

THE CONCEPT OF HOLINESS IN THE PAULINE EPISTLES

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the Faculty of
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of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
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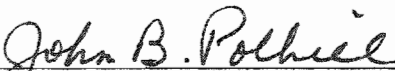
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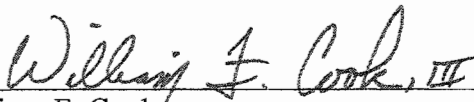
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To Irene,
my love, my true friend,
to my father,
who is now with the Lord,
and to
the Lord,
my sustainer, my comforter, and my only savior

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>ATR</i>	<i>Anglican Theological Review</i>
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>ETL</i>	<i>Evangelical Theological Literature</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
<i>LXX</i>	Septuagint
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
<i>RevExp</i>	<i>Review and Expositor</i>
<i>SBLSP</i>	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>

PREFACE

Much thought and reading have gone into the completion of this task. Much time and effort was expended. This work will be now remain on a shelf bearing my name. Without much support and thoughtful advice, however, it could not have come to completion. My supervising professor John Polhill challenged me to have a critical mind for the focus of my dissertation, patiently and continuously providing his assistance. Professor Mark Seifrid and William Cook likewise provided valuable suggestions to improve my paper.

Pursuing education apart from hometown, I remember those friends who have persistently prayed and supported our family, especially the Stewards, whom I have grown spiritually with and share vision in Christ since my college years. They have provided continual encouragement and hope for the future. Their undivided and prayerful attention helped me find my vision and pursue it.

It is a true blessing to have many relatives in many places constantly praying for our family during this journey. My special gratitude is to my father who is now with the Lord but who always had a special dream for me, and my mother who has not ceased prayer throughout my life. It is also my honor to have wonderful father- and mother-in-laws who have given encouragement and their special time for prayer. Last but not least, I am truly grateful to have brothers and sisters who have never forgotten us in their prayer.

Words are not enough to express my true gratitude to my wife, Irene, for her sacrifice and love unprecedentedly shared to me during the time of my study at the Southern Seminary. True appreciation is to my children, Daniel, Esther, and Stephanie,

who have grown up quietly and faithfully walked alongside me. I am in debt for their love and I look forward to the tomorrow God has prepared for us to share the vision and love together in the future.

And finally, my complete devotion and commitment is for God who has sustained me through His love and strength. My confession is that by His grace He has justified me, sanctified me, and called me to be a holy one. My privilege is that I may serve Him and worship Him throughout my life, walking worthy of the Lord and growing in the knowledge of God (Col 1:10). To Him be the glory.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In general, the meaning of holiness from the Old Testament and early Judaism can be understood in several varying concepts.¹ On the basis of the divine nature of holiness, the ontological concept can be strong.² As the consequence of God's salvific work through Jesus, the soteriological and ethical concepts can likewise be drawn. According to cultic contexts, functional aspects have been emphasized.³ How, then, did Paul understand and use the concept of holiness in his letters? For Judaism, holiness was the most important aspect in their cultic contexts, and it was strictly observed and enforced in the religious setting. During the time of Jesus, the Pharisees were a major influence in the religious life of Judaism, taking holiness as the means of separating their identity from other religious and ethnic groups of people. The Pharisees were dedicated to the twofold law, the written and the unwritten. Before his conversion, Paul was a

¹Baruch J. Schwartz, "Israel's Holiness: The Torah Traditions," in *Purity and Holiness: The Heritage of Leviticus*, ed. M.J.H.M. Poorthuis and J. Schwartz (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 47-59. He suggests two different views of holiness: one in the non-priestly view and the other in the priestly view. The former views Israel's holiness as the very fact of its election while the latter views it as "an emanation of the divine nature which turns Israel into a sacred object" (58). Cana Werman, "The Concept of Holiness and the Requirements of Purity in Second Temple and Tannaic Literature," in *Purity and Holiness: The Heritage of Leviticus*, ed. M.J.H.M. Poorthuis and J. Schwartz (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 163-79. He describes various concepts of holiness from biblical roots to the later development in Second Temple, rabbinic, and Christian thought.

²It is holiness that exhausts the being of God. God manifests himself as holy. Then, what could this mean to us?

³We were told to keep the Sabbath holy, bring holy offerings, and worship the Lord in holy splendor. Thus, the concept of holiness, in most cases, has been understood in its ritual aspect.

Pharisee. It is, however, still debatable and a difficult task⁴ to reconstruct the Pharisaic concept of holiness since its sources are limited and research needs to be extended to rabbinic literature which was written from the third to the sixth centuries A.D. But, it is certain that their motives and foundational understanding of their concepts were driven by Old Testament concepts. Based on Paul's background, we may assume that the source of Paul's emphasis on holiness was his Jewish religion and that he understood the concept of holiness in connection with God and the people of Israel through the Old Testament concept. In light of the Christ event, however, Paul reevaluated this tradition.

Thesis

This dissertation will attempt to define Paul's concept of holiness and how he develops and applies the concept in his letters. One of Paul's main concerns was the relationship between God and human beings. How has God brought salvation to man? And how can man be reconciled to God? To answer these questions, Paul describes man in terms of the personal, redemptive activity of God in Christ. For Paul, the redemptive activity of God is not a memory belonging to the past. God is active in the present, seeking to save his people through the death and resurrection of his Son, Jesus Christ. He has revealed himself in Christ as the living Lord, the Creator and Redeemer. Moreover, he has manifested himself as a God of holiness, justice and righteousness, love, and faithfulness.⁵ Certainly, Paul, as a Pharisee, knew such divine characteristics through the Old Testament conception of God and through the tradition of elders as well. But God

⁴J. Sievers, "Who were the Pharisees?" in *Hillel and Jesus: Comparative Studies of Two Major Religious Leaders*, ed. James H. Charlesworth and Loren L. Johns (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 138, expresses his frustration: as, "After over two decades of research, there is at least one assured result: we know considerably less about the Pharisees than an earlier generation knew. Evidently there are many more questions than answers."

⁵There are more characteristics of God which we can acknowledge from the Scriptures. But these are (in my opinion) the most important and commonly revealed ones.

has shone the light of knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor 4:6b). Through the Christ event, Paul reevaluates his understanding of God. As he has come to know God and to be known by God, he recognizes what should be the right relationship between God and man in Christ, from the point of view of man standing before God, and in a relation of dependence upon the God of such a nature.

For Paul, God's holiness is one of the most important of the divine characteristics along with righteousness, love, and faithfulness, and he assumes them for his preaching and teaching as foundational factors. Since the Reformation, however, the righteousness of God and the doctrine of justification have been a focal point of Paul's theology. Therefore, the concept of the righteousness of God has been studied as a major theme of Pauline theology among modern scholars. It certainly is not difficult to recognize the concept of righteousness through the Scripture. For an example, Paul writes that it was witnessed by the law and the prophets (Rom 3:21), and that it also has been revealed in the gospel (Rom 1:17). Throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, the righteousness of God is displayed as one who judges his people justly and who also saves them righteously. God's judging and saving righteousness has been manifested throughout the history of Israel. God's justice is perfect in every respect. Thus, death is given to mankind according to his perfect and just judgment beginning with the Fall of mankind. In light of these concepts, Paul alludes to the righteousness of God in his letters. Furthermore, he elaborates the righteousness of God within the context of the gospel, in which the announcement of the saving death and resurrection of Christ fulfills the saving act of righteousness. Thus, the righteousness of God in the gospel is revealed in God's vindicating act through the resurrection of the crucified Christ and our subsequent faith in Christ. "Just as our sin brought Christ's condemnation and death, so his resurrection announces our justification."⁶ As Reicke states, "[S]eeing in Christ the

⁶Mark A. Seifrid, *Christ, our Righteousness: Paul's Theology of Justification* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 47.

source of all righteousness is characteristic of Paul's thinking."⁷

Certainly in Christ, however, Paul saw the holiness of God as well. Paul, first, viewed God as the source of holiness through the Old Testament. "I will vindicate the holiness of my great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations shall know that I am the LORD," declares the Lord God, "when I prove myself holy among you in their sight" (Ezek 36:23).⁸ The holy God certainly displays his holiness in his righteousness (Isa 5:16). Holiness in the Old Testament is one of the most characteristic qualities of God. It describes him as being utterly pure in thought and attitude. This quality of holiness ultimately created at once a separation from the fellowship between the Creator God and his creatures, since they certainly failed to be holy in the presence of God. Upon the Israelite people, however, demands were made to become a holy people. A holy way of life was commanded in the Torah: "You shall be holy to me; for I the LORD am holy, and I have separated you from the other peoples to be mine" (Lev 20:26). Israel was the covenant people, and at the heart of the covenant was the call for Israel to form a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exod 19:6). This is because one of the essential attributes of God's nature is holiness. "An important dimension to God's separateness and distinctness is his *moral purity and perfection*,"⁹ not mere ritual purity. In Habakkuk 1:13a, the Scripture records that God's "eyes are too pure to behold evil." Isaiah writes in 35:8 that the unclean shall not journey on the Way of Holiness. The holiness of Israel, however, is limited as a function of her location and her ritual purity system.¹⁰ Paul, as a Pharisee, acknowledges

⁷Bo Reicke, "Paul's Understanding of Righteousness," in *Soli Deo Gloria*, ed. J. McDowell Richards (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1968), 43.

⁸Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the NASB.

⁹David Peterson, *Possessed by God: A New Testament Theology of Sanctification and Holiness* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 17.

¹⁰Jacob Neusner, "Another Path to Truth: From Ritual to Theological in Judaism," in *Radical Pluralism and Truth*, ed. Werner G. Jeanrond and Jennifer L. Rike

these aspects: God's holiness being known and experienced, God's command regarding holiness in the Torah, and a ritual purity system distorted by the tradition of elders.

Through the Christ event, however, Paul reevaluates the concept of holiness. First, I would suggest that even though the concept of God's holiness is never explicitly discussed in his writings, Paul implicitly assumed it as one of foundational factors in his preaching and teaching, especially concerning the salvific activity of God.¹¹ But, Paul certainly expresses to his churches the idea of holiness in terms of believers' actions and as a necessary goal for believers to pursue in their relation to God. He exhorts believers to purify themselves "from every defilement of flesh and spirit perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor 7:1, cf. 1 Thess 5:23-24). "For God did not call us to impurity but unto holiness" (1 Thess 4:7). Yet, this does not mean that the doctrine of grace is abandoned or compromised. Rather, Paul demonstrates that holiness is the result of salvation (see, e.g., Rom 12:1) through the death of Jesus Christ. Therefore the believers' new status, i.e., sainthood, depends upon the work of God in Christ and their relationship with him.¹² This is why Paul calls his readers saints who are sanctified in Christ Jesus (1 Cor 1:2),¹³ and a new creation (2 Cor 5:17 and Gal 6:15). It implies the important fact

(New York: Crossroad, 1991), 175.

¹¹My argument is that God's salvific activity seems to be explained better not only by the aspects of God's love, justice, and righteousness, but also by the essence of God's holiness. Melissa Raphael, *Rudolf Otto and the Concept of Holiness*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), rightly posits, "The biblical religions have always tried to balance a sense of God's love with their hopes for his justice. Salvation without justice is a cheap salvation, passing over radical evil and the suffering of its victims. Yet justice without love holds out no possibility of reconciliation, leaving human history with wounds that can never be healed. Human reason cannot conceive the balance of love and justice in God; its intimation belongs to the *fascinans* element of the holy" (203). Revealing God's holiness within Paul's theological and doctrinal writings would take another dissertation. From the selected Pauline letters, thus, we will limit our study to the exegetical study on the context where Paul referred to the language of holiness in his teachings.

¹²Peterson, *Possessed by God*, 46.

¹³The term ἅγιος, saint or holy one, is Paul's regular way of describing a Christian in general (e.g., Rom 1:7; 8:27; 2 Cor 1:1; Eph 1:1; Phil 1:1; Col 1:2).

that all believers are viewed as already sanctified in Christ. Holiness certainly carries a soteriological connotation.

Paul acknowledges the concept of holiness according to the Old Testament, and his understanding of holiness has been enlightened through the Christ-event. Paul reevaluates holiness in Christ and conceives how Christians may be created according to God in true holiness (Eph 4:24), satisfying God's holiness in light of the Christ event. Christ is God's own wisdom, righteousness, holiness, and redemption (1 Cor 1:30). Whereas the concept of righteousness would be important for the understanding of God's salvific work through Christ, Paul found it natural to speak of not only the concept of righteousness but also that of holiness to Gentile Christians.¹⁴ Certainly, his main objective of his preaching and teaching was not to argue for the correct understanding of holiness,¹⁵ but rather was to preach salvation by God's grace through the work of Jesus Christ. But at the same time, he reminds his churches of the importance of recognizing and pursuing the life of holiness.

In summary, therefore, I would argue that Paul's teaching and preaching are formulated by his knowledge of God, mainly through his understanding of the concept of the divine nature, by his experience of the Christ event, and by his finding of God's plan of salvation through Christ. They are also aimed at the fulfillment of the work of salvation and Christian living through these foundational factors. For this dissertation, however, we should limit our finding of those foundational factors to the background study from the possible sources. Then, our understandings of those concepts will be

¹⁴My assumption is that Paul purposely might not have used the holiness emphasis with Jewish readers because he felt it unnecessary. For Gentile believers, however, he probably wanted them to have a correct understanding of what it means to have holy living.

¹⁵My assumption is that the more Paul might have focused on holiness, the more this would have suggested the wrong perception that his preaching might have been possibly drawn from his Pharisaic background.

affirmed and redefined through the exegetical study on his writings, focusing on the implication of those factors. As one of the foundational factors, this dissertation will focus on Paul's concept of holiness and its implication on his teaching. Thus, this dissertation will seek to answer these questions: What was the source of Paul's concept of holiness? How did he understand this? And how did he reflect this in his teaching?

Background

At the end of my college career, realizing what kind of God I was believing in brought me to a new reality of my personal relationship with God. Through the reading of the Scriptures, I was able to recognize that Scripture has clearly revealed God as the one who has perfect characteristic attributes which are perceivable by human perception. Among the divine characteristics, his perfect holiness, justice, faithfulness, and love seized my attention. The more I focused on these, the clearer I understood the big picture of God's salvific work through Jesus Christ. Thus, I began to question: If I were able to understand God's nature from the reading of the Scripture and such an understanding has provided me a clear picture of God's salvific work through Jesus Christ, then could it be fair to say that the biblical writers had the basic concept of God's nature as their inspired presupposition for their writings of Scripture? This view, however, raises questions for the modern understanding of biblical theology.

In general, biblical theology is concerned with discovering the original historical and theological meaning of the biblical text and applying this meaning to the contemporary scene. It is "principally concerned with the overall theological message of the whole Bible."¹⁶ In other words, it involves an inductive study rather than a deductive approach to biblical study. It seems, however, that contemporary studies in biblical theology have debated over various methodologies such as thematic, existentialist,

¹⁶B. S. Rosner, "Biblical Theology," *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. T. D. Alexander and B. S. Rosner (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 3.

historical, salvation-historical approaches, and the centrality and unity of the Scriptures. Some of the methodologies are certainly useful for a proper understanding and approach to biblical texts and can serve as valid starting points.

Scobie's literal definition of "biblical theology" seized my attention. He defines it as "the ordered study of what the Bible has to say about God and his relations to the world and humankind."¹⁷ According to this definition, however, it seems that there is some discrepancy between what the literary definition of biblical theology is and what (and how) biblical theology has been focused. Whereas the literary definition focuses on what the Bible (biblical writers) has to say *about God* and his relations to the world, many studies on biblical theology have been absorbed with the issue of methodology. Having said that, this present writer proposes an alternative approach for biblical theology, one in which Scobie's literal definition of biblical theology is applied; that is focusing on what the Bible has to say *about God* and his relations to the world.

Before we continue, we must briefly begin with a few necessary presuppositions.¹⁸ First, biblical theology must apply a hermeneutical interpretation for its task, recognizing Holy Scripture as the revelation from God. Biblical texts are testimonies of faith and they are inspired by God. Second, God should be understood as the only one who provides salvation for all through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. And finally, only the existing Canon of Scripture should be considered.

With these foundational perspectives on the Scripture, the starting point of biblical theology should be the general concept of God. Throughout the Scripture,

¹⁷Charles H.H. Scobie, "New Directions in Biblical Theology," *Themelios* (1992): 4. He also argues, "Somewhat misleadingly, this highly fragmented, historical, descriptive approach could still be labeled by some of its practitioners as 'biblical theology', though it could well be argued that it is strictly neither 'biblical' nor 'theology'" (5).

¹⁸Scobie states that interpretation of texts cannot be carried without presuppositions according to modern hermeneutical theory (ibid., 5).

biblical writers urged and even commanded people of God to acknowledge and know what kind of God they believe.¹⁹ Here, we should assume that this general concept of God has been profoundly presupposed by the biblical writers. Based on such a presupposition, biblical theology is now ready to take place. Discovering the original historical and theological meaning of the biblical text, then, will eventually lead to proving or affirming the general concept of God. Therefore, we can be certain *what the Bible has to say about God*. An understanding of God was not only the foundation of the formation for the Scriptures, but also for what the biblical writers revealed to the world of humans. This brings the hermeneutical cycle in full circle. God has revealed himself to us through the Bible, throughout history, and through the work of salvation.

Therefore, the primary interest in the Bible should be God's action on behalf of the redemption of his people and his revelation in the redemptive history. Biblical theology should be focused on the effort of revealing God and his redemptive work through Christ. Thus, the main question which should be answered here, is "who is God and what kind of God is he? What has he done for us and how has he worked for the redemption of his people?" Even if it may sound impossible to answer the question completely, the most descriptive way we can understand God is by acknowledging his characteristic attributes such as holiness, righteousness and justice, faithfulness, and love through the Scriptures. Whether they are implied together or individually, these attributes are the most commonly revealed and acknowledged ones throughout the Scriptures. Not only are they revealed, but also God's relation to the world and humankind is more clearly described and understood by the definition of his attributes. In other words, not only has God revealed himself to us as a holy, just, loving and faithful

¹⁹Exod 6:7; 7:17; 8:10; 18:11; 29:46; 31:13; Deut 4:35, 39; 7:9; 29:6; Josh 3:10; 4:24; 23:14; 1 Kgs 8:60; 20:28; Ps 46:10; 100:3; Prov 3:6; Isa 37:20; 45:3, 6; 49:23; 58:2; 60:16; Jer 24:7; Ezek 6:14; 7:9; 27; 12:16; 13:9; 20:20, 44; 28:22, 26; 36:23; 39:28; Hos 6:3; Joel 2:27; 3:17; 1 Cor 1:21; Eph 1:17; 1 John 4:6, 8; 5:20.

God, but also we can clearly recognize and understand his revelatory works in light of his attributes. Even though we may not recognize all of his attributes being revealed in every event or message, certainly we identify all of God's characteristics in the Scriptures. Therefore, we should use God's characteristics as the interpretive keys for biblical theology, and this methodology would provide us the right approach for perceiving the meaning of the message, not from the human point of view, but from the divine perspective.

A biblical theology of the Old Testament, therefore, requires discovering the meaning of messages or historical events in the light of the divine nature and, at the same time, what kind of God he was and how he revealed himself to his people. Throughout the history of Israel, God revealed himself as a perfect, just, holy, loving, and faithful God. The biblical writers also command Israelites to love God, to be holy and righteous before God, and to be faithful to God for the proper relationship with him. We should first recognize, therefore, how the biblical writers have recorded the messages and historical events in order to reveal God. Again, we acknowledge that not every message or historical event would reveal the full nature of God. But having presupposed God's holiness, justice and righteousness, love, and faithfulness as interpretive keys, we may be able to discover his appropriate attribute(s), either implicitly or explicitly, within the context. This, then, helps us to affirm what kind of God the Old Testament reveals to us, and how the relationship between God and humankind should be. Moreover, a biblical theology of the Old Testament provides the foundational understanding of God's nature for New Testament theology.

New Testament theology also reveals who God is. With the preaching of Christ and the Christ-event on the cross, however, New Testament theology provides the complete picture of God in human perspective, and his relations to the world and

humankind.²⁰ The starting point is that the preaching of Christ and the Christ-event on the cross should be understood in the light of God's nature. God, who is faithful, has sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to fulfill the promise of salvation. God, who is holy, has purified our sins through the blood of Jesus Christ. God, who is just and righteous, has justified us through faith in Jesus Christ. God, who is everlasting love, has established the everlasting love relationship with us through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. God has revealed himself to us through his salvific work in Christ. With this understanding, we are now reciprocally able to recognize God and his true nature through the Christ-event. Furthermore, we may clearly apprehend God's relations to humankind and how this lies behind the theological messages within the New Testament. This reciprocal approach, thus, leads to the realization that the preaching of Jesus, the Christ-event which provides the understanding of God's salvific work being fulfilled in Christ, and the comprehension of God's attributes caused the formulation of the New Testament confessions and traditions.

For examples, the testimony of the Johannine letters in the New Testament not only presents the preaching of Jesus and the Christ-event, but also explicitly reveals the love of God. Matthew, on the other hand, discloses the faithfulness of God expressed in the fulfillment of Scripture. According to the Pauline letters, Paul also recognizes God's characteristics. God is holy and he commands his people to be holy (2 Cor 6:14-7:1; Eph 4:24; 1 Thess 3:13, 4:7; cf. Lev 19:2). God is just and righteous, and his wrath and justification for his people are revealed according to his righteousness (Rom 1:16-18; Eph 4:24; 2 Thess 2:5-12). Paul believes that God is love and his love is unconditional and complete for us (1 Cor 13). He realizes that God is faithful and his faithfulness is

²⁰Here, the word, "complete" should be understood as it is revealed to us, which means not in the sense of God's perfectness, but in the sense of human perception. We will never fully comprehend God's completeness, but only God's work of redemption as complete as it has been revealed to us.

fulfilled in us (Rom 4:13-25; 1 Cor 1:9; 10:13). Thus, he develops his theological view based on his understanding of God's nature. And his view is defined and finalized in a complete sense in the light of Jesus Christ.

Such views, therefore, urged me to invest in an in-depth study on the biblical theology that focuses on the nature of God (his attributes) as the interpretive key. For the biblical theology contained in the Pauline letters, the starting point should be Paul's understanding of God's main characteristics such as holiness, justice and righteousness, love, and faithfulness, and his knowledge of Jesus' teachings and the Christ-event. My dissertation, however, will focus primarily on Paul's concept of holiness as an illustration of this argument. Paul's concept of holiness will be revisited in detail through exegetical studies, and its implication for theology will be suggested.

History of Research

Porter notes, "as a result of the Reformation, there is a persistent tendency among Protestants to evaluate Paul's major salvific categories in light of the doctrine of justification."²¹ As a matter of fact, it seems that since the reformation very little attention has been given to the concept of holiness in academic circles. The most standard text on biblical holiness in the early part of this century was written by Rudolph Otto.²² Otto regards holiness as a *mysterium tremendum*, an awe-inspiring energy which brings people to God. Recently, a volume *Five Views on Sanctification* has introduced different perspectives on the view of sanctification from Wesleyan, Reformed, Pentecostal, Keswick, and Augustinian-Dispensational traditions which have developed

²¹S. E. Porter, "Holiness, Sanctification," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 398.

²²Rudolph Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, trans. J. W. Harvey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1928).

over the centuries.²³ Even if it seems to provide a fruitful dialogue concerning the subject of sanctification, each view is primarily drawn from systematic theology, bringing considerable disagreement between the various views. Although they generally recognize the importance of holiness (or sanctification)²⁴ in the Christian life, they differ on what the meaning of holiness (or sanctification) is and how it can be achieved. Such disagreement is due to the different approaches of systematic theology, thus calling for further study that focuses on biblical theology.

The Views of Holiness from Pauline Theology

With biblical theology emerging as a separate discipline from dogmatic theology,²⁵ scholars began to seek to clarify what the biblical texts taught in their historical context. This led some biblical scholars to focus on Pauline theology, and others on specific theological concepts in Old Testament or New Testament. Among those who have worked on Pauline theology, however, few scholars have worked on Paul's concept of holiness. Schreiner, as he briefly defines that the term *sanctification* designates Christ's work on behalf of believers, suggests that, through Paul's implication in his letters, the sanctification and holiness of God's people are "anchored in God's

²³Melvin E. Dieter and others, *Five Views on Sanctification* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987).

²⁴Throughout the Pauline epistles, the words "holiness" and "sanctification" have been used to translate the Greek words *ἁγιωσύνη* (in Rom 1:4; 2 Cor 7:1; and 1 Thess 3:13) and *ἁγιασμός* (in 1 Cor 1:30; 1 Thess 4:1; and 2 Thess 2:13) respectively except in Rom 6:19, 22; 1 Thess 4:4, 7 and 1 Tim 2:15, where the word *ἁγιασμός* has been translated as either "holiness" or "sanctification," depending on the Bible translation. It seems that this is due to how the Bible translators understood the word within the context, based on their doctrinal interpretation. Distinction of the words will be discussed later.

²⁵John Sandy-Wunsch, "J P Gabler and the Distinction between Biblical and Dogmatic Theology: Translation, Commentary, and Discussion of His Originality," *SJT* (1980): 133-58, suggested that J.P. Gabler's 1787 inaugural address at the University of Altdorf was the significant milestone in the development of biblical theology.

election before the foundation of the world.”²⁶

Roetzel points out that Paul, as he reflected his Jewish Pharisaic tradition, extended the concept of holiness from a holy God and holy people to holy acts. He rightly argues that God is the source of holiness and his command to believers is to be holy ones through Christ, who brings sanctification. And the Holy Spirit, who brings God’s eschatological presence and power, bears fruit in them for holiness. Roetzel, however, emphasizes that Paul’s understanding of holiness was apparently influenced by Pharisaism.²⁷

Ridderbos also explains the concept of sanctification from a theocentric point of view. He recognizes that in the first instance it does not have a moral content. The principle of holiness is rather unfolded in the cultic context and understood in a spiritual sense. The idea of holiness should be understood in the way that “it not only points toward the privilege of the church of being permitted to be the people of God,” but also denotes the whole new life that is qualified by responding with moral purity to the gracious election of God.²⁸

The Views of Holiness through Individual Pauline Epistles

Porter notes two different scholarly views for Paul’s concept of sanctification: one as a consequence of justification and the other as overlapping with justification.²⁹ As he turns to the passages in 1 Thessalonians, he sets forth the first view, suggesting that

²⁶ Thomas R. Schreiner, *Paul: Apostle of God’s Glory in Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 219-21.

²⁷ Calvin J. Roetzel, *Paul: The Man and the Myth* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 34-38.

²⁸ Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*, trans. John Richard DeWitt (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 258-65.

²⁹ Porter, “Holiness, Sanctification,” 398.

the passages are Paul's typical paraenesis, which consists of including an ethical section following closely upon theological reflection. Paul brings his concern for the Thessalonians (2:17-3:12) and he places in 1 Thessalonians 3:13³⁰ his "subsequent admonitions regarding pure ethical behavior within a context of anticipated eschatological reward." Continuously in the rest of 1 Thessalonians Paul instructs them on their ethical behavior, urging them to establish their hearts blameless in holiness so that they may be pleasing to God.³¹ Marshall, who suggests that the concept of holiness is one of Paul's favorite themes in Thessalonians, however, describes the concept of holiness in terms of God's moral righteousness and purity. When the concept is applied to a holy people, he posits the idea that those who are called to be holy must show the same righteousness and purity which characterize God.³²

Richard suggests that, depending on the context, the word holiness in Paul has either a soteriological or an ethical connotation, focusing either on the process of sanctification or its achievement.³³ Furnish, however, argues that the soteriological reference is the primary aspect of holiness and the ethical connection is secondary in 1 Thessalonians 4. The significant aspect is the identification of holiness with God's will in verse 3 and God's call in verse 7. God's call is in itself holiness. He notes, "This is why even the Corinthians can be addressed as 'sanctified in Christ Jesus' (1 Cor 1:2); their call to be holy presupposes nothing about their moral worthiness, but only that they belong to the Lord."³⁴ Thus, the concept of holiness consists not in an attainable moral

³⁰"So that He [the Lord] may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints."

³¹Porter, "Holiness, Sanctification," 398.

³²I. Howard Marshall, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 101-02.

³³Earl J. Richard, *First and Second Thessalonians*, Sacra Pagina (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1995), 194-96.

³⁴Victor Paul Furnish, *Theology and Ethics in Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon

quality, but in a given relationship with God. Having said that, he indicates that the concept of holiness is originally implied from the Old Testament cultic connotation. And this central point ultimately demands the ethical requirement through the concept of holiness. In other words, the concept of holiness “in and of itself displays the unity of indicative and imperative.”³⁵ Peterson adds, “The flow of the argument in verses 1 Thessalonians 4:6-7 suggests that the coming judgment and God’s initial calling of believers ‘in holiness’ are to be the ground and motivation for holy living.”³⁶

Schreiner points out an “already-but-not-yet” element for the future sanctification of God’s people in 1 Thessalonians. According to 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24, Paul sees that the future holiness of believers is assured because “the God who called believers to salvation will most certainly complete the sanctifying work he has begun.” Schreiner posits that no conflict between the indicative and imperative is clearly present because everything depends on God himself.³⁷

Through the letter of 1 Thessalonians, different views on the concept of holiness are suggested. Apparently there are more Pauline letters to be examined to discuss Paul’s concept of holiness, and the limited space will not be enough to cover them all at this time. It seems that even though there are various views on the concept of holiness, they all differ based on the particular context of Pauline letters. Presently, however, very little study has been produced centering primarily on Paul’s concept of holiness. Whereas commentators have described the meaning of holiness within the context of the corresponding Pauline letter, many theologians in their writings on Pauline theology have briefly tried to explain the concept without complete exegetical study.

Press, 1968), 155.

³⁵Ibid., 155-56.

³⁶Peterson, *Possessed by God*, 83-84.

³⁷Schreiner, *Paul*, 221.

Moreover, in most cases, their focus on the concept of holiness has been on the implication for Christian living rather than on what it means with respect to God's holiness and how that applies to believers and God's divine plan for us.

The Views of Holiness within New Testament Biblical Theology

The concept of holiness has often been treated with reference to the entire New Testament, and this certainly provides helpful and useful aspects of the concept. The following paragraphs present some of the suggested perspectives on holiness in the NT.

Ladd rightly points out that even though a widely prevailing view suggests that sanctification is the consequence of justification in the life of Christian, this is rather “an oversimplification of the NT teaching, and it obscures an important truth.” He proposes that the idea of sanctification in the NT is soteriological before it is a moral concept. “The very idea of ‘holiness’ is first of all cultic, and secondarily moral”³⁸ Even though the ethical aspect cannot be ignored when it is applied to Christians, holiness “denotes first of all a soteriological truth that Christians belong to God.”³⁹ This view can be implied through the most common usage of the word ἅγιος in Paul, which is to designate all Christians as the people of God.

Procksch refers to holiness in the NT as “a condition of ethical innocence,” instead of ethical conduct. It has a cultic element and it is emphasized in the people of God through their worship as they recognize being reconciled by Christ and being within the new creation as the temple of God. The concept of holiness therefore determines the nature of Christianity in a spiritual sense and not in morality. He argues, “In Paul the thought of justification overshadows sanctification as a function of God. He applies the

³⁸George E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 563.

³⁹*Ibid.*, 564.

concept passively rather than actively, speaking of the sanctified. . . . so that again the concept of sanctification is linked with that of reconciliation. Holiness (or Sanctification) is not moral action on the part of man, but a divinely effected state (1 Cor 6:11).”⁴⁰

Procksch further points out that the perfect passive participle, ἡγιασμένοι, is used by Paul twice in Acts (20:32, and 26:18) referring to those who receive inheritance, and both of them allude to Deuteronomy 33:3, πάντες οἱ ἡγιασμένοι ὑπὸ τὰς χεῖράς σου. Here, the passive ἡγιασμένοι certainly stresses the state of holiness.⁴¹ These contexts also agree with Paul’s view of Christians as partakers of the inheritance (Col 1:12). In conclusion, he indicates that “purity of heart is a condition of sanctification” according to the concept of holiness in the NT.⁴²

Regarding holiness, Porter also draws moral purity as one of the primary Pauline emphases. Although sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit, human response is a necessity. In 2 Corinthians 7:1, Paul exhorts Corinthian Christians to cleanse themselves from every defilement of body and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Through this passage, believers are said to be the temple of God and are to be separate from defilement. According to the context and the following present participle “perfecting,” the word for holiness indicates the process of action based on one’s status in Christ. Porter argues that Paul sees that the believers have not yet fully attained perfection and sanctification, even though he indicates his belief in at least

⁴⁰Otto Procksch, “ἁγιάζω” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, trans. G. Bromiley, ed. Gerhard Kittel (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 112.

⁴¹Peterson, *Possessed by God*, 40-41, as he refers to the phrase, ἡγιασμένοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, in 1 Cor 1:2, also suggests, “The perfect passive participle ‘sanctified’ should be understood as another way of speaking about *their conversion and incorporation into Christ*. It can hardly refer to holiness of character or conduct, since Paul spends much time in this letter challenging the Corinthians’ values and behavior, calling them to holiness in an ethical sense. He does this on the basis that they are already sanctified in a relational sense, but need to express that sanctification in lifestyle.”

⁴²Procksch, “ἁγιάζω,” 112.

positional holiness through his reference for believers as ἄγιοι. Thus, when he speaks of holiness, Paul expects complete holiness at the return of Christ.⁴³

Peterson rightly points out that the biblical starting point of the doctrine of sanctification should be the holiness of God, which characterizes God as pure and blameless. As he focuses on the New Testament theology of sanctification and holiness, he challenges the commonly held definition of sanctification as a process of moral and spiritual transformation following conversion. He suggests instead, “[Sanctification] refers to God’s way of taking possession of us in Christ, setting us apart to belong to him and to fulfill his purpose for us.”⁴⁴

These are well-defined interpretations of sanctification from New Testament theology. Certainly I am indebted to their in-depth biblical studies on sanctification. I would especially agree with Peterson’s position on taking the holiness of God as “the biblical starting-point” and with his interpretation of the concept of holiness in New Testament biblical theology.

This dissertation, however, focuses on specifically Pauline theology rather than New Testament theology. As a biblical writer and an apostle of Christ, and at the same time as one who had experienced Pharisaic teachings and Hellenistic culture, how did Paul understand God’s holiness and how did he develop the concept in his preaching and teaching? To answer this question, a survey of the primary sources and an in-depth exegetical study of selected Pauline texts are conducted. Even if I may draw a similar interpretation to a commonly suggested argument on the concept of holiness at the end of this study, I pray that such an approach to the study brings justice on discovering Paul’s intended meaning.

⁴³Porter, “Holiness, Sanctification,” 400.

⁴⁴Peterson, *Possessed by God*, 27.

The Methodology of the Study

As I have mentioned above, there is a certain neglect of study into Paul's concept of holiness within academic circles. Most studies on the concept of holiness have been suggested through dogmatical study focusing on the entire New Testament theology. Otherwise they are developed within the context of an individual Pauline epistle. This dissertation, however, primarily focuses on Pauline theology, conducting an in-depth exegetical study on various Pauline epistles. Due to the limited space, the in-depth study is limited to representative passages, but all texts on holiness which occur in all thirteen Pauline epistles are examined through comparison or as references.

For a better preparation of the exegetical study, first, in chapter 2, the Old Testament is mainly surveyed to suggest the source of Paul's concept of holiness. There are, as I have mentioned above, many different scholarly views on the Old Testament concept of holiness. The word "holiness" in the Old Testament is used with various meanings as well. For this study, however, we mainly survey the concept in the nature of God, and the ritual means, and the common definition for the descriptive usage in persons and things. Through the primary texts and using appropriate secondary literature, some of the background for the concepts is suggested. For a comparison with the Pharisaic concept, in chapter 3 we have briefly surveyed the background of the Pharisaic concept of holiness, which will be possibly drawn from their practice of ritual purity law.⁴⁵

⁴⁵S Mason, "Pharisees," in *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 783, suggests, "The only sources that name the Pharisees and have some claim to independent knowledge of the group are the works of the first-century priest Flavius Josephus; the NT texts, especially the Gospels; and the early rabbinic literature." However, surveying all the rabbinic literature for the Pharisaic concept of holiness would be an immense job for this dissertation. Moreover, rabbinic literature which was written from the third to the sixth centuries A.D. would rather introduce many debated issues. Due to the limited space, the concept will be suggested based upon one aspect which has been exposed through the Gospels where Jesus confronted the Pharisees and scribes (Mark 7:1-23; Matt 15:1-21; and Luke 11:37-54). This concept will also be reviewed through Pauline writings where Paul alludes to the teaching of Jesus with purity of food. The Pharisaic concept will be mainly assisted through the secondary literature, such as the work of J. Neusner and E. Rivkin.

The main section of the dissertation is covered with an exegetical study on the representative passages. According to our preliminary survey, the explicit notions have been noted throughout Pauline epistles except Galatians.⁴⁶ Then, we have divided every explicit notion into three major theological formulations according to its implied concept. The three theological formulations are, first, the concept of divine holiness, second, holiness in man, and third, holiness as applied to things.

First, in chapter 4, the concept of divine holiness is subdivided into the holiness of God manifested in believers (Rom 6:19-22; Eph 4:24; 1 Thess 3:13; and 2 Thess 2:13), and the holiness of Christ (Rom 1:4; 1 Cor 1:30; and Col 1:9-22). For the in-depth exegetical study we have mainly focused on Romans 6:19-22. Here, we may observe that as Paul describes God's righteousness through God's wrath against the sinfulness of the human condition in Romans 1:18-3:20, and the saving righteousness of God and hope in Christ in 3:21-5:21, Paul discusses the triumph of grace in 6:1-8:39. Within such a larger context, Paul brings up the concept of holiness in Romans 6:19-23 and continues on in the rest of Romans (e.g., 7:12; 11:16; 12:1; 15:16; see also, 8:27; 12:13; 15:25, 26, 31; 16:2, 15).

As another example, in 1 Corinthians 1:30, Paul refers to Jesus Christ as one ὃς ἐγενήθη σοφία ἡμῖν ἀπὸ θεοῦ, δικαιοσύνη τε καὶ ἁγιασμὸς καὶ ἀπολύτρωσις. Paul definitely suggests the centrality of Christ in the concept of holiness, and we have discussed this understanding through an exegetical study. Study of the rest of passages is also focused on the holiness language Paul used.

Second, in chapter 5, the concept of holiness in man is investigated in two aspects: first, Paul's addressing believers and the church as 'holy ones', and second, Paul's teaching on how God willed and made them to be holy (Rom 15:16; 1 Cor 1:2;

⁴⁶Paul never mentioned the word 'holy' nor any related words, not even the term 'Holy Spirit', in Galatians.

3:17; 6:11; 7:14; 2 Cor 7:1; Eph 1:4; 2:21; 5:25-27; 1 Thess 4:3-7; 5:23; and 2 Tim 2:21). Paul refers to Christians as “holy ones” 42 times in his epistles,⁴⁷ while such an address occurs a total of 24 times throughout the rest of the New Testament. The questions, what Paul meant by his address, and how the term “holy” may be defined, is discussed and compared with other references from the Old and New Testament. For the second aspect of holiness in man, this dissertation is briefly involved in the exegetical discussion of all the passages, except 2 Corinthians 7:1. This is due to the limited space, and yet at the end of this chapter we have focused on an in-depth exegetical study of 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1, examining the passage through contextual and exegetical study.

In 1 Corinthians 1:2, Paul addresses the Corinthians as ἡγιασμένοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. Paul reminds them that they have been bought with a price (1 Cor 6:20), and they were washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus (1 Cor 6:11) while he reveals their moral compromises and challenges their ethical values and behavior. He refers to them as the indwelling place of the holy God and a new creation in Christ, and yet he urges them to pursue holiness in the fear of God. Furnish rightly points out, “their call to be holy presupposes nothing about their moral worthiness, but only that they belong to the Lord.”⁴⁸ Then, how should we interpret Paul’s expressions ἡγιασθητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν (1 Cor 6:11) and ἐπιτελοῦντες ἀγιωσύνην ἐν φόβῳ θεοῦ (2 Cor 7:1)? Should we consider them as from different books, different contexts, and/or different readers? Certainly, an historical and contextual analysis is reflected in order to do justice to the requirements of exegesis. For the proper study on the concept of holiness, I strongly believe that an overall contextual analysis of the Pauline epistles is the key to success.

⁴⁷Rom 1:7; 8:27; 12:13; 15:25, 26, 31; 16:2, 15; 1 Cor 1:2; 6:1, 2; 14:33; 16:1, 15; 2 Cor 1:1; 8:4; 9:1, 12; 13:12; Eph 1:1, 18; 2:19; 3:5, 8, 18; 4:12; 5:3; 6:18; Phil 1:1; 4:21, 22; Col 1:2, 4, 12, 22, 26; 3:12; 1 Thess 3:13; 2 Thess 1:10; 1 Tim 5:10; Phlm 1:5, 7.

⁴⁸Furnish, *Theology and Ethics in Paul*, 155.

In chapter 6, the last concept of holiness discusses Paul's extensive application of the word, "holy" to things other than man or God. Other than "Holy Spirit" and "holy ones," Paul applied the word "holy" to other things. We may notice such things as the Scripture (Rom 1:2), the Law (Rom 7:12), the living sacrifice (Rom 12:1), human body and spirit (1 Cor 7:34), kiss (Rom 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20; 2 Cor 13:12; and 1 Thess 5:26) and God's created foods (1 Tim 4:4-5). Here, we have focused on the descriptive meaning of the word "holy" so that we may derive the common understanding of the concept of holiness for this extensive usage. As we investigate the concept of holiness through exegetical study, we have collated with the Old Testament background. These preliminary passages are adjusted as our study proceeds.

Finally, in chapter 7, a summary of this paper provides suggesting a contrast and comparison between Paul and the Old Testament, and Paul and the Pharisaic concept. Summarizing our findings of the concept of holiness in the Pauline epistles, we also have suggested further research that would aid our better understanding of some selected implications, which describe Paul's new identification of believers, such as the temple of God, new creation, and his emphatical expression of *in Christ*.

CHAPTER 2

OLD TESTAMENT BACKGROUND OF THE CONCEPT OF HOLINESS

Paul views God as the source of holiness, and we may assume that his view is based upon his knowledge of God in the Old Testament. In this chapter, we will survey the Old Testament concept of holiness.¹ For this task, first we will briefly conduct the word study focusing on the Hebrew word קדש which was used to suggest the Old Testament concept of holiness.² Then as we scrutinize the usage of the word implied on God, persons, and things, we will contemplate the possible definition of the word. Last, we will examine the word in its religious aspect in order to suggest the possible Old Testament conception of holiness.

¹We have noticed that there are various concepts regarding Israel's holiness or, I should say, the Old Testament concept of holiness. For examples, Baruch J. Schwartz, "Israel's Holiness: The Torah Traditions," in *Purity and Holiness: The Heritage of Leviticus*, ed. M.J.H.M. Poorthuis and J. Schwartz (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 47-59, has suggested two different views of holiness: one in the non-priestly view and the other in the priestly view. Cana Werman, "The Concept of Holiness and the Requirements of Purity in Second Temple and Tannaic Literature," in *Purity and Holiness: The Heritage of Leviticus*, ed. M.J.H.M. Poorthuis and J. Schwartz (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 163-79, also has described various concepts of holiness from Biblical roots to the later development in Second Temple, rabbinic, and Christian thought. See also David P. Wright, "Holiness (OT)," *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 237-49; and J. E. Hartley, "Holy and Holiness, Clean and Unclean," *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander and David W Baker (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 420-32. Our approach to discuss the concept of holiness, however, will differ from these, focusing on the usage of the word "holy" in the Old Testament. We will examine every occurrence of the word in the Old Testament and how it is used either to describe or to provide its conceptual meaning.

²Throughout the Old Testament, we may find many other words which may have implicitly applied to the concept of holiness. Without defining the Hebrew term קדש, however, it does not do any justice to focus on other words. As we define the concept of holiness through the word study, our assessment of the other words may be suggested later. Yet, due to the limited space of this paper, we will be mainly focusing on the specific term קדש.

The Word “Holy” in the Old Testament

The word “holy” is mainly translated from the Hebrew term קדש . But, the root קדש in the Hebrew Bible also is expressed in various meanings.³ Instead of defining those various meanings, which would require an immense space to fill this paper, however, since we are mainly concerned with the relationship between the concept of holiness in the Old Testament and the concept in Pauline epistles, we will focus on the translation of the Hebrew term קדש and its meanings in the LXX. The usage of the Hebrew term קדש is mostly translated in the Septuagint (LXX) with the Greek word ἅγιος and some of its derivatives as the equivalent of the Hebrew.⁴ But not every occurrence of קדש is interpreted in this manner, and some other Hebrew words are translated with the Greek word ἅγιος as well. For example in the verb form of the Hebrew word קדש , some of them are translated with the Greek verb ἀγνίζω ⁵ which has the meaning, “purify,” “cleanse”; the other with the Greek verb καθαρίζω ,⁶ “make clean,” “purify,” “declare ritually acceptable”; and the last with διαστέλλω ,⁷ “set apart,”

³On קדש in the Hebrew Bible, see J. E. Hartley, “Holy and Holiness, Clean and Unclean,” 420-32; Otto Procksch, “ ἅγιος , etc.,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, trans. G. Bromiley, ed. Gerhard Kittel (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 89-97; Baruch J. Schwartz, “Israel’s Holiness,” 47-59; David P. Wright, “Holiness (OT),” 237-49.

⁴Before we move on, we may have to raise one question which, I believe, is important to consider, and yet we might not be able to discuss in this paper due to the limited space of the paper. The question is mainly concerned with the linguistic issues. It would be how the Greek term ἅγιος was defined when the word was used in the LXX, and how compatible the meaning of the word would have been with the Hebrew term if there were any differences between them. Procksch describes, “the first certain attestation of the adjective ἅγιος is in Herodotus, who brings it into close relationship with the sanctuary. . . . The Hellenistic inscriptions confirm this usage, particularly for oriental sanctuaries. . . . In the Hellenistic period ἅγιος is used as an epithet of the gods as well, . . . never seems to have been applied in pure Greek to men connected with the cultus. . . . Only in the Hellenistic period does ἅγιος come into more common use” (Procksch, “ ἅγιος , etc.,” 88-89).

⁵Exod 19:10; Josh 3:5; Num 11:18; 1 Chr 15:12, 14; 2 Chr 29: 5,15, 17, 19, 34; 30:3, 15, 17; 31:18; Isa 66:17; and Jer 12:3.

⁶Job 1:5. In Isa 65:5 the adjective καθαρός is used instead of the verb form.

⁷Josh 20:7.

“distinguish.” The following Hebrew words are, however, translated with the Greek verb, ἀγιάζω: נָזַר, “dedicate,” “consecrate,” “separate” (Lev 25:11; Num 6:12; Amos 2:12); בָּדַד, “separation” (1 Kgs 8:8); and בָּרַר “purify,” “select,” “polish” (Dan 12:10).

According to this literal integration, we may notice that the Hellenistic understanding of the Hebrew word קָדַשׁ means purity, separation, consecration, and distinction. These various definitions certainly suggest a similar concept, and yet we should not ignore the fact that they are also implied with different emphases depending on the context. Here, as we survey the word, we will observe such various emphases and seek to find plausible or varying concepts of the term קָדַשׁ.

The Holiness of God

Holiness is one of the essential attributes of God’s nature. A number of scholars suggest that the essential meaning of holiness is from who God is. “Holiness originates with God. He alone is perfectly holy.”⁸ The term holiness in the Old Testament is first used in Genesis 2:3 to describe God’s sanctifying action on the day he rested after his completion of creation. The term appears next in Exodus 3:5 to express God’s presence as “holy ground.” The term occurred more than 800 times⁹ in the Old Testament, not only to describe who God is, but also to apply extensively to people and things such as seasons, places, objects. The first explicit description of the holiness of God in the Old Testament is expressed as “majestic in holiness” (Exod 15:11) and depicts the essence of glory and beauty in the holiness of God. Because of such beauty in his holiness, the Scripture depicts how God is worshipped in הִדְרָה-קְדֹשׁ¹⁰ (1 Chr 16:29; 2

⁸Keith W. Drury, *Holiness for Ordinary People* (Marion, IN: Wesley Press, 1983), 27.

⁹W. T. Purkiser, *Exploring Christian Holiness*, vol. 1, *The Biblical Foundations* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill, 1983), 19.

¹⁰Through the known English Bible versions, the phrase הִדְרָה-קְדֹשׁ is translated with various meanings such as holy array (NASB), holy splendor (NRSV), and the beauty of holiness (NKJV).

Chr 20:21; Ps 29:2; 96:9). The holiness of God is certainly described in his exalted majesty, his transcendent nature, and his infinite and perfect beauty which the human cannot grasp and describe. This explains the scriptural description of God's majestic presence throughout the Old Testament (Exod 3:2-6; 19:18; 40:34-38; 2 Chr 7:1; Isa 6:1-4).

Furthermore, the Old Testament testifies that God's holiness is revealed in his spoken words through biblical authors. He spoke to Moses, "By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy, and before all the people I will be honored" (Lev 10:3). He commands the Israelite people, "you shall be holy to me; for I, the LORD your God, am holy" (Lev 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:26; 21:8). In Joshua 24:19, Joshua proclaims that because God is "a holy God" he would not be served by those whose transgressions would not be forgiven. The Psalmist praises God's holiness in Psalm 99:

Let them praise your great and awesome name;
 Holy is He.
 The strength of the King loves justice;
 You have established equity;
 You have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob.
 Exalt the Lord our God
 and worship at His footstool;
 Holy is He. (Ps 99:3-5)

His holiness is also witnessed through the confession of people. In 1 Samuel 2:2, Hannah professes through her prayer that there is no one holy like the Lord. Through the mouth of the men of Beth-Shemesh, the holiness of God is also revealed saying no one is able to stand before the holy God (1 Sam 6:20).

God's holiness is set forth in Ezekiel's prophecy, "I will magnify Myself, sanctify Myself, and make Myself known in the sight of many nations; and they will know that I am the Lord" (Ezek 38:23). It denotes the self-revelation of divine holiness not only among the people of Israel (Lev 22:32), but also in the face of the Gentile world (Ezek 20:41; 28:22, 25; 36:23; 38:16; 39:27). God is the source of holiness. He who reveals himself to be holy also sanctifies others. God sanctified the seventh day of

creation (Gen 2:5), the Sabbath day, so that we may keep it holy and know that he sanctifies us (Exod 31:13). God spoke to the Israelites that he would sanctify the Tabernacle, the altar, Aaron and his sons to minister as priests to him (Exod 29:44). As he commanded his people to be holy, God repeatedly reminded his people that he is the Lord who sanctifies them.

There are three occasions where God's spirit is called holy (Ps 51:11; Isa 63:10, 11). God is often identified as "the Holy One" throughout the Old Testament, but especially the title, "the Holy One of Israel" is frequently rendered in Isaiah.¹¹ Procksch posits, "The concept of holiness is central to the whole theology of Isaiah."¹² In Isaiah 6:1-8, Isaiah depicts the transcendent nature of God's holiness through his encounter with the holy God. It is expressed through the cry of the seraph: "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory." Throughout the Old Testament, it has been seen that the presence of a holy God has caused not only the trembling and frightened experience to those who encounter him, but also the exposure of their sinfulness, limiting their approach to a holy God. This implicitly and yet certainly witnessed divine holiness as indescribable perfect purity. At the burning bush as he was warned not to draw near to God and to take off his sandal because of the holy ground, Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God (Exod 3:6). At Mount Sinai, the Israelites were commanded to be sanctified before the presence of the Lord and warned not to draw near to the holy God (Exod 19:9-24).¹³ God's appearance as the consuming fire also conveys that through a

¹¹While the title "the Holy One" recurs in various texts such as in Ps 16:10; 22:3; Prov 9:10; Isa 10:17; 40:25; 43:15; 49:7; Ezek 39:7; Hos 11:9; and Hab 1:12; 3:3, Isaiah identifies God as "the Holy One of Israel" 24 times and it is more frequent than "the Holy One" throughout the Old Testament: 2 Kgs 19:22; Isa 1:4; 5:19, 24; 10:20; 12:6; 17:7; 29:19; 30: 12, 15; 31:1; 37:23; 41:14, 16, 20; 43:3, 14; 45:11; 47:4; 48:17; 49:7; 54:5; 55:5; 60:9, 14; Jer 50:29; 51:5; Ezek 39:7.

¹²Procksch, "ἅγιος, etc.," 93.

¹³There are many records of theophany throughout the Old Testament.

marvelous display of power that which is unclean or defiled will be consumed and this emanates from his holiness (Deut 5:22-33; Isa 10:17; Jer 17:27). Isaiah's trembling awe due to his uncleanness in the presence of the holy God clearly displays the result of "his sense of being sinful in the presence of divine purity."¹⁴ His uncleanness was rather exposed in the light of the holiness of God since the presence of the Lord demands personal cleansing. Here, the reference to the taking away of guilt and the purging of sin (Isa 6:7) depicted the contrast between God's holiness and human sinfulness, divine purity and human depravity. Even though unclean sin was revealed because of the holy God who does not tolerate sin, the atoning sacrifice was not required for Isaiah. Rather it came from "God's side, God himself effecting it through the seraph by means of coal from the altar used as a holy means."¹⁵ Isaiah certainly testifies that the holy God displays his holiness in his righteousness (Isa 5:16). Habakkuk describes the purity implied in God's holiness as his ceaseless opposition to evil:¹⁶

Are You not from everlasting,
O LORD, my God, my Holy One?

...

Your eyes are too pure to approve evil,
And You can not look on wickedness *with favor*.
Why do You look with favor
On those who deal treacherously?
Why are You silent when the wicked swallow up
Those more righteous than they? (Hab 1:12-13)

Just as he is holy, God refers to his name as "holy" in Leviticus 20:23; 20:2; and 22:32, commanding his people not to profane his holy name. Procksch suggests, "the name itself is prescribed for invocation in the cultus; for the cultus is possible only where

¹⁴Purkiser, *Exploring Christian Holiness*, 24.

¹⁵Procksch, "ἅγιος, etc.," 93.

¹⁶Purkiser, *Exploring Christian Holiness*, 24.

the name of God is acknowledged.”¹⁷ Ezekiel and Amos echo this common concept that God’s holy name should not be profaned among the nations (Ezek 20:39; 36:20-23; 29:7, 25; 43:7, 8; Amos 2:7).

Thus says the Lord GOD, “It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went. I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD,” declares the Lord GOD, “when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight. (Ezek 36: 22-23)

David and the Psalmists refer to God’s name as holy (1 Chr 16:10, 35; 29:16; Psa 30:4; 33:21; 97:12; 99:3; 103:1; 105:3; 106:47; 111:9; 145:21) in connection with worship, praising and giving thanks to God’s holy name and describing it as great and awesome. Procksch notes here, “Nevertheless, with the emphasizing of the name holiness becomes far more personal than cultic.”¹⁸ Certainly addressing God’s name as holy indicates the holiness of his attributes, and the holiness of God describes him as being utterly pure in his nature. “God’s holiness thus becomes an expression for his perfection of being which transcends everything creaturely.”¹⁹

Isaiah envisions the high and lofty one, whose name is holy, dwells in the holy place (Isa 57:15). Throughout the Old Testament, holiness is applied to the things that explicitly belong to God, such as his arm (Ps 98:1; Isa 52:10), his word (Ps 105:42; Jer 23:9), his way (Ps 77:13), his throne (Ps 47:8) and his places such as temple (Ps 5:7; 11:4; 28:2; 65:4; 134:2; 138:2; Ezek 41:4ff; 43:12; Mic 1:2; Hab 2:20), hill (Ps 2:6; 3:4; 15:1; 24:3; 43:3; 78:54; Jer 31:23), mountain (Ps 48:1; 99:9; Isa 11:9; 56:7; 57:13; 65:11, 25; 66:20; Ezek 20:40; 28:14; Dan 9:20; Joe 2:1; 3:17; Zech 8:3), heaven (Deut 26:15; 2 Chr 30:27; Ps 20:6; 102:19; Isa 63:15; Jer 25:30), and courts (Isa. 62:9).

¹⁷Procksch, “ἅγιος, etc.,” 91.

¹⁸Ibid., 91.

¹⁹Ibid.

In summary, the Old Testament concept of God's holiness is manifested in his exalted majesty, his transcendent nature, and his apartness from profane and wicked humans. While his holy name is exalted in worship, it is not to be profaned among nations. As he reveals himself to be holy to his people, he commands them to be holy and reminds them that he is the Lord who sanctifies his people.

The Holiness of Persons

Holiness is not only descriptive of God's nature, but also applied to both things and people. Here, we will first survey the holiness of persons revealed in the Old Testament. In Exodus 13:2, God commanded Moses to sanctify all the firstborn of Israel, for they are his. In Exodus 19:6, Israel is called to be a holy nation, and the exhortation of God's people to be holy echoes through the Pentateuch (Exod 19:10; Lev 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7, 26; Num 15:40; 16:3, 7; Deut 7:6; 14:2, 21; 26:19; 28:9) and Ezra (8:28). Priests and Levites are classed as holy, for the Lord will sanctify them (Exod 29:44; Lev 21: 6-7; 2 Chr 23:6; 31:18; 35:3). The Nazarites are separated to be holy (Num 6:5, 8). Moses and Aaron (Ps 106:16), and prophets such as Elisha (1 Kgs 4:9), and Jeremiah (Jer 1:5) are referred to as the Lord's "holy ones." Isaiah writes that the remnant in Zion and Jerusalem will be called holy (Isa 4:3).

The interesting observation is the fact that, while all the firstborn and the Nazarites are separated to be holy unto God, and priests and Levites have the holy status, it is also seen that the Israelites, God's people, are called to be holy. Moreover, the most holy²⁰ part of offerings was given to Aaron and his sons, all male priests (Lev 2:3, 10; 6:29; 7:6; 10:12; 21:22; 24:9; Num 18:9, 10; Ezek 42:13), and they are to do all the work of the most holy place (1 Chr 6:49) and to consecrate the most holy things (Num 4:19; 1

²⁰The Hebrew term קֹדֶשׁ הַקֳּדָשִׁים is translated as "most holy" in NRSV, KJV, and some parts of NASB. Based on the context, however, NASB sometimes translates it as "holy of holies."

Chr 23:13). Then, the following questions may be raised: First, what would be the difference between the holiness of priests and the holiness of God's people? Second, why are the most holy things associated with priests only and what is the description of the most holy implied in the Old Testament concept of holiness? Wright suggests the different degrees of holiness are due to there being two classes of priests, high and undistinguished, due to the distinguished ritual assignments between them.²¹ These assignments are ultimately separated for the division of the tabernacle, the holy of holies and the holy place (Exod 26:33), or the inner and outer sanctuary (1 Kgs 6:16). Other than the holy of holies in the tabernacle, the most holy is ascribed to the atonement with the blood of the sin offering (Exod 30:10, 22, 26) and other offerings (Lev 2:3,10; 6:17, 25; 7:1; 10:12; 14:13). Therefore, the most holy in the Old Testament is mainly applied to the place of the holy of holies and certain offerings. And since they are defined as most holy by divine instruction without explicit explanation, we should only expect certain emphases to be drawn from those ascribed to be most holy. "The sense of this distinction, however, is less a gradation of the holiness which derives from God than a gradation of human dealings with the Holy One."²²

Then what does it mean to be a holy people in the Old Testament? From the Pentateuch, as they are commanded to be holy, they are also instructed to wash (Exod 19:10), not to defile (Lev 11:44), to keep all God's commandments in ritual and moral aspects (Lev 19:1-37; 20:7; Num 15:40), to be separated from other people to be God's (Lev 20:26; Num 6:5), and not to profane the name of the Lord (Lev 21:6). This indicates that our response to be holy is required in the concept of personal holiness. The Old Testament, however, also reminds that they become holy people because God has

²¹David P. Wright, "Holiness (OT)," 238.

²²H. Seebass, "Holy," in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), 227.

chosen them to be his treasured possession (Deut 7:6, 14:2). Certainly they should be chosen by God and be separated to be his. Here the question is raised as to whether the Old Testament concept of personal holiness is an imputed and positional holiness, or a moral goodness focusing on qualification. We will deal with this question at the end of this chapter as we discuss the concept in its religious aspects.

The Holiness of Things

Throughout the Old Testament, holiness is extensively applied to things. Since we have surveyed the holiness of things explicitly belonging to God, here, we will focus on the descriptive holiness of other things and derive the common concept of the holiness of things.

The first term to which holiness is applied is the seventh day of God's creation, which is later referred to as the holy Sabbath (Exod 16:23). Thereafter it is applied to other things, such as assembly for holidays (Exod 12:16), the ark of the covenant (26:33-34), Aaron's garments (28:2), the gifts or offerings in the Tabernacle (28:38; 29:27-28), the high priestly crown (29:6), the altar (v. 37), atonement (30:10), the anointing oil, perfume, and furniture in the Tabernacle (30:25-37), the Tabernacle (40:9), the fruit of trees (Lev 19:24), Jubilee (25:12), the house dedicated to the Lord (27:14), the field released in Jubilee (v. 21), every devoted thing (v. 28), the tithe (v. 30), and many other things. These examples are selected from Exodus and Leviticus only. Other than these, if we add other representative references, they would include money, booty, and precious metals and stones given to the sanctuary; water (Num 5:17); the censers out of the blaze (16:37-38); sanctuaries such as Solomon's temple and Ezekiel's visionary temple; Jerusalem; the covenant (Dan 11:28); and fasting (Joel 1:14).

Here, we may see that most references to holiness are set apart for divine or religious purposes. They are referred to as holy because they are to be distinguished from that which is profane or unclean. References to the holiness of things can be grouped into two major classes. They are difficult to distinguish sharply and therefore difficult to

name with precision. The first class is involved around cultic or ritual concern. The other class covers non-ceremonial concerns. Mainly they have been either explicitly or implicitly tied or devoted to God, or sanctified for God. Without any power of moral choice, certainly there is no suggestion of moral goodness and righteousness involved in the holiness of things. Then, how are they entitled to be called holy or sanctified? Within the frame of divine command and presence, they are described as holy.

Holiness in Religious Contexts

The four books of the Pentateuch, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, introduce the “priestly” concept of holiness with the most extensive occurrences of the word group found in the cultic aspect. Thus the concept is largely positional, cultic or ceremonial. For this concept, the meaning of holiness is emphasized as “set apart and dedicated.” The idea of holiness is separation from the secular, profane, and unclean. Even though the ethical and spiritual ideas cannot be ignored, the concept mainly stresses ceremonial cleanness. It is directly related to the worship of God and the covenant relationship with God.²³

As he revealed his holiness to Moses in Exodus 3:5, God instructed the Israelites to observe the Passover, keeping it as a holy assembly and sacrificing the unblemished Passover lamb (12:1-28). He also commanded them to keep the Sabbath day holy (Exod 16:23; 20:8) reminding them to be a holy nation (19:6). Then, he charged them to build the ark of the covenant and designated the place of the ark as the most holy place within the tabernacle (26:31-37). After these, he specifically described what needed to be set apart for him, extensively applying the concept of holiness to various things and persons because he is the Lord who sanctifies those (Exod 31:13). There are certainly no ethical or moral aspects of holiness in the book of Exodus. While the

²³Purkiser, *Exploring Christian Holiness*, 43.

holiness of God is revealed in his majesty, the holiness of things and persons is taught through the ritual and ceremonial aspect and it stresses the need of separation from that which is profane and unclean.

In Leviticus, the ceremonial aspect of holiness, especially concerned with the offerings, continued until the tragic incident of unholy fire offered before the Lord. And Moses said that through this incident the Lord had shown himself holy and he was glorified before all the people (Lev 10:3). Next, God's instruction concerning priests came upon Aaron and his sons saying, "you are to make a distinction between the holy and the profane, and between the unclean and the clean" (10:10). We may notice, here, that within the first 10 chapters of Leviticus the concept of holiness is focused on the ceremonial aspect. As the theme of Leviticus changes to the specific description of clean and unclean animals in chapter 11 and continues with various laws of purification (cc. 11-15), God commands the Israelites to sanctify themselves and to be holy from the uncleanness, for he is holy (11:44-45). Within the context of the laws of purification, however, the term, 'holiness', was not applied to the laws of purification, which the Israelites were instructed to keep through their daily lives. Instead the term 'clean' (טהור) was used for the laws of purification.

The rest of Leviticus deals with a mixture of cultic and ethical regulations as the book introduces God's instruction concerning the Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16. This section is usually known as the Holiness Code, constituting the largest single division in the Book of Leviticus (17:1-26:46).²⁴ Certainly, there are ethical regulations in Leviticus 18 and 19. Various ethical behaviors and attitudes are identified as defiling practices and an abomination to the Lord. Yet, there are no specific ideas of holiness applied to the ethical regulations. Just as in Leviticus 11:44-45, again in 19:2, 20:7, and 20:26, there is only God's command for his people to be holy as he is holy.

²⁴Ibid., 46.

Through the rest of the chapters in the Book of Leviticus, four aspects are dominant according to the survey of holiness language: The first is the holiness of priests (21:6-8); the second is the warning against profaning God's holy name (22:2, 32); the third is declaring holy convocation; and the last is the holiness of things dedicated to God.

Throughout the Book of Numbers, the concept of holiness is primarily found in ceremonial contexts except for the holiness of Nazirites (Num 6) and the holiness dispute (Num 16). To a man or a woman who made a special vow, the vow of a Nazirite, to dedicate oneself to the Lord, God set them apart to be holy and mandated certain rules to keep. The Book of Numbers also records one tragic incident that occurred due to the dispute over holiness. Korah and his company assembled against Moses and Aaron, and claimed their holiness before the Lord. Moses responded to Korah, saying, "The Lord will show who is His, and who is holy, and will bring *him* near to Himself" (16:5). This incident ended with God's consuming fire upon Korah and all his company, and yet with God's recognition of their censers, which were offered to the Lord as holy (16:35-38).

Much as Israel is commanded to be holy to the Lord in Exodus and Leviticus, the affirmation in Deuteronomy 7:6 is "you are a holy people to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth." And the biblical writer testifies that this special call is based on God's love and his faithful promise (7:8). The same thought is echoed in 14:2, and throughout the book the term "you are a holy people to the Lord your God" appears three more times (14:21; 26:19; 28:9).²⁵ The concept of holiness is definitely focused on the separation of Israel from all other people to be his special

²⁵In Deut 33: 2-3 the author used a similar term "holy ones" twice in a similar concept. Out of 11 occurrences of the term "holy" the idea of God's holy people appears 7 times. The rest of the instances of "holy people" can be found only in prophetic writings: Isa 62:12; 63:18; Dan 7:27; 8:24; 12:7. The term "holy nation" is used once in Exodus 19:6.

possession. Here, the one thing we should note is that she was designated as a holy people within the cultic setting in the beginning part of the book. However, after Israel was instructed to keep God's commandments in both cultic and ethical aspects, she was reminded of the promise of holiness in Deuteronomy 26:18-19 and 28:9. It seems that, even though Israel was chosen to be a holy people, she was reminded that she needed to demonstrate herself as a holy people by her obedience to God's commandments, or otherwise her holy status could be forfeited. Purkiser posits that a truly prophetic emphasis began in Deuteronomy as a transition focusing on "the heart and its love and loyalty as necessary for the validity of the cultic sacrifices."²⁶

Based on the survey of the concept of holiness through Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, we may find that the concept is mainly cultic or ceremonial. But we may also observe that the concept is developed or established with a certain flow of the content. As he reveals his nature in the concept of holiness, God confers holiness upon very special objects and people in the cultic aspect. Atonement is demanded for man to encounter with the holy God. Here, the ceremonial aspect is focused on the rite of the atoning sacrifice, emphasizing the purity of its place and process, and its unblemished nature. People are to be separated and specifically distinguished from the profane and uncleanness, and related to God in a way no other can claim except by his specific instruction. God is the only source of holiness. He sets the criteria and defines them in the cultic or ceremonial aspect. He then commands his people to be holy for he is holy. Certainly they are chosen to be a holy people in the cultic perspective. But the call to be holy does not limit the concept to the cultic setting only. Cultic qualification is inconceivable without purity, and eventually it requires personal purity.²⁷ As Israel becomes more vulnerable to commit sin against God and the ethical commandments are

²⁶Purkiser, *Exploring Christian Holiness*, 48.

²⁷Procksch, "ἅγιος, etc.," 92.

given for moral qualification, holiness becomes the promise from God for a people who are obedient to his commandments. This concept continues to develop through the rest of the Old Testament.

The Psalmist inquires, “Who may dwell on Your holy hill?” And the answer is, “He who walks with integrity, and works righteousness, and speaks truth in his heart” (Ps 15:1-2). Again he asks, “Who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood and has not sworn deceitfully. He shall receive a blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation” (Ps 24:3-4). It seems that the concept of holiness now moves away from the cultic element and focuses on the moral qualification.

Isaiah proclaims, “A highway will be there, a roadway, and it will be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean will not travel on it, but it *will* be for him who walks *that* way, and fools will not wander *on it*. No lion will be there, nor will any vicious beast go up on it; these will not be found there. But the redeemed will walk *there*” (35:8-9). Through this proclamation, it seems that a connection is established between redemption and holiness. And the redemption is for the ones who keep purity in their walks.

The Suggested Concept of Holiness in the Old Testament

Through the survey of the extensive holiness language, the holiness of God serves as the foundational concept of holiness. He is the source of holiness and “holiness is an attribute of God which distinguishes him as God from everything in creation.”²⁸ Holiness in the Old Testament depicts “the quintessential character of God” and it affects everything around him as “the center of divine motivation.”²⁹ An important dimension to

²⁸G. Ernest Wright and Reginald H. Fuller, *The Book of the Acts of God* (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1957), 380.

²⁹Hartley, “Holy and Holiness, Clean and Unclean,” 420.

his holiness is, only if we may describe him in human terms, *purity and perfection*. His purity and perfection is, however, rather described in moral antithesis to the nature of man. Much is made of the contrast between holiness and impurity, or his holy name and his people's profanity of the name in the Old Testament. This essential nature of God's holiness ultimately brought at once a separation from the fellowship between the holy God and sinful humans when his people rebelled against him. "God's holiness means that he never remains neutral to persistent disobedience."³⁰ It is seen in his judgment on the gross sinfulness of people, and in the standard of that judgment they are called to be holy. Thus, due penalty was upon the people according to God's justice. To those chosen people, however, demands were made to become a holy people: "You shall be holy to me; for I the LORD am holy, and I have separated you from the other peoples to be mine"(Lev 20:26).

Therefore, here we define the implied concept of holiness from the survey of the holiness of persons and things. According to the study of the holiness of things, second, we find that they are referred to as holy because they are distinguished from the profane or unclean, and this distinction is based within the framework of God's command or presence. People are called to be holy because they are either explicitly or implicitly tied or devoted to God, or sanctified for God. No moral choice is given and no moral qualification is involved in the holiness of things. Even though most things are designated as holy within the cultic aspect, non-ceremonial references are also implied. This suggests that God, most of all, defines holiness in the Old Testament. And such an understanding is based upon two important aspects: first, his nature of holiness, and second, the tie and devotion of things connected to God, whether it is cultic or not.

As related to persons, holiness in the Old Testament appears under two major

³⁰Ibid., 430.

aspects: cultic and moral.³¹ Basically within the cultic or ceremonial aspect, the major meaning for holiness is to be set apart, dedicated, separated, or regarded as sacred. Here, Hartley expresses that for Israel being holy meant: “they were in a covenant relationship,” and “God was present in their midst.”³² But, as we have surveyed, it certainly does not exclude the moral element, since those who are to be holy are also demanded to keep moral purity. Seebass posits, “the holy were never purely ritualistic matters but were concerned with one’s way of life.”³³ Again, we should recognize that “as purity is the proper characteristic of everything that is holy, it is duty of everyone who takes part in the cultus to be pure (to sanctify oneself).”³⁴ In other words, cultic qualification of holiness is inconceivable without purity, and eventually it requires personal purity in a moral sense. Therefore, we may observe the growing moralization of the concept of holiness through the Old Testament. Purkiser suggests, “It is God’s total aversion to sin and unrighteousness that makes holiness practically synonymous with moral purity in later OT writings.”³⁵ Here, Seebass suggests “the sphere of the holy was wider than the cult. The holy is therefore a pre-ethical term. . . . it is a concept which posits ethical values. This ethic is not the first stage of human morality, but the expression of the holiness of Yahweh.”³⁶

Then how should we understand the meaning of holiness in its moral aspect? Is the ethical concept of holiness defined differently from the cultic aspect? In Deuteronomy, holiness is promised to Israel for her obedience to God’s commandments

³¹It is also divided into priestly and prophetic among scholars.

³²Hartley, “Holy and Holiness, Clean and Unclean,” 425.

³³Seebass, “Holy,” 225.

³⁴Ibid., 227.

³⁵Purkiser, *Exploring Christian Holiness*, 24.

³⁶Seebass, “Holy,” 224.

in both the cultic and ethical aspects (26:18-19 and 28:9). Even though she was chosen to be a holy people, the Israelites were reminded of their walk with a clean hand and a pure heart in order to stand in the divine holy place. This suggests that moral purity is primary foundation for holiness just as in the cultic setting the atoning sacrifice is required to be offered without blemish to be a holy sacrifice to God. Here, we should notice that holiness in its moral aspect, just as in the cultic aspect, is imputed to God's people as a promise according to his defining concept of holiness, or, we may say, his divine nature. In other word, God sets moral purity as the primary foundation for the holiness of persons according to his commandments, and his people do not become holy because of their ethical behavior. Israel was reminded that she was a people holy to the Lord, for the Lord had chosen them out of all the peoples on earth to be his treasured possession (Deut 7:6; 14:2). And she was exhorted to display a holy character through her obedience to God's instruction, by showing love and compassion to others, and through careful observance of the rules for worshipping God. For this, the Law was given to her according to his holy nature providing "insight into holiness."³⁷

Hartley iterates that observing the Law was required for the fulfillment of holiness. But, "keeping the Law in itself did not make the people holy but prepare them to be made holy."³⁸ Yet, sin was rather reflected upon her through his Law. Through the Law God has revealed, on the one hand, his justice to his people, holding them accountable for their persistent sin and rejection of his ordinance. The holy God displays himself holy in righteousness (Isa 5:16). Certainly there is the interrelationship between holiness and righteousness, and it is clearly seen in the Law. Hartley rightly points out, "Righteousness is an integral expression of holiness for the God of revelation."³⁹ On the

³⁷Hartley, "Holy and Holiness, Clean and Unclean," 423.

³⁸Ibid., 425.

³⁹Ibid., 423.

other hand, the Lord who is “compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth, who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin, yet [who] will by no means leave *the guilty* unpunished” (Exod 34:6-7), bestowed his promise: “The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, as He swore to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways” (Deut 28:9). Even though he is a holy God, God promises his people to manifest his compassion upon them, implicitly revealing his salvific plan (Hos 11:9). Just as he had chosen Israel as a holy people through their atoning holy sacrifice, God promised to establish the Highway of Holiness for future generations so that those who are redeemed will walk there (Isa 35:8-9).

These thoughts are where, we may assume, two different theological concepts are put forth and responded to in the course of the history of religions. Paul suggests both concepts through his experience. Paul, as a Pharisee holding the Jewish religion, thought that at one point in his life he found himself to be blameless with regard to the righteous requirement of the Law through his observance of the Law (Phil 3:5-6), suggesting the theological concept of Judaism that one becomes holy through the observance of cultic and ethical regulations. But, Paul, after his conversion to Christ, confessed that there is none righteous “because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight” (Rom 3:20), and preached, “although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, *engaged* in evil deeds, yet He [Jesus] has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before him holy and blameless and beyond reproach” (Col 1:21-22). Clearly we observe that Paul has reevaluated the concept of holiness through the Christ event. This reevaluation will be the main concern of this study.

In the ultimate sense, God alone is holy, and the concept of holiness in the Old Testament should be defined by the essential nature of God. Everything and everyone

brought into relationship with him should share in some way in that holiness.⁴⁰ With respect to God, it means absolute purity and perfection, and with respect to persons, it means becoming one of his chosen ones or receiving the promise of holiness by becoming ceremonially and morally qualified. God's essential nature of holiness guarantees that he will always be true to his character, keep his promises and nourish his established relationships. Gregory writes, "We are justified in this emphasis. Holiness is manifest in righteousness and purity."⁴¹ The holiness of Israel, however, is limited as a function of her location and her ritual purity system.⁴² This aspect will be discussed in the next chapter in order to compare with the Old Testament concept of holiness.

⁴⁰Purkiser, *Exploring Christian Holiness*, 72.

⁴¹James F. Gregory, "The Holiness of God," in *Further Insights into Holiness*, ed. Kenneth Geiger (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1963), 33.

⁴²Jacob Neusner, "Another Path to Truth: From Ritual to Theological in Judaism," in *Radical Pluralism and Truth*, ed. Werner G. Jeanrond and Jennifer L. Rike (New York: Crossroad, 1991), 175.

CHAPTER 3

THE PHARISAIC CONCEPT OF HOLINESS

Before his conversion, Paul was a Pharisee (Phil 3:5). He writes to the Galatians that he had received his gospel "through a revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:12) and that during his "former life in Judaism" he had tried to destroy the church of God (1:13). He continues, then, saying, "I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions" (Gal 1:14). In Philippians 3:3-9, as he contends that believers in Christ are the true people of God, he testifies that he was "circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee" (Phil 3:5). Based on his background, we may assume that the source of Paul's emphasis on holiness was his Jewish religion and that he understood the concept of holiness in connection with God and the people of Israel. Keck suggests, "Whereas other influences on his thought must be inferred, Paul himself points to the 'Pharisaic factor', even if he thinks he is done with it."¹ Davies claims, "Paul is grounded in an essentially Rabbinic world of thought, that the Apostle was, in short, a Rabbi become Christian and was therefore primarily governed in life and thought by Pharisaic concepts, which he had 'baptized unto Christ.'"²

For Judaism, holiness was the most important aspect in their cultic contexts,

¹Leander E. Keck, "The Quest for Paul's Pharisaism: Some Reflections," in *Justice and Holy: Essays in Honor of Walter Harrelson*, ed. Douglas A. Knight and Peter J. Paris (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 164.

²W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), 16.

and it was strictly observed and enforced by the religious setting. During the time of Jesus, Pharisees were a major influence in the religious life of Judaism, taking holiness as the means of separating their identity from other religious and ethnic groups of people. We have surveyed the Old Testament concept of holiness assuming that Paul's view is based upon his knowledge of God in the Old Testament, and it seems necessary to compare this with the Pharisaic concept of holiness. Neusner rightly suggests that the holiness of the Jewish religion is limited as a function of location and their ritual purity system.³ Based on this argument, the Pharisaic concept of holiness will be briefly surveyed from their practice of ritual purity law, especially focusing on Pharisaic handwashing. This also helps us to reflect on the Pharisaic concept through the teachings of Jesus (Mark 7:1-23; Matt 15:1-21; and Luke 11:37-54) where Jesus confronted the Pharisees and scribes and taught his disciples "the need for an inner purity of heart as the basis for one's external behavior."⁴ The extent of Paul's knowledge of Jesus' teachings when he wrote his letters is debatable. Yet, since he was a Pharisee, we can at least assume that he was aware of how Jesus confronted the Pharisees regarding the ritual purity system. What we can notice is Paul's conviction grounded "in the Lord Jesus," and that he draws his teaching concerning purity, saying, "nothing is unclean in itself; but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean" (Rom 14:14, cf. 1 Tim 4:4-5). Keck thus points out that Paul's teaching on purity is "the opposite of zealotry for the traditions of the fathers."⁵

³Jacob Neusner, "Another Path to Truth: From Ritual to Theological in Judaism," in *Radical Pluralism and Truth*, ed. Werner G. Jeanrond and Jennifer L. Rike (New York: Crossroad, 1991),175.

⁴Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, The New American Commentary, vol. 24 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1992), 339.

⁵Keck, "The Quest for Paul's Pharisaism: Some Reflections," 173, also explains, "Paul did not simply reverse the Pharisaic concern that only 'clean' food be eaten; he did not insist that 'unclean' food be eaten in order to demonstrate his new-found freedom from *kashrut*. The discussion in Romans 14-15, like its counterpart in 1 Corinthians 8-10, shows that what had been decisive has now become a matter of

Paul, who had a Pharisaic background, acknowledged these aspects: God's command regarding holiness in the Old Testament and a distorted ritual purity system by the tradition of elders. Through the Christ event, however, Paul reevaluated the concept of God's holiness and reflected Jesus' teachings on purity in his letters. In his writings Paul alluded to the teaching concerned with purity of food. We will suggest that this is one of the sources of Paul's reevaluation of tradition. From this chapter, however, we will focus on the Pharisaic concept of holiness. We will first briefly review the teachings of Jesus where Jesus encountered the Pharisees concerning the matter of handwashing before meals. As we describe the Pharisees, then, we will discuss concerning the Pharisaic understanding of holiness through their ritual purity laws. Later, when we focus on the concept of holiness in the Pauline epistles through our exegetical studies, our findings from the Pharisaic understanding of holiness will help us to examine how Paul's concept has been recast.

Jesus' Teaching Concerning Purity Laws (Handwashing)

In the synoptic Gospels, Mark 7:1-23 and its parallels in Matthew 15:1-21 and Luke 11:37-54 (Matt 23:25-26), Jesus and his disciples were challenged concerning the matter of washing their hands before a meal by some Pharisees and scribes. Their arguments were based on their tradition of the elders concerning their purity law.⁶ In the Markan account, it is noted that the Pharisees and indeed all the Jews did not eat unless they thoroughly washed their hands, and they did not eat anything from the market unless they washed it; and there were also many other traditions that they observed, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles (7:3-4). Jesus, however, confronted their misconception

custom.”

⁶There are conflicting views on this aspect and we will briefly discuss those different views later.

of God's commandments. "Instead of defending himself, Jesus attacked his opponents [the Pharisees and scribes] by proclaiming the need for an inner purity of heart as the basis for one's external behavior."⁷ Jesus called them hypocrites, blind guides and foolish people.

Mark and Matthew write that both the Pharisees and the scribes came to Jesus, and opposed Jesus by criticizing his disciples' conduct. According to their understanding of the tradition of the elders, the disciples transgressed the ritual purity law (Mark 7:5; Matt 15:2). They became unclean because they ate bread with defiled hands (Mark 7:2). The disciples were accused of undermining ritual purity. Knowing the inner motives of the Pharisees, however, Jesus rebuked them as hypocrites (Mark 7:6; Matt 15:7). "The epithet 'hypocrites' occurs here for the first and only time in Mark."⁸ Matthew also writes that, for the first time, Jesus calls them "blind guides" in Matt 15:14.⁹

Pharisees adopted a life pursuing the law in approaching God but by replacing God's commandments with the tradition of the elders. Such a tradition is considered to be 'interpreted rules.' Jesus challenged them by citing God's commandment from Isaiah 29:13 and Exodus 20:12 to show that their approach had indeed distorted God's word.

Jesus then turned his attention to the multitudes and addressed the same issue with the crowds by giving them an illustration with an implicit meaning, οὐδέν ἐστιν ἔξωθεν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἰσπορευόμενον εἰς αὐτόν ὃ δύναται κοινῶσαι αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ τὰ ἐκ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκπορευόμενά ἐστιν τὰ κοινούντα τὸν ἄνθρωπον¹⁰ (Mark 17:15; Matt.

⁷Stein, *Luke*, 339.

⁸Donald E. Cook, "A Gospel Portrait of the Pharisees," *RevExp* 84 (1987): 222.

⁹*Ibid.*, 224. Cook points out blindness and hypocrisy as major motifs in Matthew's treatment of the Pharisees.

¹⁰Marcus J. Borg, *Conflict, Holiness & Politics in the Teachings of Jesus* (New York: Edwin Mellen, 1984), 96. Borg posits that this saying in v. 15 is an authentic saying of Jesus and is unanimously held among many schools of criticism. Sanders, however, argues against its authenticity. E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*

15:11). Jesus said, Ἀκούσατέ μου πάντες καὶ σύνετε (Mark 7:14; Matt 15:10).

Responding to the disciples' question, Jesus declared that nothing from the outside could defile a person, but only things from the inside (Mark 7:18-19; Matt 15:17). He was teaching that defilement was not caused by external acts but by the internal motives of one's heart. Jesus' primary concern was not the external form of religion but rather human nature that was fundamentally sinful.

In Matthew 23, there are seven woes, all but one of which refer to the Pharisees and scribes. With the fifth woe (23:25-26), Jesus condemns the washing of cups and plates. This generally parallels the Lukan discourse in Luke 11:37-12:1. The setting for the discourse is a meal at a Pharisee's home where Jesus did not wash before the meal. Here another disagreement over ritual purity occurs. In reaction to the Pharisee's amazement at his behavior, Jesus begins to reprove them. Here, the first criticism parallels Matthew's fifth woe.

Conflict over Purity Laws: Handwashing

Before we continue on to the Pharisaic concept of holiness, we need to discuss two conflicting scholarly views on the Pharisaic handwashing rite.¹¹ Many scholars, such as G. Alon¹² and J. Neusner,¹³ hold that the Pharisees washed their hands because they

(Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 267.

¹¹Roger P. Booth, *Jesus and the Laws of Purity: Tradition History and Legal History in Mark 7* (Sheffield: Journal for the Study of the New Testament, 1986), 119. Besides the two views, he also explains one view which involves a hygienic rather than cultic setting. It has been suggested that handwashing may have been derived from Roman table manners. However, I did not include this view because it does not seem plausible for the pharisaic cultic setting.

¹²Ibid., 153. Booth writes, "Regarding handwashing before ordinary food Alon admits that till the destruction of the Temple and possibly even later, this practice was not accepted by all the Sages, nor observed by all Israel; he consequently regards [Mark 7:3] that all Israel handwashed in Jesus' time as an 'exaggerated generalization.'"

¹³Ibid. Booth writes, "At *Purities*, XXII, p. 89, however, Neusner considers that [Mark 7:3] attests to handwashing before eating 'at the earlier states of the unfolding of the law', and he claims elsewhere that this practice did prevail amongst Pharisees,

were concerned with the purity of ordinary food. A second view, which is supported by E. P. Sanders, is that since the Pharisees maintained the purity of food only in connection with Temple proceedings; they did not wash their hands for ordinary food.¹⁴ It seems important here to review such different views in order to find the understanding of the teachings in the Gospels.

Sanders argues that there is no evidence from rabbinic literature that demonstrates that the Pharisees washed their hands before eating ordinary meals. He suggests that handwashing was an innovation late in the Pharisaic movement. It could have originated because of the biblical significance of handwashing as a metaphor for innocence.¹⁵ According to biblical purity laws (Lev 11:32-38) and the interpretation of Berakoth 8.2f and T. Berakot 5.25-28, the impurity which the Pharisees adopted to remove by handwashing was probably fly-impurity. Yet, Sanders argues, “handwashing is not a biblical purification.”¹⁶ Based on Shabbat 13b-14s, the Pharisees disagreed about the point which their hands should be washed before handling food for the priests or their own holy food. He explains, “The likely line of development was from washing hands before handling the priests’ food to washing hands before their own special meals on _____
apparently in, or close to, Jesus’ time.”

¹⁴John C. Poirier, “Why Did the Pharisees Wash their Hands?” *JJS* 47 (1996): 217.

¹⁵E.P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief, 63 BCE-66 CE* (London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1992), 437. He writes that handwashing symbolizes innocence or righteousness in Deut. 21:6-7; Ps 26:6; 73:13; and 24:4.

¹⁶E.P. Sanders, *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah: Five Studies* (London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990), 229. Hannah K. Harrington, “Did the Pharisees Eat Ordinary Food in a State of Ritual Purity?” *JSJ* 26 (1995): 50, argues that Sanders did not see a biblical system on the matter of purity as important because, “unless the Torah specifically says immersion or eating/handling food in a state of purity was required, he assumes it was not.” However, it is certainly known that “if the second tithe, which was eaten by ordinary Israelites, had to be separated in purity, holy food could not have been handled by impure persons.” For example, he says, “Leviticus is clear that those who eat impure food should bathe and launder their clothes” (cf. Lev 11:40; 17:15; 7:19; and 22:3).

Sabbaths and festivals.”¹⁷ The rabbinic passages only discussed handwashing in three contexts: “handling food which would go to the priesthood; the Pharisees’ own Sabbath and festival meals; handling scripture.”¹⁸ The concern for the protection of the priesthood and the temple from impurity was certainly important to them. Yet, Sanders argues that the purity of their private food seemed less significant since there were many issues more important than handwashing. Moreover, since some other Jews practiced handwashing as well, “it was not necessarily a hallmark of Pharisaism.”¹⁹ On the other hand, the Pharisees were interested in ritual purity just as many other ancient religions were. And the system was called ‘ritual’ because it is especially connected with the temple and the priesthood.

Yet, Harrington asserts that the synoptic Gospels reveal the most compelling and clear evidence of a Pharisaic handwashing rite performed with ordinary food.²⁰ In Mark 7:5, κοῖνος, which is ‘common’ in English, is used with the meaning “ceremonially impure.” Thus, by κοινῶς χερσὶν in v.5, it seems probable that Mark “meant hands *assumed* to be impure” for ordinary food.²¹ Booth further argues that handwashing was practiced by the Pharisees before ordinary food for ritual purity in post-Temple days and that such a position is clear from the Mishnah. He says, “we do not find their purity system explained comprehensively until the Mishnah and Tosephta of about A.D. 200.”²²

¹⁷Sanders, *Jewish Law*, 228-29.

¹⁸Ibid., 31.

¹⁹Ibid., 41.

²⁰Harrington, “Did the Pharisees Eat Ordinary Food in a State of Ritual Purity?” 53.

²¹Booth, *Jesus and the Laws of Purity*, 120-21.

²²Ibid., 123. Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 34a (Dallas: Word, 1989), 364. He explains that ‘handwashing’ is ritual cleansings “covered by the sixth division of the Mishnah (*Tohorot*) with twelve tractates, the eleventh of which is on ‘hands’ (*Yadaim*).”

Yet, based on the evidence of *t. Demai 2:12* which revealed *haberim* “Associates” washed their hand before ordinary food, he suggests that it is sufficient to render the Pharisaic question in Mark 7:5 as credible.²³

The Mishnaic system of cultic purity was largely built on the foundations of the Priestly Code. In the Pentateuch, the impurities are identified with the human corpse, the dead body of certain other creatures, discharges from human sexual organs, and leprosy. In the Mishnah, “these impurities are called ‘fathers of impurity.’ . . . A subject rendered impure by a father of impurity, or even by a defiler of less impurity, is called an ‘offspring of impurity.’”²⁴ The whole system is understood in this manner: only a subject which is impure can defile another subject and its effectiveness and the purification is determined by the level of different sub-degrees. For example:

A father of impurity renders men, garments and utensils, foods, and liquids impure, but an offspring of impurity only renders foods, liquids and hands impure (B.K. 2b and Yad. 3.1). If the hands contact a father of impurity, the whole body becomes unclean in the first degree, and must be purified by immersion in a *miqveh*; if the hands contact only an offspring of impurity, they alone become unclean (in the second degree), and are purified by washing.²⁵

Harrington also presents plausible evidence from the Mishna and Tosefta which supports the first view that the Pharisees maintained a certain level of purity for eating ordinary food. An exemplary text is from *t. AZ 3(6):10*, “And who is deemed an ‘*am ha’ areš*? ‘Anyone who does not eat his unconsecrated food in conditions of cultic cleanness,’ the words of R. Meir,” and this emphasizes eating ordinary food in a state of purity. Other example texts include:

m. Hul. 2:5: He who slaughters a beast, a wild animal, or fowl, from which blood did not exude—they are valid. And they are eaten with dirty hands, because they have not been made susceptible to uncleanness by blood.²⁶

²³Ibid., 153, 202.

²⁴Ibid., 128.

²⁵Ibid., 129.

²⁶Harrington, “Did the Pharisees Eat Ordinary Food in a State of Ritual Purity?” 46.

m. Par. 11:5: Whoever requires immersion in water according to the rules of the scribes (1) renders the holy things unclean and (2) spoils the heave offering. “And he is permitted in respect to unconsecrated food and tithe,” the words of R. Meir. And Sages prohibit in the case of the tithe. After he has immersed, he is permitted for all of them.²⁷

m. Toh. 4:12: A matter of doubt concerning the unconsecrated food—this has to do with the cleanness of abstinence [*pěrišût*].²⁸

t. Dem. 2:2: He who gives the following four undertakings is accepted as a *haber*: That he will not give heave offerings and tithes to an ‘*am ha’ areš*, that he will not prepare levitically pure food next to an ‘*am ha’ areš*, and that he will eat secular food in purity (tr. Alon).²⁹

Moreover, Harrington posits that the reason that the Pharisees emphasized handling priestly food in purity is because of both the biblical command and the penalty attached to it.³⁰ In summary, Harrington concludes that even though the Pharisees did not completely follow a priestly way of living, they considered it important to eat ordinary food in a state of purity just as the priest did.

What Does It Mean?

Booth argues that the washing of hands in the Old Testament is done to symbolize a moral cleansing rather than ritual purity.³¹ Marcus posits that the cleanness of hands is a symbol of innocence or repentance in several biblical passages (e.g., Deut 21:6-7; Pss 18:20, 24; 26:6; 73:13). In the sense of this symbolism, Psalm 24:4 says that those who have clean hands and pure hearts can ascend to the hill of the Lord and stand in his holy place.³² In Psalm 26.6, we read, “I shall wash my hands in innocence, and I will go about Your altar, O LORD.” Yet, in the Gospels, the Pharisaic accusation of

²⁷Ibid., 47.

²⁸Ibid., 48. She suggests that this passage connects *pěrišût*, which is used with the reference to the Pharisees, with concern over the purity of ordinary food.

²⁹Ibid., 46-48.

³⁰Ibid., 52.

³¹Booth, *Jesus and the Laws of Purity*, 158.

³²Borg, *Conflict, Holiness & Politics in the Teachings of Jesus*, 18.

handwashing seems focusing more on cultic function than on a symbolic meaning. That is evidenced in Jesus' reply because "Jesus does not counter the pharisaic practice by objecting at the level of symbol, but at the purported function of the tradition: 'to eat with unwashed hands does not defile man' (Matt. 15:20)."³³

If the Pharisees used handwashing in the sense of cultic function only, then what would be the practical meaning they implied? Poirier suggests two possible answers explaining why they washed the hands. First is "the Alon-Jeremias-Neusner view of the Pharisees as priestly imitators: mealtime itself might have been a sacred activity, and ritual purity was a necessary 'gesture of approach' for eating." The second explanation: "the Pharisees' concern was analogous to modern table etiquette—that one must guard against ingesting impurity—but with a concern for a truly ritual sort of defilement. In other words, the Pharisees washed their hands in order not to defile their inward parts."³⁴

Are these the only reasons why Jesus rebuked their practice of ritual purity and called them "hypocrites"? Now we will try to answer the question: how should we understand the Pharisees' accusation of Jesus and his disciples, and Jesus' rebuke?

Harrington argues, "In no way do the Pharisees think of themselves as priests, but they do strive for a holiness above and beyond what the Torah prescribed for the lay Israelite."³⁵ This leads them to emphasize the tradition of the elders. But just as the Law separates Israel from the nations, the Pharisaic tradition divides "Israel into observers and non-observers of that tradition."³⁶ It is therefore no accident that Jesus responds to the

³³Poirier, "Why Did the Pharisees Wash their Hands?" 229.

³⁴Ibid., 227.

³⁵Harrington, "Did the Pharisees Eat Ordinary Food in a State of Ritual Purity?" 54.

³⁶Borg, *Conflict, Holiness & Politics in the Teachings of Jesus*, 194.

Pharisees and their Pharisaic regulations as a tradition of human beings (τῶν ἀνθρώπων, 7:8). He quotes Isaiah 29:13 to condemn this tradition. He then points out repeatedly how defilement comes from the heart of the human being (τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, 7:15, 18, 20-21, 23). “These pervasive usages of ἄνθρωπος are conceptually as well as literally linked: tradition inevitably ends up choking the revelation of God because it participates in the human sphere in which the Evil Inclination holds sway.”³⁷

Borg insists that Jesus is not the only one who condemns the Pharisaic tradition. He states that “in a variety of apocalyptic Jewish and Jewish-Christian texts (e.g. *CD* 4:5; *Jub* 23:21; *T. Asher* 7:5; *T. Levi* 14:4; 16,2), it is ‘prophesied’ that in the end-time Jews will fall away from God and will prefer the commandments of human beings to the divine, Mosaic laws.”³⁸ And he writes that some of these ‘prophecies,’ strikingly, allude to Isaiah 29:13. For example, *Testament of Asher* 7:5 accuses the disobedient descendants of Asher of “not paying attention to God’s Law but to human commandments.” The *T. Levi* 14:4-8 further shows an extended allusion to Isaiah 29:13:

4) What will all the Gentiles do, if you are darkened through ungodliness and bring a curse upon our race—because of which the light of the law (came) which was given among you to enlighten every man? . . . [You will be] *teaching commandments contrary to the ordinances of God.* 5) You will rob the offerings of the Lord and steal from his portions . . . 6) You will *teach the commandments of the Lord* out of covetousness, pollute married women, defile virgins of Jerusalem, be joined with harlots and adulteresses, take to wives daughters of the Gentiles, purifying them with an unlawful purification, and your union will be like Sodom and Gomorrah in ungodliness. 7) . . . *Puffed up also against the commandments of God.* 8) you will mock the holy things, jesting contemptuously.³⁹

The Pharisaic accusation of violating ritual purity against Jesus and his disciples is based on human commandments. Such commandments are distorted. On the other hand, Jesus is the truth and he speaks the living words, the bread of life, because he came to fulfill the

³⁷Ibid., 193. Paul has a similar understanding in Rom 8:3 when he writes, “God’s Law could not do what it had promised, since it has been weakened by the flesh.”

³⁸Ibid., 184.

³⁹Ibid., 184-85.

Law.

The disciples' behavior raises the question of cultic functional justification by failing to do what was acceptable to the Pharisees and scribes. Jesus counters by dismissing this functional justification as "human commandments." Jesus rebukes the Pharisees and scribes for their hypocrisy and hypocritical lifestyles (Mark 7:6; Matt. 15:7). Here, many scholars question whether Jesus engaged in a controversy with them or not. This answer differs depending on how one understands the meaning of the word *hypocrites*. "One view argues it may refer to outright hypocrisy, where the leadership requires of others what they will not do themselves. The second view sees a more subtle form of hypocrisy, where they offer no aid or loving support to help those who have great burdens to bear."⁴⁰

Guelich points out that the word *hypocrite* in the original language does not imply the moral sense of fraud as we understand it in our English word today. "Rather it refers to the discrepancy in the behavior of one who unconsciously had alienated oneself from God, an 'ungodly' person by one's actions." Thus, "Jesus' charge of hypocrisy is directed at 'false teaching' only to the extent that it leads to the discrepancy of neglecting the 'commandment of God.'"⁴¹ Based on this understanding we should understand that when the Pharisees were called hypocrites they were being accused of their false teachings ("human commandments") which has caused them to neglect God's commandment. This is why they were accused of being a blind guide in Matthew 15:14. And just as Jesus demonstrated by quoting Isaiah 29:13, their discrepancy in behavior was described in the difference between lip service and where one's heart really is. Jesus challenged them with a more radical understanding of 'purity' which must be rooted in

⁴⁰Darrell L. Bock, *Luke*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 333.

⁴¹Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, 366.

one's heart. He called for a conduct which follows God's will, and which is not necessarily defined by the rules and regulations of the Law but which is indicative of one's relationship with God. Then, here, one may ask, why was Jesus so hard on this religious group? Bock explains that, "though the text does not tell us, their claim to represent God and then be an obstacle to him made these opponents dangerous to the spiritual well-being of others."⁴² Even though they believed deeply in what they tried to teach, zeal and sincerity were not enough. The misconception of God's commandment and the false teaching had created a blind and hardened heart.

Borg suggests that Jesus did not reject the food laws of the Pentateuch, and that there is no such accusation reported.⁴³ Jesus' rebuke was directed to the issue of ritual purity of washing one's hands before meals. Luke also reports a similar content when he writes of how Jesus replied to the same accusation in Luke 11:38-41. Taken together, the accusations and replies reported by Mark and Luke lead to two very important conclusions. First, the Pharisees' extension of priestly regulations to daily life contravened an important aspect of the purity laws. Second, the contrasting view of Jesus indeed negated the whole notion of how holiness was to be achieved. "The equation between holiness and separation, *qudosh* and *parush*, was denied, for holiness had nothing to do with separation from external sources of defilement."⁴⁴

Who Are the Pharisees?

Neusner points out that the picture of Pharisees which Josephus presents is different from both the early church's view and the rabbinic traditions while the pictures drawn by the Gospel and the rabbinic writings are essentially coherent. He argues, "the

⁴²Bock, *Luke*, 333.

⁴³Borg, *Conflict, Holiness & Politics in the Teachings of Jesus*, 97.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 98.

traits of Pharisaism emphasized by Josephus, their principal beliefs and practices, nowhere occur in the rabbinic traditions of the Pharisees.”⁴⁵ Neusner posits that the Pharisees are “a party of philosophical politicians,” according to Josephus, with their philosophical emphases on belief in fate, and in the traditions outside of the Laws of Moses. The rabbinic traditions, however, have the focus of interest in the internal affairs of the Pharisaic party itself with such issues as “ritual purity, agricultural taboos, and Sabbath and Festival behavior.”⁴⁶ The recurring issues in the Gospels’ accounts of the Pharisees are as follows: Sabbath, purity, consecrating objects to the Temple and oath-taking, tithing, fasting, and lawful divorce.⁴⁷

Nevertheless, all three sources agree on a similar description of the Pharisees as:

a lay, not priestly, association who were thought to be expert in the laws; they were in a sociological sense brokers of power between the aristocracy and masses; they promoted their special living tradition in addition to the biblical ways; they were interested in issues of ritual purity and tithing; and they believed in afterlife, judgment and a densely populated, organized spirit world.⁴⁸

Pharisaic Understanding of Holiness through Their Ritual Purity Law

A holy way of life was commanded in the Torah: “You are to be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy; and I have set you apart from the peoples to be Mine.”(Lev 20:26); and “make a distinction between the holy and the profane, and between the unclean and the clean” (Lev 10:10). When the Roman general Pompey occupied Jerusalem in 63 B.C., the concern of the religious Jews was raised with the question,

⁴⁵Jacob Neusner, “Two Pictures of the Pharisees: Philosophical Circle or Eating Club,” *ATR* 64 (1982): 526-527.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 526-29.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 530.

⁴⁸Steve Mason, “Pharisees,” in *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, ed. Craig A. Evans, and Stanley E. Porter (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity, 2000), 786.

“how to be faithful to Yahweh in these circumstances.” The answer provided for this quest was ‘be holy’ and it was intensified focusing on Torah and Temple.⁴⁹ “Central to that life of holiness was“ nevertheless, “the ‘tabernacle’, conceived as the model for the post-exilic temple.”⁵⁰

The Pharisaic emphasis on holiness can also be found from a purely linguistic understanding. The word “Pharisee” was probably derived from the Greek translation of the Hebrew word *Parush*, or the Aramaic *Perishaya*, meaning “separated” and “isolated.”⁵¹ Baeck also connects the word *Parush* with a concept of holiness by stating:

In Sifra, the old Midrash of the Akiba school to Leviticus, which supplies us with material that is in part as old or older than Josephus’ work, the word *Parush*, “separated,” is given as an explanatory translation of the biblical word *Kadosh*, “holy.” . . . This new word is used where the holiness of God is expressed. God is quoted as saying: “Just as I am *Parush*, so Ye shall be *Perushim*.” . . . They show unmistakably that our word *Perushim* at that time expressed the attribute of holiness and the moral summons to it.⁵²

Then, how did the Pharisaic quest for holiness bring forth the purity laws?

Israel was the covenant people and at the heart of the covenant was the call for Israel to form a kingdom of priests and a holy people (Exod 19:6). Baeck points out that Pharisaism originally aimed at separation from the nations when the direction of the land seemed to be governed by Gentile nations, and this caused the Pharisees’ struggle to be

⁴⁹Borg, *Conflict, Holiness & Politics in the Teachings of Jesus*, 56-57.

⁵⁰Jacob Neusner, *Purity in Rabbinic Judaism: A Systematic Account* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1994), 33.

⁵¹Leo Baeck, *The Pharisees and Other Essays* (New York: Schochen, 1947), 3. Mason, “Pharisees,” 789, asserts that generally many scholars disagree concerning the meaning of the Pharisees’ name, yet there are few critics who would make a confident statement about this. See also Günter Stemberger, *Jewish Contemporaries of Jesus: Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 40-45. Stemberger cautions about many unusable and questionable rabbinic texts that speak of the word *perusin*. He points out that the word *parus*, ‘separated,’ “can refer to various ascetic groups that had nothing to do with the Pharisees” (40). This argument may be correct in this sense, and yet Baeck tries to find questionable etymological relationship between the word *perusin* and the Pharisees in order to explain their emphasis on holiness.

⁵²Baeck, *The Pharisees and Other Essays*, 5.

“the preservation of the strict purity and cohesion of the Jewish community.”⁵³

This conception assigns purity a systemic priority, and Neusner describes this systemic priority as:

The lines of structure emanated from the altar. And it was these lines of structure which constituted high and impenetrable frontiers to separate Israel from the gentiles. Israel, which was holy, ate holy food, reproduced itself in accord with the laws of holiness, and conducted all of its affairs, both affairs of state and the business of the table and the bed, in accord with the demands of holiness. So the cult defined holiness. Holiness meant separateness. Separateness meant life. Why? Because outside the Land, the realm of the holy, lay the domain of death. The lands are unclean. The Land is holy. For the Scriptural vocabulary, one antonym for holy is unclean, and one opposite of unclean is holy. The synonym of holy is life. The principal force and symbol of uncleanness and its highest expression are death. So the Torah stood for life, the covenant with the Lord would guarantee life, and the way of life required sanctification in the here and now of the natural world. It was in that setting that the purity system functioned.⁵⁴

So just as the Land and people are to be holy, Neusner posits, “The theology of holiness will bear within itself a heavy burden of theological consequence,” when people wander.⁵⁵

Therefore, the Pharisees focused upon the holiness of the life of Israel, i.e., the people.⁵⁶ Holiness was formerly centered on the Temple, and now the logical question has become how will Israel attain, or give evidence of sanctification. As it was described in the purity system, the answer to the question was implied in the natural world, thus all things in nature and society were to be sanctified to receive the blessing and to be made holy. The purity restrictions were an inheritance and accepted as the tradition of elders,

⁵³Ibid., 11.

⁵⁴Neusner, *Purity in Rabbinic Judaism*, 34.

⁵⁵Neusner, “Another Path to Truth,” 175.

⁵⁶Jacob Neusner, “The Absoluteness of Christianity and the Uniqueness of Judaism: Why Salvation Is Not of the Jews,” *Interpretation* 43 (1989): 28. He points out that there is a fundamental difference in understanding the term, ‘Israel,’ between the Pharisees and Christianity. The Pharisees saw Israel as a way of life while Christians saw it as a family. Therefore, he argues that when the Pharisees raise the issue of the sanctification of Israel, Christians raise the salvation of their family.

and, we witness this in the Mishnah's system.⁵⁷ Here, Neusner suggests that even though sources of uncleanness in the Mishnah's and Scripture's systems coincide in detail, "the emphasis in the matter of loci of uncleanness is strikingly at variance, and the Mishnah's modes of purification are quite distinct from those of Scripture."⁵⁸ The Mishnah is especially interested in cultic purity at the table such as the issues of dietary cleanness, including utensils and food and drink, and of sexual uncleanness. Even though the Scripture is the foundation, Neusner argues, "The structure built thereon rises along lines hardly determined by that foundation."⁵⁹

This cultic purity system which requires the practical human response and implication, therefore, suggests a human being as one who possesses the power to attain sanctification. It is for man to renew life as God lives in the cult: man is to be "formed and nourished by sustenance which is like God's, and so, in nature, become like supernature." Neusner further explains this more simply:

by eating like God man becomes like God. And this "eating-like-God" is done naturally and routinely, in the context and course of ordinary life, with utensils available for any purpose, with food and drink, bed and chair, commonly used in the workaday world. Man at his most domestic and in his most natural context is susceptible to uncleanness and therefore potentially capable also of sanctification.⁶⁰

Borg explains that one of "the two identifying marks of the Pharisees" in regard to holiness is "eating unconsecrated food as if one were a Temple priest."⁶¹ Therefore, Firmage suggests that the dietary law originated "in a self-conscious attempt on the part of the priests to put a single tenet of Israelite theology—that Israel is to be holy, not simply pure." It was based on their understanding of the intention of the dietary

⁵⁷Neusner, *Purity in Rabbinic Judaism*, 38-39.

⁵⁸Ibid., 39.

⁵⁹Ibid., 40.

⁶⁰Ibid., 49.

⁶¹Borg, *Conflict, Holiness & Politics in the Teachings of Jesus*, 58.

law, which was to be kept by Israelites alone although the personal impurity law was applied even to non-Israelites.⁶² Thus, when they created the dietary law, the priests called Israel to go a step further. It went “beyond the more limited notion of personal purity,” in that “it distinguished Israelites as holy and pure from other nations.”⁶³

Harrington argues, “In no way do the Pharisees think of themselves as priests, but they do strive for a holiness above and beyond what the Torah prescribed for the lay Israelite.”⁶⁴

Therefore, one aspect that the Pharisees emphasized was handling priestly food in purity even though biblical law does not require it to be specially handled before it reaches them.

Conclusion

The Pharisaic understanding of holiness through the ritual purity law has been surveyed focusing on the handwashing rite so that we may draw an implied concept of holiness from the teachings of Jesus. Because of the conflicting views regarding the Pharisaic handwashing rite, we have first raised the following question: “Why and under what condition did the Pharisees wash their hands before meals?” According to the view represented by Neusner, which we have found as the most properly corresponding view to the Pharisaic representation seen in the Synoptic Gospels, the Pharisees washed their hands in imitation of priests and ate ordinary food in a state of ritual purity. Sanders’ view, which argues that the Pharisees maintained ritual purity for priestly food only, however, raises the question of the authenticity of the Synoptic Gospels.

When Jesus encountered the Pharisees, he rebuked the Pharisees for their

⁶²Edwin Firmage, “The Biblical Dietary Laws and the Concept of Holiness,” in *Studies in The Pentateuch*, ed. J.A. Emerton (Leiden, Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1990), 183.

⁶³*Ibid.*, 185.

⁶⁴Harrington, “Did the Pharisees Eat Ordinary Food in a State of Ritual Purity?” 54.

misunderstanding of ritual purity and gave them new insight about purity. Their understanding is based on the tradition of the elders, human commandments, and he rebuked their understanding as hypocrisy. Sanders concludes, “the Pharisees were extremely interested in all aspects of the law, and they studied and applied it in great detail, . . . in order to make it easier to observe.”⁶⁵ This may well be a sign of a good religious group. However, if they just outwardly impressed the Jewish people by fulfilling the traditions they invoked and distorting the word of God, but inwardly corrupted the system to such a degree that money that should have been given to parents who were in need was not reaching its proper destination (Mark 7:11; Matt 15:5), then it should not be surprising that they were condemned as hypocrites by Jesus. Jesus would not tolerate those who distorted God’s commandments and emphasized external purity for the sake of their own self-righteousness.

“Purity is not merely a function of diagnosis by observation.”⁶⁶ Since the “heart” is the determining factor in one’s standing before God, it follows that “defiled” food cannot defile one’s “heart” or “person.” By contrast, all sorts of evil thoughts, attitudes and conduct emerge from within one’s “heart” and these make one “defiled” or unworthy of a direct relationship with God. Thus eating with “defiled hands” has no consequence. Jesus “‘prophetically’ summons the hearer to do God’s will from the whole person. Instead of attacking the ritual or ceremonial law of purity, Jesus calls for a total purity.”⁶⁷ As Jesus teaches his disciples at the end of the incident by saying, “Τὸ ἐκ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκπορευόμενον, ἐκείνο κοινῶν τὸν ἄνθρωπον” in Mark 7:20, he “uses a catalogue of vices to depict inner corruption of the heart. The vices include actions

⁶⁵Sanders, *Jewish Law*, 252.

⁶⁶B. D. Chilton, “Purity,” in *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity, 2000), 877.

⁶⁷Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, 376. We will discuss later what it meant to have a total purity as we define Paul’s concept of holiness.

proscribed in the Ten Commandments (theft, murder, adultery, avarice or envy, deceit). Consequently, Jesus continues to uphold the commandment of God, which his opponents undermine.”⁶⁸

The passages we have looked at give us new insight into the meaning of holiness and the concern for purity. In the light of Jesus’ example and teaching, Jesus is challenging people for the right perception of a holy life. Jesus’ pronouncement of woes means that everyone, especially those who claim an association with God, are accountable for their understanding of God’s commandment regarding holiness and their relation with God. Though Jesus’ rebuke was directed against the Pharisees, the spiritual errors of the Pharisees are still with us today. We must let God define truth through his Word and not allow our own preferences and traditions to dictate our actions, lest we be called hypocrites.

Concerning the Pharisaic understanding of holiness, we have found that the profound motivation of ritual purity was to be holy, and one of its applications was to eat ordinary food in a state of purity. We could also assume that handwashing was one of their innovations in order to preserve purity laws and it was to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean, and for this reason they applied purity laws in their lives. Certainly we conclude that they had distorted views and applications of the purity laws, and a misinterpreted perception of the holy life. Paul, as a Pharisee, acknowledges these aspects: God’s command regarding holiness in the Torah, and a ritual purity system distorted by the tradition of elders. As we continue on through the exegetical study of the Pauline epistles, the Pharisaic understanding of holiness will be compared with Paul’s reevaluated concept of holiness.

⁶⁸PHEME PERKINS, *Mark*, The New Interpreter’s Bible, vol. 8 (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 608.

CHAPTER 4

PAUL'S CONCEPT OF DIVINE HOLINESS

In this chapter, we will discuss Paul's concept of divine holiness. Paul never explicitly mentions nor explains God's divine attributes in the concept of holiness. But, he certainly implies the holiness of God as manifested in believers in his various epistles (Rom 6:19-22; Eph 4:24; 1 Thess 3:13; and 2 Thess 2:13). He also refers to the holiness of Christ sparsely in his writings (Rom 1:4; 1 Cor 1:30; and Col 1:9-22). These need to be examined with an in-depth exegetical study in order to find his concept of holiness. For the in-depth exegetical study we will mainly focus on Romans 6:19-22. Study on the rest of passages will be, however, briefly discussed, focusing on the holiness language Paul used.

The Holiness of God Manifested in Believers in Romans 6:19-22

Romans in Context

Paul introduces the major passage on holiness in Romans 6:19-23 as "part of Paul's larger theological or doctrinal argument (Rom 1-8)."¹ As an apostle who has been set apart for the gospel of God (1:1), he begins Romans expressing his eagerness to share the gospel of Jesus in 1:1-17. At the end, he states that he has written this epistle so that as a minister of Christ to the Gentiles, serving as a priest of the gospel of God, he may bring an acceptable offering of the Gentiles, which have been made holy by the Holy Spirit (15:15-16).

¹S. E. Porter, "Holiness, Sanctification," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity, 1993), 399.

According to Paul, the gospel which is the power of God (1:16) discloses two essential aspects to every believer. The immediate thrust is a revelation of God's righteousness "which is communicable both in terms of judicial standing (3:21-5:21) and in terms of Christian holiness (chapters 6-8)."² Here, the key word is righteousness. It is not the achievement of human effort. It is the righteousness that is revealed from God through the gospel of Jesus Christ. This righteousness is according to God's nature, and it is witnessed by the law and the prophets (Rom 3:21). Dayton posits, "The God-kind of righteousness is basically Godlikeness. This term touches and is almost interchangeable with the other, larger, term by which God is described—holiness."³ It is, however, imparted to man, who at his best had "sinned, and come short of glory" (3:23). Just as it is written in the Old Testament, thus, Paul emphasizes that the righteous one shall live by faith (1:17).

But along with the revelation of the righteousness of God and man's right standing before him, in 1:18-3:20 Paul declares that the righteousness of God has exposed the guilt of both Jew and Gentile and left them subject to his divine wrath. It was the gospel that revealed the "divine diagnosis of sinful man's condition and a display of God's attitude toward such ungodliness and unrighteousness of men."⁴ This divine diagnosis of sin was certainly reflective of God's holiness. Here, Paul implicitly depicts God's holiness and righteousness. Man needed to be bounded by God's standard according to his holiness. Man, however, distorted and rejected it and was condemned. Without meeting the standard he will never come to holy God. This reveals "the inescapable need for holiness and the dreadful plight of man."⁵

²Wilbur T. Dayton, "Holiness Truth in the Roman Epistle," in *Further Insights into Holiness*, ed. Kenneth Geiger (Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 1963), 95.

³Ibid., 90.

⁴Ibid., 95.

⁵Ibid., 97.

Paul then reveals in 3:21-4:25 that God has manifested his righteousness and brought redemption of mankind from his wrath through the death and resurrection of his Son, Jesus Christ. He argues the saving righteousness of God emphasizing the justification by faith. All who have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God are justified (or declared righteous) through faith in Jesus Christ. This is made possible “by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith” (3:24-25).

Therefore, Paul excludes any boasting in “works of the Law,” ἔργων νόμου (3:28) and includes God’s justification on both Jew and Gentile by their faith, yet without nullifying the Law (3:29-31). As he draws the examples from the Old Testament, in Romans 4, Paul describes the promise that was made to Abraham and also was guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to those of the Law, but also to those of the faith of Abraham through δικαιοσύνης πίστεως (4:13-16), and its fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

Peterson argues, “Romans 5 is a bridge passage, providing a powerful conclusion to this first major section of the argument and preparing for what follows.”⁶ Polhill views the chapter as the start of a new theme dealing with “the fruits of the new relationship with God which have come about through Jesus Christ,” but also as the transitional section looking back to previous chapters 1-4 and also “ahead to the description of the new life in Christ in chapters 6-8.”⁷ In chapter 5-8, as he begins in 5:1

⁶David Peterson, *Possessed by God: A New Testament Theology of Sanctification and Holiness* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 95. There is considerable debate as to the role chapter 5 plays in Paul’s argument—whether the chapter serves as a conclusion to the preceding chap. or as the introductory statement to the following chapters. The debate, however, will not be covered in this paper.

⁷John B. Polhill, *Paul and His Letters* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999), 289. Frederic Godet, *Commentary on St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans*, vol. 1, trans. by A. Cusin (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1880), divides chaps 1-5 from chaps 6-8 suggesting “justification by faith” as the theme of the first five chaps while “sanctification” as that of the following three chaps. This theme of “sanctification” is mainly developed by Rom 6:19-23. Taking the position of Ernst Käsemann,

saying, “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,” Paul brings out two main arguments based on a result of righteousness by faith: First, in general terms,⁸ he describes how sin and death became dominant over all human races and how Christians are now free from sin and death through the risen Lord (5:12-6:23). Second, in more specific terms,⁹ he describes how the law has been a binding power over those who know the law and how Christians are now free from the law through the death of Christ (7:1-8:17). In 8:18-39, then, he draws his conclusion of the chapters 5-8 that Christians have the hope of a new creation and they have the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. From those two towering arguments, he initiates each argument with appropriate illustrations. For the first argument, he begins “the incursion of sin and death into the world through Adam,”¹⁰ later comparing Adam with Christ. For the second argument, he brings the principle of the law with the illustration of marriage in Jewish law, later relating our relationship of law with the death of Christ.

The contrast was made between Adam’s disobedience and Christ’s obedience (5:19). Through this contrast, Paul draws the concept of two ages as the basis of his teaching in Romans 6-8.¹¹ By Adam’s transgression, παράπτωμα, sin entered into the

Commentary on Romans, trans. by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) 172-74, however, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans*, The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 445, asserts that “sanctification” is not to be conceived as the consequence of justification, but as the same understanding under a different image. These arguments will be revisited in Rom 6:19 in a similar aspect.

⁸I would like to suggest that Paul has asserted his first argument aiming for believers within the gentile mission churches (Jews and Gentiles). Therefore, “in general terms” implies in the sense of all believers.

⁹Here, I am also suggesting that Paul has included his second argument specifically for Jews or those who understand the Jewish law (i.e., Rom 7:1).

¹⁰Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 270.

¹¹Peterson, *Possessed by God*, 96.

world resulting in condemnation for all and the outcome of the present evil age. By Christ's righteous deed, δικαίωμα, however, the gift of righteousness began to reign, resulting in justification of life and the outcome of a new age. The existence of two ages thus suggests a possible dichotomy of Christians' standing before God. Christians belong to the new age through the grace of God, but they are not yet entirely free from the effect of the present evil age. Before he covers the Christians' understanding of their lives with regard to the Law (7:1-8:17), Paul briefly brings out one of the purposes of the Law as he contends that it is to reveal and expose sin (5:20). Thus, before grace reigns through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ (5:21), the Law came in to expose sin which reigned in death. In other words, the present evil age is ruled by sin and also bounded by the Law. As he preaches that Christians now belong to the new age through the grace of God, Paul, therefore, focuses on the clarification of how Christians who are justified by faith should understand their relation to sin and the effect of the Law. Within such a larger context, Paul brings up the concept of holiness in Romans 6:19-23 and continues in the rest of Romans (e.g., 7:12; 11:16; 12:1; 15:16; see also, 8:27; 12:13; 15:25, 26, 31; 16:2, 15). Dayton argues, "Having such a deep insight into the gospel, Paul can't preach at all without preaching holiness. Holiness is wherever a holy God is. And man can draw near only as grace in some degree makes him holy."¹² Before we conduct an in-depth exegetical study on Romans 6:19-23, we will first examine the immediate context in Romans 6-8.¹³

Immediate Context in Roman 6-8

In chapters 6-7, Paul raises three rhetorical questions in order to argue against

¹²Dayton, "Holiness Truth in the Roman Epistle," 98.

¹³We acknowledge that there are debatable texts in Rom 6-8. Especially Roman 7 has been the cause of much discussion and debate among biblical scholars. Since it is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss such debate, we will focus on determining the central teaching within the larger context.

a possible, false inference that could arise as a result of his teaching. The first rhetorical question begins chapter 6: “Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?” The second question in a similar way to the first one is raised later in the chapter, at 6:15, “Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace?” (NRSV)¹⁴ The last question is in 7:7, “Is the Law sin?” Obviously the answer for all three questions is *μὴ γένοιτο*.¹⁵ The inference for all three questions arises because of his assertion in 5:20: “The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; where sin increased, grace abounded all the more.” The first question deals with the second half of 5:20. His argument then progresses to the statement in 6:14, “For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace,” and he raises the second question to respond to that statement. With further progression, he states that the sinful passions were aroused by the Law to bear fruit for death, echoing the first half of his assertion in 5:20. He then raises the last rhetorical question to explain the relationship of the Law to sin and death.

Through the first two rhetorical questions it seems that Paul is raising the same issue concerning the believers’ new status against sin. Yet, there are two different emphases developed from the first argument to the second.¹⁶ The first teaching deals with the issue how Christians who belong to the new age may grasp the idea of *not remaining in sin*¹⁷ in the present evil age. The second emphasis is the perception of

¹⁴NASB translates in futuristic aorist for the verb *ἁμαρτήσωμεν* which is in subjunctive aorist form.

¹⁵In Rom 6-8, Paul uses four times the pattern of a rhetorical question with the emphatic negation, *μὴ γένοιτο* (6:2; 6:15; 7:7; 7:13).

¹⁶Here, Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 350-51, argues that Paul presents the theme of “Christian’s freedom from sin’s tyranny or lordship” in two different ways: with the first rhetorical question he deals with negative component (i.e., death to sin), while with the second the positive aspect (i.e., dedication to righteousness).

¹⁷Cf. For the subjunctive *ἐπιμένωμεν* in 6:1, James D.G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 38A (Dallas: Word, 1988), 306, suggests that the

Christ's lordship as they are under grace.

In 6:2-3, as he raises another question, Paul effectively answers the first question he has raised, "How shall we who died to sin still live in it? Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?" Here, Paul used the language of death for the first time in this letter.¹⁸ For the question of how Christians acknowledge the idea of *not remaining in sin*, he describes that it is a logical impossibility to live in sin as one who has already died to sin,¹⁹ and refers to baptism in Christ as representative of the Christians' death to sin. He proceeds to explain that Christians have been buried with Christ through baptism into death, so that they may walk in newness of life as Christ was raised from the dead (6:4-5). The baptism into Christ refers to an actual union with Christ.²⁰ Their old selves are crucified with Christ in order that their body of sin will no longer be a slave to sin (6:6-7). After the indicative explanation (6:2-10), Paul brings an imperative command in 6:11-13. Schreiner explains that this shift of mood suggests a dynamic maxim, "become what you are becoming," rather than a static adage, "become what you are" (overrealized eschatology).²¹ Thus Paul urges Christians to consider that they are dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus (6:11), and to present themselves to God as those alive from the dead, and their members *as* instruments of righteousness to God (6:13). Why? For sin shall not be master over them (6:14a). This is not to suggest that sin will lose all power in their lives but that they will rather have a victory over sin's force. In 6:14b, Paul places the death to sin theme in relation to the Law in order to continue his teaching on

intended meaning is closer to "persist" than "remain," since the word resonates with a more forceful unyielding determination.

¹⁸Peterson, *Possessed by God*, 96.

¹⁹Vincent Tanghe, "Die Vorlage in Römer 6," *ETL* 73 (1997): 411.

²⁰Schreiner, *Romans*, 307-8.

²¹*Ibid.*, 321.

the perception of lordship which is not under the Law but under grace.

In 6:15, with his rhetorical question and emphatic negation, Paul argues with his implied response, “We should not sin because we are not under the Law but under grace!” After this response, Paul supplies an explanation in the form of a rhetorical question in 6:16: “Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone *as* slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?” Here, he uses the imagery of slavery to make his point. With this simple illustration, Paul gives thanks to God and reminds his readers that though they were slaves of sin, they became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which they had been delivered, and having been freed from sin, they became slaves of righteousness (6:17-18). By using passive verbs to express their deliverance and freedom from sin, he implies God as their liberator from the power of sin and one who subjects them to the power of righteousness.²² The rest of the verses (19-22) will be covered later through the in-depth exegetical study.

In Romans 7:1-6, Paul writes a transitional and yet introductory passage in between chapter 6 and 7. In transitional effort, he brings the structural similarities in themes from his discussion of sin and death in chapter 6 to his discussion of the Law in chapters 7 and 8.²³ Especially in 7:1-6, with much repeated language Paul compares the freedom from the Law through the death of Christ with the freedom from sin at baptism through the risen Christ in chapter 6:²⁴

²²Ibid., 334.

²³Joyce A. Little, “Paul’s Use of Analogy: A Structural Analysis of Romans 7:1-6,” *CBQ* 46 (1984): 82-83.

²⁴Gloria Van Donge, “In What Way is Paul’s Gospel (*Euangelion*) of Freedom Theology of the Cross (*Theologia Crucis*)?” *Colloquium* 21 (1988): 22.

Verse in Chap. 6

1. τῆ ἁμαρτία
2. ἀπεθάνομεν τῆ ἁμαρτία
4. ἐν καινότητι ζωῆς περιπατήσωμεν
7. ὁ γὰρ ἀποθανῶν δεδικαίωται ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας.
18. ἐλευθερωθέντες δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας

Verse in Chap. 7

1. ὁ νόμος
4. ἐθανατώθητε τῷ νόμῳ
6. δουλεύειν ἡμᾶς ἐν καινότητι πνεύματος
6. κατηργήθημεν ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου ἀποθανόντες ἐν ᾧ κατειχόμεθα
3. ἐλευθέρα ἐστὶν ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου

Little points out, “Parallel constructions found between chap. 6 and the first six verses of chap. 7 underscore the continuity which Paul wishes to establish between these two chapters.”²⁵ As he makes his point regarding the Christian’s freedom from sin and death in the previous chapter, Paul also introduces his discussion of freedom from the Law, indicating the forthcoming theme of chapters 7 and 8. By means of a marriage analogy Paul points out that Christians are no longer under the Law’s custodial authority and have been set free from the Law which stimulated their sinful passions. They have now been placed into a new relationship with Christ through his death, bearing fruit for God.

In 7:7-25,²⁶ Paul points out a far more difficult problem since the Law is quite different than sin and for the Jew the Law has been “an expression of God’s covenant.”²⁷ After he makes such statements as the following, “the Law came in so that the transgression would increase” (5:20), and “the sinful passions were aroused by the Law” (7:5), Paul explains the relation of the Law to sin. Again he provides the formula of a rhetorical question and answer to bring his implied and yet emphatic response “the Law is not sin.” Following this, he draws one of the purposes of the Law in 7:7b, arguing that sin would not be known as sin except through the Law. He unfolds this statement with an example from the Law and asserts that sin taking advantage of the Law produced every

²⁵Little, “Paul’s Use of Analogy,” 82.

²⁶We find the change of subject with the frequent occurrence of ἐγὼ in 7:7-25. This passage has been the cause of debate because of the uncertain identity of the ἐγὼ, and we will not be involved in the debate.

²⁷Polhill, *Paul and His Letters*, 291.

kind of sinful desire. Having demonstrated the deceiving power of sin (7:11), he replaces the false inference previously drawn with a correct one, saying, “the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good” (7:12). He raises the issue of the Law’s holiness and its purpose of exposing sin in conjunction with his assertion that sin takes opportunity through the Law to achieve its evil purposes. For the issue of a holy Law, we will discuss later in detail as we deal with the holiness of things in the Pauline epistles.

In 7:13, Paul reemphasizes the purpose of the Law that the holy Law exposed sin as sin beyond measure, and sin rather produced death in mankind. Having stated the purpose of the Law, in 7:14-25 Paul now explains the inability of the Law to deal with sin. He illustrates this as the uncertain identity of the ἐγὼ who is of flesh, sold into bondage to sin, who is struggling between willing and doing. He points out that because of the presence of sin, the sinful nature cannot do what is right even though he knows what is right according to the Law. Thus Paul describes, “[Even though] I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members” (7:22-23).

After he deals with all the rhetorical questions in chapter 6-7, Paul now concludes his treatment of the new life in Christ in chapter 8. His main emphasis is Christians’ assurance through the Holy Spirit. First, he finishes the questions raised in chapter 7 regarding the relation of the Law to sin in 8:1-11. What the Law could not do due to the weak flesh, God, by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh as a sacrifice for sin, condemned sin in the flesh so that τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου (the just requirement of the Law) might be fulfilled in us (8:3-4). And the Holy Spirit has bestowed the freedom from sin and death. Therefore, Christians who died to sin now do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. Not only that, indeed the Spirit of God also dwells in them providing “the power to cope with sin’s pull and the

assurance of the immortal resurrection life to come.’²⁸

Once again, in 8:12 Paul briefly reminds Christians that they are still to live in the present evil age. This, however, will certainly bring death to them. But if they put to death the deeds of their body, they will live being led by the Spirit of God (8:13-14). Even if it means to take suffering with Christ, because they are called to be heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, they will also be glorified with Christ (8:17). Having said that, Paul now brings up the hope for future glory in the midst of the suffering reality of this present life (8:18-21). It is the hope to “be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God” awaiting the full redemption to come (8:22-23). Because the hope is in the future and not in a present reality, even though they have been saved in hope, Paul points out that the Spirit helps Christians patiently to wait for the hope (8:24-25). In 8:26-27, Paul thus shows how the Spirit undergirds lives of believers in their weakness, even interceding for their prayer in accordance with God’s purposes.

Here, we will pause upon the overview of the immediate context in chapters 6-8 and continue the rest of chapter 8 later as we bring the conclusion of an exegetical study on 6:19-23.

Romans 6:19-23

As we have examined the immediate context in Romans 6-8, we may notice that Paul is explaining the new situation of the Christian life when “grace reigns through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (5:21). Christians must live out the conditions of the new existence, considering and knowing themselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ. Certainly the main concern of Paul’s argument was the concept of Christians in newness of life as they recognize that they are justified

²⁸Ibid., 292.

by faith and incorporated through baptism into the person of Christ. This union with Christ is especially emphasized by “the distinctive *syn*-references” in chapter 6 such as συνθάπτομαι (6:4), σύμφυτος (6:5), συσταυρόομαι (6:6), and συζάω (6:8)²⁹ and continued through the end of chapter 8. Within this larger context, Paul includes the concept of holiness.

In Romans 6:19 Paul brings up the reality of human weakness through the parenthetical remark in order to remind of possible human nature of the present evil age and the limitation of human understanding due to sin. Then he brings up an exhortation which is grounded on the indicative expressed in 6:17-18.³⁰ Paul states ὡςπερ γὰρ παρεστήσατε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν δοῦλα τῇ ἀκαθαρσίᾳ καὶ τῇ ἀνομίᾳ εἰς τὴν ἀνομίαν, οὕτως νῦν παραστήσατε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν δοῦλα τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ εἰς ἁγιασμόν. Concerning the mood of verbs Cranfield suggests that the use of the imperative verb παραστήσατε following the passive indicatives ἐδουλώθητε τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ in 6:18 points “to the human response demanded by the divine action.”³¹ Paul assures Christians in 6:18 that having been set free from sin, they have become slaves of righteousness. Now in 6:19, he instructs them to present their bodily members as slaves to righteousness. In other words, recognizing that they have become set right with God, Christians should now present themselves as the ones who have been justified and set right with God. Here, Paul uses the verb παρίστημι in order to express Christians’ actions before God. This verb is used twice in this verse and a total of 16 times in his epistles, where nine of them are used to

²⁹Brendan Byrne, “Living out the Righteousness of God: The Contribution of Rom 6:1-8:13 to an Understanding of Paul’s Ethical Presuppositions,” *CBQ* 43 (1981): 563.

³⁰Schreiner, *Romans*, 337. Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 444, argues, “Paul does not turn to imperatives or exhortations when he cannot sustain his declarations; instead he utters his imperatives on the basis of the truth of the indicative declarations.”

³¹C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, The International Critical Commentary (Greenwood, SC: Attic, 1975), 325.

explicitly refer to the Lord as the dative object of the verb (Rom 6:13; 12:1; 14:10; 2 Cor 4:14; 2 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:27; Col 1:22; 28; 2 Tim 2:15).³² When he refers to the Lord as the object, Paul uses the verb in either aorist or future aspect. This suggests his careful choice of grammatical variation. Particularly with the verb *παρίστημι* he implies Christians' action at some point in their lives or in the eschatological circumstance, suggesting the idea of *already but not yet* tension in believers' status. In 6:13, as he instructs them *not to present* their members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin any longer by deploying the present imperative, in the conjunctive clause, Paul urges Christians *to present, now and completely*, their members as instruments of righteousness to God by using the aorist imperative form. In 6:19, in a similar manner, he also uses the aorist imperative to exhort Christians that now they are to present their members as slaves to righteousness, while he reminds them that they once presented their members as slaves to impurity, this time, by using the aorist indicative. Here, Paul certainly implies the idea of believers' dedication and recognition for the newness of life as they recognize who they are in Christ rather than their demonstration or process of their conduct.

Throughout chapters 6 to 8, Paul uses five imperative verbs, and they all are found in chapter 6: "Consider (*λογίζεσθε*, present) yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus" (6:11); "do not let sin reign (*Μὴ βασιλεύετω*, present) in your mortal body" (6:12); "do not go on presenting (*μηδὲ παριστάνετε*, present) the members of your body to sin *as* instruments of unrighteousness"; "present (*παραστήσατε*, aorist) yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments" (6:13); and "present (*παραστήσατε*, aorist) your members as slaves to righteousness" (6:19). This shows that Paul's main concern is Christians' right recognition and understanding of their state in Christ, their right relation to God. As they are reckoning

³²Different usages can be found in Rom 6:16; 19(2x); 16:2; 1 Cor 8:8; and 2 Tim 4:17.

themselves to be dead to sin and continually guarding themselves from the power of sin, they should now present their dedicated and committed heart to God, being set right with God in Christ. Dunn points out, “the antithesis to ‘lawlessness’ is not obedience to the law, but once again righteousness—righteousness not as determined by the law, but as determined by grace.”³³

Furnish points out that the translation of the phrase τῇ ἀνομίᾳ εἰς τὴν ἀνομίαν in 6:19 as “to lawlessness, resulting in *further* lawlessness”³⁴ can be misleading and this may “be misinterpreted to mean that there are successively more serious stages of lawlessness.”³⁵ In that case the following phrase, τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ εἰς ἁγιασμόν, which was expressed in the parallel format, can be misinterpreted in the same aspect that holiness is the highest level or the goal of righteousness. The noun ἁγιασμός which occurs a total of ten times in the New Testament and is found in five Pauline epistles³⁶ is usually translated “sanctification,” and “this is represented as the progressive amelioration of the individual resulting from his moral self-discipline.”³⁷ Is this then what Paul implied with the noun in Romans 6? Based on Paul’s foundational theological argument, we may begin with this question: how does Paul view a sinner in his epistles? Are there different grades or levels of referring to a sinner? Certainly he views that there

³³Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 355.

³⁴It is the translation from NASB. The translation from NRSV and NKJV is “to greater and greater iniquity,” and “of lawlessness *leading to more* lawlessness” respectively.

³⁵Victor Paul Furnish, *Theology and Ethics in Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1968), 157.

³⁶The noun ἁγιασμός occurs eight times in the Pauline epistles (Rom 6:19, 22; 1 Cor 1:30; 1 Thess 4:3, 4, 7; 2 Thess 2:13; and 1 Tim 2:15) and twice in the rest of the NT (Heb 12:14 and 1 Pet 1:2).

³⁷Godet, *Commentary on St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans*, 441. Schreiner, *Romans*, 338, and Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 327, suggest that the word is commonly implied to believers’ process of sanctification with ethical renewal.

is none righteous (3:10), and all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (3:23). “The sinner is enslaved to sin in such a way that he cannot break out of its bonds, and it is in that sense that he ‘goes on sinning.’ He has given himself up to impurity ‘for every repeated lawlessness.’”³⁸ Sinners are always slaves to sin unless they are released from such subjection, and Paul is preaching that only God can release them from the power of sin. Is it not the concept which we have found from the contextual study of Romans chapter 1 through 8, that Paul is trying to explain to Roman Christians? With such a concept we should determine the meaning of the parallel phrase τῆ δικαιοσύνη εἰς ἁγιασμόν. Holiness is not the highest level or the goal of righteousness. It is not an ultimate condition all Christians should attain. Schlatter posits, “Just as he does not erect his own righteousness but is subject to the righteousness of God, so also he does not presume to make himself holy.”³⁹ Thus by being subject to the righteousness, a believer will receive the privilege of being declared righteous from God and to have the status of belonging to God. This will also result in experiencing divine holiness which “places its splendor upon him and the likeness of Christ shines in him.”⁴⁰ Schlatter also suggests, “At this juncture divine grace is described by means of the two formulas of justification and sanctification.”⁴¹ Fitzmyer points out that the word ἁγιασμός brings up an effect of the Christ-event in this passage,⁴² which we will discuss further later through the holiness of Christ.

In Romans 6:20-22, Paul continues, ὅτε γὰρ δοῦλοι ἦτε τῆς ἁμαρτίας,

³⁸Furnish, *Theology and Ethics in Paul*, 157.

³⁹Adolf Schlatter, *Romans: The Righteousness of God*, trans. by Seigfrid S. Schatzmann (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 151.

⁴⁰Ibid., 151.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 445.

ἐλεύθεροι ἦτε τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ. τίνα οὖν καρπὸν εἴχετε τότε; ἐφ' οἷς νῦν ἐπαισχύνεσθε, τὸ γὰρ τέλος ἐκείνων θάνατος. νυνὶ δέ ἐλευθερωθέντες ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας δουλωθέντες δὲ τῷ θεῷ ἔχετε τὸν καρπὸν ὑμῶν εἰς ἁγιασμόν, τὸ δὲ τέλος ζωῆν αἰώνιον. Here, Paul provides a basis for his exhortation in 6:19 as he explains that the believers' enslavement to sin caused them to be freed in relation to righteousness. He continues to emphasize two different lordships in the Christian life, suggesting that one cannot be the slave of both sin and righteousness at the same time. He clarifies any ambiguity or uncertainty thus far which the readers might have.⁴³

In 6:21, there is a debate concerning the place of a question mark and the interpretation of the verse. Greek New Testament (4th edition, UBS) places a question mark after τότε, which suggests the subsequent clause as the answer for the question. Most of the Bible translations, however, place a question mark after the subsequent clause. Thus, instead of translating the verse as, “What fruit then were you reaping? You are now ashamed of those things, for the end of those things *is* death,” it would read: “What fruit then were you reaping from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.” Some scholars argued that the latter interpretation was preferred since it was difficult to see present (νῦν) shame being based on future death.⁴⁴ If we take, however, the γὰρ clause as causal applying the implied sentence “you realize,” then the former interpretation may be reread: “What fruit then were you reaping? You are now ashamed of those things, since *you realize that* the end of those things *is* death.” Whichever reading one follows, however, Paul clearly implies that those who are slaves to sin can only obtain shameful fruit, and the outcome of a sinful life is death.

⁴³Schreiner, *Romans*, 338.

⁴⁴J. Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans: Chapters 1-8*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959), 236; and Schreiner, *Romans*, 339.

In 6:22, Paul speaks of slavery to God instead of slavery to righteousness in 6:18. Since Paul is continuously explaining about Christians' lordship (6:15-23), Paul reassures his readers that their enslavement to righteousness is the same as to God and reemphasizes that having been free from sin they have been also enslaved to God. This change of lordship, therefore, also brings the change of benefit (καρπός) that is from the shameful mark of sin to holiness and the change of outcome, from death to eternal life. While Paul depicts the believers' outcome as eternal life from death, he teaches them that their present καρπός for being enslaved to God is ἁγιασμός, which is manifested from God alone. Understanding the word ἁγιασμός as the believers' process of sanctification with ethical renewal, however, certainly does not line up with Paul's teaching in Romans 6 or with the larger context of the first eight chapters of his epistle. Further on in this chapter, Paul's concept of divine holiness will be more fully discussed.

In 6:23, Paul brings a precise and yet conclusive supporting statement for the previous verse: τὰ ὀψώνια τῆς ἁμαρτίας θάνατος, τὸ δὲ χάρισμα τοῦ θεοῦ ζωὴ αἰώνιος ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν. The idea of the word ὀψώνιον is often depicted as a soldier's wage paid out by a ruler. But here we may understand it as a slave's wage from the dominion of sin.⁴⁵ In contrast to ὀψώνιον, however, the word χάρισμα suggests that God's provision of eternal life is granted even to those who do not deserve to receive it. Yet, the words ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν indicate the undeserved receivers as those who are united with the Lord Jesus Christ in his death and resurrection. The words τὸ χάρισμα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν certainly imply that our lordship to God through our faith in Jesus Christ grants us both our present righteous status with the mark of holiness manifested in us and the promises of eternal life.

With such understandings, Paul concludes his larger theological or doctrinal argument (Rom 1 to 8) at the end of the chapter 8. Through the first eight chapters of

⁴⁵Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 329.

Romans, he certainly preached about God's righteousness, faithfulness, love and holiness, and we have considered them as God's essential divine nature and argued that they are important interpretive keys for Pauline theology. In his conclusion, with brief mention of God's love in Romans 5:5-8, Paul focuses on God's amazing love in Christ Jesus. Out of his love, God delivered his Son, who would be the firstborn among believers, to be a holy sacrifice for them on the cross. Through Christ's sacrificial death for the condemnation of mankind, God then justified believers and called Christians according to his purpose. This is what God has "promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures" (Rom 1:2) and fulfilled in Christ, revealing his faithfulness. Thus, believers become slaves of righteousness, resulting in God's holiness being manifested in them. Moreover, Christ, who was raised from death, now intercedes for the holy ones (8:27, 34). Therefore, nothing can separate the holy ones from the love of God.

Divine Holiness in Ephesians 4:24; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; and 2 Thessalonians 2:13

Through the exegetical study in Romans 6:19-23, we have concluded that Paul's concept of holiness refers to divine holiness manifested in Christians. Briefly we will discuss three more occasions where we may consider Paul's reference to divine holiness.

Ephesians 4:24

In Ephesians 4:21-24, Paul reminds Christians how the teachings in the tradition which the risen Christ provides for the lives of believers assist their minds to be renewed in the spirit through the transformation of their humanity. They were taught to put on the new self which has been created according to the likeness of God ἐν δικαιοσύνη καὶ ὁσιότητι τῆς ἀληθείας, "in righteousness and holiness of the truth." Paul here uses the word ὁσιότης which has the same meaning of "holiness" as ἁγιασμός. The word ὁσιότης occurs only twice in the New Testament. We find the other in Luke 1:75,

where it uses the same phrase, ἐν ὁσιότητι καὶ δικαιοσύνη.

In the LXX the word ὁσιότης occurs only three times (Deut. 9:5; 1 Kgs 9:4; and Prov 14:32) and has the meaning of “personal piety.” The adjective form ὅσιος, however, occurs frequently in Psalms and Proverbs referring to “saint or faithful one.” It is predominantly used for יִשְׁתָּהּ which is frequently used of persons and is never used for שִׁירָה.⁴⁶ But we should note how it is often referred to God, especially through the quotations in the New Testament. ὅσιος occurs 5 times in quotations out of a total 9 occurrences in the New Testament, and they are all used to refer to God or Christ. Three quotations in the speeches in Acts (2:27; 13:34, 35) refer to Christ, the Messiah, quoting the Messianic interpretation of Psalm 16:10 in Acts 2:27 and 13:35, and Isaiah 55:3 in Acts 13:34. Here, we may notice that the author of Acts identifies Paul as the speaker in Acts 13:34, 35. Two times in Revelation (15:4 and 16:5) the word is used of God with a quotation from Deuteronomy 32:4 which refers to God as δίκαιος καὶ ὅσιος. Besides those quotations, in Hebrews 7:26 Jesus is described as ὅσιος as a perfect High-priest for all believers. The rest of the occurrences are, however, found in Pauline epistles. In 1 Thessalonians 2:10 Paul uses the similar phrase, ὁσίως καὶ δικαίως, to describe how he and the Thessalonian Christians have become as witnesses to others through their ministry. Paul also uses the word ὅσιος to characterize one of the virtuous qualities of a bishop in Titus 1:8 and to describe the hands lifted up for prayer in 1 Timothy 2:8.

Having said that, in Ephesians 4:24 we may see that Paul might have used the phrase, ἐν δικαιοσύνη καὶ ὁσιότητι τῆς ἀληθείας, in reference to God or to men. Abbot suggests that the words only refer to “a summary of human virtue” as in Luke 1:75.⁴⁷

⁴⁶Hauck, “ὅσιος, ὁσίως, ἀνόσιος, ὁσιότης,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* trans. G. Bromiley, ed. Gerhard Kittel (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 490.

⁴⁷T. K. Abbott, *The Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians*, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1979), 139.

Paul, however, reminds us that the new humanity has been created κατὰ θεόν, “according to the likeness of God” or “after the pattern of God.” And, as he adds the phrase following the adjectival participle κτισθέντα, he expresses the characteristics which God has and at the same time that the new humanity should be created in. In LXX Psalm 144:17 (Ps 145:17 in BHS) the Psalmist already testifies the divine nature as δίκαιος κύριος ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτοῦ καὶ ὅσιος ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ. Thus, as the new humanity created in the likeness of God, believers are to renew their minds. As the new creation transformed into righteousness and holiness, they are to put on their new identity. Just as in Romans 6:1-11 which we have discussed above, with the language of “putting off” and “putting on” Paul draws “another way of expressing the ideas of dying and rising with Christ.”⁴⁸ This new created humanity is viewed as a work God has already accomplished in Christ Jesus (2:10). And God who is righteous and holy manifested the divine righteousness and holiness into the new humanity. Taking the genitive τῆς ἀληθείας in the phrase as a genitive of source, Snodgrass suggests, “righteousness and holiness have their source in truth, the truth found in Jesus.”⁴⁹ Based on the following context in 4:25-5:2, we may also follow the current argument. Paul continuously exhorts Christians to pursue ethical lives with specific ethical instructions, and he certainly does not suggest that this ethical conduct is a process for reaching holiness. Holiness is the divine nature manifested in his new creation, the new humanity, through Jesus Christ.

Within 4:22-24, there are three infinitive phrases used with a variety of tenses. Here, we may first notice different interpretations based on how these infinitives were understood: (1) as complements of previous verses (20-21) to explain the content of

⁴⁸Klyne Snodgrass, *Ephesians*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 234.

⁴⁹Ibid., 236.

Christ's teaching (NIV, NRSV), (2) as imperatives (RSV), and (3) as result (NKJV, NASB).⁵⁰ Such different interpretations, however, suggest whether Paul is describing the transformation of the Christian life as a fact already accomplished, or whether he is instructing Christians to pursue the transformation.⁵¹ Since the interpretation of the Greek infinitive may vary depending on the context, it seems proper here to focus on the tenses of the verbs. The first phrase, "put off the old self" and the last, "put on the new" are both used with aorist infinitives, which describe undefined action, while the second phrase, "renewal of the mind," is expressed for the ongoing action with the present tense (passive). From this grammatical variation of aspects, we may argue that Paul's emphasis on continual renewal is following the putting on of the new humanity, and we may also find this concept in Colossians 3:10.⁵² Paul's description of the transformation of the Christian life which occurs with the metaphors of putting clothing on and off in this passage applies to an undefined action that should be made once for all (cf. Rom 6:19 above), resulting in a continual renewing process (cf. 2 Cor 4:16). Again this renewal is not the result of human effort, but the result of being a new humanity created in righteousness and holiness.

1 Thessalonians 3:13

As he hopes to see his Thessalonian friends, Paul brings his prayer for them in 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13. After he first asks for the Lord's guidance to his journey to Thessalonica, Paul prays for them in verses 12-13 saying, "May the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people, just as we also *do* for you; εἰς τὸ στηρίξαι ὑμῶν τὰς καρδίας ἀμέμπτους ἐν ἀγιωσύνῃ (so that he may establish

⁵⁰Ibid., 232-33.

⁵¹W. T. Purkiser, *Exploring Christian Holiness*, vol. 1, *The Biblical Foundations* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 1983), 171.

⁵²Snodgrass, *Ephesians*, 235.

your hearts without blame in holiness) before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.” Through this prayer, Paul wishes that the increase in love through the Lord Jesus might become the means by which their hearts may be established without blame in holiness before God. Then what does it mean by “He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness”? Paul used the adjective ἄμεμπτος in two other occasions, and both are in Philippians, 2:15 and 3:6.⁵³ In Philippians 3:6 he used the word to describe his ethical status of pre-conversion saying, “as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.” He mentioned this not to boast about his experience but to explain his mistakenly understood past religious experience. Certainly he would not have tried to impose such an ethical state on his converts in Thessalonica. We may notice there are some degree of differences in Paul’s writings between Philippians 3:6 and 1 Thessalonians 3:13. The first is Paul’s use of the same adjective ἄμεμπτος, to depict the same ethical or moral state, between ἐν νόμῳ and ἐν ἀγιωσύνη. The second is the one who is at work in producing such a condition. Here, comparison of the contrasting views in a similar format will help us to discover the proper meanings on both. It seems appropriate at least briefly to discuss Paul’s view on the Law in light of his concept of holiness.

In Romans 7:7, which we have briefly discussed above, first, Paul contends that the Law was intended to reveal and expose sin. In Romans 3:19-20 Paul expresses that the purpose of the Law was to inform humankind of their sinfulness: “for through the law comes the knowledge of sin” (Rom 3:20b), and to hold the whole world accountable to God under the Law (Rom 3:19b). Not only that, the Law was given to increase the transgression in us (Rom 5:20; Gal 3:19). “The Law did not restrain sin, but rather it provoked more sinning.”⁵⁴ Thus, “the sinful passions, which were *aroused* by the Law,”

⁵³One adverbial form is also used in 1 Thess 5:23.

⁵⁴Thomas R. Schreiner, *The Law and Its Fulfillment: A Pauline Theology of Law* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 77.

only cause humankind “to bear fruit for death” (Rom 7:5). In other words, the Law not only revealed that what we are doing is contrary to God’s holy will, but also reflected that our continual willful disobedience is under the power of sin. In doing so, sin is exposed, and yet the grace of our loving God abounds even more (Rom 5:20). The moral consciousness of humankind is fully reflected by the Law of God. All the more, God’s divine nature of perfect holiness and righteousness is revealed to his people. And “the Law establishes God’s just charge against humanity in the public square, whether humanity acknowledges it or not.”⁵⁵ This brings the next purpose of the Law.

Second, the Law was given to us to pronounce God’s wrath, condemnation, and curse.⁵⁶ So, in Romans 4:15 Paul writes that the Law brings wrath. In Galatians 3:10, “For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, ‘cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, to perform them.’” However, “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’” (Gal 3:13). Thus, as the Law pronounces “the open and public sentence of death,”⁵⁷ the death of Christ reveals its proper effect for those who are under the Law. Moreover, “therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death” (Rom 8:1-2). Therefore, the Law not only pronounced God’s wrath, but also revealed God’s sacrificial love through Christ’s vicarious death by becoming the perfect holy sacrifice for us. This also helps us acknowledge that Christ’s death not only justified us from eternal condemnation, but also satisfied our holy standing before God for our holy union with our perfect holy God.

⁵⁵Mark A. Seifrid, “Natural Revelation and the Purpose of the Law in Romans,” *TynBul* 49 May (1998): 128.

⁵⁶C. E. B. Cranfield, “St. Paul and the Law,” *SJT* 17 (1964): 48.

⁵⁷Seifrid, “Natural Revelation and the Purpose of the Law in Romans,” 129.

The third purpose of the Law was its function as a παιδαγωγός⁵⁸ until the coming of Christ (Gal 3:24). The interpretation of the term παιδαγωγός has been the subject of continuing debate. In comparison with the interpretation of an educative function, however, Seifrid appropriately suggests that according to the context Paul rather draws upon, “three aspects of the guardian’s function: (1) that those under a guardian are deprived of freedom; (2) that those under a guardian have the status of minors; (3) and that therefore the guardian’s role is temporary.”⁵⁹ Thus, the Law functioned in the sense of a temporary guardian until Jesus Christ came, and the promise through faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe (Gal 3:22). Indirectly, again, the purpose of the law was intended to reveal God’s plan of salvation, by demonstrating to Israel that he would deal with sin. Through his revelation of the Law, God also profoundly manifested himself as being a holy God who reveals our sin, reflecting his perfect holiness, a just God who justly deals with sin, and a loving and faithful God who provides a guardian until the fulfillment of his salvific promise.

According to this Pauline view on the Law, we may now go back and explain the differences between his boastful pre-conversion claim, “as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless” (Phil 3:6), and his prayer for his friends in Thessalonica, “He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness” (1 Thess 3:13). In the Pauline

⁵⁸NRSV interprets the word as “disciplinarian” while NASB and NKJ as “tutor.”

⁵⁹Mark A. Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness: Paul’s Theology of Justification* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity, 2000), 108. Cf. Wayne G. Strickland, “The Inauguration of the Law of Christ with the Gospel of Christ: A Dispensational View,” in *Five Views on Law and Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993), 244-45, argues, “In the Greek world, a παιδαγωγός was generally a slave who functioned in both a custodial and an educative fashion as a tutor. His responsibility was to supervise the entire lifestyle of the child, giving constant attention to the academic, social, and spiritual nourishment of the child until maturity.” And, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *To Advance the Gospel*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 192, suggests, “The law played a temporary role in salvation-history, disciplining God’s people that it might gradually come of age to learn of Christ.”

letters, “Paul makes the fundamental issue clear: the establishing of one’s righteousness (by works), or submission to the righteousness of God (by faith).”⁶⁰ Paul presents his argument clearly against Judaism, writing that the Law was revealed to Israel to show the will of God and what a right relationship with God should be. He argues that the Law was given to deal with the problem of sin, not to make Israel righteous through the Law. However, Israel failed to follow the Law because they strove for the righteousness that is based on the Law by works instead of through faith (Rom 9:31-32). They were ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and they did not submit to God's righteousness (Rom 10:3). Again, although Paul expresses the expectation of believers’ obedience to the law, his main point is that no one can be righteous by the works of the law. If one wishes to be righteous by obedience to the law, then obedience must be perfect, because God is perfect in his holiness and justice. One who obeys the law must keep the entire law (Gal 5:3). Anyone who does not observe and obey all the things written in the book of the law is cursed (Gal 3:10). He writes, “no human being will be justified in [God’s] sight by deeds prescribed by the law” (Rom 3:20), but rather “a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law” (v. 28). Martin describes, “The man of Romans 2 endorses God’s law, believes he obeys it, and would instruct others in it (vv. 17-20); yet he does not obey the law (vv. 1, 3, 21-24). The man of Romans 7:14-25 delights in God’s law and yet knows that even when he tries his utmost he is powerless to obey it (vv. 15-25).”⁶¹ In Romans 8:7-8, Paul writes that the man whose mind is set on the flesh cannot submit to God's Law and the man who is in the flesh cannot please God; because the law could not do anything for him, weakened by flesh (Rom 8:7).

Thus, Paul provides the understanding of Law against his own pre-conversion

⁶⁰George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 539.

⁶¹Brice L. Martin, “Paul on Christ and the Law,” *JETS* 26 (1983): 277.

experiences which were based on his Pharisaic background. He had been pursuing the Law by his own works, hoping to be righteous. To Jews, he even had a conviction that he could boast of himself to be blameless in the Law. But through the Christ-event, he found instead that “his very devotion to the law had led to pride (Phil. 3:4, 7) and boasting (Rom. 2;13, 23).”⁶² He acknowledges that no one can be righteous and holy before God by works, and the Law only separates humankind from the holy and righteous God. Only God can justify his people and he has justified them and made them holy through faith in Jesus Christ, who was cursed and punished for the iniquities of all mankind by becoming a perfect and holy sacrifice for the sins of the world once and for all. Thus, faith in Jesus Christ alone brings righteousness and holiness in us.

In 1 Thessalonians 3:13, as he continues his prayer from the previous sentence with εἰς and the articular infinitive of purpose, Paul implies that the Lord Jesus Christ, not the works of Paul or the Thessalonians, would establish their hearts blameless ἐν ἁγιωσύνη. Here, Paul uses the rare word ἁγιωσύνη which he also used on two other occasions (Rom 1:4; 2 Cor 7:1). The word occurs only in the Pauline epistles in the New Testament, and Peterson suggests that Paul used the word to refer to “the sanctity of God’s character and life, which he shares with believers in some measure at the present time but fully and finally when they see him face to face.”⁶³ In the LXX it occurs only in Psalm (LXX) 29:5; 95:6; 96:12; and 144:5 and it is twice expressed in the following sentence, ἐξομολογεῖσθε τῇ μνήμῃ τῆς ἁγιωσύνης αὐτοῦ, “Acknowledge [God] in the remembrance of his holiness!” (29:5 and 96:12, author’s translation) and once in the following phrase, ἐξομολόγησις ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ ἁγιωσύνη,⁶⁴ “Acknowledging [him]

⁶²Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, 544.

⁶³Peterson, *Possessed by God*, 139.

⁶⁴In LXX the word ἁγιωσύνη was supplied for the interpretation of the Hebrew לְפָנָיִם.

before his holiness” (95:2, author’s translation). From these passages, Psalmists emphasize holiness as the important divine attribute that God’s people acknowledge and honor. None of them including Psalm 144:5 actually suggests human conduct. In Pauline usage, even though 2 Corinthians 7:1 suggests an allusion to human conduct, in Romans 1:4 Paul clearly employs the word ἁγιωσύνη as a divine attribute.⁶⁵ In 1 Thessalonians 3:13, we may acknowledge that Paul uses the concept of divine holiness in his prayer. Thus, according to the study we have presented, the prayer in 3:12-13 should be understood to say that through the increase in love for one another, which again will be found in Christ Jesus, the Lord would make their hearts blameless reflecting upon divine holiness,⁶⁶ not the Law, when they stand before God at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his holy ones.

2 Thessalonians 2:13

In 2 Thessalonians 2:13, Paul adds the second thanksgiving in this letter for God’s election of Christians in Thessalonica saying, “But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, for εἴλατο ὑμᾶς ὁ θεὸς ἀπαρχὴν⁶⁷ εἰς σωτηρίαν ἐν ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος καὶ πίστει ἀληθείας.” Here, literally Paul writes, “God chose you as the first fruits [or from the beginning] for salvation.” Then, he adds a

⁶⁵In a later chapter we will study Rom 1:4 and 2 Cor 7:1 as we discuss the holiness of Christ and the holiness in man, respectively.

⁶⁶Earl J. Richard, *First and Second Thessalonians*, Sacra Pagina Series, vol. 11 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1995), 176, suggests the interpretation of the phrase ἐν ἁγιωσύνη as “in the sphere of holiness.” Howard Marshall, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 101, posits, “Holiness is a quality of God himself.”

⁶⁷There is a textual variant where some of early versions such as Sinaiticus and D have ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς (from the beginning) instead of ἀπαρχὴν (as first fruits) which is read by B F G P. The former variant is however preferred by most commentators and rendered in NASB and NKJV while the latter is adopted in NRSV. Here, we will not linger on this debate since it seems that the debate will be less significant for our focus on the concept of holiness in the sentence.

complex prepositional phrase with ἐν, which contains parallel phrases, each consisting of nouns followed by a genitive noun. This prepositional phrase expresses the means by which salvation is secured (instrumental force). For the parallel genitival constructions, the first one is taken as a genitive of source, “holiness wrought by the Spirit.” The phrase ἐν ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος can be also found in 1 Peter 1:2 where the context indicates the same concept. Taking the second phrase as an objective genitive, we may thus interpret the prepositional phrase as, “through holiness by the Spirit and through faith in the truth.”

According to the order of the two phrases, “holiness by the Spirit” then “faith in the truth,” we may notice that Paul focuses “first on divine action and then on the human response to that action.”⁶⁸ Commenting on the common view among commentators that 2 Thessalonians 2:13 indicates a process of sanctification⁶⁹ beyond conversion, Peterson posits, “If such a process is included in Paul’s thinking, then it will be an extension of the consecrating work of the Spirit associated with gospel proclamation and conversion to Christ.”⁷⁰ If the phrase ἐν ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος expresses the means by which the salvation is secured through the divine action, then holiness which is brought about by the Spirit should be referred to divine holiness manifested in those who have been chosen. This holiness is achieved by Christ’s redemptive work and manifested in Christians by the Spirit so that the Lord may dwell in them and call them holy ones, and also that they may have faith in the truth pursuing their life in holiness.

What Is the Concept of Divine Holiness?

Thus far, we have not clearly defined the concept of divine holiness. Paul does not explicitly explain the concept other than saying “the Lord may establish your hearts

⁶⁸Richard, *First and Second Thessalonians*, 357.

⁶⁹“Sanctification” is the word used in major English versions (NASB, NRSV, NKJV).

⁷⁰Peterson, *Possessed by God*, 61.

without blame in holiness,” “God has chosen you for salvation through holiness by the Spirit,” “put on the new self, which in *the likeness of* God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth,” and “now present your members as slaves to righteousness, into holiness . . . having been enslaved to God, you have your fruit to holiness.” Through our study in the Old Testament, we have found difficulty in describing the concept of divine holiness since we have noticed that God defines holiness. We have concluded that God alone is holy; the concept of holiness needs to be defined by the essential nature of God; and everything and everyone brought into relationship with him should share in some way in that holiness.

In the Pauline epistles, we will also consider divine holiness an abstract form, simply referring to a divine attribute which God reveals to us and commands us to have. Again, because he is holy, God commands us to be holy. But holiness can be achieved in us, not by the works of Law, not by our effort to be righteous, but only by a certain relationship which should be established by God. That relationship, however, has been granted us through Jesus Christ. Thus Paul says, “you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God” (1 Cor 6:11, NRSV; cf. 1 Cor 1:2). Divine holiness has been imparted to us through Christ so that we may be in his holiness. Therefore, here we should define what it means for us to be in his divine holiness rather than what is the concept of divine holiness. In his holiness we know that our hearts have been established without blame, our salvation has been secured, our new humanity has been created in the likeness of God, and we may present ourselves as belonging to him. When we discuss Paul’s reference to holiness in man, then, we may describe what is the definition of the word “holiness” when applied to man.

The Holiness of Christ

Discovering the concept of holiness in Christ is a difficult task, especially in the Pauline epistles since Paul implicitly refers to the holiness of Christ. But Paul sparsely mentions the term holiness in relation to Christ and his redemptive work. We will briefly discuss three passages (1 Cor 1:30; Rom 1:4; and Col 1:9-22) where, we may argue, the term “holiness” is applied to describe the holiness of Christ or his redemptive work.

1 Corinthians 1:30

Paul writes to the church in Corinth that they are ἡγιασμένοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, κλητοῖς ἁγίοις (1 Cor 1:2). As an apostle of Christ, Paul emphasizes their becoming God’s new people in Jesus Christ as the result of divine activity.⁷¹ Then, in 1 Corinthians 1:30, Paul refers to Jesus Christ as the one ὃς ἐγενήθη σοφία ἡμῖν ἀπὸ θεοῦ, δικαιοσύνη τε καὶ ἁγιασμὸς καὶ ἀπολύτρωσις. Paul definitely links the centrality of Christ with the concept of holiness, and we will discuss this understanding through a brief exegetical study.

In the first four chapters of his letter, Paul deals with the problem of the disunity and the misconception of the power of the cross raised in the Corinthian church due to their pursuit of human wisdom. For this response, first, he argues the incompatibility of divine and human wisdom (1:18-2:16), emphasizing the cross and the crucifixion of Jesus Christ as God’s way of salvation. By all standards of human wisdom it may seem foolishness, yet it demonstrates the power and wisdom of God. Thus, those who are called by God acknowledge Christ as the power and wisdom of God through his atoning death.

In 1 Corinthians 1:26, Paul reminds the Christians in Corinth of their calling,

⁷¹Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 32.

as he expresses his disappointment concerning how their misunderstanding of their calling had brought divisions in church. Again, he introduces the negative aspects regarding the worldly pride in verses 26b through 29, and he explains what kind of calling he was reminding them to consider in 1:30. In verses 26b-29, Paul negatively expresses, “because there are not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; rather God has chosen the foolish things of the world in order to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world in order to shame the strong, and God has chosen the insignificant things of the world, and the things that have been despised, the things that are not existing, in order that he may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God” (author’s interpretation). Having interjected this negative expression, Paul now reminds them, saying, “*what you should consider for your calling is that by his act*⁷² you are in Christ Jesus, ὃς ἐγενήθη σοφία ἡμῖν ἀπὸ θεοῦ, δικαιοσύνη τε καὶ ἁγιασμὸς καὶ ἀπολύτρωσις, so that, just as it is written, ‘Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord’”(1 Cor. 1:30-31, italics as author’s interpretation). After Paul teaches them that they have been sanctified ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (1:2) and the grace of God has been given to them ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (1:4), now he reminds them that ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ they have been called.

Here, Paul includes a christological statement concerning Jesus, saying, ἐγενήθη σοφία ἡμῖν ἀπὸ θεοῦ, δικαιοσύνη τε καὶ ἁγιασμὸς καὶ ἀπολύτρωσις “he became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and *holiness*⁷³ and redemption” (1:30). With this statement, Paul explains that God has made Jesus to become wisdom, revealing the knowledge of the divine plan, and the power (cf. 1:24) that “brought us the

⁷²The phrase ἐξ αὐτοῦ, is literally “of Him.” Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, trans. James W. Leitch, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 51, suggests that the phrase describes God’s election and it is shown by the correspondence with v. 24 and 3:23.

⁷³Again the word ἁγιασμὸς is translated as “sanctification” in the major English versions.

most necessary of blessings, salvation, consisting of *righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.*”⁷⁴ Here, Fee suggests the three words are “the three illustrative metaphors, which refers to the saving event of Christ,” and that the three metaphors are correlative, “each emphasizing a different aspect of the one reality.”⁷⁵ Concerning the order of the three words, Conzelmann points out, “the three soteriological concepts are not systematically arranged.”⁷⁶ Certainly there is no evidence of logical sequence or any superiority of one to the other suggesting any steps in the saving process. “Three different metaphors set forth the saving work of Christ because no single metaphor captures what he has accomplished on our behalf. . . . Paul conceives of sanctification as a definitive act that is already accomplished for believers.”⁷⁷ This analysis is confirmed by 1 Corinthians 6:11, “you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” Here, the describing verbs also do not seem to be listed sequentially: the verb “sanctified” precedes the verb “justified.”

The knowledge of the divine salvific plan has been revealed in Christ. Such knowledge is mainly described in the concepts of righteousness, holiness, and redemption, which are established through Jesus Christ. The idea of δικαιοσύνη is, as we have discussed above, explained by Paul in the first part of Romans 1-4. The righteousness of God is revealed to us through the death and resurrection of Christ as a divine act. The act of God’s grace has established believers’ undeserved stance of right

⁷⁴Frederic Godet, *Commentary on First Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1977), 118.

⁷⁵Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 86. Fee also suggests that Paul’s usage of nouns instead of verbs to describe the event indicates the fact that the three metaphors stand in apposition to the noun “wisdom.”

⁷⁶Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 52.

⁷⁷Thomas R. Schreiner, *Paul: Apostle of God’s Glory in Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity, 2001), 220.

standing before God, despite the condemnation pronounced on them, by placing on a righteous man, Jesus Christ, God's just punishment for those who were condemned, and granting the forgiveness of their sin.

From this divine salvific act, the concept of holiness is also revealed through Christ, since God's just punishment is necessitated by God's holiness. While the righteousness of God is expressed in his justifying activity through Christ, the holiness of God is satisfied in him by the self-offering of Jesus in death as an atoning sacrifice. Paul certainly depicts in his writings both forensic and cultic images in order to explain the divine salvific act in justification and holiness. In 2 Corinthians 5:21 we find the expression "made Him to be sin" which obviously refers to Christ as one who has taken punishment for our sin, using a forensic image. As he describes Christ's death in 1 Corinthians 5:7 as τὸ πάσχα ἡμῶν, however, Paul suggests an act of salvation by means of sacrifice in a cultic image. According to the term ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25, we may notice that Paul more specifically implies an atonement for sin with the term, "fulfilling the pattern of the Day of Atonement ritual in Leviticus 16."⁷⁸ Here, Peterson rightly points out, "the expression 'in his blood' is best connected with ἱλαστήριον (rather than with 'through faith') indicating that it was by the shedding of his blood that his death was an atoning sacrifice. . . . The ultimate purposes of God in providing Christ as a propitiatory sacrifice was so that He could justify sinners rightly and still be just (3:26)."⁷⁹ But, this divine act was fulfilling holiness in us by making Christ as a perfect and holy sacrifice for us, once and for all, through his sacrificial death so that God could

⁷⁸David Peterson, "Atonement in the New Testament," in *Where Wrath & Mercy Meet*, ed. David Peterson (Carlisle, PA: Paternoster Publishing, 2001), 41. The term has been also taken to refer to the "place of atonement" or the "mercy seat" in the Holy of Holies. Against the notion of a propitiatory sacrifice, the "means of expiation" or "medium of atonement" is argued as well. The debate regarding the term is immense and we will not treat it in this paper.

⁷⁹Ibid., 42.

regard us as holy ones and still be holy. In other words, through the death and resurrection of his Son, God has cleansed us from the guilt of sin and liberated us from its consequences and its control. Calvin explains, “As we ourselves, when we have been engrafted in Christ, are righteous in God’ sight because our iniquities are covered by Christ’s sinless, so our works are righteous and are thus regarded because whatever fault is otherwise in them is buried in Christ’s purity and is not charged our account.”⁸⁰ The righteous standing before God is established in us through Christ who is the perfect and holy one and became holy sacrifice for us. Thus Paul writes, Christ became ἁγιασμός (1 Cor 1:30), and at the same time, believers are sanctified in Jesus Christ (1 Cor 1:2; 6:11). He describes the sanctifying work of God in the holiness of Christ, and argues that through this believers are drawn into an exclusive relationship with God. Guthrie posits, “God looks at the ‘holiness’ of Christ rather than the lack of it in the believer.”⁸¹ Barth asserted that Jesus Christ is both the holy God and the sanctified man, and Christians are sanctified as they participate in the holiness of Christ.⁸² Therefore, now we may identify ourselves in his holiness, not by our own personalities, background, or achievement. The holiness in view here is not a process of moral change. “The context is about belonging to God and being given a holy status. The focus is on God’s saving activity, not on our response.”⁸³

A general consensus is that sanctification is established by a progressive moral

⁸⁰John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (London: S.C.M. Press, 1961), III. 17. 10.

⁸¹Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1981), 669.

⁸²Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 4, bk. 2, ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1936-77), 516. He also argues that justification and sanctification are as inseparable as the two natures of Christ, saying that they “must be distinguished, but they cannot be divided or separated” (505).

⁸³Peterson, *Possessed by God*, 44.

change with man's response to the gift of righteousness. Godet rightly expresses that, on the contrary, Paul sees in holiness "a Divine work no less than in righteousness: Christ himself is the holiness of the believer as well as his righteousness. . . . If our righteousness is Christ *for* us, our sanctification is Christ *in* us, Christ *is* our holiness as well as our righteousness."⁸⁴ Calvin posits, "Christ justifies no one without also sanctifying him."⁸⁵ Thus, Christ brings our redemption. Peterson notes, "The Greek term ἀπολύτρωσις does not simply mean emancipation or deliverance. It is the language of the slave market, with a particular application in Jewish thinking to the great saving event of the exodus."⁸⁶ With the redemptive act in Christ, God has freed us from the condemnation he pronounced for us.

Romans 1:4

Paul writes in Romans 1:1-4 how God has promised the gospel in the holy Scriptures through *his* prophets, concerning *his* Son who has come from the seed of David κατὰ σάρκα and was declared to be the Son of God ἐν δυνάμει κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν (author's interpretation with the italicized emphasis). Here, Paul uses the unusual phrase κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης to describe the declaration of Christ's divine sonship. Some scholars, however, suggest that verses 3-4 are Paul's addition of a liturgical fragment. One of the reasons for this suggestion is the utilization of hapax legomena (ὀρίζω, πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης). Schreiner, however, argues against this, noting "the insufficient evidence to verify such hypotheses."⁸⁷ From verses 3-4, we may notice that Paul's emphasis on divine sonship is seen in two different modes of life, in

⁸⁴Godet, *Commentary on First Corinthians*, 120.

⁸⁵Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* III. 16. 1.

⁸⁶Peterson, "Atonement in the New Testament," 41.

⁸⁷Schreiner, *Romans*, 39-40. Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, 10, comments, "The verses are composed with even more care than the rest of the prescript."

earthly life and the life from the resurrection of death. It is “*his* Son,” the Son of God, who came to be a Davidic descendent κατὰ σάρκα. It is “*his* Son” who is now declared to be “the Son of God with power” κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης by the resurrection from the dead. In other words, Paul describes that Jesus was already Son of God in human nature but “in a hidden way where his power was not displayed (cf. 2 Cor 13:4).”⁸⁸ By the resurrection, now he is declared to be the Son of God with power.⁸⁹ And it is declared and revealed by no one but the Father through his Word, the Holy Scripture.

The phrase πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης “the spirit of holiness” is nowhere else used in the New Testament or LXX to refer to the Holy Spirit. Some have suggested this phrase may be referred to the Holy Spirit since the literal translation of the phrase πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης in Hebrew is שְׁרֵטֹת קִדְּוָה (Ps 51:13; Isa 63:10-11). Yet, this Hebrew term is rather translated as τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον. The Greek phrase, however, appears in the *Testament of Levi* 18:11 describing its bestowal upon holy ones. Byrne suggests that this shows a similar concept of imparting of the spirit with the christological statement in Romans 1:4. Then, how should we understand the phrase in Paul’s writing? Different explanations of the phrase have been suggested.

First, the identification of πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης with the Holy Spirit has been suggested by many commentators throughout history.⁹⁰ Dunn here suggests that with the

⁸⁸Brendan Byrne, *Romans*, Sacra Pagina Series, vol. 6 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996), 44.

⁸⁹Concerning the verb ὀρίζειν, which is translated as “to declare” in most of the major English versions, Schreiner, *Romans*, 42, suggests its interpretation as “to appoint” arguing, “the idea is not that Jesus was ‘declared’ or ‘shown to be’ at the resurrection what he was all along, namely, the eternal Son of God. Rather, the point is that Jesus was ‘appointed’ to be God’s Son in power at the resurrection of the dead. . . . Upon his resurrection, he was enthroned as the messianic king.” Byrne, *Romans*, 44, however, points out that, compared to the sense of ‘appoint’, the meaning of ‘declare’ would “give a less ‘adoptionist’ tone to the statement of Jesus’ divine sonship in the present formula.” And he argues, “The ‘adoptionist’ tone is avoided if the phrase ‘in power’ is taken closely with ‘Son of God.’”

⁹⁰Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 63-64; Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 15; Byrne, *Romans*, 45, argues a reference to the Spirit of God; Schreiner, *Romans*, 41-44.

phrase *κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης* Paul explains the new phases of Christ's existence through resurrection and "the role was characterized by holy spirit, just as the previous phase was characterized by flesh."⁹¹ Byrne suggests that Christ's own messianic status and the dawn of the new age is indicated through the risen Lord's imparting of the Spirit while Jesus' messianic qualification is only based upon his fleshly descent from David.⁹²

Second, in contrast with *κατὰ σάρκα* (v. 3), some argue that the phrase *κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης* does not refer to the Holy Spirit, but is a description of Christ's divine nature while the phrase *κατὰ σάρκα* refers to human nature.⁹³ Hodge posits that *πνεῦμα* is applied in the similar sense in 1 Timothy 3:6, *ἐδικαιώθη ἐν πνεύματι*, and the genitive *ἁγιωσύνης* is a qualification of *πνεῦμα*, thus implying the characteristic of holiness in Christ.⁹⁴

The third interpretation suggests that, taking the parallelism between *κατὰ σάρκα* and *κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης*, the latter phrase refers to something inherent in Christ, as the human inner spirit where "the Divine personality resided." Thus it is "distinguished . . . from that of ordinary humanity by an exceptional and transcendent holiness," while the former refers to Christ's humanity.⁹⁵ Käsemann asserts that the

⁹¹Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 15.

⁹²Byrne, *Romans*, 45. Schreiner, *Romans*, 43-44, seems to overemphasize on the introduction of two different ages through Jesus, saying, "The resurrection of Christ inaugurates the new age. When Jesus lived on earth as the Son of David, he lived his life in the old age of the flesh that was characterized by weakness, sin, and death. At his resurrection, however, Jesus left the old age behind and inaugurated the new age of the Spirit."

⁹³Charles Hodge, *Romans*, The Crossway Classic Commentary, ed. Alister McGrath and J. I. Packer (Wheaton: Crossway, 1993), 18; M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament* (Wilmington, DE: Associated Publishers and Authors, 1972), 664.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*, 18.

⁹⁵W. Sanday and A. C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: Clark, 1902), 9. Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, 11, and Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 236, also express a similar interpretation.

phrase does not imply Christ's moral holiness, but that which "finally overcomes what is profane and secular and which opens up access to God," and "it is the power in virtue of which Jesus is appointed the Son of God."⁹⁶

According to the context, again we may argue that Paul is emphasizing the divine sonship in two different modes of life, phases, or ages (however one may suggest here). And both phrases, *κατὰ σάρκα* and *κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης* are applied to distinguish two different modes of life Jesus experienced. According to this understanding, certainly the two natures interpretation should not be taken, as if Christ were now established the divine nature that has been his all along with human nature. Fitzmyer rightly points out, "Such an interpretation introduces anachronistically ideas of later theology into the Pauline phrase."⁹⁷ Then, Paul may have implied the phrase *κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης* to indicate the Holy Spirit which brought the appointment of the resurrected Christ's divine sonship in power, or the transcendent holiness inherent in Christ's spirit. Adding Schlatter's opinion, however, includes the idea of holiness being bestowed by the indwelling Spirit who manifests oneness of Father with his Son.⁹⁸ Taking *ἁγιωσύνη* with the meaning of holiness, Cranfield also suggests that Paul especially had in mind the sanctifying work of the Spirit (cf. chapter 8).⁹⁹

An interesting observation in the Pauline epistles is that Paul used the term "the Spirit" more than 60 times to refer to the Third Person in the Trinity while he employed the specific term "the Holy Spirit" 13 times for the same purpose.¹⁰⁰ Based on

⁹⁶Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, 11-12. Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 2, interpret the phrase as "in virtue of the Holiness inherent in His spirit."

⁹⁷Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 236.

⁹⁸Schlatter, *Romans*, 9.

⁹⁹Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 64.

¹⁰⁰Rom 5:5; 9:1; 14:17; 15:13; 15:16; 1 Cor 6:19; 12:3; 2 Cor 13:13; Eph 4:30; 1 Thess 1:5; 1 Thess 1:6; 2 Tim 1:14; Titus 3:5.

this, it seems that Paul has applied the unusual phrase πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης in order to express more than just “the Holy Spirit” alone. As we have discussed previously, the word ἁγιωσύνη is rare in the New Testament (1 Thess 3:13; 2 Cor 7:1) and occurs only three times in the LXX, where each time it refers to a divine attribute. According to 1 Thessalonians 3:13, we have taken the word ἁγιωσύνη as a divine attribute manifested in believers. If we apply this concept, certainly we can consider the idea that the phrase πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης refers to the Spirit revealing, promoting, and underlining holiness in Christ. For this explanation, it seems that Godet’s comment is worth quoting at length:

The term spirit (or breath) *of holiness* shows clearly enough that the matter here in question is the action displayed on Christ by the Holy Spirit during His earthly existence. In proportion as Jesus was open to this influence, His whole human nature received the seal of consecration to the service of God—that is to say, of holiness. Such is the moral fact indicated in Hebrews 9:14: “*Who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God.*” The result of this penetration of His entire being by the breath of the Holy Spirit was this: at the time of His death there could be fully realized in Him the law expressed by the Psalmist: “Thou wilt not suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption” (Psa. 16:10). Perfect holiness excludes physical dissolution. The necessary corollary of such a life and state was therefore the resurrection. This is the relation expressed by the preposition κατὰ, *according to, agreeably to*. He was established as the Son of God in a striking manner by His resurrection from the dead, *agreeably to the spirit of holiness*, which had reigned in Him and in His very body. . . . What he[Paul] contrasts is, on the one hand, the naturally Jewish and Davidic form of His earthly appearance; and, on the other, the higher form of being on which he entered at the close of this Jewish phase of His existence, in virtue of the principle of holy consecration which had marked all His activity here below. For this new form of existence is the condition on which alone he could accomplish the work described in the verse immediately following.¹⁰¹

Colossians 1:9-22

In Colossians 1:22, Paul summarizes the work of Christ and its effect of imparting holiness to believers, saying, “He has now reconciled you in his fleshly body through death παραστήσαι ὑμᾶς ἁγίους καὶ ἀμώμους καὶ ἀνεγκλήτους κατενώπιον αὐτοῦ.” This summary begins with Paul’s intercessory prayer concerning the Christians’ knowledge of God’s will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that they may

¹⁰¹Godet, *Commentary on St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans*, 131-32.

walk in the Lord, pleasing him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work, increasing in the knowledge of God, becoming strong according to his glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience, and finally giving joyously thanks to the Father (Col 1:9-12a).¹⁰² With these prayer concerns, he continues to explain God's saving will and its purpose through Christ. He states that God has made them fit to be partakers of the inheritance of the holy ones in the light (12b).

In verses 12-13, Paul uses three verbs in the aorist tense (ἰκανώσαντι, ἐρρύσατο, and μετέστησεν) to describe God's salvific action, while by contrast, he uses the present tense in verse 14 (ἔχομεν) to stress the results of God's redemption. O'Brien argues that Paul points to the realized eschatology with the aorist tenses (i.e., God has *already* made them fit . . . *already* rescued . . . *already* transferred), and at the same time, the believers' present reality with the present tense.¹⁰³ Based on this fact, verse 12b may be paraphrased; God has *already* made Gentile Christians, who have no natural right to the inheritance, holy in order for them to be able to share the inheritance which God has prepared for the holy ones (cf. Isa 35:8-10).¹⁰⁴ This idea somehow anticipates Paul's concept of holiness through Christ in verse 22. Lohse suggests here that in verse 12b Paul indicates participation of Christians in the salvation accomplished by God.¹⁰⁵ God

¹⁰²There are various scholarly opinions concerning the extension of Paul's intercession to v. 14. Some argue the break of intercession in v. 11 suggesting various interpretations of vv. 12-20. We will not linger on such arguments due to the limited space of this paper.

¹⁰³Peter T. O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 44 (Waco, TX: Word, 1982), 26.

¹⁰⁴According to the Qumran literature where the similar motifs such as inheritance and holy ones are mentioned (1QS 11:7, 8), many commentators suggest that "holy ones" here refers to angels. This interpretation is, however, less likely than a reference to believers since the term ἅγιοι is a common designation of believers in the Pauline epistles. Especially in Colossians, the term is always used to designate believers (cf. 1:2, 4, 22, 26; 3:12). This term will be discussed in the next chapter.

¹⁰⁵Eduard Lohse, *Colossians and Philemon*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), 35.

has rescued them from the authority of darkness, and transferred them to the kingdom of his beloved Son (13). Therefore, they experience God's redemption and the forgiveness of sins (14).

Paul then draws the transition to the wonderful picture of the supremacy and work of Christ in verses 15-20.¹⁰⁶ Many scholars consider that verses 15-20 comprise a pre-Pauline hymn inserted by Paul. This suggestion is based on the presence of the introductory relative clause in verse 15, the rhythmically balanced units with "chiasmus and *inclusio*, and unusual terms."¹⁰⁷ Garland, although he is in line with minority opinion, however, rightly points out that even though this passage is undeniably poetic, Paul could also express his faith with majestic poetry since he knew his letter would be read aloud as part of the church's worship.¹⁰⁸

Thus Paul praises Christ as the image of the invisible God, mediator of all creation, and Lord over all things that have been created (15-16). He is the beginning, and in him all things hold together, even all the powers on the earth and church (17-18), for it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in him (19). With such praises, Paul also signifies Christ's redemptive work, expressing Christ as the firstborn from the dead (18). With his death and resurrection, thus, he reveals his primacy over all things (18) for it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in him (19). And Paul closes his praise with the concept of reconciliation through Christ's death on the cross, which ultimately brings harmony with all things (20). Dunn comments concerning Paul's praise, "It says much for the faith of these first Christians that they should see in Christ's death and resurrection quite literally the key to resolving the

¹⁰⁶The possible backgrounds to these verses suggested by scholars have been remarkably varied.

¹⁰⁷O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 33.

¹⁰⁸David E. Garland, *Colossians/Philemon*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 82-83.

disharmonies of nature and the inhumanities of humankind, that the character of God's creation and God's concern for the universe in its fullest expression could be so caught and encapsulated for them in the cross of Christ."¹⁰⁹

As he concludes his words of the thanksgiving, Paul recalls the past of the Colossian Christians in verse 21, saying, "You were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, *engaged* in evil deeds." Then, in verse 22 he reminds them of their present status as believers, saying, "he has now reconciled *you* in his fleshly body through death, to present you holy and blameless and beyond reproach before him" (author's interpretation). As he elaborates in his poetic writing the imagery of reconciliation through the blood of his cross (20), Paul explains how Christ has reconciled believers in his fleshly body through death (22). The verb ἀποκαταλλάσσω in the aorist tense indicates Christ's death on the cross as the decisive (once and for all) redemptive act. From the reference to death of the fleshly body and blood, Paul draws a reminder of the sacrificial terminology. This can be seen in the linguistic idea of "presenting holy and blameless." Both words ἅγιος and ἄμωμος are of significance in the sacrificial terminology of the LXX. We have already discussed how the word ἅγιος occurs in the Old Testament cultic background. The word ἄμωμος is also used to describe the physical perfection required of the sacrificial animal as well as that of the priest in the cultic language.¹¹⁰ With these sacrificial terms, the verb παρίστημι, which is also used in the aorist tense, thus signifies a formal bringing of believers already reconciled in Christ before the Lord. This imagery is also drawn in Pauline epistles such as in 2 Corinthians 4:14 and Ephesians 5:27. Especially in the latter, a parallel concept is depicted for the relationship between the church and Christ through the marriage motif, saying, "He might present to Himself the

¹⁰⁹James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 104.

¹¹⁰Markus Barth and Helmut Blanke, *Colossians*, trans. Astrid B. Beck, The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 222.

church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless” (Eph 5:27). This is also anticipated in Paul’s introductory writing in Ephesians 1:4: “just as He chose us in Him [*Christ*]¹¹¹ before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him in love.”

Dunn rightly points out, “There is an echo of the Pauline idea of sacrificial interchange, where spotless sacrifice by dying as a sin offering is somehow interchanged with the blameworthy sinner and its spotlessness transferred to the sinner”¹¹² (cf. 2 Cor. 5:21). Christ’s death as sacrifice certainly has reconciled believers to God so that they would be presented as holy and blameless before God. Yet, the actual presentation has not taken place for them and Paul implies this idea through the following note of caution in verse 23.¹¹³

For the concept of holiness in Christ, Paul describes that through the holy and blameless sacrifice of Christ, who knew no sin, God has accomplished holiness in us, bringing us into accord with his holy character. It is God’s goal of making us holy ones in Christ. And Paul believes that God has achieved this reality in Christ who has done what we could not do for ourselves by becoming our own offering. Thus Christians need to recognize that they have been reconciled to God to live a life as holy ones. This is what we will continue to discuss in the next chapter.

What Is the Concept of Holiness in Christ?

In a similar manner as the concept of divine holiness in the Pauline epistles, we have noticed that Paul does not explicitly explain the concept of holiness in relation to Christ. Just as we have defined that God alone is holy, the concept of holiness needs to

¹¹¹The prepositional phrase ἐν αὐτῷ refers back to “in Christ” in v. 2.

¹¹²Dunn, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*, 110.

¹¹³*Ibid.*

be defined by the essential nature of God, and everyone brought into relationship with him should share in some way in that holiness. We have come to conclude that Paul implies Christ's holiness as our source of holiness. His holiness is wrought by the Spirit, and in order to present us holy and blameless he accomplished our reconciliation with God through his holy and blameless sacrificial death on the cross.

In the Pauline epistles, God reveals his holiness through Christ's redemptive work, and through Christ's holiness God has sanctified us and called us as holy ones. Holiness can be achieved in us only through the divine intervention, and this attention is focused upon Christ's sacrificial death, becoming a holy and blameless atoning sacrifice for us. Thus, in Christ, Paul says, we were washed, we were made holy and we were justified (1 Cor 6:11). Not only was he perfect and holy before God, but he also provided us the holy way (Isa 35:8) in him and through him. Christ himself said the same: "For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth" (John 17:19). The holiness of Christ has been revealed to us, though implicitly, so that we may experience his holiness. Paul conceives this concept, and yet cautiously expresses this to Gentile Christians who are less familiar with the Jewish cultic background.¹¹⁴ For holiness in man, however, Paul implies the idea of an *already but not yet* tension in the believers' status. Thus, as we move on to the next chapter, we will discuss this idea in depth.

¹¹⁴Again, we could speculate that Paul's sparse mention of the term holiness is due to his Pharisaic background as well.

CHAPTER 5

PAUL'S CONCEPT OF HOLINESS IN MAN

In this chapter, Paul's concept of holiness in man will be investigated in two aspects. First, the concept of Paul's designation of believers and the church as "holy ones" will be examined. Paul addresses Christians as "holy ones" throughout his epistles (total 42 times) except in Galatians, 2 Timothy and Titus,¹ while this reference occurs a total of 24 times in the rest of the New Testament. Thus, we will discuss the questions, what Paul meant by his designation and how the term "holy" may be defined, comparing these findings with other references from the Old and New Testament. Second, we will discuss Paul's teaching on how God willed and made people to be holy. We may find this concept in various places (Rom 11:16; 15:16; 1 Cor 1:2; 3:17; 6:11; 7:14; 2 Cor 7:1; Eph 1:4; 2:21; 5:25-27; 1 Thess 4:3-7; 5:23; and 2 Tim 2:21). Due to the limited space, we will briefly and yet exegetically discuss all the passages. First, two passages in the first letter of Thessalonians (4:2-8; 5:3) and Romans 11:16 will be studied. Second, all the passages in the first letters of Corinthians (1:2; 3:17; 6:11; 7:14;) will be explored as we append similarly related passages (or, I should say, the passages that are expressing a similar understanding to that of the 1 Corinthians passages). At the end of this chapter, however, we will mainly be involved in an in-depth exegetical study on 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1, examining the passage through contextual and exegetical study.

¹Rom 1:7; 8:27; 12:13; 15:25, 26, 31; 16:2, 15; 1 Cor 1:2; 6:1, 2; 14:33; 16:1, 15; 2 Cor 1:1; 8:4; 9:1, 12; 13:12; Eph 1:1, 15, 18; 2:19; 3:5, 8, 18; 4:12; 5:3; 6:18; Phil 1:1; 4:21, 22; Col 1:2, 4, 12, 26; 3:12; 1 Thess 3:13; 2 Thess 1:10; 1 Tim 5:10; Phlm 1:5, 7.

Paul's Designation of Believers as "Holy Ones"

A common designation of believers in the Pauline epistles is ἅγιοι.² When he generally refers to or addresses Christians, Paul frequently uses "holy ones." The term, however, has its origin in the Old Testament.³ When it was referred to God's people in the Old Testament, only Israel was understood to be "holy ones" among all the peoples of the earth. But, certainly we notice that Paul stresses that Gentiles are included among the "holy ones." With this designation, we may find, Paul also implies the concept of holiness.⁴

Here, we will briefly discuss three implications of Paul's characteristic⁵ designation of believers as "holy ones." First, we will look at Paul's designation of believers as "holy ones" within certain formulas.⁶ But we may also notice that, as he uses the term, Paul describes the privileges of holy ones and also brings an exhortation

²Paul uses the plural ἅγιοι most of the time in his epistles except for one singular occurrence in Phil 4:21. Hans Conzelmann, *I Corinthians*, trans. James W. Leitch, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 21, suggests, "Holiness is not a quality of the individual, but a communal state in which we are placed by baptism." The underlying idea of the term is, however, that the term "holy ones" manifests itself in the individual Christian as well.

³We have examined how the word "holy ones" is used to refer to various groups, such as priests, prophets, Nazirites, and also the people Israel in the Old Testament. Cf. T. J. Deidun, *New Covenant Morality in Paul* (Rome: Biblical Institute, 1981), 5-14, who suggests, "The term ἅγιος reflects one of the most important aspects of Israel's self-understanding."

⁴Cf. Deidun, *New Covenant Morality in Paul*, 10, who notes, "The designation of Christians as ἅγιοι implies that Christian existence . . . is constituted by, and directed to, holiness."

⁵"Characteristic" in the sense that Paul uses the designation more frequently than other writers in the New Testament.

⁶Throughout the Pauline epistles, there are also many occurrences of the term and many of them were used simply to address members of the Christian community (Rom 15:25, 26, 31; 16:2, 15; 1 Cor 6:1, 2; 14:33; 16:1, 15; 2 Cor 8:4; 9:1, 12; 13:12; Eph 1:15; 2:19; 3:5, 8, 18; Phil 1:1; 4:21, 22; Col 1:4; 1 Tim 5:10; Phlm 1:5). Thus, we will limit our discussion to the particular usages where Paul seems to imply more than a simple address.

concerning them. Thus, secondly we will discuss some of the privileges that holy ones are promised to receive. Last, we will consider Paul's exhortation to holy ones.

Called to Be "Holy Ones" (1 Cor 1:2; Rom 1:7; Eph 1:1; Phil 1:1; Col 1:2)

In 1 Corinthians 1:2, Paul reminds Corinthians that they were κλητοῖς ἁγίοις, "called to be holy ones." He also uses the same phrase in Romans 1:7 to refer to all Christians in Rome. This phrase occurs only twice in the New Testament. It is possible that Paul may be recalling the phrase κλητὴ ἁγία⁷ from the LXX. In the Old Testament, however, the term is used to describe the cultic gathering of people for particular feasts and Sabbath. Deidun rightly posits that the word κλητοῖς in Paul's expression has "an emphasis and a theological nuance that are lacking in the LXX usage."⁸ Dunn suggests that calling Gentiles, who offered no sacrifices and practiced none of the Jewish rites, as holy ones is "indicative of the boldness of Paul's argument in the letter over against those more characteristically Jewish views."⁹ The word κλητοῖς emphasizes the divine action and at the same time the believer's response rather than Paul's appealing to the LXX formula.

The term ἅγιος also has a significant history. Especially in the Old Testament, we have noticed that it chiefly refers to God himself, and its reference to persons, places, and objects is thought of as derived from the will of God and therefore always involving a certain relationship with him. Even though this does not exclude the moral and ethical element, its reference to persons is not simply according to their moral conduct. Therefore, when the term "holy" applied to Israel, it expressed the fact that they were

⁷This phrase is translated as "a holy assembly" (NASB), "a solemn assembly" (NRSB), or "a holy convocation" (NKJV).

⁸Deidun, *New Covenant Morality in Paul*, 6.

⁹James D.G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 38A (Dallas: Word, 1988), 20.

God's chosen and sanctified people, "set apart for a special covenant with Yahweh, to be 'holy' as [H]e is holy."¹⁰ Upon this Old Testament foundation, thus we may suggest, Paul squarely used the term ἅγιος to refer to Christians. Garland suggests that the designation of Gentile Christians as "holy ones" implies their belonging to "the eschatological people for whom all the promises apply."¹¹

But, one aspect we may notice here is that it seems that Paul has applied such a bold address to Christians, whether they are Jews or Gentiles, at a certain point in his own spiritual journey. This is a speculative idea and is suggested based on Paul's designation of believers throughout his epistles. In the first three letters, Galatians and First and Second Thessalonians, which are among Paul's earliest extant epistles,¹² Paul used the term ἐκκλησία to greet believers in his letters (Gal 1:2; 1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:1). However, he changes the designation with the term ἅγιος in the later epistles such as Romans, Philippians, Ephesians, and Colossians, except for First and Second Corinthians where he uses both terms.¹³ This seems to suggest that Paul, who was a Pharisee, has gotten used to or comfortable with such a designation in some point after his reevaluation of the concept of holiness through the Christ-event.

Based on this idea, we may also consider why the same term ἅγιος in

¹⁰Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans*, The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 239.

¹¹David E. Garland, *Colossians/Philemon*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 41.

¹²It has been debated whether Galatians is one of the earliest extant epistles or not. According to G. W. Hansen, "Galatians, Letter to the," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 327-28, the debated dates would be anytime between A.D. 48 and 57. If the later years were argued, this would place Galatians between 2 Corinthians and Romans.

¹³This suggestion is similarly argued by W. Sanday and A. C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: Clark, 1902), 15.

Thessalonians (1 Thess 3:13; 2 Thess 1:10) seems to designate other than believers. In 1 Thessalonians 3:13, Paul describes how the hearts of believers may be established without blame in holiness before God at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his holy ones. In 2 Thessalonians 1:10, Paul posits that Christ's return will be glorified in his holy ones and be admired among all those who believe. Most scholars opt for the designation of "angels" with the word ἄγιος, especially in 1 Thessalonians 3:13.¹⁴ Some of them, however, suggest that the term rather describes believers in 2 Thessalonians 1:10.¹⁵ According to the context, whether he refers to angels, believers, or both with the term, in the letters of Thessalonians Paul certainly depicts the reality of holy ones in an apocalyptic context. But, in referring to Christians in Thessalonians, Paul frequently uses the verb πιστεύω in the substantival participial form instead of "the holy ones."¹⁶ Apparently, Paul changes his designation of believers to "holy ones," which is a shortened and yet more complete sense of referring to Christians who have been not only set apart for the New Covenant but also sanctified in Christ.

This has been more clearly expressed in both 1 Corinthians 1:2 and Romans 1:6-7. In 1 Corinthians 1:2, Paul indicates that those who are called to be holy ones are

¹⁴This suggestion is generally conceded because of the argument that in 1 Thess 3:13 Paul is recalling Zech 14:5c, "Then the LORD, my God, will come, *and* all the holy ones with Him," where "the holy ones" are understood as "angels." It is suggested by many scholars such as Earl J. Richard, *First and Second Thessalonians*, Sacra Pagina (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1995), 177-78; Gene L. Green, *The Letters to the Thessalonians*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 181; F. F. Bruce, *1&2 Thessalonians*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 45 (Waco, TX: Word, 1982), 73; I. Howard Marshall, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 102-03; and many others.

¹⁵This is mainly suggested by the parallelism of two infinitive clauses. Green, *The Letters to the Thessalonians*, 294; Bruce, *1&2 Thessalonians*, 152; Marshall, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, 180.

¹⁶1 Thess 1:7; 2:10, 13; 2 Thess 1:10. Paul also rarely uses the participle form in other epistles (Gal 3:22; 1 Cor 1:21; 14:22; Eph 1:19), except Romans, where he employs it rather frequently (Rom 1:16; 3:22; 4:5, 11, 24; 10:4).

already sanctified in Jesus Christ. In Romans 1:6-7, he refers to them also as those who are called to belong to Jesus Christ. They are called to be holy ones because they are called by God and sanctified in Jesus Christ. Paul means that they are the holy ones, even possessing “the title of nobility before God” because “Christ has honored them with his call,” bringing them to be the new creation.¹⁷ Again, Paul’s emphasis is on God’s sanctifying work in Christ, who became a perfect and holy sacrifice for us, once and for all, through his sacrificial death. This brings the identity and status of Christians as holy ones. Peterson rightly posits that with the perfect passive participle ἡγιασμένοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ in 1 Corinthians 1:2 Paul implies:

Their conversion and incorporation into Christ. It can hardly refer to their holiness of character or conduct, since Paul spends much time in this letter challenging their values and their behavior, calling them to holiness in an ethical sense. He does this on the basis that they are already sanctified in a relational sense, but need to express that sanctification in lifestyle.¹⁸

Paul thus approvingly calls the Christians as ἅγιοι “not because of their deepening spirituality (progressive sanctification), but because of their justified standing in Christ (positional sanctification).”¹⁹

Another of his unique designations is that, in his salutation to churches, Paul addresses his readers as τοῖς ἁγίοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (Eph 1:1; Phil 1:1; Col 1:2). Such a notion, Demarest notes, emphasizes “that their holy status is rooted squarely in the Savior’s work. Believers in Christ are ‘saints’ since they are inwardly separated from sin and set apart for the worship and service of God.”²⁰ Those who truly belong to the

¹⁷Frederic Godet, *Commentary on St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans*, trans. A. Cusin (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1880), 1:139.

¹⁸David Peterson, *Possessed by God: A New Testament Theology of Sanctification and Holiness* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 41.

¹⁹Bruce Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1997), 407.

²⁰Ibid.

church have been made holy and called holy ones in Christ. “They have been appropriated by God, to be exclusively devoted to him and to his service.”²¹ The status of holy ones, however, does not mean the abolition of sin in sanctified persons. Though they are no longer slaves of sin, it still lives in them, and sometimes it becomes very active and powerful. As he realizes this aspect, Paul also draws further implications. Certainly there is the privilege of being holy ones, and yet, we also notice Paul’s consistent exhortation to holy ones.

The Privilege of “Holy Ones” (Eph 1:18; Col 1:12; Rom 8:27; Col 1:26)

Concerning the believers as God’s chosen, elect, or holy ones, Paul reminds them in his epistles of some privileges they are promised to receive. Among the promised privileges, first, Paul mentions the inheritance as their reward from the Lord (Col 3:24; Eph 1:11, 14). Warning against the unrighteous men was also given, indicating no inheritance for them (Gal 5:21; 1 Cor 6:9-10; 15:50; Eph 5:5). In Ephesians 1:18 and Colossians 1:12, however, Paul describes how the inheritance was specifically promised to the holy ones.²² Paul prays for Christians in Ephesus that God may give to them a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, with the eyes of their heart having been enlightened, so that they may know what is the hope of his calling, what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for holy ones (Eph 1:17-19, author’s interpretation).²³ For the believers in

²¹Peterson, *Possessed by God*, 42.

²²Other than the warning, these are the only specific references to God’s inheritance that Paul mentions.

²³There is a syntactical debate concerning the perfect passive participle clause, πεφωτισμένους τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς τῆς καρδίας (Eph 1:18). According to Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 261-62, we may consider two views, whether it should be taken as the second predicate of δῶη in v. 17 which would be translated, “God may give you the Spirit... [and] the eyes of your heart may be enlightened” (NASB, NIV, NEB), or as the accusative absolute which looks back to ὑμῖν in v. 17 and forward to the following ὑμᾶς

Colossae, he reminds them of their qualification to be partakers of the inheritance as the holy ones.

In Ephesians 1:18, Paul definitely first recognizes the eyes of their heart being enlightened as holy ones. According to the previous context (Eph 1:3-14), however, we may notice the following implications: God has chosen them to be holy and blameless (4); he has predestined them to adoption as sons through Christ (5); they have redemption and forgiveness through the blood of Christ (7); he made known to them the mystery of his will (9); and they have obtained an inheritance (11). With such understandings and thoughts, Paul thus focuses on their true acknowledgement of what it means to have the hope of his calling, how rich is the glory of inheritance, and how great is his power for holy ones through the spirit of wisdom and revelation. Paul certainly depicts immeasurable quantity and quality of inheritance bestowed upon the holy ones through Christ. In Colossians 1:12, Paul echoes the same teaching. We have already briefly discussed verse 12 in the previous chapter, paraphrasing the verse; God has *already* made Gentile Christians holy, who have no natural right to the inheritance, in order for them to be able to share the inheritance which God has prepared for the holy ones (cf. Isa 35:8-10).

In Romans 8:27, we may also notice that Paul offers assurance of the Spirit's assistance of Christians' supplication to God, saying that the Spirit intercedes for holy ones according to the will of God. In Romans 8:26-27 and 34, Paul expresses that the Spirit's intercession on behalf of the holy ones is provided since they are weak in that they are unable to articulate what to pray for according to God's will.²⁴ This implies the

which would be read as the translation given by the author (NRSV).

²⁴This is the only time Paul suggests the idea of intercession attributed to the Spirit (only here in the NT as well). Here in v. 26, we may notice the debate concerning the dative phrase στεναγμοῖς ἀλαλήτοις "unspeakable groanings." A number of scholars such as Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 241, have argued that it is a reference to speaking in tongues, while others such as Adolf Schlatter, *Romans: The Righteousness of God*, trans. Seigfrid

Spirit's assistance on pleadings and also formulating of prayer "in the context of divine commission" on behalf of those who belong to God.²⁵ Fitzmyer here suggests, "Such assistance is not limited to the prayer of petition, but would include all manner of communicating with God, be it doxology in adoration, blessing, praise, thanksgiving, penitent confession, supplication, or, above all, acknowledgment of God as Father (8:15) and of Jesus as Lord (1 Cor 12:3b)."²⁶

Throughout his letters, Paul exhorts his readers to understand the mystery (Rom 11:25; Eph 6:19; Col 2:2; 4:3; 1 Tim 3:9; 1 Tim 3:14-16). But, in Colossians 1:26, Paul posits that the mystery, which has been hidden from the ages and generations, has now been revealed to holy ones (cf. 1 Cor 2:7; Eph 1:9; 3:5-10).²⁷ The mystery, Paul explains in verse 25, is the Word of God which was given to him according to God's commission so that he may complete the task.²⁸ Even though it has been kept secret throughout the ages and generations, the mystery has been disclosed, in essence revealing the redemptive work of Christ (cf. Col 2:2; 4:3; Eph 3:4; 6:19). The divine intention is implied with the term "mystery," and God's purpose is, in his time, to those whom he willed, "to make known the riches of the glory of the mystery" (Col 1:27). Thus, Paul

S. Schatzmann (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 190-91; Brendan Byrne, *Romans*, Sacra Pagina, ed. Daniel J. Harrington. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996), 267; and Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), have suggested the phrase refers to the inexpressible longings in believers' hearts to know the will of God.

²⁵Adolf Schlatter, *Romans: The Righteousness of God*, 191.

²⁶Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 518.

²⁷In Eph 3:5, Paul mentions the revelation of mystery to "holy" apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

²⁸Margaret Y. MacDonald, *Colossians and Ephesians*, Sacra Pagina, ed. Daniel J. Harrington (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 81, points out the reference of the word "mystery" in Jewish and Qumran literatures. In Jewish literature it refers to God's secret purpose for Israel's destiny and its view is granted to the wise and pious. In the Qumran literature, it is "revealed only to such persons as the teacher of righteousness."

asserts that, to those who are called “holy ones,” which includes Gentiles,²⁹ now the privilege of understanding the revelation has been bestowed.

Paul’s Exhortation to “Holy Ones” (Eph 4:12; 5:3-4; Col 3:12)

In Ephesians 4:1-16, Paul teaches the Christians in Ephesus that God’s free gift (χάρις) according to the measure of Christ’s gifts was given to his people (7-8, 11) πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων εἰς ἔργον διακονίας, εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ (12), until they all come to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ (13) so that they are to grow up in every way into Christ (15). Here, various interpretations have been suggested among scholars and the English Bible versions because of the different views on the structure of the three prepositional phrases in verse 12 (πρὸς ... εἰς ... εἰς ...).³⁰ Based on the context, especially in verse 16, however, it seems that Paul is referring to the purpose of the gifts as for the equipping of holy ones so that they may be involved in ministry, which is ultimately for the edification of the body of Christ. And he posits that such equipping of holy ones will provide their ultimate spiritual growth to be like Christ in their lives. The word καταρτισμὸν which we have translated as “equipping” is found only in this verse in the New Testament. However, the verb καταρτίζω occurs frequently, expressing the idea of “to restore, put in order, make complete, or prepare.”³¹ Thus, through the phrase πρὸς

²⁹In Col 1:27, we notice that Paul only refers to Gentiles as those for whom God willed to reveal the mystery, and yet this should not be taken as ignoring Jewish Christians as recipients of the mystery. Paul certainly maintains in Eph 3:5-6 that the mystery was not made known to the sons of men in former generations, and that Gentiles have become joint heirs of the mystery.

³⁰Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 547-49, describes four different views. We will not linger on this issue, however, due to the limited space of this paper, only suggesting an appropriate interpretation to explain Paul’s concept of holiness.

³¹Walter Bauer, Wilbur F. Gingrich, and Frederick W. Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 417-18.

τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων Paul teaches the Christians in Ephesus that God has given various gifted people so that they may equip, train, and prepare holy ones for the edification of the church and for their spiritual growth.

In the previous chapter, we have discussed Ephesians 4:21-24, focusing on divine holiness manifested in believers. From the immediate context of this passage, we may find the following outline: presentation of the old person (4:17-19); exhortation of the new person in holiness (4:20-24); and practical injunctions about the old and new life (4:25-32). In 5:1-2, then, Paul exhorts Christians to be imitators of God and live in love just as Christ loved us, even by offering himself for us as a holy sacrifice to God. After he teaches Christians how their new selves have been created in divine holiness and righteousness (4:24), here, Paul also reminds them how God has satisfied holiness in them through the holy sacrifice of Christ and also how they should pursue the holiness in themselves by becoming imitators of God.

Having said that, in Ephesians 5:3-4, he provides a vice list, saying, πορνεία δὲ καὶ ἀκαθαρσία πᾶσα ἢ πλεονεξία μηδὲ ὀνομαζέσθω ἐν ὑμῖν, καθὼς πρέπει ἁγίοις καὶ αἰσχρότης καὶ μωρολογία ἢ εὐτραπελία, ἃ οὐκ ἀνήκειν, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον εὐχαριστία. Here, as he describes how such vice is not appropriate, not even acceptable as the subject of conversation among believers, Paul indicates that there is a line separating holy ones from corrupting influences. The vice list, especially in verse 3 (immorality, impurity and covetousness), which is repeated in verse 5, certainly gives “the expression of insistence on the need to purify”³² believers. As we have previously looked at this through the Old Testament concept of holiness, we may also notice that Paul brings an exhortation of this necessary moral purity that they need to keep against every kind of impurity, reminding them that this was reflected by the essential nature of divine holiness through Christ.

In Colossians 3:12-17, Paul now exhorts Christians what they should pursue as

³²MacDonald, *Colossians and Ephesians*, 311.

holy ones, saying, “So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.” Certainly Paul not only points to the existence of moral standards against vices (3:5-9), but also reminds them of the virtuous life that they are supposed to put on as holy ones. In Romans 16:2, Paul also encourages Christians to persist in a manner worthy of the holy ones, ἀξίως τῶν ἀγίων, for their Christian fellowship.

Summary on Paul’s Designation of “Holy Ones”

Cranfield concisely summarizes how Paul defines his designation of “holy ones,” saying, “Those who have been called by the holy God are holy in virtue of his calling and are thereby claimed for holiness of life.”³³ Peterson rightly expresses, “It is one of the tragedies of church history that, in official as well as popular usage, the term ‘saint’ has become too narrowly identified with apostles or outstanding Christian leaders and exemplars. The notion that all Christians are saints by virtue of God’s calling is obscured by this misleading practice.”³⁴ Certainly they are called to be “holy ones” because they already belong to God through the redemptive work of Christ. Thus, to those who are called “holy ones,” Paul suggests that they have also certain privileges of being holy ones such as the Spirit’s assistance in their intercessory prayer, the inheritances from God, and the disclosure of mystery. In addition, as he brings exhortation, Paul continuously reminds his readers of the virtuous life they should pursue as holy ones. We will continue with this issue as we discuss how God specifically willed and made them to be holy.

³³C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, The International Critical Commentary (Greenwood, SC: Attic Press, 1975), 70.

³⁴Peterson, *Possessed by God*, 41.

Believers Made to Be Holy in God's Will

Before we move on to the first and second letters of Corinthians, we will briefly and yet exegetically discuss two passages in the first letter of Thessalonians (4:2-8; 5:23) and Romans 11:16.

The Concept in 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8 and 5:23

The first letter of Thessalonians is one of Paul's earliest extant epistles. Previously we have suggested that Paul, who was a Pharisee, refined the concept of holiness at some point in the course of his ministry, reevaluating it through the concept of the Christ event. This may be seen in some change of the language referring to "holy ones" in his epistles from his earlier epistles to the later epistles. In the letters to the Thessalonians, however, we notice that Paul's references to holy ones occur in an apocalyptic context rather than the context of church. We also observe this idea in his prayer in 3:12-13. According to the study we have presented earlier, we have suggested that the prayer should be paraphrased: "Through the increase in love for one another, which again will be found in Christ Jesus, the Lord would make their hearts blameless reflecting upon divine holiness, not the Law, when they stand before God at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his holy ones." This is Paul's prayer, hoping that at the time of Christ's return, in the eschatological context, the Lord would make believers to reflect divine holiness, to be appropriated for God's holiness.

After he shares what he truly wishes for their final standing before God, Paul now stresses in 1 Thessalonians 4:3 what is God's will for them during their Christian lives. Paul has also emphasized this throughout his first letter to Thessalonica, as one of the main purposes of his writing of the letter. It suggests an important aspect that we should consider later for the concept of holiness. According to the overall context, as he seeks to comfort and assure the Thessalonians about Jesus' coming, Paul reminds them of their firm standing as believers in the first chapter of the letter, stressing, "You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation

with the joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers” (1 Thess 1:6-7; cf. 1 Thess 2:14). In the following chapters, he continues his exhortation, saying, “walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory” (1 Thess 2:12), and “we urge you, brethren, to excel still more, and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you, so that you will behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need” (1 Thess 4:10-12). Lastly, he urges them to “examine everything *carefully*; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil” (1 Thess 5:21-22).

With such paraenesis, Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 4:3 that God’s will is ἀγιασμός, their “holiness,” their being made holy in Jesus Christ. He then continues to expound what holiness seems to involve with the following infinitive clauses, ἀπέχεσθαι ὑμᾶς ἀπὸ τῆς πορνείας, εἰδέναι ἕκαστον ὑμῶν τὸ ἑαυτοῦ σκεῦος κτᾶσθαι ἐν ἀγιασμῷ καὶ τιμῇ, “that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor” (vv. 3-4). Here, many scholars interpret the term ἀγιασμός as progressive moral sanctification and this sanctification is “defined as purity in sexual relationships as opposed to being ‘impure’ (v.7).”³⁵ Other scholars, however, argue that the soteriological reference is the primary aspect of holiness, and the ethical connection is secondary in 1 Thessalonians 4.³⁶ Certainly, we may notice that abstention from immorality, which seems to be the likely reference for holiness here,³⁷ is not sufficient to explain the full implications of the concept of holiness.

³⁵Green, *The Letters to the Thessalonians*, 189. Bruce, *1&2 Thessalonians*, 82, and Marshall, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, 106, also consider the interpretation of sanctification as the process of making holy.

³⁶Victor Paul Furnish, *Theology and Ethics in Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1968), 155; Richard, *First and Second Thessalonians*, 194-97.

³⁷The second infinitive clause in v. 4 basically draws a similar meaning to the first clause in v. 3.

Moreover, within verses 3-7, Paul mentions the term ἁγιασμοῦς three times (vv. 3, 4, 7) and the significant aspect is the identification of holiness with God's will in verse 3 and God's call in verse 7, and finally as the condition of moral living in verse 4, but not as the goal. Thus, we may see that the concept of holiness in Thessalonians consists not in an attainable moral quality, but in a given relationship with God.

Peterson adds, "the flow of the argument in verses 1 Thessalonians 4:6-7 suggests that the coming judgment and God's initial calling of believers 'in holiness' are to be the ground and motivation for holy living."³⁸ Holiness is certainly related to moral conduct, but the passage does not imply the process of sanctification but rather "the ethical bearing witness in the body to the state of holiness which it was God's will to confer upon believers, or to which God called them."³⁹ Paul does not refer to the achievement of holiness but rather to a pure life as the mark of holy ones. Having said in 1 Thessalonians 3:13 that the Lord would make their hearts blameless reflecting upon divine holiness at the Lord's return, Paul reminds them that holiness is God's will, God's call, and the reality or proof that would motivate their blameless and pure lives. Thus Paul brings a final exhortation in 1 Thessalonians 5:23, saying, "Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." As he refers to God as the divine agent of the sanctifying activity, Paul expresses God's complete work for them at Jesus' return. Paul certainly does not refer to God's sanctifying work as God's final task, taking up believers' slack in ethical achievement. It is the divine holiness manifested in believers through the Christ-event so that, as they are being made holy, they may pursue the reality of God's call until God completes his work in them.

In overall aspect in 1 Thessalonians, Paul refers to holiness as God's will and

³⁸Peterson, *Possessed by God*, 83-84.

³⁹Richard, *First and Second Thessalonians*, 195.

God's call for believers to realize (4:3, 7), the divine characteristic nature to be reflected in their lives (3:13; 4:4), and finally the reality of their nature to be completed in Jesus' return (5:23). In essence, Paul is referring to the holiness of believers that is already realized and assured in believers through the soteriological activity, but not-yet completed in the eschatological sense.

ἡ ἀπαρχὴ and the root (Rom 11:16)

In Romans 9:30-11:10, Paul explains Israel's rejection of God's saving righteousness and he argues that God has not yet rejected his people. Having said that, Paul changes his focus to his Gentile audience in Romans 11:11-24 before he finishes his preaching concerning the salvation of Israel, with God's promise of Israel's salvation in Romans 11:25-32. Thus, Paul describes first in 11:11-15 the impact of the salvation of Gentiles on the restoration of Israel, and second, in 11:17-25, the warning against Gentile boasting over Jews. Here, Paul injects a transitional verse 16: "If the first piece *of dough* is holy, the lump is also; and if the root is holy, the branches are too." According to the context, without mentioning any explanation regarding the first metaphor, Paul explains the implication of "root" and "branches" in verses 17-18. This helps us safely to suggest that Paul uses two metaphors to be parallel in implication.⁴⁰ Here, Paul implicitly implies the "branches" as Jews, while he does not clearly identify the "root." This has drawn various interpretations of the "root" and the first metaphor ἀπαρχὴ as well.⁴¹ Since our study is focusing on Paul's concept through his usage of holiness language, however, we will not linger on the debate concerning such different interpretations.

⁴⁰Some scholars argue against this, suggesting separate implications according to two different metaphors. For example, Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 564; and Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans*, The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 614, suggest that the first metaphor ἀπαρχὴ refers to the Jewish Christian remnant while "root" refers to the patriarchs.

⁴¹According to Schreiner, *Romans*, 600, we may find the suggested interpretations for both metaphors as: (1) Christ, which some of the church fathers identified; (2) the remnant of Jewish Christians; and (3) Abraham and the patriarchs.

Here, we will just convey a possible explanation of Paul's reference to holiness. Moo suggests that Paul uses the word "holy" in a more general way taken from Old Testament sacrificial language, implying the idea of a being "set apart" by God for special attention, rather than in a salvific sense. "Paul is not here asserting the salvation of every Israelite but the continuing 'special' identity of the people of Israel in the eyes of the Lord."⁴² Even if we may consider that Paul is referring to the Jewish concept for the holy status of the people of Israel, however, it is still a new idea in the Pauline epistles since Paul only used the concept in his reevaluated aspect through the Christ-event. We also notice that Paul further expands the concept not only to Jews but also to Gentiles as he refers to them as "wild olives" grafted among the branches in verses 17-24. In other words, Paul draws the idea of a holy status being transferred to Gentiles by grafting. Based on this idea, it seems that the word "holy" should not be understood only as an identity of people. From the Old Testament concept, we found that the holy status is established by the promise of God, and it is the same in the Pauline epistles. The only difference in the Pauline epistles is that through the Christ-event believers are made holy by God, and the salvific aspect is clearly seen. Thus, in verse 16, Paul expresses the divine intention of establishing a holy people in a salvific aspect. This understanding, then, suggests that ἡ ἀπαρχὴ refers to Christ who is born as the Son of Abraham and the Son of David, and the root may refer to God who has established Israel to be holy. If it is God's purpose to establish ἡ ἀπαρχὴ, Christ, to be holy just as He is holy, it will be to the lump, those who belong to him; and if it is God's intention to reveal the root, God himself, to be holy, it will be to the branches, Jews those who were called to be his chosen people, and even to the wild olives, Gentiles who will be grafted in through their faith and called to be his people.

⁴²Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 701.

The Concept of Holiness in Man in 1 Corinthians

1 Corinthians 1:2 (Eph 1:4)

In the opening of 1 Corinthians, Paul explains that the Corinthians are called to be “holy ones” because they have been made holy in Christ Jesus.⁴³ Paul claims that this has been God’s will even before the foundation of the world; thus they would be holy and blameless before him (Eph 1:4). From these verses, Paul emphasizes divine activity in choosing people in Christ. He also characterizes such activity, election, based upon the divine nature and plan. Thus, we notice that the purpose of God’s choosing his people in Christ is their holiness, becoming holy ones according to his nature. Conzelmann posits that here the character of holiness is expressed in the same understanding of grace as it is received, not achieved.⁴⁴ Paul certainly describes election that takes place *in Christ* (Eph 1:4) and *through Christ* (1:5). Snodgrass here stresses, “Individuals are not elected and then put in Christ. They are in Christ and therefore elect.” And “Election always brings responsibility, . . . namely, to live holy and blameless lives before him.”⁴⁵

1 Corinthians 3:16-17 (Eph 2:21-22; 2 Tim 2:21-22)

Having been made holy in Christ Jesus, Paul also describes Christians as the temple of God, which is known as the holy place. In 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, Paul states, “Do you not know that you are a temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is

⁴³Just as we have seen many different and various interpretations regarding the concept of holiness, I notice here one of the weak explanations made by Richard Hays, *First Corinthians*, Interpretation (Louisville: John Knox, 1997), 16, saying, “To be ‘sanctified’ means to be set apart for *the service of God, like Israel’s priests or the vessels used in the Temple*” (italics mine).

⁴⁴Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 21.

⁴⁵Klyne Snodgrass, *Ephesians*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 49.

holy, and that is what you are.” Here, in verse 16, Paul actually introduces a new metaphor as he addresses the reader “with surprising directness with its dialogical οὐκ οἴδατε,” and he changes his notion from God’s building to his dwelling.⁴⁶

Orr argues that in 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 Paul meant to say the congregation of the church in Corinth instead of each person as God’s holy temple and this is to emphasize their unity.⁴⁷ For the absence of the article before ναός, Godet, however, suggests, “This applies to every believer at Corinth, and at the same time to the Church as a whole.”⁴⁸ Whether Paul meant to refer to each person or the congregation as God’s temple, the issue is what it means to refer to believers as the temple of God, which had been known to be “the central locus of the divine presence in the world” among Jews.⁴⁹ Paul uses the similar temple metaphor in Ephesians 2:21-22, referring to believers as a holy temple which is built into a dwelling of God in the Spirit. “The physical temple was traditionally understood as a dwelling place for God, but now a spiritual temple exists in the shape of a community of believers.”⁵⁰ The use of the temple metaphor is similar to the Qumran community’s understanding of itself as God’s temple (1QS 5:5-6; 8:4-15; 9:3-8; 11:7-8).⁵¹

Conzelmann suggests, “Paul is alluding to the apocalyptic expectation of the

⁴⁶Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 77.

⁴⁷William F. Orr and James Arthur Walther, *1 Corinthians*, The Anchor Bible (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1982), 174.

⁴⁸Frederic Godet, *Commentary on First Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1977), 192.

⁴⁹Hays, *First Corinthians*, 57.

⁵⁰Margaret Y. MacDonald, *Colossians and Ephesians*, 250.

⁵¹Hays, *First Corinthians*, 57, explains, “At Qumran the use of this metaphor was prompted by a protest against the corruption of the Jerusalem temple and by the belief that the rigorous holiness of the covenanters could ‘atone for the land,’ by offering figurative sacrifices of obedient deeds.”

temple of the last days and spiritualizes it.”⁵² Lincoln also adds, “When we talk of the ‘spiritualization’ of the concept of the temple, we are not talking of invisibility or immateriality but of the reality of men and women forming the eschatological people of God.”⁵³ MacDonald, however, rightly points out, “It is important to realize that the concomitant invisibility and immateriality of the holy temple had important social consequences for the community. It facilitated their integration into mainstream society. They did not withdraw into the desert . . . in order to build an alternate society, but continued to live in the world as though they did not belong to the world.”⁵⁴ Paul certainly believes that the Spirit of God is present among believers wherever they gather together to worship God. It is no longer any sacred building as a holy place, but the gathered community of holy ones; the church is a ‘holy’ temple where God dwells.⁵⁵ The church is built on the foundation of Jesus Christ in such a way that the spiritual worship is manifested through the presentation of believers as a living and holy sacrifice to God (Rom 12:1). “Once again Ephesians stresses that life is relational. In Christ separation is broken and relationship with God and his people are established. This is not merely some act in the past, but life with God in the present.”⁵⁶ Thus no one will destroy the relationship between God and those who have been made holy and also called to be the temple of God because no one will avoid God’s severe judgment.

In 1 Corinthians 3:9-17, we have noticed that Paul extends his metaphor,

⁵²Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 77.

⁵³Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 42, (Dallas: Word, 1990), 158.

⁵⁴MacDonald, *Colossians and Ephesians*, 258.

⁵⁵Cf. Brian S. Rosner, “Temple and Holiness in 1 Corinthians 5,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 42 (1991): 137-45, however, suggests that Paul’s reference to the holiness of God’s temple is to express his insistence on the expulsion of the sinner in 1 Cor 5.

⁵⁶Snodgrass, *Ephesians*, 139.

beginning with believers being a building constructed with various materials and moving on to call them God's holy temple. In 2 Timothy 2:20-22, Paul employs a similar metaphor, this time with vessels, showing how some vessels are sanctified, honorable, and useful for Master prepared for good work. Just as we have focused on what it means to be a holy temple, here we will also focus on what a vessel being sanctified means in 2 Timothy.

In 2 Timothy 2:20, Paul brings the metaphor of a vessel, saying, "Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, and some to honor and some to dishonor." In the following verses (21-26), then, Paul interprets the metaphor of verse 20. If anyone wants to be a useful vessel for God, he must cleanse himself by fleeing from lusts, pursuing righteousness, faith, love and peace (v. 22), and refusing foolish debates (v. 23). He is a servant of the Lord who is not quarrelsome but kind and gentle (vv. 24-25). In verse 21, then Paul posits that the servant will be a vessel for honor, ἡγιασμένον and ἡτοιμασμένον for every good work. Here, two participles in the passive voice may be understood as the result of a servant cleaning himself, indicating the result of human effort. But the verb ἀγιάζειν in the passive voice is always used to indicate divine work in the Pauline epistles.⁵⁷ The verb ἑτοιμάζειν is also always used with God as agent when it occurs in a passive voice in the New Testament.⁵⁸ According to this fact, it can be suggested that a servant's cleaning himself is rather to be empowered by God's sanctifying work, as he becomes a vessel for honor. Mounce suggests that Paul is indicating that when a servant cleans himself God makes him holy in response, expressing "the human and divine intertwined."⁵⁹

⁵⁷An exception may be seen in 1 Cor 7:14 and we will explore this issue further later.

⁵⁸Matt 20:23; 25:34, 41; Mark 10:40; 2 Tim 2:21; Rev 9:7, 15; 12:6; 16:12; 21:2.

⁵⁹William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 530.

1 Corinthians 6:11

In 1 Corinthians 6:1-8 Paul raises his concern about legal disputes which believers in Corinth were pursuing against one other. He teaches that such lawsuits cause them to do wrong to and defraud not only themselves but also their brothers. In verses 9-10, thus, Paul urges believers to do away with such unrighteous behavior, providing a list of other immoral behaviors and saying that those who do these will not inherit the kingdom of God. In 1 Corinthians 6:11, Paul reminds believers in Corinth how they are now changed from their former state into a new state, saying, “ἀλλὰ ἀπελούσασθε, ἀλλὰ ἡγιασθητε, ἀλλὰ ἐδικαιώθητε in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” Here, we have noticed that the descriptive verbs are not listed sequentially suggesting all three actions as the saving works of Christ that are accomplished for believers. According to the variation in verb voice, it seems that the first middle voice is indicating the action of washing taken by believers while the other two passive forms are indicating the actions accomplished by God. Paul, however, posits that all three actions are done in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of God. In other words, the washing may indicate believers’ voluntary act in baptism,⁶⁰ and yet based on the context, it indicates the act which transferred them from the condition of being polluted and condemned to that of being pardoned and purified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of God.

They are washed since they are cleansed and forgiven from their past sins. They are made holy to be in the new reality in their relation with God. They are justified to be set right in their relation to God. Thus believers entered into the community of saints. These affirmations are true “even though some of their present actions seem to contradict the new identity that God has given them in Christ.”⁶¹ Godet points out, “This

⁶⁰Orr, *1 Corinthians*, 201, suggests, “It is within the power of human freedom to take the initial step to clean one’s life from such vices and sins as Paul enumerates.”

⁶¹Hays, *First Corinthians*, 100.

is what prevents us from applying the term *sanctify* to the growing work of Christian sanctification.”⁶²

1 Corinthians 7:14 (Eph 5:25-27)

Paul sometimes records very difficult teachings, and we may find one such verse in 1 Corinthians 7:14: “For the unbelieving husband is sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified through her believing husband; for otherwise your children are unclean, but now they are holy.” Conzelmann rightly posits, “Its interpretation is very difficult It looks as if holiness is crassly regarded as a thing; it is transferable, without faith (and even baptism) being necessary.”⁶³ Conzelmann suggests that Paul applies the concept of holiness that is “already prescribed for Paul by his Jewish upbringing,” and gives it a critical point:

The world is desacralized. By this means freedom is brought to light. Through the believing partner, the marriage between a pagan and a Christian is withdrawn from the control of the powers of the world. In living together with the world, the “saints” are the stronger party. The decisive idea lies not in an ontological definition of the state of the non-Christian members of the family, but in the assertion that no alien power plays any part in the Christian’s dealing with them. . . . Paul here, too, refuses to allow the direct demonstration of desecularization by means of a rule of abstinence. This would again be a way of salvation by achievement (cf. 5:9f).⁶⁴

Godet, however, points out that interpreting this verse with the idea of an external and ritual purity or as the expression of “a hoped-for result” of sanctifying influence is not “in keeping with the spirit of the New Testament.”⁶⁵ We may also notice

⁶²Godet, *Commentary on First Corinthians*, 298.

⁶³Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 131. He also points out that most of the suggested explanations are unsatisfactory. Orr, *1 Corinthians*, 213, for example, argues, “The close contact produces a corporal unity between the two so that the unbelieving member actually is made holy by the faith of the believer.”

⁶⁴Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 132.

⁶⁵Godet, *Commentary on First Corinthians*, 338. He notes here that certainly the perfect passive verb ἡγιάσται does not suggest any language of hope. He also argues against the idea of applying “holiness only to the bond between the two spouses, to their conjugal relation as such” (339).

that certainly “Paul rejects the assumption—an assumption congenial to his own pharisaic background—that the pure person is defiled by contact with the unclean.”⁶⁶ Based on the contextual and the literal understanding of the perfect passive and the preposition (ἡγιάσται ... ἐν) in verse 14, Godet suggests a plausible interpretation, saying:

As the believer is consecrated to God in the person of Christ, and as by faith in him he gains his own consecration in his, so the non-Christian spouse is sanctified in his Christian spouse by his consent to live with her. This consent is in his relation to his Christian spouse what faith is in the believer’s relation to Christ. . . . the position of consecration in which the non-Christian spouse is at once placed by his determination to remain united to his Christian spouse.⁶⁷

Having said that, he explains the following expression, ἐπεὶ ἄρα τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν ἀκάθαρτά ἐστιν, νῦν δὲ ἅγιά ἐστιν, which is directed to the second person, as Paul’s appeal to Christian parents. And his argument is that if they recognize that their children are already holy in the eyes of God in virtue of the bond which unites children to their parents, they should not “make a difficulty about recognizing also that an unbelieving husband may be regarded as consecrated to God in virtue of his union with his believing wife, and that by the fact of his desire to remain united to her.”⁶⁸

Here a question is raised, then, how we should understand children being holy. Whereas Paul used the verb ἁγιάζω in the perfect passive to indicate a non-Christian spouse made holy in his Christian spouse, he applied the adjective ἅγια to children as if it were an inherent quality. Calvin remarks that Christian children are holy from their birth “by supernatural grace.”⁶⁹ Is this what Paul is trying to convey regarding the holy status in Christian children? Paul mentions a similar concept in Romans 11:16, saying, “If the

⁶⁶Hays, *First Corinthians*, 121.

⁶⁷Godet, *Commentary on First Corinthians*, 339-40.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 341-42.

⁶⁹John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (London: S.C.M. Press, 1961), IV. 16. 31.

first piece *of dough* is holy, the lump is also; and if the root is holy, the branches are too.” However, at least we find that Paul’s argumentation in Romans explains the promise of God made to the fathers to the Israelite people, focusing on the concept of covenant in the Old Testament. Then according to his reevaluated concept of holiness, how should we interpret the holiness of Christian children? Godet suggests that, even though Christian children may ultimately decide freely for or against salvation, they are placed in the provisional situation where the benefit of becoming holy ones is already given to parents in the virtue of the God-given family bond.⁷⁰ Thus, we may paraphrase 1 Corinthians 7:14 as, “You, parents, consider your children becoming holy ones since they are under care of the provisional situation of acknowledging the salvation in Christ through your faith. In this manner, it is not difficult to recognize also that an unbelieving husband may be regarded as sanctified in virtue of his union with his believing wife, having his determined desire to remain united to her. It is also true with an unbelieving wife to her believing husband” (author’s interpretation).

In Ephesians 5:25-27, Paul brings an illustration of Christ’s love for the church and his sacrificial death for believers to teach the love of husbands for wives. In essence, these verses may explain 1 Corinthians 7:14, saying just as Christ’s love has brought holiness to believers, so also a believing husband’s love may cause his unbelieving wife to be holy. Through the illustration, Paul explains in Ephesians 5:26 that making believers holy is described by means of cleansing “by the washing of water with the word.”⁷¹ According to the context, however, Christ’s love for the church and his sacrificial death for believers actually provided holiness in believers. The word καθαρίζω

⁷⁰Godet, *Commentary on First Corinthians*, 346.

⁷¹F. F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 387, points out that Paul draws part of the imagery from Ezek 16:6-14, where Yahweh speaks concerning Jerusalem, “I bathed you with water, . . . I also clothed you with embroidered cloth, . . . I adorned you with ornaments” (vv. 9-11).

occurs in two other places (2 Cor 7:1; Titus 2:14) in the Pauline epistles. In 2 Corinthians 7:1, believers are exhorted to purify themselves, while in Ephesians 5:26 and Titus 2:14, Christ is said to purify believers. Based on this understanding, we may notice a subtle difference in the implication of the concept of holiness between Ephesians 5:26 and 2 Corinthians 7:1 but a similarity between Ephesians 5:25-26 and Titus 2:14. The verse 2 Corinthians 7:1 will be discussed later with an in-depth exegetical study, but when Paul exhorts believers to purify themselves he uses the participle form of the verb ἐπιτελέω instead of the verb ἁγιάζω to apply to the believer's action. In Ephesians 5:26, however, Paul describes Christ as one who makes them holy as he purifies them. This is achieved by Christ's giving himself up for believers (Eph 5:25). In Titus 2:14, Paul draws a similar concept, saying that Christ gave himself for believers to redeem them from every lawless deed, and to purify them for his own possession. According to the similarity, the two verses may be combined to express that the purpose of Christ's sacrificial death for believers is to redeem them and to make them holy by their purification. This is also revealed in 1 Corinthians 1:30 and 6:11.

Thus the purpose of Christ's sanctifying and cleansing act, Paul posits, was that "[Christ] might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless" (Eph 5:27). In the previous chapter we have mentioned that Paul's usage of the two words ἅγιος and ἄμωμος has a background in the sacrificial terminology of the LXX, and both words are used to describe the physical perfection required of the sacrificial animal as well as that of the priest in the cultic language. Whether Paul had this idea in his writings or not, Paul certainly signifies a formal bringing of believers already made holy and purified in Christ. All the necessary requirements are done to make believers gloriously fit to be presented to Christ. This is, we have also noticed, anticipated in Paul's introductory writing in Ephesians 1:4 and echoed in Colossians 1:22. With the description of physical blemishes such as spot or wrinkle or any such thing, Paul suggests that Christ's

sanctifying and purifying act even removes ethical defects in believers.

Perfecting Holiness in Man (2 Cor 6:14-7:1)

Immediate Context

In 2 Corinthians 5:11-6:10, Paul writes to the Corinthians, that “knowing the fear of the Lord (5:11),” he first seeks to persuade people to turn to Christ, reminding them of his being a minister of God. He tells them who he is in Christ, what he believes, and what it is to be in Christ. First, to express who he is in Christ, Paul draws attention to Christ’s love seen in his death and resurrection for all (5:14-15). Since he is in Christ, he is a new creation (5:17) and regards no one from a human point of view (5:16). Second, Paul believes that God has reconciled his people to himself through Christ and has given him the ministry of reconciliation (5:18). In Christ, believers become the righteousness of God (5:21). So he is now an ambassador for Christ (5:20) and he is a minister who works together with God (6:1). Third, Paul, as a minister of God, denies giving offense in anything (6:3), and yet he commends himself in the face of various sufferings (6:4-5). He shares the hardships because he has experienced them and he knows what it is to be in Christ. But he also explains how he was sustained in the face of hardships through virtues such as purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, and genuine love, and the divine source of power such as Holy Spirit, the word of truth, and the power of God (6:6-7). Here, Paul clearly demonstrates that virtues are not the only sustaining sources of power for the transformation of Christian lives. They also need the divine source of power. In 6:7c-10, Paul introduces a series of three antitheses which demonstrate how he conducted his ministry and also seven antitheses “contrasting how he appeared in the eyes of some against the inner reality.”⁷²

⁷²Paul Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 323.

After he has reminded them that he is a minister of God, in 6:11-13, Paul now emotionally urges them to open wide their hearts. And in 6:14-7:1, Paul exhorts that Christians should strive to be pure, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Here, we should conduct an in-depth exegetical study examining Paul's exhortation and the OT citations found in this passage.

Authenticity and Integrity of 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1

The integrity and authenticity of this passage has been a towering issue among scholars. Every commentary and article on this passage discusses this issue and adds their assumptions and arguments. The summaries of these arguments are as follows: Most scholars agree that this passage is at least to some extent disruptive to the clear, primary appeal expressed in 6:11-13 and in 7:2-3. Beyond this, however, there have been many different understandings of this passage. These are the dominant positions: (1) a fragment of another Pauline letter which was edited later for circulation;⁷³ (2) an interpolation of non-Pauline or even anti-Pauline origin;⁷⁴ (3) previously formulated material which was quoted by Paul;⁷⁵ and (4) both Pauline in origin and integral⁷⁶ to the

⁷³Paul Brooks Duff, "The Mind of The Redactor: 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1 in Its Secondary Context," *NovT* 35 (1993): 180. He concludes that the fragment is intrusive and a later redactor placed it in its current position.

⁷⁴Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "Qumran and the Interpolated Paragraph in 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1," *CBQ* 23 (1961): 271-80.

⁷⁵Victor Paul Furnish, *II Corinthians*, The Anchor Bible (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984); and Ralph P. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 40 (Waco, TX: Word, 1986). Both suggest that Paul has modified a pre-existing fragment.

⁷⁶Most recent scholars hold to this argument except Duff, Fitzmyer, Furnish, and Martin. Examples of such are Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*; Jan Lambrecht, *Second Corinthians*, Sacra Pagina, vol. 8, ed. Daniel J. Harrington (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999); Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Corinthians: A Literary and Theological Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (New York: Crossroad, 1987); G. R. Beasley-Murray, *2 Corinthians-Philemon*, in vol. 11 of *The Broadman Bible Commentary* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1984); Robert E. Picirilli, *1, 2 Corinthians*, The Randall House Bible Commentary (Nashville: Randall House Publications, 1987);

context.⁷⁷ These arguments are disputed because of the combination of these significant factors: (1) the interruption of the thought of its context; (2) the usage of a large number of *hapax legomena*;⁷⁸ (3) the particular way Old Testament quotations are used; (4) similar ideas and phrases presented in the Essene writings (Qumran);⁷⁹ and (5) un-Pauline content such as strict separation, and the call to holiness.⁸⁰

Currently, however, more scholars defend Pauline authenticity and integrity of this passage.⁸¹ Based on grammatical and logical considerations, Pauline authenticity and integrity of this passage can be briefly determined.⁸² First, the verbal usage of the second-person plural imperative⁸³ in both 6:13 and 6:14 does not express an abrupt transition between them. Second, the connection and the repetition of thoughts from

Margaret E. Thrall, *The 2nd Epistle to the Corinthians*, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994); and David Garland, *2 Corinthians*, The New American Commentary, vol. 29 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999).

⁷⁷Summarized list from Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 368.

⁷⁸They are ἑτεροζυγοῦντες, μετοχή, συμφώνησις, Βελιάρ, συγκατάθεσις, and μολυσμοῦ. Martin suggests that a high percentage of *hapax legomena* are not uncommon in Pauline writings (Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 192).

⁷⁹Fitzmyer, "Qumran and the Interpolated Paragraph in 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1," 273, suggests similar points with Qumran literature in this passage's intense dualism, opposition to idols, concept of the temple of God, separation from impurity, and concatenation of Old Testament texts.

⁸⁰Illustration from Lambrecht, *Second Corinthians*, 121-22.

⁸¹Lambrecht, *Second Corinthians*, 122, argues that there is no manuscript indicating any insertion of this passage, and "it is well known that Paul interrupts himself quite often." Talbert, *Reading Corinthians*, 171-73, explains this interruption as "the technique of turning aside from the main flow of the argument for a moment to address another aspect of the speech." This technique was called an apostrophe by Quintilian. He points out that this technique is characteristic of Greco-Roman literature in the first century, and has been rendered by Paul on other passages as well. In New Testament narrative, it is also called intercalation or a sandwiching technique.

⁸²The arguments disputed against those assumptions, which argue for a fragment of another Pauline letter, or an interpolation from non-Pauline or anti-Pauline source, however, will not be discussed in detail in this paper.

⁸³πλατύνθητε (v. 13) and Μὴ γίνεσθε (v. 14)

6:11-13 to 7:2-4 indicates that there was always an interruption between them.⁸⁴ (Here, the clause, “προείρηκα γὰρ” [for I have said *before*, 7:3], which refers back to 6:11-12, also implies an insertion prior to 7:3.) In 7:3, Paul also writes πρὸς κατάκρισιν οὐ λέγω, “I do not say *this* to condemn *you*.” It seems that Paul is referring to a previous appeal (6:14-7:1) because he does not want the Corinthians to be discouraged for their lack of faith and their shortcomings.⁸⁵ The third argument is based on a logical connection between this passage and its context. Murphy-O’Connor refers to this passage as a concluding appeal to the exhortation in 5:20 and 6:1-2.⁸⁶ Talbert considers this passage as an appeal based on the assertions of 6:3-12.⁸⁷ Martin sees this passage as a reinforcement of Paul’s teaching on reconciliation in 5:14-21 and the defense of his apostolic ministry in 6:1 through 6:13.⁸⁸ Patte suggests that this passage belongs to the conclusion of 2:14-7:4 and that Paul’s argument is governed by a metaphorical way of thinking in his conclusion.⁸⁹ It is also suggested that perhaps this passage has a logical

⁸⁴Lambrecht, *Second Corinthians*, 122. Cf. also R.V.G. Tasker, *The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians*, Tyndale New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962), 30. He suggests that the similarity of the language of 6:13 and 7:2 shows the author’s intention to leave his theme for the moment and to pick it up again.

⁸⁵Among the scholars, there are no clear explanations as to what this phrase is referring.

⁸⁶Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, “Relating 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1 to Its Context,” *NTS* 33 (1987): 272-75. He argues that the central thrust of 2 Cor 6 is contained in vv. 1-2, 11, and 14-7:1.

⁸⁷Talbert, *Reading Corinthians*, 170.

⁸⁸Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 194.

⁸⁹Daniel Patte, “A Structural Exegesis of 2 Corinthians 2:14-7:4 with Special Attention on 2:14-3:6 and 6:11-7:4,” *SBLSP* 26 (1987): 40. Cf. also James M. Scott, “The Use of Scripture in 2 Corinthians 6:16c-18 and Paul’s Restoration Theology,” *JSNT* 56 (1994), who suggests that this passage concludes Paul’s apology for his apostolic office in 2:14-7:4 and exhorts the Corinthians to put into practice the implications of the New Covenant situation for their sanctification (95-96). Here, Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 337-41, agrees with the argument of Scott, and he also adds “This passage is a specific call for separation from the temple cults of Corinth, in direct continuity with the holiness-separation theme of 1 Corinthians.”

link with the previous appeal in 6:11-13, i.e., open wide your hearts to us in return (6:13) and, therefore, do what we ask (6:14-7:1).⁹⁰

The Context and Structure of 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1

This passage is an *inclusio*, in which the initial exhortation (6:14a) is reiterated by the closing exhortation (7:1). Between these exhortations are five rhetorical questions in verses 14b-16a and the scripture citations in verses 16d-18. In the middle of this literary structure, there is the assertion that believers are the temple of the living God (16b), and this assertion is supported by the Old Testament citations that follow.⁹¹ These Scripture citations in verses 16d-18 make up with the combined threefold quotations and have the structure of “beginning and ending premises with a concretizing parenthesis in the middle; hence the citations form three parts consisting of three lines each” (see Appendix).⁹² Scott suggests that the exhortation in verse 17, which reiterates verse 14a, provides the theological basis for citing the Old Testament.⁹³ As he applies Koch’s argument, he explains, “The only citation combination to likewise incorporate six OT texts into one continuous quotation is Rom. 3:10-18, which has a threefold structure similar to that in 2 Cor. 6:16-18.” He also points out that the similarity and complexity of 2 Corinthians 6:16-18 and Romans 3:10-18 implies the integrity of Pauline letters since only a two-citation combination has been found in Qumran so far.⁹⁴

Paul first commands the Corinthians not to be “unequally yoked” with

⁹⁰Lambrecht, *Second Corinthians*, 122.

⁹¹Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 343.

⁹²Scott, “The Use of Scripture in 2 Corinthians 6:16c-18 and Paul’s Restoration Theology,” 77.

⁹³*Ibid.*, 75.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*, 77.

“unbelievers.” He identifies this with a series of five antithetical questions which begin with the interrogative pronoun τίς and which expect a negative answer.⁹⁵ The last question, “what agreement has the temple of God with idols?” leads him to focus on the essential point in the passage that believers are the temple of the living God. On this account, he describes the promise of God based on the Old Testament as he reiterates his first exhortation with the Old Testament citation, “Come out from their midst and be separate” (6:17a). The promises of God expressed in the first person singular bracket the center of exhortation and Paul expresses the practical implication of a reciprocal relationship between God and his people through these Old Testament citations. Following the promises of God, he lastly encourages the Corinthians, saying, “let us purify ourselves from every defilement of flesh and spirit,” as he changes from the imperative command in 6:14 to the hortatory subjunctive. He closes his exhortation with the main point of this passage: “perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

Exegetical Argument on 6:14-7:1

Now, assuming both the authenticity and integrity, the immediate context, and the structural analysis of this passage, I submit an exegetical study examining Paul’s exhortation in this passage. First, what is meant by *Μὴ γίνεσθε ἑτεροζυγοῦντες ἀπίστοις* (6:14a). Here, the prohibition is metaphorically applied based on two Old Testament texts (Lev 19:19 and Deut 22:10).⁹⁶ However, in this passage, Paul does not give us the description of the prohibition in detail. Rather, it is generally taken as a general application of the metaphor rather than a specific application such as marriage or

⁹⁵Talbert, *Reading Corinthians*, 174, suggests that Paul applied this method elsewhere (e.g., Rom 2:3-4; 21-23; 1 Cor 9:1-7).

⁹⁶Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 344, states that the verb *ἑτεροζυγοῦν* occurs nowhere else in the NT, but only in the form of an adjective *ἑτεροζυγος*, which is used in the LXX only in Lev 19:19 and has the meaning of cross-breeding animals. Deut 22:10 also speaks against the yoking together of an ox and an ass for plowing.

cultic meals.⁹⁷ Certainly, elsewhere he does not ban social interaction with *unbelievers*, but only with those “who bear the name of brother or sister who is sexually immoral or greedy, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or robber” (1 Cor 5:9-11).⁹⁸ Nor does Paul discourage believers from remaining in marriage with unbelievers (1 Cor 7:12-15).

The following five rhetorical questions further give answers for what the verb ἑτεροζυγέω “unequally yoked” means. Paul first contrasts righteousness with wickedness. Here, the meaning of *righteousness* may be suggested to emphasize an ethical dimension from its comparison, *wickedness*. Paul certainly has implied ethical demands with the word righteousness in 1 Timothy 6:11 and 2 Timothy 2:22, exhorting, “pursue righteousness.” In the previous chapter, however, we have noticed that a similar contrast appears in Romans 6:19, and we have concluded that there righteousness does not have an ethical sense but a sense of being declared righteous by God, a status brought to us through the work of Christ. In 2 Corinthians 5:21, Paul also writes ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ in a sense of being declared righteous by God, and it seems that Paul here refers the meaning of righteousness back to 5:21.

Second, consider light with darkness. True light carries the element of holiness since the light always dismisses the darkness. Although darkness can exist by itself, it cannot sustain itself in the presence of light. Paul explains the most significant reference to light in 2 Corinthians 4:6, saying, “God, who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness’,

⁹⁷Beasley-Murray, *2 Corinthians-Philemon*, 50. Lambrecht, *Second Corinthians*, 117; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 196; and Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 372, also take it as a warning not to become involved; John Calvin, *The Second Epistle of Paul The Apostle to the Corinthians and the Epistles to Timothy, Titus and Philemon*, trans. T. A. Smail, Calvin’s Commentaries, ed. David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 90, suggests, “Under this prohibition marriage also falls, inasmuch as it is a snare that might implicate men and women in consent to ungodliness. But my point is that Paul’s teaching here is too general to be restricted just to marriage; his subject here is the avoidance of idolatry, and to make sure that we do avoid it, we are also forbidden to marry the ungodly.”

⁹⁸Picirilli, *1, 2 Corinthians*, 342.

made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.” God’s light has shone upon our hearts so that we may recognize God’s glory through Christ. The power of light has also shone upon us and makes us children of light (Eph 5:8), and so we may walk in the light. Paul commands us not to “participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness” (Eph 5:11) because light cannot have fellowship with darkness (14c). Rather, the devil and his angels are “the world forces of this darkness” (Eph 6:12). Out of this spiritual darkness God has called us and delivered the believers (Col 1:13). Light brings the life of holiness and darkness is death.⁹⁹

Paul now asks, “What harmony has Christ with Belial?” (15a). Here is the only occurrence of the word “Belial” in the entire New Testament.¹⁰⁰ The word is applied with the meaning “worthlessness” in the Old Testament¹⁰¹ without being used as a proper name. Nonetheless, in later Jewish literature, it is found as a personal name for Satan with the meaning of God’s opponent.¹⁰² The essential point in this rhetorical question, however, is that Jesus Christ, whose name is holy (Luke 1:49), should be glorified and worshiped far removed from the worthless prince of evil.

⁹⁹R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s First and Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (Columbus, OH: Wartburg, 1946), 1081-82.

¹⁰⁰Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 347.

¹⁰¹See Deut 13:13; 15:9; 2 Sam 22:5; Ps 18:4; M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament* (Wilmington, DE: Associated Publishers and Authors, 1972), 826. He explains that the Septuagint renders it as *transgressor, impious, foolish, pest*.

¹⁰²Thrall, *The 2nd Epistle to the Corinthians*, 474. Fitzmyer, “Qumran and the Interpolated Paragraph in 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1,” 213, argues the contrast of Christ and Belial is the reworking of Qumran expressions and ideas since the word *Belial* is used to designate the prince of the powers of evil. The significant question is, then, why Paul used the unusual word *Belial* instead of the familiar word *Satan*. Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 348, suggests “Perhaps Paul wanted the Jewish believers in the first instance to understand and agree with his rigorous stance and then to explain it to those Gentiles who stood in spiritual danger at that time.” Thrall, *The 2nd Epistle to the Corinthians*, 474, explains, “Possibly he employs a less familiar term for rhetorical effect, to strike the readers with more force.” Either possibility may make good sense.

For the fourth question, the “believer” is contrasted with the “unbeliever” saying there are no common things (KJV: no parts; RSV: nothing to share) between them. It is to reinforce the juxtaposition of the previous antithetical question implying that the believer is the one who belongs to Christ and the unbeliever is the one who is living for Belial. John also contrasts one who is to be purified through the blood of Jesus Christ (1 John 1:9), with another who cannot be purified under the power of the evil one.

The fifth and last rhetorical question is the utter incompatibility of the elements between the “temple of God” and “idols.”¹⁰³ This rhetorical antithesis is the climax of the preceding questions, and at the same time, it drives to the next message: the main reason of the prohibition and the purpose of being holy. Here, the word “temple” is not used with the Greek word *ἱερόν*, which refers to the whole temple complex including its courts and auxiliary buildings, but Paul uses the word *ναός*, which indicates the inner sanctuary. “In Jerusalem it was the Holy of Holies and not the courts and the other structures.”¹⁰⁴ “Under the New Covenant, the temple of God is the congregation of holy ones, those set apart to God in Jesus Christ and made so by God’s indwelling presence, the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 3:16-17; cf. John 2:19-21).”¹⁰⁵ Therefore, Paul is drawing the contrast between the temple of God, which is God’s indwelling holy place (1 Cor 3:16), with idols, which brings abomination to God and causes the temple to be defiled and the heart to become impure (Rom 1:24).

Following the preceding comparison, Paul firmly explains the main reason of the prohibition: “For we are the temple of the living God” (16b). And, the temple must

¹⁰³Some argue that the use of *temple* for the community points to a Qumran setting. Paul, however, has elsewhere applied the temple for the community or the individual Christian (e.g., 1 Cor 3:16; 6:19) (Talbert, *Reading Corinthians*, 172).

¹⁰⁴Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s First and Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1085.

¹⁰⁵Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 349.

be kept pure and holy, “not merely for its effect on those who use it or visit it, but because God dwells in it [us].”¹⁰⁶ On this account, Paul now describes the promises of God. These promises will be fulfilled in those who keep themselves pure as the temple of the living God. As he reiterates his first exhortation with an Old Testament citation, “come out from them and be separate,” he illustrates the promise of God with the practical implication based on a reciprocal relationship between God and his people through the Old Testament citations: God will live within us and He will be our God if we keep ourselves holy. God will receive us and He will be a Father to us if we keep ourselves pure as the temple of the living God. These promises are not just simply made by Paul. Rather, they have “the divine and authoritative origin”¹⁰⁷ since God, the Lord Almighty, has given them.

In 5:11-6:10, Paul already persuades them to turn to Christ reminding them how believers are reconciled to God by becoming a new creation in Christ, holding fast in hardship, and being sustained by the pursuit of virtues and by the divine source of power. Now, the believers are the temple of the living God. It is the God-given blessing of the new covenant in “the time of God’s favor, the day of salvation” (6:2).¹⁰⁸ Presenting the preceding challenge to the Christians of Corinth, Paul now gives the reason why the Christian has no room for compromise as the temple of the living God.

Having the promises of God, Paul now closes his exhortation begun in v. 14. Using the hortatory subjunctive form he exhorts both his reader and himself with the summarizing statement, καθαρίσωμεν ἑαυτοὺς ἀπὸ παντὸς μολυσμοῦ σαρκὸς καὶ πνεύματος, “let us purify ourselves from every defilement of flesh and spirit” (7:1b,

¹⁰⁶Floyd V. Filson, and James Reid, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, in vol. 10 of *The Interpreter’s Bible*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), 354.

¹⁰⁷Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 206.

¹⁰⁸Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 351.

author's translation). This reflects his preceding exhortation which he has presented with five rhetorical questions and the promises of God. He is, however, here including everything that defiles¹⁰⁹ the flesh and spirit, which means the entire person. Hodge explains, "*Let us purify ourselves*; that is, not merely keep ourselves pure by avoiding contamination, but, being already defiled, let us strive to become pure. Though the work of purification is so often ascribed to God (Acts 15:9; Eph 5:26), this does not stop his people from being agents."¹¹⁰

Paul, then, finally exhorts Corinthians with the main point: ἐπιτελοῦντες ἁγιωσύνην ἐν φόβῳ θεοῦ, "perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (7:1c). Here, the word ἐπιτελοῦντες, "perfecting,"¹¹¹ means to bring to completion, to carry on to perfection with a continuous process. This also implies that we can attain completion when life in its totality, body and spirit, is subjected to the will of God. The Scripture says, "You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy" (Lev 19:2, 1 Pet 1:15-16). Then what is the true meaning of holiness proper to God's covenant people?

Paul exhorts believers to purify themselves "from every defilement of flesh and spirit perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (7:1, cf. 1 Thess 5:23-24). "For God did not call us to impurity but unto holiness" (1 Thess 4:7). Just as *purity* is understood as being spotless without any contamination, *holiness* should be interpreted as being blameless without any compromise.

"Perfecting holiness" is an emphatic argument that Paul applies in this passage.

¹⁰⁹A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Nashville: Broadman, 1933), 4: 238, explains that defilement (μολυσμός) "is a late word from μολύνω, to stain (see on 1Cor 8:7), to pollute."

¹¹⁰Charles Hodge, *2 Corinthians*, The Crossway Classic Commentaries, ed. Alister McGrath and J. I. Packer (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 140.

¹¹¹Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, 238; Picirilli, *1, 2 Corinthians*, 345, describes that, based on grammatical study, whereas "purify" is a settled action (aorist), the "perfecting" is an on-going action (present participle).

This does not mean, again, that Paul is encouraging self-conscious piety. Rather, the term involves our total respect for God that causes us to submit unconditionally to his will.¹¹² As the Scripture states, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge” (Prov 1:7) and “hatred of evil” (Prov 8:13), knowing that God is just and holy, and abstaining from every form of evil (1 Thess 5:22) is our true reverence for God and the sphere in which the perfecting of holiness takes place. This expresses the complete aspect of holiness and purity within the Christian life.

We were bought with a price (1 Cor 6:20) and we are called ἅγιοι, holy ones, who are sanctified in Christ Jesus (1 Cor 1:2). Then Paul says in 2 Corinthians 7:1, “Let us purify ourselves from every defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” Paul refers to *every defilement of flesh and spirit*. According to this, it seems that, as believers are the temple of the living God (and yet he exhorts all the believers, including himself, to purify themselves from every defilement of flesh and spirit perfecting holiness) Paul is referring to two different dimensions of life, spirit and flesh (cf. Rom 8:10). In other words, in spirit we are the temple of the living God and God dwells in us, and we are called holy ones in Christ Jesus. Yet, since we are also in the flesh, we still need to pursue holiness, bringing it to completion. We know that Paul is not a perfectionist (Phil 3:12-14), and there is none righteous (Rom 3:10). Paul recognizes that Jesus even made friends with sinners. The character of the true believer is not being isolated, but becoming a proven armor against moral infections. Thus, he brings an exhortation to pursue perfecting holiness. He encourages believers, who are holy ones in spirit, to live lives as holy ones.

To avoid being unequally yoked together with a heathen and an unbeliever does not, of course, mean that we refuse to share our love and compassion.¹¹³ Hodge

¹¹²Picirilli, *1, 2 Corinthians*, 345.

¹¹³Many scholars have tried to specify who the unbelievers (ἀπίστοις) are in 6:14. When I have discussed earlier, however, that the first exhortation in 6:14a is to be

states that Paul is reminding us:

It is the union of incongruous elements, of the devout and the undevout, of the spiritual and the worldly, of the good and the evil, of the children of God and the children of the evil one, that the apostle exhorts Christians to avoid. . . . People are said to have fellowship when they are so united that what is true of one is true of the other. Believers have fellowship with one another when they recognize each other as having a joint interest in the benefits of redemption and are conscious that the inner experience of the one is that of the other. Incongruous elements cannot be united like this, and any attempts to combine them must destroy the character of one or the other. . . . To the one, Christ is God, the object of supreme reverence and love; to the other, he is a mere man. To the one, the great object of life is to promote the glory of Christ and to secure his favor; to the other, these are objects of indifference. Elements so discordant can never be united into a harmonious whole.¹¹⁴

Paul is warning against having a common cause with the pursuits and aims of unbelievers so that we may not “compromise Christian character and destroy the integrity and distinctness of Christian life.”¹¹⁵ Therefore, God’s people are those who strive to be pure perfecting holiness in the fear of God, those whom he recognizes as holy temples and receives as his sons and daughters.

Whether this passage is integral to the context, interpolated, or an interruption, the call to strive for purification and perfecting holiness is an appropriate exhortation for Paul’s ministry of the new covenant. If this passage is considered to be Paul’s concluding exhortation in 2 Corinthians, as many scholars have argued, then it seems also plausible to have the exhortation of perfecting holiness as the concluding remark.

What Is the Concept of Holiness in Man?

We have discussed how through the Pauline epistles it is said that holiness in man is God’s will, believers are called to be holy ones, they are made holy in Christ, they

taken as a general application, here I would argue that Paul’s exhortation of this passage is more based on his effort to establish the understanding of holiness (or sanctification) in the Christian life for the new covenant ministry.

¹¹⁴Hodge, *2 Corinthians*, 133-35.

¹¹⁵Charles R. Eerdman, *The Second Epistle of Paul to The Corinthians* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1966), 74.

are the holy temple of God, and their holiness may be realized through the faith of others. One common understanding of the concept of holiness in men is that it is accomplished by divine plan and divine action. But we may notice that Paul also exhorts every Christian to live a holy life, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Paul, in his Jewish background, recognizes that holiness originates with God and he alone is perfectly holy. Yet, he also understands that Christians are also called holy ones in the life of the Spirit through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul, however, does not explicitly define what is the complete meaning of being made holy in man. He only injects how we should pursue our Christians lives as holy ones. Just as Paul refers to believers as the new creations in Christ, holiness in man may be understood as the new reality and new identity in Christ. This reality may be realized in our conformity to the character of God and obedience to the will of God. “It means thinking as God thinks, loving what he loves, hating what he hates, and acting as Christ would act.”¹¹⁶ But this seems to limit the complete meaning of the nature of holiness. If Paul understood that holiness originates with God, he alone being perfectly holy, and that believers are called to be holy and are made holy in Christ, it would be difficult to define the complete meaning of holiness, especially in man, with a clear definition.

The one thing that is certain is that Paul exhorts believers to live a holy life, to continue to pursue a life characterized by the Word of God, purifying oneself from every defilement of flesh and spirit. And the goal of purification is to demonstrate the perfecting of holiness in our true reverence for God. Why? It is because we are the temple of God where God dwells in us. Therefore (and because of that), we are to pursue holiness, striving to achieve its completion until we dwell in God’s kingdom. Thus, the application of biblical holiness is inevitable in Christian lives for the proper relationship

¹¹⁶David K. Bernard, *Practical Holiness: A Second Look* (Hazelwood, MO: Word Aflame, 1985), 32.

with God. There are no exceptions to this call. It is not a call only to certain individuals such as ministers, missionaries, and dedicated lay leaders. Every Christian in the world, whether rich or poor, educated or uneducated, famous or unknown, leaders or follower, is called to pursue the life of holiness.¹¹⁷

Again, we may elaborate that this call to a holy life is based on God's standard, a perfect and exceedingly high standard since he alone is perfectly holy. His perfect nature cannot be diminished. Rather, we should strive to be pure, perfecting holiness. While it is true that he calls us as holy ones through the blood of Christ, God's standard for our heart, attitude, character, and action should be, "let us purify ourselves from every defilement of flesh and spirit perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

¹¹⁷Jerry Bridges, *The Pursuit of Holiness* (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1978), 78-79.

CHAPTER 6

PAUL'S CONCEPT OF HOLINESS AS APPLIED TO THINGS

As the last concept of holiness in the Pauline epistles, we will discuss Paul's extensive application of the word, "holy" to things other than man or God. Paul applied the word "holy" to many other things than "Holy Spirit" and "holy ones." We find them with the Scriptures (Rom 1:2), the Law (Rom 7:12), the sacrifice or offering (Rom 12:1; 15:16), human body and spirit (1 Cor 7:34), kiss (Rom 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20; 2 Cor 13:12; and 1 Thess 5:26), and God's created foods (1 Tim 4:4-5). Here, we will focus on the descriptive meaning of the word "holy" so that we may derive the common understanding of the concept of holiness for this extensive usage. As we investigate the concept of holiness through exegetical study, we will collate with the Old Testament background.

Objects Referred to as Holy in the Pauline Epistles

Scripture (Rom 1:2)

In Romans 1:1-2, Paul testifies that God promised the gospel beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures. The phrase γραφαις ἁγίαις "Holy Scriptures" occurs only this one time in the New Testament and nowhere is found in the LXX. As he asserts that the prophetic promises are made by God in the Holy Scriptures, Paul emphasizes the divine origin of the message of salvation with the term "holy." Morris also notes, "By omitting the article Paul is emphasizing the character of these writings as 'holy'."¹ Thus Paul stresses at the beginning of his letter to Romans that God

¹Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 41.

gave the written record as the message of salvation, and this salvific message is established in divine intention to provide the divine identity of God's word. Paul also testifies at the end of his letter that the written record is made known to all nations with reference to God's authority (Rom 16:26). Schlatter explains, "Paul spoke, not of the writings of God, but of the word of God, of the law of God, of the message of God that brings salvation. By using the term *hagioi*, he says concerning the words that became the scripture (*graphai*), that these are not the community's work and possession, but they belong to God"²

The Law (Rom 7:12)

Paul posits in Romans 7:12, "The Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good." For Paul the law is God's Law, and God's Law is the rule of perfect righteousness. Because God is holy and just, his will is holy and righteous. Thus the Law is holy and just (Rom 7:12). Certainly, the term "holy" bears the meaning that it is recognized to be God's work. Schlatter explains that the holy Law is "characterized as God's possession, and furnished with the mark of divinity. The origin of the law is in God's work and bears God's features."³ The Law declares God's will to his people and commands them to conform to the requirement of his will. He has given a holy Law to his people in order to reveal the perfect means of becoming holy based on his standard. The Law should be fulfilled perfectly in righteous requirement of the law and yet this is impossible for those who walk according to flesh (Rom 8:4). Because of human weakness and sinfulness, thus, the Law has rather reflected the wickedness of humans before holy God and became an instrument of condemnation, wrath, and death by a righteous God (Rom 7: 8-11). "Such an argument destroys the view of Jews who claim

²Adolf Schlatter, *Romans: The Righteousness of God*, trans. Seigfrid S. Schatzmann (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, reprint of 1995), 8.

³*Ibid.*, 162.

that the law is the crucial means for holiness. The law itself provides no power for holiness and righteousness.”⁴ The Law rather separates us from a holy and righteous God. This indicates somehow that the law was given to man with certain divine purposes rather than just requiring man’s perfect obedience. We have briefly discussed the purpose of the Law in Paul’s view in chapter 4. The ultimate and transcendent purpose of the Law is Christian growth in the grace of God, not justification or merit. It also became an instrument of revealing God’s holiness and righteousness. The Law helps believers to acknowledge God as holy and to recognize his complete work of salvation through Christ. Thus, Paul asserts the holiness of the Law to reveal the origin and purpose of the Law. Schlatter suggests that Paul has also acknowledged the holiness of the Law in order to affirm his claim that Christ is holy.⁵

Sacrifice or Offering (Rom 12:1; 15:16)

In Romans 12:1 Paul exhorts believers to present their bodies as living, holy, and acceptable sacrifices to God, by the mercies of God, and states that this is their spiritual worship (author’s interpretation).⁶ Moo suggests, “Paul succinctly and with vivid imagery summarizes what the Christian response to God’s grace in Christ should be.”⁷ Paul uses the sacrificial imagery in order to express how believers have shared the gifts (Phil 4:18) since Christ has fulfilled the Old Testament sacrificial system (Eph 5:2) and believers no longer offer literal sacrifices. According to the cultic aspect, we may

⁴Thomas R. Schreiner, *The Law and Its Fulfillment: A Pauline Theology of Law* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 151.

⁵Schlatter, *Romans*, 163.

⁶Whereas all three adjectives (“living,” “holy,” and “acceptable”) describe the sacrifice, English versions suggest different translations: “a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable” (NASB); “a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable” (NRSV, NKJV, NIV).

⁷Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1996), 748.

understand here the sacrifice as something which is offered by believers—for example such as their praise or good actions (e.g., Rom 15:16; Phil 4:18; Heb 13:15). Paul, however, refers to believers’ bodies as the sacrifice emphasizing a dedication of the whole person to the service of God. And he describes the nature of the sacrifice as living, holy and acceptable. The term “holy” has been a regular description of sacrifices in the Old Testament cultic language. Then what does this term imply here? Moo suggests that the holy sacrifice through believers’ bodies involves “a being ‘set apart’ from the profane and a dedication to the service of the Lord.”⁸ Cranfield explains that while the basic meaning is belonging to God, the epithet “holy” also stresses an ethical obligation to be in accord with the character of God.⁹ But, Dunn, following Käsemann, stresses “holy” as, not having moral implications, but rather a cultic meaning.¹⁰

It seems proper to consider the rest of the epithets, “living,” and “acceptable,” as well in order to understand Paul’s concept. The “living,” which expresses the contrasting view of killing an animal as a sacrifice and also of evanescent offerings, points to believers’ new spiritual lives. The εὐάρεστος “acceptable” is almost always used with reference to God in the New Testament (Rom 12:1, 2; 14:18; 2 Cor 5:9; Eph 5:10; Phil 4:18; Col 3:20; Heb 13:21) except in Titus 2:9. These understandings thus help us to acknowledge that the nature of believers’ sacrifice as living, holy and acceptable should be explained through their new spiritual lives sanctified by God to be acceptable in God’s sight. Paul expresses the divine activity in this new reality that needs to be presented as spiritual worship. The sacrifice through believers’ bodies involves sanctified and

⁸Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 751.

⁹C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 2 vols, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1975), 2: 601.

¹⁰James D.G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 38B (Dallas: Word, 1988), 710; Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1980), 327.

acceptable new spiritual lives through divine activity because it is developed in Christ. This is certainly not stressed in moral implication or in cultic aspect. It is according to Paul's reevaluated concept of holiness through the Christ-event.

In Romans 15:16, Paul shares his concern that through his ministry the Gentiles may be the offering that is acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Here, Paul uses cultic terms to describe his offering just as in Romans 12:1. He conveys his apostolic role as a priest who brings the Gentiles as an offering to God. Schreiner suggests, "Paul likely saw this as a fulfillment of Isa. 66:20, which envisions an eschatological offering of the Gentiles. . . . Paul presumably saw this as coming to fruition in his ministry."¹¹ Paul also stresses the grace of God as the source of his ministry (15:15). Thus, he would bring his offering of the Gentiles as acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. This concept certainly differs from the Jewish view on cultic sacrifice. It is not a physical and literal sacrifice anymore, but only a spiritual and symbolic sacrifice. Paul again focuses on divine activity, since it is God who approves his ministry to the Gentiles as acceptable and sanctifies it through the Holy Spirit. This also justifies his call of Gentile believers as holy ones.

**Kiss (Rom 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20;
2 Cor 13:12; and 1 Thess 5:26)**

Paul often includes in his final greetings the expression, "Greet one another with a holy kiss" at the end of his letters (Rom 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20; 2 Cor 13:12; and 1 Thess 5:26). The kiss was a common form of greeting in early Christian communities. Godet explains that some scholars such as Calvin have given the term "holy kiss" a purely spiritual meaning, but according to the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the term should be taken literally since it refers to an external rite.¹² Morris suggests that the kiss should be

¹¹Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 767.

¹²Frederic Godet, *Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, trans. A.

understood as a regular greeting, demonstrating their warm affection for one another but “not as a liturgical action like the ‘kiss of peace’ which was taken into the service of Holy Communion.”¹³ It was within the setting of gathering for worship when they affirmed the unity by means of a holy kiss, after hearing the apostolic message.¹⁴ But the term “holy kiss” occurs only in the Pauline letters within the New Testament.¹⁵ In 1 Peter 5:14, the term “kiss of love” is mentioned instead. Garland explains, “Qualifying it as ‘holy’ removes any dimension of erotic kissing.”¹⁶ It is difficult to suggest, however, that Paul has tried to convey any implications through his reference with “holy.” A possible suggestion may be stressed that since believers shared a kiss as holy ones in Christ, Paul might have referred to a “holy kiss,” expressing a unique greeting that shared undefiled affection among holy ones as the family of God.

Body and Spirit (1 Cor 7:34)

In 1 Corinthians 7:34, Paul notes that specifically the unmarried woman, who is a virgin, is concerned about the things of the Lord so that she may be holy both in body and spirit; but the married woman is concerned about the things of the world, that is to know how she may please her husband. To both the married man and woman, Paul brings the same remark that both are concerned with the care for each other, that is to please one another (1 Cor 7:33; 34b). However, whereas in verse 32 he writes that the

Cusin (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1880), 1: 493-94. He notes that according to the *Apostolic Constitutions*, which is from the Fathers, particularly Tertullian in the *De Oratione*, c. 14, “at a later time rules were laid down to remove from this custom all that might be offensive in it.”

¹³Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 537.

¹⁴Schlatter, *Romans*, 275.

¹⁵It is unknown whether the term “holy kiss” is Paul’s unique reference or not. We may just assume that it is Paul’s designation since the term only occurs in his letters.

¹⁶David Garland, *2 Corinthians*, The New American Commentary, vol. 29 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999), 555.

unmarried man cares for the things of the Lord, that is “to please Lord,” in verse 34 Paul points out that the aim of the unmarried woman’s cares is “that she may be holy both in body and spirit.” According to the context, a comparison between the unmarried man and woman may suggest a possible interpretation of the clause, “that she may be holy both in body and spirit,” as expressing the implication of “pleasing the Lord.” Paul certainly does not imply that those who are unmarried are holier than those who are married. Neither does he here express an abstinence from sexual relations since Paul stresses holiness not only in body, but also in spirit, and it is not consistent with Paul’s concept of holiness. It seems, if we may suggest, that Paul might have expressed what it means to be perfecting holiness in believers, and this is to care for the things of the Lord, to please the Lord in body and in spirit. If this is the case, he certainly suggests a benefit of being unmarried.

God’s Created Foods (1 Tim 4:4-5)

As he expresses his concern over false asceticism from marriage and certain foods (1 Tim 4:1-3), in 1 Timothy 4:3c-5, however, Paul explains regarding foods only,¹⁷ saying that God has created foods so that they may be gratefully shared by those who believe and know the truth, “for everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude; for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer.” This also similarly connects to Paul’s concern against an insistence on cultic dietary restrictions in Romans 14:14ff. Paul, who has a Pharisaic background, knows a distorted cultic purity system, and he is teaching that all food is inherently good

¹⁷Scholars draw different interpretations of Paul’s explanation, taking it as referring to foods only or to both marriage and foods. George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles*, *The New International Greek Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1992), 190, argues that in vv. 4-5 Paul’s explanation applies to marriage also. But, Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, trans. Philip Buttolph and Adela Yarbo, *Hermeneia* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), 64, suggest that Paul regards foods only according to the context.

and pure¹⁸ because of God's creative activity. He adds further that every food that was created by God is sanctified through God's word and prayer. What is then God's word which helps every food that was created by God to be sanctified? Mounce notes that it has been viewed as a reference to mealtime prayers in the Old Testament or as reflecting a Eucharistic prayer, and he argues against these interpretations, pointing out the problem of explaining how the word in prayer sanctifies the food, which God has already created as good as pure. According to the context, thus, he suggests two possible interpretations: first, it refers to the gospel message, based on the parallel reference in the previous phrase, "by those who believe and know the truth" (1 Tim 4:3); and, second, it refers to God's pronouncement in Genesis 1 that creation is good, and its inference in the phrase, "everything created by God is good" (1 Tim 4:4). Therefore, he stresses combining the two interpretations as a possible solution, saying, "The gospel message reasserts what was true at the beginning: the fruit of the earth is good and available for consumption."¹⁹

Mounce, however, does not clearly provide a complete interpretation of verse 5. Paul writes, ἀγιάζεται γὰρ διὰ λόγου θεοῦ καὶ ἐντεύξεως, and with the διὰ phrase he certainly includes both God's word and prayer. Robertson, also taking the idea of Genesis 1 as the reference to God's word, suggests the interpretation of the διὰ phrase with a hendiadys, rephrasing, "by the use of Scripture in prayer." He also translates the present passive indicative verb ἀγιάζεται as "rendered holy" rather than "declared holy."²⁰ From this interpretation, we may interpret verse 5 as, "every food that was created by God is rendered holy through the use of Scripture in prayer." This seems to

¹⁸William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 240, suggests that "good" is "defined in this context as cultically pure."

¹⁹Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 241-42.

²⁰A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Nashville: Broadman, 1933), 4: 579.

provide a plausible interpretation, and such an interpretation at least helps us to suggest what Paul might have implied with the language of holiness. Paul explains that God has created foods so that those who believe and have acknowledged the truth in the Scripture may gratefully receive those foods, since every food created by God is declared good and pure. Nothing should be rejected if it is received with such gratitude. Again, Paul draws his focus on divine origin and activity. Thus, every food in God's creation with his divine intention is rendered holy through the acknowledgement of the declared truth in prayer.

What Is the Concept of Holiness When Applied to Things?

We have discussed Paul's extensive usage throughout his epistles of the word "holy" with reference to things, such as the Scriptures, the Law, the sacrifice or offering, body and spirit, kiss, and God's created foods. According to our study, we have found difficulty in defining Paul's implied concept through his application of the word "holy" to things. The common understanding on the Scripture, the Law, and God's created foods, was, however, suggested to point out Paul's emphasis on the divine origin and activity of things. Paul describes God's approval and his establishment on believers' sacrifice or offering. With the designation of "holy kiss," we have suggested that its reference is to express believers' unique greetings through their kiss to share undefiled affection among holy ones as the family of God. With his remarks that an unmarried woman should "be holy in body and spirit," we have suggested, Paul might have tried to explain that such holiness in the believer is expressed in the believer's care to please the Lord. Based on this study, we have also found that Paul's concept of holiness of things is similar to the concept in the Old Testament in the sense of divine possession. Even though Paul uses the holiness language through the cultic imagery, however, since its implication is more symbolic than actual cultic objects, the concept of holiness also focuses on divine activity rather than human response.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Summary of Historical Research

Previously we have noted that among those who have worked on Pauline theology few scholars have worked on Paul's concept of holiness. Some scholars, such as Schreiner, Roetzel, Ridderbos and Porter, who have focused on Pauline theology, have briefly defined the concept of holiness. Schreiner emphasizes Christ's work on behalf of believers and God's election. Roetzel focuses on Pharisaic tradition as Paul's understanding of holiness. Ridderbos explains the concept from a theocentric point of view. He recognizes the concept in the cultic context and in a spiritual sense. Porter also draws moral purity as one of the primary Pauline emphases.

In addition to these, Adewuya,¹ Brown,² Cranfield³ and Kinghorn⁴ have focused on Paul's view of holiness. Adewuya sees communal holiness as Paul's basic view of holiness in the Corinthian correspondence and argues the importance of preservation of purity within the community against the non-Christian world. Brown distinguishes the concept between holiness and sanctification in the Pauline epistles.

¹ Ayodeji J. Adewuya, *Holiness and Community in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1: Paul's View of Communal Holiness in the Corinthian Correspondence* (New York: Peter Lang, 2001).

² C. Brown, "Holy," in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), 223-31.

³ Charles E B. Cranfield, "Paul's Teaching on Sanctification," *Reformed Review* 48 (1995): 217-29.

⁴ Kenneth Kinghorn, "Holiness: The Central Plan of God," *Evangelical Journal* (1997): 57-70.

Holiness is, he explains, a pre-ethical term indicating behavior in response to the Holy Spirit, while sanctification is the process of bearing fruit for eternal life. Cranfield uses Paul's expression of the verb "has set free" to explain the work of sanctification. He posits that the work of sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit who has set believers free from the power of sin and death, and at the same time, calls for an active response from believers. Kinghorn argues that Paul's expression of our union with Christ results in holiness of heart and life. He then explains the believer's union with Christ with the following terms: an *organic* union, a *transforming* union, a *growing* union, and a *shared* union, focusing more on the implications of holiness than the concept of holiness.

Presently, however, very little study has been produced centering primarily on Paul's concept of holiness. According to a few selected commentaries, we have found that there are various interpretations based on the particular context of the Pauline letters. Whereas commentators have described the meaning of holiness within the context of the corresponding Pauline letter, many theologians in their writings on Pauline theology have briefly tried to explain the concept without complete exegetical study. Moreover, in most cases, their focus on the concept of holiness has been on the implication for Christian living, and the relationship of holiness to justification. Some have focused on soteriology as the primary aspect of holiness while others emphasize the ethical connotation. Focusing on the process of sanctification or divine activities, various suggestions have been offered as well.

The concept of holiness has often been treated with reference to the entire New Testament, and we have discussed some of the scholars who have done this, such as Ladd, Procksh, and Peterson. Ladd proposes that the idea of sanctification in the NT is soteriological before it is a moral concept. Procksch suggests that the concept of holiness determines the nature of Christianity in a spiritual and not a moral sense. Peterson points to the holiness of God as the biblical starting point of the doctrine of sanctification and suggests that it describes God's way of taking possession of believers in Christ.

Certainly I am indebted to their in-depth biblical studies on sanctification. This dissertation, however, has focused specifically on the Pauline epistles rather than the entire New Testament through in-depth exegetical study. From the beginning of our study we have raised the following questions: *as a biblical writer and an apostle of Christ, and at the same time as one who had experienced Pharisaic teachings and Hellenistic culture, how did Paul understand God's holiness and how did he develop the concept in his preaching and teaching?* In order to adequately answer these questions, first, the Old Testament has been surveyed to suggest the source of Paul's concept of holiness. The Pharisaic concept of holiness, which is drawn from their practice of ritual purity law, has also been briefly reviewed for a better understanding of the background of the concept. The main section of the dissertation, then, has been covered with an in-depth exegetical study on the representative passages which are divided into three major theological formulations according to its implied concept. They are the concept of divine holiness, holiness in man, and holiness applied to things. Thus, throughout the study, we have tried to answer the question we have raised above.

Summary of Background (The Old Testament and Pharisaic View)

In the Old Testament, we have surveyed the word "holiness" through the extensive contextual implications such as the holiness of God, persons, and things. First we have found that God alone is holy. Holiness defines God's nature and represents the divine quality itself. God's essential nature of holiness guarantees that he will always be true to his character, keep his promises and nourish his established relationships. His holiness is manifest in righteousness and purity. It signifies his majesty and unapproachableness, but at its heart it refers to his perfect moral purity as opposed to anything that is profane and immoral.⁵ His purity and perfection are described in moral

⁵ Cf. I. Howard Marshall, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 101-02.

antithesis to the nature of man, and this essential nature of God's holiness ultimately brings about a separation between the holy God and sinful humans. For the holiness of persons and things, second, we have observed that everything and everyone brought into relationship with God should share in some way in that holiness. No moral qualification, however, is involved in the holiness of things. With respect to persons, it means becoming one of God's chosen ones or receiving the promise of holiness by becoming ceremonially and morally qualified. We have also suggested that the cultic qualification of holiness is inconceivable without purity, and eventually it has required personal purity in a moral sense. Therefore, we may observe the growing moralization of the concept of holiness throughout the Old Testament.

Nevertheless, we have noted that some scholars have distinguished the views of holiness in two different aspects in the Old Testament: one in the non-priestly view and the other in the priestly view, or one in the views from the earlier books of the Old Testament and the other in the view from the later books, particularly the Psalms and Prophets. Schwartz suggests the non-priestly view as the very fact of Israel's election while the priestly view is seen as "an emanation of the divine nature which turns Israel into a sacred object."⁶ Hoekema explains that, from the two different periods of the Old Testament, the earlier books describe the holiness of God's people as "the way in which priests were to be set apart for their special service or by which the people were to purify themselves through certain ritual observations," while the later books describe the holiness of God's people "primarily in ethical terms, as involving doing righteousness, speaking the truth, acting justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God (Ps. 15:1-2; Mic. 6:8)."⁷ It seems that the concept of holiness in the Old Testament may be

⁶ Baruch J. Schwartz, "Israel's Holiness: The Torah Traditions," in *Purity and Holiness: The Heritage of Leviticus*, ed. M.J.H.M. Poorthuis and J. Schwartz (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 58.

⁷ Anthony Hoekema, *Saved by Grace* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 193.

approached in various manners, depending on the ways in which a scholar selects his methodology of study. However, we have not offered any review or debate concerning the existing views of holiness in the Old Testament. Instead, we have compared the Pauline concept of holiness to our findings in the Old Testament.

Our basic assumption regarding Paul's background has been that Paul, who had a Pharisaic background, acknowledges these aspects: God's command regarding holiness in the Old Testament and a distorted ritual purity system by the tradition of elders. Thus, the Pharisaic concept of holiness has been also briefly surveyed from their practice of ritual purity law, especially focusing on a Pharisaic handwashing issue reflected in the Gospels.

In conclusion of the Pharisaic concept, we have found that the profound motivation of ritual purity is to be holy, and one of its applications is to eat ordinary food in a state of purity. Pharisaic handwashing is one of their innovations in order to preserve purity law and it is to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean. These reveal that they had distorted views and applications of the purity laws, and misinterpreted the perception of the holy life even from the perspective of the Old Testament. Paul, as a Pharisee, acknowledges these aspects and reevaluates his concept of holiness through the Christ event. He even reflects Jesus' teachings on purity in his letters, alluding to the teachings concerned with the purity of food.

Summary of the Concept of Holiness in the Pauline Epistles

Divine Holiness

For the concept of divine holiness, we have discovered that Paul never explicitly mentions nor explains God's divine attributes in the concept of holiness. But, he implies the holiness of God as manifested in believers in his various epistles, saying "the Lord may establish your hearts without blame in holiness" (1 Thess 3:13); "God has chosen you for salvation through holiness by the Spirit" (2 Thess 2:13); "put on the new

self, which in *the likeness of* God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth” (Eph 4:24); and “and now present your members as slaves to righteousness, into holiness . . . having been enslaved to God, you have your fruit to holiness” (Rom 6:19-22). From the exegetical study, our findings are that we should define what it means for us to be in divine holiness rather than what is the concept of divine holiness. This has revealed a coherent view of holiness in the Pauline epistles, namely, that holiness can be achieved in us, not by the works of Law, not by our effort to be righteous, but only by a certain relationship which should be established by God. And that relationship has been granted us through Jesus Christ. Divine holiness has been imparted to us through Christ so that we may be in his holiness. Thus, we may explain Paul’s writings as in divine holiness we know that our hearts have been established without blame, our salvation has been secured, our new humanity has been created in the likeness of God, and we may present ourselves as belonging to him. Holiness is the reflection of God’s moral purity in the lives and hearts of believers. Greenlee posits, “Paul does not seem to place major emphasis upon the distinction between the experience of conversion and the experience of heart cleansing. His emphasis is upon the facts and fruit, as well as the necessity, of forgiveness and of holiness rather than upon the mechanics of the experiences.”⁸ This concept of divine holiness is also expressed in the Old Testament where we have concluded that God alone is holy; the concept of holiness needs to be defined by the essential nature of God; and everything and everyone brought into relationship with him should share in some way in that holiness.

We have also found that Paul sparsely referred to the holiness of Christ in his writings (Rom 1:4; 1 Cor 1:30; and Col 1:9-22). In other words, even though the concept of divine holiness is implicit in the Pauline epistles, yet, at least we are able to suggest

⁸ J. Harold Greenlee, “The Greek New Testament and the Message of Holiness,” in *Further Insights into Holiness*, ed. Kenneth Geiger (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1963), 83.

that Paul implies Christ's holiness as our source of holiness. His holiness is wrought by the Spirit in order to present us holy and blameless as he accomplishes our reconciliation with God. Here we may also observe a comparison to the concept in the Old Testament. God causes our holiness to be achieved in us only through the divine intervention, and this is through Christ's sacrificial death, becoming a holy and blameless atoning sacrifice for us. God reveals his holiness through Christ's redemptive work, and through Christ's holiness God has sanctified us and called us as holy ones. So that in him, Paul says that we were washed, we were made holy and we were justified (1 Cor 6:11). He provided us the holy way (Isa 35:8) in him and through him. Thus now we may experience holy life through the holiness of Christ. To be in Christ by faith is to accept the holiness which Christ has realized in His people. Godet illustrates this as follows: "It is to be transplanted from the soil of our natural and profane life into that of His Divine holiness. The regimen, *in Christ Jesus*, expresses this idea, that our holiness is only participation in His in virtue of the union of faith with Him."⁹ Here, one thing, which we have suggested concerning Paul's sparse mention of the term holiness compared to justification, was that, even though he conceived the importance of the concept, Paul cautiously expressed it to Gentile Christians because of two reasons: the first reason was their unfamiliarity with the Jewish cultic background; and the other was his Pharisaic background, which had focused on a rather distorted concept of holiness.

Holiness in Persons

For the concept of holiness in persons, we have examined the concept in two aspects. The first aspect was Paul's designation of believers and the church as "holy ones," which was extensively used in the Pauline epistles. The second aspect was Paul's teaching on the holiness in believers through divine activity. We have discovered this

⁹ Frederic Godet, *Commentary on First Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1977), 42.

concept in various places (Rom 15:16; 1 Cor 1:2; 3:17; 6:11; 7:14; 2 Cor 7:1; Eph 1:4; 2:21; 5:25-27; 1 Thess 4:3-7; 5:23; and 2 Tim 2:21).

We have suggested that they are called to be “holy ones” because they already belong to God through the redemptive work of Christ. Paul reminded them that they have certain privileges of being holy ones, such as the Spirit’s assistance in their intercessory prayer, the inheritances from God, and the disclosure of mystery. Paul also emphasized that holiness in man is God’s will, believers are called to be holy ones, they are made holy in Christ, they are the holy temple of God, and their holiness may be realized through the faith of others. From these findings, thus, we suggest one common understanding on the concept of holiness in persons. That is to say that its accomplishment is made by divine plan and divine action.¹⁰

Furnish suggests that holiness may accurately be explained as the “*actualization of justification in the life of believer.*”¹¹ Throughout the study, the concept has primarily been viewed in its soteriological significance rather than its moral aspect. It certainly consists not in a moral quality which stresses believers’ achievement, but in a particular relationship to God which has been established by divine activity.¹² We have also noted this aspect in the Old Testament concept of holiness where anything or anyone who is in a devoted relationship to God is described as “holy,” and have observed that ethical demands are derived from this concept.

We have assumed that Paul, in his Jewish background, recognizes that holiness originates with God and he alone is perfectly holy. But in his reevaluation through the

¹⁰ Cf. Hoekema, *Saved by Grace*, 200, who suggests that holiness is a divine gift.

¹¹ Victor Paul Furnish, *Theology and Ethics in Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1968), 153.

¹² Cf. Hoekema, *Saved by Grace*, 202, who explains that holiness is depicted “as an act of God that is definitive, occurring at a specific time rather than during an extended period.”

Christ-event, he defines that Christians are called holy ones in the life of the Spirit through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul, however, does not explicitly define what is the complete meaning of being made holy in man. He only injects how we should pursue our Christians lives as holy ones. Just as Paul refers to believers as the new creations in Christ, holiness in man may be understood as the new reality and new identity in Christ. This reality may be realized in our conformity to the character of God and obedience to the will of God. But this seems to limit the complete meaning of the nature of holiness. If Paul understood that holiness originates with God, he alone being perfectly holy, and that believers are called to be holy and are made holy in Christ, it would be difficult to define the complete meaning of holiness, especially in man, with a certain definition. Marshall, who suggests that the concept of holiness is one of Paul's favorite themes in Thessalonians, however, describes the concept of holiness in terms of God's moral righteousness and purity. When the concept is applied to a holy people, he rightly posits the idea that those who are called to be holy must show the same righteousness and purity which characterize God.¹³

Thus, the final thing that Paul includes for the concept of holiness in persons is his exhortation of believers to live a holy life. It is to continue to pursue a life characterized by the Word of God, purifying oneself from every defilement of flesh and spirit.¹⁴ The goal of purification is to demonstrate the perfecting of holiness in our true reverence for God. Why? It is because we are the temple of God where God dwells in us. Therefore (and because of that), we are to pursue holiness, striving to achieve its completion until we dwell in God's kingdom. The application of biblical holiness is

¹³ I. Howard Marshall, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 101-02.

¹⁴ Cf. Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1981), 667, who posits that sanctification is "working out what God was working within, a combination of human effort and divine activity."

inevitable in Christian lives for the proper relationship with God. And this call to a holy life is based on God's standard, a perfect and exceedingly high standard, since He alone is perfectly holy. His perfect nature cannot be diminished. Rather, we should strive to be pure, perfecting holiness. For those who are made holy, and called in holiness, Paul emphasizes their demonstration of blamelessness and purity in their lives. Certainly it brings the impression of the moral perfection which characterizes divine nature. Paul never suggests, however, that believers can be in the moral aspect as perfect as God in their achievement of holiness.¹⁵ Rather Paul exhorts believers to purify themselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit through their pursuing and perfecting holiness as holy ones in the fear of God. In the Pauline epistles, however, Paul never implies this as the means of achieving sanctification.¹⁶ It involves our responsible participation with the work of the Spirit whereby he continually transforms us into the likeness of Christ. Here, Hoekema points out that in this aspect the concept of holiness may be explained in a progressive sense.¹⁷ While it is true that God calls us as holy ones through the blood of Christ, our heart, attitude, character, and action should be, "let us purify ourselves from every defilement of flesh and spirit perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

¹⁵ Cf. Donald Metz, *Studies in Biblical Holiness* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 1971), 228, who posits, "Because of finite qualities which still bear the scars of sin, this same believer will *not perfectly* fulfill God's law."

¹⁶ A similar concept is drawn by some scholars. Greenlee, "The Greek New Testament and the Message of Holiness," 78, describes, "Holiness as a quality of life, is the Christian standard and the Christian distinctive. This is not so, however, merely because certain passages in the Bible can reasonably be interpreted to mean that Christians should be pure and holy—and many such passages can thus be interpreted; nor even because this is an underlying assumption throughout the Bible—and it is. It is not so merely because we are convinced of the correctness of a certain doctrine relative to holiness. . . . There is only one morally adequate basis for the requirement that Christians be pure and holy in heart and life. . . . Christians are to be holy because, and only because, God is holy."

¹⁷ Hoekema, *Saved by Grace*, 208.

Holiness to Things

As the last concept of holiness in the Pauline epistles, we have discussed Paul's extensive application of the word, "holy" to things other than "Holy Spirit" and "holy ones." We have found them describing the Scriptures, the Law, the sacrifice or offering, body and spirit, kiss, and God's created foods. It was a rather difficult task to find a coherent definition of Paul's implied concept through his usage of the word "holy" with reference to things. The common understanding on the Scripture, the Law, and God's created foods, was, however, suggested to point out Paul's emphasis on the divine origin and activity of things. As he refers to believers' sacrifice or offering as holy, Paul describes God's approval and establishment of the ministry of believers as acceptable. With the designation of "holy kiss," we have suggested that its reference is to express believers' unique greetings through their kiss to share undefiled affection among holy ones as the family of God. With his remarks that an unmarried woman should "be holy in body and spirit," we have suggested, Paul may have tried to explain that such holiness in the believer is expressed in the believer's care to please the Lord. Based on this study, we have also found that Paul's concept of holiness in things is similar to the concept in the Old Testament in the sense of divine possession. Paul, however, rarely uses the concept to describe religious objects as in the Old Testament. Even if he refers to objects, most of the time Paul uses them as metaphors to illustrate holiness in man rather than as actual cultic objects. In comparison to his Pharisaic background, however, we have observed that Paul's view of holiness differs from the Pharisaic tradition. This reaffirms our basic assumption regarding Paul's acknowledgement of these aspects: God's command regarding holiness in the Old Testament and a distorted ritual purity system by the tradition of elders.

Further Research

Some Implications in Paul's Overall Theological Context

Paul acknowledges the new power in his life that had not been there before. He attributes such power to the work of God through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Rom 1:16; 1 Cor 2:4f; 4:20; Eph 3:20; 1 Thess 1:5). This is the power that turned his life around from his Jewish belief through the Pharisaic teachings to his faith in Christ through the Christ-event. Frequently he also designates 'old' and 'new' as the time before and after conversion or personal regeneration (Rom 6:6; Eph 4:22f; Col 3:9f).¹⁸ With many other expressions, such as justification, redemption, being washed, and new creation, Paul describes believers' transformed status. These implications express salvific work assured in believers that they are restored to the favor of a holy and just God. Yet, we also acknowledge such language to be used to express renewal (2 Cor 4:16; Rom 12:2), growth (Eph 4:15; Col 1:10; 2:19; 2 Thess 1:3), and transformation (Rom 12:2), all of which point to continuous and progressive activities. The phrase "in Christ"¹⁹ communicates both static and dynamic objective works of salvation which God accomplishes in believers.²⁰ Thus, with such expressions, Paul implies that believers are

¹⁸ Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*, trans. John Richard DeWitt (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 63, however, argues that the different modes of 'old' and 'new man' should be understood not in the sense of conversion in the individual believer, but in that of the history of redemption in which believers have had a part in Christ in the corporate sense. The old mode of existence of sin was judged and cursed. "Because the old man was condemned and put to death in Christ's death on the cross, the body of sin, the flesh, the old mode of existence of sin, has lost its dominion and control over those who are in him. In Christ's death and resurrection they have been transferred to the new order of life—the life order of the new creation, the new man."

¹⁹ Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, trans. James W. Leitch, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 21, suggests, "The phrase ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ is not to be understood in mystico-spatial terms ('in the pneumatic Christ' or 'in the Christ-body'). ἐν can merge into the instrumental sense (διὰ)."

²⁰ Cf. William B. Barclay, *"Christ in You": A Study in Paul's Theology and Ethics* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, Inc., 1999), 50, who suggests that the phrase "Christ in you" expresses a transformation which has already taken place and also an on-going transformation which is leading to maturity. "'Christ in you' points to the

already given a new reality and identity such as the “new creation,” “new men,” being justified, redeemed, and washed through their faith in Christ. “However, as yet we do not have it as a firm and perfect possession.” Kim rightly points out, “it must constantly be renewed or actualized in our lives [and in Christ] until it becomes a perfect reality at the *eschaton*.”²¹

Those are some of implications that need to be interpreted in light of the concept of holiness. In addition to these, there are many other issues that need to be dealt with such as virtue and vice lists, ethics, and the Law. For example, through the survey of virtue and vice lists in the Pauline epistles, we may find that it is difficult to construct a standard set of virtues and vices and to conclude where they might have originated. If this is true, then we may also raise such a question, “what would be the function or purpose of Paul in providing the virtue and vice lists in his writings, and how should these be interpreted in light of the concept of holiness?” If the concept had been understood as a process of moral renewal after personal regeneration, then the purpose of virtue and vice lists should had been interpreted as an absolute means of accomplishing sanctification. But through our findings of the concept of holiness, it seems that the purpose of exhorting through the virtue and vice lists in the Pauline epistles is rather for our responsible participation in the work of the Spirit, pursuing the perfecting of holiness in the fear of the Lord. This explains the importance of properly defining profound concepts in the Scriptures through biblical theology.

Suggestions for Further Research

We have tried to presuppose our starting point of biblical theology²² with the

end of the life of faith and anticipates the time when believers will be fully transformed and conformed to the image of Christ.”

²¹ Seyoon Kim, *The Origin of Paul's Gospel* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1981), 323.

²² This was based on the following definition: “The ordered study of what the

concept or nature of God, arguing that the concept of God has been profoundly presupposed by the biblical writers. An understanding of God was not only the foundation of the formation for the Scriptures, but also for what the biblical writers revealed to the world and humankind. Here we have suggested that the most descriptive way we can understand God is by acknowledging his characteristic attributes such as holiness, righteousness and justice, faithfulness, love, and the like through the Scriptures. Whether they are implied together or individually, these attributes are the most commonly revealed and acknowledged ones throughout the Scriptures. Therefore, we have suggested that God's characteristic attributes should be used as the interpretive keys for biblical theology, and this methodology would provide us the right approach for perceiving the meaning of the message, not from the human point of view, but from the divine perspective.²³

As we finish our study on Paul's concept of holiness through biblical theology, that is focusing on what the Bible has to say *about God* and its implication to the world, it makes sense that we should extend our study to other concepts, focusing on God's attributes. We have noted that since the Reformation began, the doctrine of justification has been Paul's major salvific category among scholars, while many other concepts have been given very little attention in academic circles. Even if there were studies done concerning other concepts, most of them were primarily drawn from systematic theology, bringing considerable disagreement between the various views due to the different approaches of systematic theology. According to the Pauline letters, we have found that

Bible has to say about God and his relations to the world and humankind," suggested by Charles H.H. Scobie, "New Directions in Biblical Theology," *Themelios* (1992): 4.

²³ As one of the contemporary challenges for biblical theology, D. A. Carson, "Current Issues in Biblical Theology: A New Testament Perspective," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 5 (1995): 31, suggests, "There would be improvement if several demonstrably central, interlocking themes were chosen, and if those interlocking themes were placed, for each corpus, in the context of the corpus contribution to the canon."

Paul also recognized God's attributes such as holiness, justice and righteousness, love, and faithfulness. He develops his theological view based on his understanding of God's attributes. And his view is defined and finalized in a complete sense in his knowledge of Jesus' teachings and the Christ-event. My dissertation, however, has been primarily focused on Paul's concept of holiness as an illustration of this argument.

Therefore, further in-depth exegetical studies on other divine attributes will help us build the basic building blocks so that they may be compared to check and balance one to another.²⁴ In other words, finding the plausible concepts of God's attributes in Pauline epistles through in-depth exegetical study—obviously this study should be compared with the background study such as the Old Testament and Jewish religion—will help one to discover how they are integrated, related, compared, and even interpreted one to another in order to describe God's relation and his divine activities in us. This will, then, help us explain not only the divine nature, such as characterized by holiness, justification, love, and many others in a broader aspect, but also the implication of God's nature for his people, his church, and his salvific purposes in a more complete aspect. In this way, the following questions may be addressed: How does Paul explain God and His divine activities?; what does he teach about His relation to us?; and how should believers understand and implement his teaching in their proper interpretation of God?

For the concept of holiness in the Pauline epistles, it also seems helpful to compare Paul's views on the terms "purity"²⁵ and "blameless"²⁶ as well. This language is

²⁴ This kind of research is common in scientific study and it certainly sounds useful to any other research. Carson, "Current Issues in Biblical Theology," 30-31, also points out the importance of seeking clear connections among corpora and themes, remembering the complexity of the documents and the multidimensional nature of the Bible.

²⁵ There are a total of 14 occurrences in the Pauline epistles: 1 Thess 2:10; 2 Cor 6:6; 11:2; 3; Phil 1:10; 4:8; 1 Tim 1:5; 4:12; 5:2; 22; 2 Tim 2:22; Titus 1:15; 2:5; 2:14.

characteristic of a cultic setting in the Old Testament and in Jewish religion. Some scholars treat these terms as though they were synonymous to the concept of holiness in the Pauline epistles.²⁷

Concluding Summary

Finally, we will conclude this paper suggesting what is the relevance of our findings for the life of the believer and the ministry of the church today. We have begun this paper with the following questions and the possible answers. For the relationship between God and human beings, how has God brought salvation to man? And how can man be reconciled to God? Our answer for these questions according to Paul was finding Paul's description of man in terms of the personal, redemptive activity of God in Christ. For Paul, thus, it is important to express the characteristic divine nature and its implication in his epistles. He acknowledges that God has revealed himself in Christ as the living Lord, the creator and redeemer. Moreover, he has manifested himself as a God of holiness, justice and righteousness, love, and faithfulness. Certainly, Paul knew the characteristics of the divine nature through the Old Testament and through the Pharisaic tradition as well. But through the Christ event, Paul reevaluates the concept of the divine nature, especially from his Pharisaic understanding. As he comes to know God and to be known by God, he recognizes what should be the right relationship between God and man in Christ, from the point of view of man standing before God, and in a relation of dependence upon a God of such a nature.

For Paul, God's holiness was one of the most important of the divine attributes

²⁶ There are a total of 13 occurrences in the Pauline epistles: 1 Thess 2:10; 3:13; 5:23; 1 Cor 1:8; Eph 1:4; 5:27; Phil 1:10; 2:15; 3:6; Col 1:22; 1 Tim 3:10; Titus 1:6; 7.

²⁷ Cf. Michael Newton, *The Concept of Purity at Qumran and in the Letters of Paul* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 52-116. Most scholars who focus on the Old Testament and Jewish religion take the terms "purity" and "holiness" as the same concept.

along with righteousness, love, and faithfulness, and he assumed them for his preaching and teaching as foundational factors. But the concept of holiness has been misunderstood in many churches today and confused with moral and ethical sanctification. According to our in-depth exegetical study as we focused on the text in its overall context and its implication, we have found that Paul refers to either divine holiness that has been manifested to believers through Christ or the holiness accomplished in believers through divine activity. He states that believers are established without blame, salvation has been secured, and a new humanity has been created in the likeness of God. Finally, he exhorts believers to pursue a life of holiness, demonstrating and perfecting holiness as they reflect God's moral purity in their lives and hearts.

“For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace” (Rom. 6:14). “Consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 6:11). “Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Cor. 7:1). “In reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in *the likeness of* God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth” (Eph. 4:22-24). According to these selected Pauline verses, we must have faith in God, simply resting our sin problem in Christ's finished work on Calvary, and realize that we are dead to sin and alive to God who strengthens us. We are called to be “holy ones,” being sanctified through Christ. Therefore, we should acknowledge that God has and will purify us from every defilement through the blood of Christ. We should live by the Spirit with the new self, facing up to our responsibility of perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

APPENDIX

THE STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF THE PASSAGE, 2 CORINTHIANS 6:14 - 7:1

14 Μὴ γίνεσθε ἑτεροζυγοῦντες ἀπίστοις·

τίς γὰρ μετοχὴ δικαιοσύνης καὶ ἀνομία,
ἢ τίς κοινωνία φωτὶ πρὸς σκότος;

15 τίς δὲ συμφώνησις Χριστοῦ πρὸς Βελιάρ,
ἢ τίς μερὶς πιστῶ μετὰ ἀπίστου;

16 τίς δὲ συγκατάθεσις ναῶ θεοῦ μετὰ εἰδώλων;

ἡμεῖς γὰρ ναὸς θεοῦ ἔσμεν ζῶντος,

(Q) καθὼς εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς ὅτι

(A) Ἐνοικήσω ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐμπεριπατήσω

(B) καὶ ἔσομαι αὐτῶν θεός

(C) καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔσονται μοι λαός.¹

17 διο ἐξέλθατε ἐκ μέσου αὐτῶν

(X) καὶ ἀφορίσθητε, λέγει κύριος,
καὶ ἀκαθάρτου μὴ ἄπτεσθε.²

(A') καὶ γὰρ εἰσδέξομαι ὑμᾶς

(B') 18 καὶ ἔσομαι ὑμῖν εἰς πατέρα

(C') καὶ ὑμεῖς ἔσεσθέ μοι εἰς υἱοὺς καὶ θυγατέρας,³

¹This first OT quote has been suggested as a composition of Lev 26:11-12 and Ezek 37:27. James M. Scott, "The Use of Scripture in 2 Corinthians 6:16c-18 and Paul's Restoration Theology," *JSNT* 56 (1994): 78-82, argues that Paul here presents the promise of the New Covenant since he rendered this OT quotation from the covenantal contexts.

²This Old Testament quote is a modified citation of Isa 52:11.

³This is a mixed citation consisting of Ezek 20:34; Sam 7:14; and Isa 43:6. Scott, "The Use of Scripture in 2 Corinthians 6:16c-18 and Paul's Restoration Theology," 85-87, describes this as the adoption formula: "The Davidic promise is interpreted as a promise of restoration associated with the second exodus." Suggested structural analysis

(Q') λέγει κύριος παντοκράτωρ.

7:1 ταύτας οὖν ἔχοντες τὰς ἐπαγγελίας, ἀγαπητοί,
καθαρίσωμεν ἑαυτοὺς ἀπὸ παντὸς μολυσμοῦ σαρκὸς καὶ πνεύματος,
ἐπιτελοῦντες ἀγιωσύνην ἐν φόβῳ θεοῦ.

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ABSTRACT

THE CONCEPT OF HOLINESS IN THE PAULINE EPISTLES

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This dissertation has attempted to define Paul's concept of holiness and how he develops and applies the concept in his letters. This task has focused on Pauline theology, conducting an in-depth exegetical study on various Pauline epistles. All texts on holiness which occur in all thirteen Pauline epistles are examined and discussed.

Chapter 1 begins with a question on how Paul, as a Pharisee, might have reevaluated the concept of holiness through the Christ event. This chapter briefly covers the history of research on the concept of holiness in Pauline epistles.

Chapter 2 surveys the Old Testament concept of holiness, focusing on the word "holiness." This survey examines the conceptual meaning of the word in the nature of God and in the ritual setting, and also the common definition for the descriptive usage in persons and things.

Chapter 3 examines the pharisaic concept of holiness, and compares this with the concept in the Old Testament.

Chapter 4 defines the concept of divine holiness. This concept is subdivided into two aspects: the holiness of God manifested in believers (Rom 6:19-22; Eph 4:24; 1 Thess 3:13; and 2 Thess 2:13), and the holiness of Christ (Rom 1:4; 1 Cor 1:30; and Col 1:9-22). For the in-depth exegetical study, Romans 6:19-22 is mainly covered.

Chapter 5 analyzes the concept of holiness in man. First, Paul's addressing believers and the church as 'holy ones' is discussed. Second, Paul's teaching on how

God willed and made them to be holy (Rom 15:16; 1 Cor 1:2; 3:17; 6:11; 7:14; 2 Cor 7:1; Eph 1:4; 2:21; 5:25-27; 1 Thess 4:3-7; 5:23; and 2 Tim 2:21) is examined.

Chapter 6 observes Paul's extensive application of the word, "holy" to things other than man or God. Paul has applied the word "holy" to the Scripture (Rom 1:2), the Law (Rom 7:12), the living sacrifice (Rom 12:1), human body and spirit (1 Cor 7:34), kiss (Rom 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20; 2 Cor 13:12; and 1 Thess 5:26) and God's created foods (1 Tim 4:4-5). Finding the descriptive meaning of the word "holy" has focused so that the common understanding of the concept may be derived for the extensive usage.

Chapter 7 concludes with the summary of the concept of holiness. Further research has been suggested for possible implications in Paul's overall theological thought.

This work suggests that through the Christ event, Paul has reevaluated the concept, especially from his Pharisaic understanding. For Paul, God's holiness is one of the most important of the divine attributes along with righteousness, love, and faithfulness, and he assumed this for his preaching and teaching as a foundational factor. Paul refers to either divine holiness that has been manifested to believers through Christ or the holiness accomplished in believers through divine activity. He states that believers are established without blame, salvation has been secured, and a new humanity has been created in the likeness of God. He exhorts believers to pursue a life of holiness, demonstrating and perfecting holiness as they reflect God's moral purity in their lives and hearts.

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