

From the Pulpit of the Japanese Baptist Church of North Texas  
June 24, 2018

Sharing God's Holiness  
Hebrews 12:10-11

12:10 For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness.

12:11 For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

We learned that God became the Father of the believers, and He disciplines His children with love. Today's verses show the purpose of His discipline. What is it? It's that we may share His holiness as the second half of verse 10 says, "He disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness." Then, what is the "holiness?" How can we share His holiness? And what kind of blessings can we receive when we share His holiness? Today, let us learn these three things, in its order.

**1. The Holiness of God**

"Holiness" is one of God's character. It means that God is free from any corruptions; He is pure and separates from any temporal things of the world. His holiness is well praised in the hymn titled, "Holy, holy, holy." This hymn came from "Sanctus," a piece of mass music. And its root came from a praise sung by angels in Isaiah 6:3. The angels sang to God, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth

is full of his glory!” Therefore we also sing to God repeating “holy” three times. But, why three times?

It is because there is no comparative degree in Hebrew language. When we want to say “holier” or “more holy,” we say, “holy holy” repeating “holy” twice. In the Old Testament time, the temple had two rooms. One was called, “Holy” in Hebrew, “the Holy Place” in English, and the priests prayed there. The other room was called, “Holy Holy” in Hebrew, “The Most Holy Place” in English. Actually it was the most holy place on the earth. Only the arch priest could enter there once a year. When the word “holy” was repeated three times, it shows that God is holy beyond the most holy place on the earth. In the vision Isaiah saw, God sat on the throne beyond the temple, and the temple, that were the Holy Place and “the Most Holy” could not hold even the train of His robe. Indeed, God is the One Who should be called “holy, holy, holy.”

God is the “Righteous” One and the “Loving” One as well as the “Holy” One. Since humans were created according to God’s image, we are given a part of His character. We also have “righteousness” and “love” in some degree. But our righteousness is imperfect and our love is selfish. However God’s righteousness is perfect and His love is pure. In other words, God’s righteousness is “holy righteousness” and His love is “holy love.” We can put “holy” above any words showing His being, character, and works; such as “Holy Trinity,” “Holy grace,” and, “Holy guidance.” “Holiness” distinguishes God from any others. I think that the word, “holiness” describes God most effectively.

## **2. Sharing His Holiness**

When Isaiah saw Holy God, he shouted “Woe is me! For I am lost” (Isaiah 6:5). Isaiah recognized his sin in front of the Holy God. What he recognized as a sin was not “that” sin or “this” sin that he had committed. It was a deep-rooted sin, which was a nature of humans. As Jesus said in Mark 7:20-22, “What comes out of a person is what defiles him. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts,” humans commit sins because they have the character of sins. Sin is not that simple as you have done what you shouldn’t do or you haven’t done what you should do. Isaiah not only repented the sins that he committed, but he lamented himself who could not help committing sins.

But we did not recognize our sins until we met the Holy God. But when we touched the holiness of God, we realized how big of a sin we had committed previously. Our heart was filled with happiness of being forgiven after we believed in Jesus Christ and our sins were forgiven. Then, we gradually became to understand how sinful and dirty we were in front of Holy God. We began to have a deep sense of sin, that is, we ourselves were “sin”. Have you had a similar experience? When Peter saw the miracle done by Jesus, he said “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.” (Luke 5:8) Likewise, When Paul was questioned by God’s words, he said “Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?” (Romans 7:24) Those who are respected as Saints or “Men of Faith,” such as Augustine, Martin Luther, or John Newton, had similar experiences. This experience is necessary for believers to share the Holiness.

The angel brought a charcoal from the alter to Isaiah, who was deeply afraid in front of God, and touched his lips and cleansed Isaiah. (Isaiah 6:6-7) A charcoal refers to the Holy Spirit Who is working for the sanctification of the believers. God not only grants forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ, but also through the Holy Spirit He cleans us and gives us His holiness instead of sins.

Ephesians 4:22-24 says, “to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.” God gave us a new birth when we believe in Him. He also put the new self in true righteousness and holiness to them. Therefore, believers began to be called “saints.” Because they shared the holiness and became holy.

The Holy Spirit changed “sinners” to “saints” by the grace of regeneration, but the works of the Holy Spirit do not stop there. The Holy Spirit continues to work on believers so that they become a true saints. This is called the grace of sanctification. The grace of regeneration works instantaneously, but the grace of sanctification takes time. Using various daily events, sanctification is often accomplished through trials and training.

As verse 11 says, “all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant,” no one likes trials or training. But God does not give trials or discipline without purpose. That’s one of the works of sanctification. As the second half of verse 11 says, “but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it,” the work of sanctification through trials and training brings a big

reward to the believers in the future.

The Bible teaches us to “live now” instead of “regretting the past” or “worrying about the future.” But it does not mean “all you do is to please yourself at this moment.” Although we don’t know what will happen tomorrow, as 2 Corinthians 4:17 says, we believe God supports our future and He will change today’s suffering into glory of the future. We do know that if we follow God’s will, we can survive in the future. If someone avoids training given by God at this right moment, what future will he/she have? If you believe in your future, then, strive for the holiness now and follow the training that God has given to you.

### **3. Blessing of the Holiness**

Hebrews 12:14 says, “Strive for the holiness.” The Holy God orders us to be holy and seek for the holiness. However, people these days think that being holy is no use. Instead of holy, they strive for being strong, clever, popular and so on. Many think that seeking holiness is a loss, and say, “If you want to be successful in the world, you need to be open-minded which accept right and bad.” But these things are told in the world and it does not apply to the believers. It should not apply to the believers.

Is “being holy” no use nor good? On the contrary, it brings the greatest benefits. Hebrews 12:10 says, “For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness.” The things given by God the Spiritual Father are far better than anything given by the world. Verse 11 says, “For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than

pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.” Those who strive for the holiness will receive joy instead of sorrow, peace instead of fear, righteousness instead of sin. Because all these blessings come from the “holiness.”

There is sin in our minds. The sin forms “unrighteousness.” There are three kinds of unrighteousness. One is the unrighteousness against God, and another is against people, and other is against society. The unrighteousness against the God is not judged by law in the world. But it will be judged by God. The unrighteousness against people does not become crime as long as it stays in our mind. But it will surely damage the personality, destroy the home, and disturb the society. The unrighteousness against the society like bribery, falsify, conceal is bad for the country, and spread the evil over the world. If we do a drawing, it looks like as seen in screen.

**[Sin] → [Unrighteousness] → [Evil]**

“Evil” is caused by “Unrighteousness”, and “Unrighteousness” caused by “Sin.” To cut down the “Evil” from the root, God put His hands to our deepest mind. That is, He put “Holiness” instead of Sin, and the “Holiness” brings “Righteousness” that is to think, feel, talk, and act justly. This Righteousness brings in all kind of Good things, that is “Goodness.” Again, see the summary on screen.

**[Holiness] → [Righteousness] → [Goodness]**

When we do something, we look for “strength”, “wisdom”, and

“knowledge” for that. Sport players need “strength” and “technique.” “Human relationship” is important for businessmen. People who lead social activities are asked “passion” and “belief.” But, the God asks believers personal and inner “holiness.” “Holiness” is the goal of faithful living, also motive power at the same time. Hebrews 12:14 says, “the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.” To understand the Bible is not by wisdom, only, but by “purified mind.” Prayers with full assurance also come from “holiness of mind.” Evangelistic works and service do not yield fruits without our inner “holiness.” Only “holiness” brings great blessings. Knowing these, let’s strive for the “holiness” first in our inner spiritual life, and in our daily life.

### **(Prayer)**

God, the Father, we thank that You gave Jesus to us as the model and the coach for our faith. We often are attracted by the worldly things, stumble by seeing others. And discourage by seeing ourselves. Please help and lead us so that our eyes are looking straight only to the Lord. In the name of Lord Jesus, we pray. Amen.