
6:7	
14 ^c <i>See 111; 162;</i>	
148:1; 148:4	

from this that angels are called 'holy', and also the prophets and apostles; and ... that Jerusalem is called 'holy'... Divine truth proceeding from the Lord is called 'the Spirit of truth' and 'the Holy Spirit'.

Those called 'holy [saints]' are those who are in Divine truths. *Apocalypse Explained* 204:5,6e,7e

'Be holy ...' Learning to know the Lord's way and loving to live that way gives us this living truth within, which makes us holy. It is a gift from the Lord.

Consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am the Lord your God. Keep my decrees and follow them. I am the Lord, who makes you holy. *Leviticus 20:7-8*

No-one is holy from himself, not even the angels... but from the Lord, because the Lord alone is holy. *Apocalypse Revealed* 586e

When praying to the Father, Jesus says: Sanctify them [make them holy] by the truth; your word is truth ... For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified. *John 17:17,19*

Pause again - and reflect on what holiness means to you now. What truths do you live by? What words of the Lord do you turn to most? How do these affect your life? How are you holy?

Bible focus

Ourselves – as the Lord's dwelling

Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me... My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. *John 14:21,23*

