

1

Bearers of the Lord's Vessels: Purify Yourself!



2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9

Graham F. Watts, Sr.

VISION: To hear the midnight cry, "The bridegroom comes, go out to meet Him" (Matthew 25:6) and become like Him when I see Him as He is (1 John 3:2).

MISSION: Purify myself even as Christ is pure (1 John 3:3) to be glad, to rejoice, give honor to Christ and be ready for the marriage of the Lamb (Revelation 19:7).

13

VALUES: Follow the Lamb wherever He goes (Revelation 14:4), be without fault before God (Revelation 14:5), be perfect even as my Father in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48), wear the Lamb's fine, clean and white linen (Revelation 19:8) do righteously (1 John 3:10) and walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8).

19

OVERALL AIM: Studies presented here unveil Bible knowledge to inquiring minds to prompt the following inquiries: "Are our feet on the rock of ages? Are we one with Christ as He is one with the Father" (John 10:30 in Evangelism, {Ev} 199.1)? Am I crucified with Christ (Galatians 2:20)?

25

26 **PURPOSE/REASON FOR/WHY**

27
28 This study examines God's call for clean vessel bearers/servants.

29
30
31 **OBJECTIVES/WHAT WE WANT TO ACCOMPLISH/THESIS**

32
33 At the end of this study, believers, can self examine to determine
34 whether their lives translate to a genuine, godly lifestyle (2
35 Corinthians 13:5, NLT and 2 Timothy 3:12).

36
37
38 **SIGNIFICANCE: SO WHAT**

39
40 The risk of rejection by Jesus Christ at His return should be
41 adequate incentive for church attending people to walk in the Holy
42 Spirit (Galatians 6:15 & 25). Those who fail to live and walk in the
43 Holy Spirit will hear the awful words: "...I never knew you: depart
44 from me (Matthew 7:23)!

45
46 **BACKGROUND CONTEXT**

47
48 The Bible has clear redemptive declarations. "[God] ...wants everyone
49 to be saved and to understand... truth" (1 Timothy 2:4, NLT). Christ
50 died that all might have eternal life (Isaiah 53:5-6)! "...God...
51 raised Christ from the dead..." (Acts 3:15 & 4:10), "...and set Him
52 at His own right hand..." (Ephesians 1:20) "...to make intercession
53 for them [that come unto God by Him]" (Hebrews 7:25; 1 Timothy 5:24 &
54 1 John 1:9). Before Jesus ends His ministerial work (Revelation
55 22:11), the "...angel ascending from the east... having the seal of
56 the living God... [will seal] ...the servants of... God in their
57 foreheads" (Revelation 7:2-3). It will take more than lip service to
58 receive the seal of the living God. Jesus was very clear when he
59 acknowledged that **NOT** everyone who says "...Lord, Lord, shall
60 enter... the kingdom of heaven..." (Matthew 7:21). This background
61 provided the impetus for the study question that follows.

62 **STUDY QUESTION**

63

64 Am I obeying God's call to separate from all that is unclean?

65

66 **ANSWER SOURCE: HOLY BIBLE**

67

68 1. **Separation from all that is unclean calls for transformation of**
69 **character, holiness.** Each servant of Jesus Christ must be changed
70 from disobedience to obedience (Romans 10:16; 2 Thessalonians 1:8;
71 1 Peter 4:17; Romans 1:5; 6:16; 16:19 & 1 Peter 1:2). Only those
72 who do the will of God will "...enter... the kingdom of heaven...
73 (Matthew 7:21). However, Matthew 7:21 must be carefully vetted
74 because many evils against humanity have been perpetrated under the
75 ruse of doing God's will (Daniel 7:25). Saul of Tarsus believed
76 that he was a servant of Jesus Christ while engaged in active
77 persecution of religious people (Acts 22:4 & 26:11). So to
78 distance ourselves from psychotic behaviors such as religiously
79 policing the lives of others when our own lives need adjustments
80 (Matthew 7:2-4), attention appropriately centers on self: namely,
81 "[diligently working] to show the results of [our] salvation [by]
82 obeying God with deep reverence and fear" (Philippians 2:12, NLT),
83 which includes being virtuous, pure and holy (2 Peter 1:5; Matthew
84 5:8; Leviticus 20:26 & 1 Peter 2:9). "...Purify yourselves, you
85 who carry the vessels of the Lord" (Isaiah 52:11, NASB). Both
86 under-shepherds and sheep are God's workers (1 Corinthians 6:19-20;
87 Isaiah 43:10 and Acts 1:8). Everyone who has accepted Jesus Christ
88 by repentance, baptism and reception of the Holy Spirit are His
89 ministers and servants (Isaiah 65:14; Romans 6:17-18). Therefore,
90 there is no excuse for continuing in disobedience after God
91 "...[gave Jesus] to die [for] our sins and He was raised to life to
92 make us right with God" (Romans 4:25, NLT). The servants of Christ
93 "...enter God's Kingdom... through the narrow gate..." (Matthew
94 7:13, NLT) and stay on that pathway (Hebrews 6:4-6).

95 2. **Holiness, the fruit of separation from uncleanness, requires an**
 96 **ongoing, trusting and faith-based relationship with Jesus Christ.**
 97 For He said: "...Except [you are] converted, and become as little
 98 children, [you] shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven"
 99 (Matthew 18:3). On average, healthy children raised in a warm,
 100 nurturing environment develop trust in their caregivers and
 101 confidence in their outlook on life. Similarly, all who actively
 102 exercise faith in Christ know that "...when God counted [Christ] as
 103 righteous, it wasn't just for Abraham's benefit. It was recorded
 104 for our benefit too, assuring us that God will also count us as
 105 righteous if we believe in Him--(God): the one who raised Jesus our
 106 Lord from the dead" (Romans 4:23-24, NLT). And since "...we died
 107 and were buried with Christ by baptism, [then], ...just as Christ
 108 was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now,
 109 we also may live new, [holy] lives" (Romans 6:4, NLT & 1 Peter
 110 1:16). "[And] we are sure of this because Christ was raised from
 111 the dead, and he will never die again. Death no longer has any
 112 power over Him" (Romans 6:9, NLT). Similarly, "sin is no longer
 113 [our] master..." (Romans 6:14, NLT). The power of sin is broken
 114 "...that [we] may be married to another--to Him who was raised from
 115 the dead, that we should bear fruit to God" (Romans 7:4, NKJV).
 116 There is no need to be of two minds (James 1:8) about separation
 117 from all that is unclean for God is clear: "...come out from among
 118 them... and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you" (2
 119 Corinthians 6:17).

120
121

122 3. **Holiness is more than external adherence to religious traditions.**
 123 Jesus was adamant about this when He said: "...Except your
 124 righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and
 125 Pharisees, [you] shall in NO case enter into the kingdom of heaven"
 126 (Matthew 5:20). This statement prompts the question: What did the
 127 righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees look like? Jesus

128 described it so that none would be in doubt. "...They love to pray
129 standing in the synagogue and on the corners of the streets, that
130 they may be seen by men..." (Matthew 6:5, NKJV). Because
131 ostentation is an unacceptable ingredient of revival and
132 reformation of character, Jesus offered alternative advice, which
133 reads: "...when you pray, go into your room... (Matthew 6:6, NKJV).
134 "...When you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know
135 what the right hand is doing" (Matthew 6:3, NKJV). All record
136 keeping is being done in heaven (Malachi 3:16) and soon Christ will
137 give rewards (Revelation 22:12). For God is not unrighteous to
138 forget your work and labor of love, which you have [shown] toward
139 his name, in that [you] have ministered to the saints, and do
140 minister (Hebrews 6:10). When you are away from earthy observers
141 and cameras, remember that the watchful eyes of Jesus is upon you
142 (Job 34:21 & Amos 9:8); therefore, "...to do good and to
143 communicate, forget not for with such sacrifices God is well
144 pleased" (Hebrews 13:16). The imperative to go beyond conformity
145 to tradition states: "But if you look carefully into the perfect
146 law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget
147 what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it" (James 1:25,
148 NLT). "...You will always harvest what you plant. Those who live
149 only to satisfy their own sinful nature will harvest decay and
150 death from that sinful nature. ["...What do you benefit if you
151 gain the whole world but lose your own soul... (Matthew 16:26)]?
152 But those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting
153 life from the Spirit" (Galatians 6:7-8, NLT). "...[Everyone] who
154 reaps is receiving wages, [so strive to be among those who are]...
155 gathering fruit for life eternal..." (John 4:36, NASB) by being a
156 co-laborer with Christ in developing a character after the divine
157 likeness.
158

159
160 4. **Be holy in all, 100%, of your conduct.** Why does God require 100%
161 holiness? Isn't 95+% reasonably high? The serious answer is No!
162 "You must be 100% holy because... the Lord [is] holy. ...[And He
163 has] set you apart from all other people to be [His] very own"
164 (Leviticus 20:26, NLT). By God's own admission, "...You are a holy
165 people, who belong to the Lord your God. He has ransomed you and
166 you are His (Isaiah 43:1), originally created for His glory (Isaiah
167 43:7), and recreated "...anew in Jesus Christ ...to do the good
168 things He planned... long ago" (Ephesians 2:10, NLT). Of all the
169 people on earth, the Lord your God has chosen you to be His own
170 special treasure" (Deuteronomy 7:6, NLT). And He will "...sanctify
171 you completely, [so that] your whole spirit, soul and body be
172 preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord, Jesus Christ" (1
173 Thessalonians 5:23, NKJV). "So think clearly and exercise self-
174 control. Not only are you to "depart from evil, and do good; seek
175 peace and pursue it" (Psalm 34:14), but you should also "make sure
176 that... [you do not permit] an unbelieving heart [to] turn [you]
177 away from the living God" (Hebrews 3:12, NIRV). Instead, look
178 forward to the gracious salvation that will come... when Jesus
179 Christ is revealed to the world. So... live as God's obedient
180 children. Don't slip back into [the] old ways of living to satisfy
181 your own desires. You didn't know any better then. But now you
182 must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is
183 holy" (1 Peter 1:13-15, NLT). Haven't you read where the Scripture
184 says: "Whether therefore you eat or drink or whatever you do, do
185 all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31). This is an
186 impeccable and unimpeachable standard that God has set for His
187 vessel bearers/servants. And just in case a feeling of being
188 overwhelmed has set in, God offers this assurance: "...[I am] able
189 to keep you from falling away and will bring you with great joy
190 into [My] glorious presence without a single fault" (Jude 1:24,
191 NLT). Therefore, there is no place for compromise on holy

192 principles for we "have no obligation to do what... [the] sinful
 193 nature urges..." (Romans 8:12, NLT). "So be perfect, just as your
 194 Father in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48, NIRV), for He said to
 195 Abram: "...I am the Almighty God; walk before me and be...
 196 perfect" (Genesis 17:1).

197
 198 **5. The redeemed from earth who inhabit the New Jerusalem will be holy,**
 199 **undefiled and uncorrupted.** In AD 95, the angel who visited John on
 200 Patmos gave him this message: "...the time is near; let the one who
 201 is doing harm continue to do harm; let the one who is vile continue
 202 to be vile; let the one who is righteous continue to live
 203 righteously; let the one who is holy continue to be holy"
 204 (Revelation 22:10-11, NLT). *Children of God*, Jesus is coming soon
 205 (Revelation 22:12); so this is not the time to be a vacillating
 206 Christian. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand; ...*cast off*
 207 *the works of darkness and... put on the armor of light*, [which refers to Jesus
 208 Christ and His word]" (Romans 13:12 & 14; Galatians 3:27; John
 209 8:12; Psalm 119:105). And having put on the armor of light,
 210 "...*walk as children of light*" (Ephesians 5:8). Because "...*if we walk in*
 211 *the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood*
 212 *of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin*" (1 John 1:7). Brethren,
 213 "...the nations of them [that] are saved shall walk in the light of
 214 [the holy Jerusalem]... (Revelation 21:10 & 24). So perfect
 215 holiness now, today and everyday. Practice holiness daily,
 216 momentarily, for only those who "...do His commandments... [will]
 217 enter in through the gates, into the city because "...the
 218 commandment [is] holy, just and good" (Romans 7:12). ...Sorcerers,
 219 ...whoremongers, ...murderers, ...idolaters and ...[liars will not
 220 enter the holy Jerusalem]" (Revelation 22:14-15)! The remnant of
 221 Israel shall **NOT** do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a
 222 deceitful tongue be found in their mouth..." (Zephaniah 3:13). If
 223 you plan to spend eternity in the holy Jerusalem, then you must

224 hate what God hates. And the top seven things on God's hate list
225 are: "...haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that kill the
226 innocent, a heart that plots evil, feet that race to do wrong, a
227 false witness who pours out lies [and] a person who sows discord in
228 a family" (Proverbs 6:16-19, NLT). If this list speaks to you,
229 then you have work to do in your own life (Philippians 2:12) before
230 Jesus ends His priestly ministry at the right hand of the Father
231 (Ephesians 1:20; Hebrews 1:3; 8:1 & 10:12; 1 Peter 3:22; Colossians
232 3:1; Daniel 7:9-13 & Revelation 5:6-7)!

233
234
235 SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS: This study examined God's call for clean
236 vessel bearers. The question that focused this study asked: Am I
237 obeying God's call to separate from all that is unclean? In the
238 discovery phase of the study, five points emerged to support the
239 inquiry: 1) Separation from all that is unclean calls for
240 transformation of character, holiness. 2) Holiness, the fruit of
241 separation from uncleanness, requires an on-going, trusting and
242 faith-based relationship with Jesus Christ. 3) Holiness is more than
243 external adherence to religious traditions. 4) Be holy in all, 100%,
244 of your conduct. And 5): The redeemed from earth who inhabit the New
245 Jerusalem will be holy, undefiled and uncorrupted. Given what we
246 have discussed, can a person risk just "doing-church" like the
247 foolish virgins of Matthew 25 and not make an entire, complete
248 consecration to God as the wise virgins did? Ponder this question
249 and be persuaded in your own mind (Romans 14:5). However, in
250 recognition of the limited value of engaging in Bible study merely
251 for information or intellectual gymnastics; subsequent paragraphs
252 make a practical application of the principles set forth here.

253

254

255

256 **DISCUSSION: WHAT DO THESE THINGS MEAN?**

257

258 Separation from all that is unclean calls for comprehensive reform!
 259 It requires purification, which comes by "...obeying the truth
 260 through the Spirit..." (1 Peter 1:22). By obeying the truth, we not
 261 only purify ourselves, which removes natural tendencies, [Jeremiah
 262 17:9], to "...evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications,
 263 thefts, false witnessing [and] blasphemies: ...[the behaviors
 264 that]... defile a [person]" (Matthew 15:19-20); but also are
 265 sanctified by the truth: the word of God... (John 17:17). Jesus
 266 discussed this point with the religious leaders of His day this way:
 267 "...Moses gave you this law from God: 'Honor your father and mother.'
 268 'Anyone who speaks disrespectfully of father or mother must be put to
 269 death.' But you say it is all right for people to say to their
 270 parents, 'Sorry, I can't help you, for I have vowed to give to God
 271 what I would have given to you.' In this way, you let them disregard
 272 their needy parents. [Thus], ...*you cancel the word of God in order to hand*
 273 *down your own tradition*. And this is only one example among many others"
 274 (Mark 7:10-15, NLT). Brethren, Jesus did not miss this teachable
 275 moment for mass instruction. He "...called to the crowd to come and
 276 hear, and said: 'All of you listen, ...it's not what goes into your
 277 body that defiles you. You are defiled by what comes from your
 278 heart'" (Mark 7:14-15, NLT). So as a bearer of the Lord's vessels,
 279 that is, as a worker or witness for Jehovah, in whatever capacity
 280 your spiritual gifts permit, let virtue (2 Peter 1:5) and complete
 281 holiness characterize "...all conversation and godliness" (1 Peter
 282 1:15 & 2 Peter 3:11).

283

284

285

286 **CONCLUSIONS: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?**

287

288 God requires cleanliness from His servants. Take for example Joshua,
289 who appeared before the Angel, clothed with filthy garments. In very
290 clear and definitive terms, the Angel said: "Take away the filthy
291 garments from him." What were these filthy garments? They
292 represented iniquity, which the Angel replaced "with rich robes"
293 (Zechariah 3:3-4). Brethren, "...we are the temple of the living
294 God, ...[who promised to] live in... and walk among [us to]... be
295 [our] God [as we remain His] people" (2 Corinthians 6:16). And the
296 clothing, that is: the lifestyle we are to exhibit is one that is
297 free of entanglement with iniquity. This is a precondition for
298 habitation in the New Jerusalem. God's dress code, that is, His
299 standard of character, calls for purchasing from Him "...white
300 raiment that [kingdom candidates] may be clothed, ...that the shame
301 of [their] nakedness do not appear..." (Revelation 3:18). This is a
302 no-exception dress code. In other words, to be dressed in any other
303 attire than the righteousness of Christ is to invoke condemnation and
304 rejection (Matthew 22:11-14). We cannot be partially converted, for
305 the divine requirement is complete transformation of character.
306 Anything short of total transformation of character will render us
307 foreigners to the kingdom of God (Joel 3:17) for in the holy
308 "...mount Zion, ...there shall be holiness..." (Obadiah 1:17).

309 Everything connected with heaven is pure, holy and clean. Let us
310 review a few examples. "[The] angel of the Lord [who] came down from
311 heaven [and] rolled aside the stone... [to resurrect Jesus wore]
312 clothing [that] was white as snow" (Matthew 28:2-3, NLT), a fact
313 corroborated by Mark, who also reported that "...Mary Magdalene and
314 Mary the mother of James and Salome..." saw Him "...clothed in a
315 long, white garment..." (Mark 16:1 & 5). Guests at the heavenly

316 banquet (Matthew 25: 6 & 10, NIV) must be overcomers, a state that is
 317 evidenced by being "...clothed in white raiment..." (Revelation 3:5),
 318 symbolizing purity of character. Those who were "...slain for the
 319 word of God and for the testimony which they held" (Revelation 6:9)
 320 will receive "...white robes..." (Revelation 6:11). The 24 elders
 321 seated around the throne of God are "...clothed in white raiment..."
 322 (Revelation 4:4). The "...great multitude, which no [person] could
 323 number of all nations, kindreds, people and tongues (languages)
 324 [that] stood before the throne [of God] and before the Lamb [will be]
 325 clothed with white robes..." (Revelation 7:9). "The seven angels
 326 [that will come] out of [God's] temple, having the seven plagues,
 327 [will be] clothed in pure and white linen..." (Revelation 15:6).
 328 Finally, "the armies [that are] in heaven [will] follow [Christ
 329 triumphantly, and they are also]... clothed in fine linen, white and
 330 clean" (Revelation 19:14). Therefore, "...get out and leave your
 331 captivity, where everything you touch is unclean. Get out of there
 332 and purify yourselves, you who carry home the sacred objects of the
 333 Lord" (Isaiah 52:11, NLT).

334

335 **CALL TO ACTION: WHAT SHALL WE DO?**

336 The implications of this study are clear. "...Do not share in
 337 [other's] sins...; keep yourself pure" (1 Timothy 5:22, NLT).
 338 "Repent... and be converted that your sins may be blotted out...
 339 (Acts 3:19) so that your sins precede you to judgment rather than
 340 follow after (1 Timothy 5:24, NKJV). "...[Christ, our] ...great High
 341 Priest... rules over God's house; [therefore], ...go... into the
 342 presence of God with sincere hearts, fully trusting Him..." (Hebrews
 343 10:21-23, NLT) and abide in Christ (John 15:4); "... joined to
 344 [Him]... who was raised from the dead, in order... [to] bear fruit
 345 for God" (Romans 7:4, NASB), which includes holiness (Romans 6:22),
 346 "...goodness, righteousness and truth" (Ephesians 5:9). Servants of
 347 Christ, His vessel bearers, the serious work of reformation of

348 character lies ahead, but it is within grasp; so, "... forgetting
349 those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things
350 which are before, ...press toward the mark for the prize of the high
351 calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13-14) and "...be
352 transformed by the renewing of your mind..." (Romans 12:2).