

RUMINATIONS OF A FORMER HEATHEN

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Explain Words

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The explanation of words is an absolute must. This is imperative because words get repeated so much that after a while they lose their meaning. We must get back to basics. Some of the words that need explaining are: Holy, holiness, redemption, redeemer, salvation. That's just to start. People are not stupid, and given the right information, the exact information, they will do the right thing. Or else, they're nuts. Now, if they are nuts there's nothing one can do about it. Of course, the Holy Spirit could intervene, and even someone who is nuts can have his mind straightened out. All one can do is explain things, it is God's problem after that.

We hear much talk about holiness these days. Even the heathen think they can be holy. They put up their hands in the air, bring them to their bosom, clasp hand in hand chastely, they try to think good thoughts. Many Christian churches do the same. They try to flog their flocks into holiness, be holy, NOW! What nonsense. Most people when they hear the word "holy" think of some extra and above goodness, being more like God in purity. This is the message one gets from the churches: You must be holy, or else, you're no good.

Well, as a matter of fact, I got news for you. Bad news at that. You are no good. You were no good before, you are no good now, and you will never be any good. At least not while on this Earth. And yet, if you are one of the chosen of God to avoid hell and go into eternal life with him, you are holy. Can one be no-good and holy at the same time? Of course. The word "holy" means "set apart." It doesn't mean extra good, it doesn't mean extra pure, it just means "set apart." In the sense of being good and pure, only God is good and pure. He is very set apart.

When we are chosen by God to be exempt from the fires of hell, we are set apart. God has set us apart to keep us for himself. We are holy because God has set us apart. If goodness were a qualification to be set apart, God would have to throw everybody into hell because nobody is any good. Yet, out of all those who are no-good, God has set some of those apart. Why? Why would God do such a thing, to set some of those no-good apart? I don't have an answer for that. It's incomprehensible to me. But the fact is that we are no-good, yet God has made

some “holy”, because God in his mercy has set them apart.

Another aspect, or another derivative word to be explained, is “holiness.” Some preachers have it close, they are almost right. They say, you have to be separate, you have to separate yourself from the world. Well, that’s true, you have to separate yourself from the world. But I tell you this, when you are saved and you know what you’re saved from, the terribleness of hell, you can’t keep your mouth shut about it. Pretty soon you want to tell others about Jesus being the payment for sin and what will happen to them after death if they don’t avail themselves of his blood now, and your family members and your dear friends and the world in general will begin to separate itself from you. You don’t have to make an effort to separate yourself from the world. The world will separate itself from you. You’ll get your holiness all right, you’ll get your separation, because the moment you start talking about Jesus the world cannot stand you anymore. When you tell your friends “I’ll see you later,” they probably say under their breath, “not if I see you first.”

So, we talked a bit about Holy and Holiness. It’s not going to be the last time because I repeat myself a lot. How can one exhaust any of these subjects? How can one exhaust *any* subject that has to do with God?

Redeemer, Redemption, Salvation, there’s so much left, I have not even started. One strand touches all others in a continual weaving.

Redemption is what you do when you go back to the pawn shop where you hocked your watch and buy it back. You get the ticket they gave you, you gather up the money you borrowed against the watch, and go back to the lender and buy back your watch from him. That is redemption, a buy back. In this case of the watch you are the redeemer because you are the one who buys it back.

At this point I’m going to leave you hanging so you can ruminate for a while. But I will continue on the next one.