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BT 682 The Biblical Basis of the Idea of Christian Perfection

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BT 682

THE BIBLICAL BASIS OF THE IDEA OF CHRISTIAN PERFECTION

PURPOSE

This course is designed to provide an in-depth appraisal of the biblical data which forms the basis of the doctrine of Christian perfection. It assumes that any proper theological understanding and practical application of this aspect of Christian truth is based upon a serious examination of the relevant portions of the Scripture. Accordingly, the focus of this course will be an inductive study of the biblical materials related to the concept of Christian perfection. The theological and practical aspects of the doctrine will be covered within this context.

INTRODUCTION

This course presupposes that several categories of Scriptural truth are very closely interwoven. Thus while the title focuses attention upon the doctrine of Christian perfection, this is designed to refer not only to the concept of perfectness in the Bible, but also to include Christian holiness, the work of the Holy Spirit, the ideas related to sin and purification/cleansing, and the concept of Kingship/Lordship. Accordingly, the course is designed to cover key sections of Scripture that deal with each of these major categories. While the materials will be interwoven throughout the studies, the total impact should make clear how scripture emphasizes these several facets of what is collectively called the doctrine of Christian perfection or Christian holiness.

OBJECTIVES

1. The student shall be able to recall from memory the basic principles of the doctrine of Christian perfection/holiness in the sections of Scripture studied.
2. The student shall be able to demonstrate the use of inductive and exegetical skills for the purpose of extracting and correlating the basic biblical principles related to one major doctrine in Biblical Theology.
3. The student shall be able to identify the relevant passages of Scripture on any of the following biblical concepts:

a) holiness	e) sin	l) ethical righteousness
b) perfection	f) purification/cleansing	j) biblical characters that model these concepts
c) love	g) kingship/lordship	
d) the Holy Spirit	h) the will	
4. The student will be able to identify the various meanings of biblical holiness and their connection with the several major roles of God.

REQUIREMENTS

- I. Completion of each inductive study by its assigned date. (60%)
 - A. All studies will be collected at the close of the class hour on the day they are due for completion. All late assignments will be received only with a corresponding grade reduction.

- B. All studies are to be presented in their original, hand-written form. They should not be rewritten or typed. Care should be taken, therefore, that the original study should be legible.
- C. All studies should be marked with the amount of time the student spent on it in preparation.

II. PARTICIPATION in the class review of the assigned study.

- A. The student should be ready in any class period to present his own findings on the assignment with the aid of his study notes.
- B. The student should also be prepared to contribute to the class discussion of the study materials.

III. EXAMINATION

There will be a mid-term and a final examination over the materials covered in the assigned studies and the classroom presentations.

The mid-term exam will be Thursday, October 21. (20%)

The final will be Thursday, December 16, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. (20%)

IV. ATTENDANCE at all class periods is expected. The student should keep a record of any absences from class, and be ready to report these on the day of the examination.

V. TEXTBOOK

A. The course is based on a primary study of the text of Scripture. Secondary sources are not to play a part in the preparation of assignments. Either of the following versions is acceptable:

1. American Standard Version or New AS.
2. Revised Standard Version but not New RSV.

Use of original languages is encouraged in conjunction with the English text.

B. A Workbook on Scriptural Holiness: The Gospels and Acts.

This material will serve as a guide through the studies in the middle part of the course.

C. Holy Living by Allan Coppedge will serve as a summary of the studies in the Old Testament.

VI. READING

As a background for the relationship of holiness to the roles of God, the student should read Allan Coppedge, The Roles of God (in MSS form) chapters 1 and 2. A copy is on reserve in the library.

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**THE BIBLICAL BASIS
OF THE IDEA OF
CHRISTIAN PERFECTION**

FALL 1999

Dr. Allan Coppedge

**THE BIBLICAL BASIS FOR THE DOCTRINE
OF CHRISTIAN PERFECTION**

BT 682

I. Exodus 19-24

A. Outline of Exodus

- I. Deliverance of Israel from Egypt 1-12.
- II. Provision of God for Israel 13-18.
- III. Establishment of covenant of Mt. Sinai 19-24
- IV. A tabernacle for presence of God among people 25-40.

B. Study Questions

1. What in chapter 3 is described as holy? Why? Why does Moses resist God's call in chapters 3-4? What is the basic reason? What is the significance of Moses' last response in 4:18? (What happens between Moses and God?)
2. When Israel reaches Mt. Sinai in chapter 19, what two major things has God done for them? In what sense can they be described as the people of God? as people of faith? How does this affect our understanding of the establishment of the covenant at Sinai?
3. Read carefully 19:1-20:20. In the initial presentation of the covenant in 19:5-6 what does God desire? Are there conditional elements? Why is God choosing one people? What does "kingdom of priest: mean? Why does God want a "holy nation"? What is the relationship of "kingdom of priests" and a "holy nation: to the statement: "for all the earth is mine"? Why is God looking for a holy nation? Check Leviticus 44 and 45. How is being a holy people related to being God's own possession?
4. What was Israel's first response to the covenant offer? What is the significance of the preparation for the coming of a holy God among his people? What does this tell us about holiness? What was the response to his descent upon the mount? What does this tell us about the holiness of God?
5. What is the relationship of chapter 20 the chapter 19? What structural law best describes the relation of 19:5-6 to 20:1-17? The Ten Commandments tell us both about the character of a Holy God and of a holy people which He wants? How does the first commandment effect their understanding of what a holy people is to be like? What in the second commandment describes the two major components of the holy character of God? How do a holy people respond to a Holy God in this context?
6. Take a concordance and check the references to "the name" of the Lord. What adjectives are attached to the name of God? How many times was each adjective used? What does this tell us about the essence/nature of the "name" of God? What would it mean to "take the name of the Lord in vain"? How is this related to being a holy people?
7. What are the implications of making a Sabbath day holy? What are the underlying implications here for the connection of holiness and time? Commandments 5-9 relate to how a holy people are to relate to other people. An additional study would include discovering the implications of how

holiness is connected to personal relationships with other people and ethical living. How is the command about covetousness in commandment 10 related to holiness of heart?

8. What is the relationship of the detail laws in chapters 21-34 to the Ten Commandments? What structural law relates 19:5-6 and 20:1-17 and 21-23? Does this give any indication of whether the decalogue is to be understood as a group of narrow commandments or a cluster of broad principles? What is the significance of Israel's further responses to the covenant in 24:1-3?
9. Note and classify that which is described as holy in chapters 25-40. you may use a concordance. What is the purpose of the tabernacle according to 25:8? How is 40:34-35 related to this purpose? How is God's holy presence described? How are the tabernacle and God's holy presence described? How are the tabernacle and God's presence related to the covenant as stated in 19:5-6? How is the purpose of the tabernacle related to the holiness of God? How is this related to John 1:14?

II. I Peter

Read carefully Peter's understanding of Christians as people of God in I Peter 2:4-10 and 1:14-16. What factors are similar to those found in Exodus 19 and Leviticus 11. What are the implications of this for consistency across the testaments for what God desires of people in every age?

Numbers - Deuteronomy - Joshua

1. In Chapter 11, briefly describe the problem that Moses is facing. What is God's solution to the problem?
2. Describe the chief thing that God wants to do for the elders and how He does it. What did they do to get ready for this? Who is the active agent in the preparation for the enabling of the elders for service? Who's spirit is being described? What is the result of the spirit's coming? Does this seem to be a temporary or permanent coming of the spirit on the elders?
3. God took the Spirit that was upon Moses to share with others. What characteristics in Chapter 12 do you see of a man who is controlled by the Spirit of God?
4. In Chapter 27:12-23, what is the problem Moses faces? What is God's answer to the problem? What is the key qualification for Joshua to serve in leadership? What is there about Moses in this story that indicates that he is a man who is living under the Spirit of God?
5. In Joshua 1, what are the indicators that Joshua is living under the Spirit of God in his leadership role? What are God's challenges to him as a man under the Spirit?
6. Joshua 1:16-17 quotes the response of the people to Joshua. Why is their reaction keyed to their response to Moses? What is there about Moses' leadership that they would like to see in Joshua? The key may be how Moses is described in this Chapter. How is all this related to Moses and Joshua being under the Spirit of God?
7. In Deuteronomy 5-7, focus your attention on 7:6-13. What similar things have you already seen about a Holy People? A Holy God? What additional things do you find? What new or fuller insights about a Holy people or a Holy God come from Chapters 5-6? What insights are added from passages like 4:37 and 8:5?

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ISAIAH

General Objective: An Introduction to the Concept of Holiness in the Book of Isaiah.

Specific Methodology:

1. Using a concordance mark every occurrence of the title “The Holy One of Israel” (Or its equivalent) in your Bible with a blue pen. How many times does it occur? How often does it occur elsewhere in the OT? Would you describe it as a characteristic title of Isaiah’s? How often does it appear in chapters 1-39? In 40-66? Does his suggest anything about the authorship of the book?
2. Give short descriptive titles to the paragraphs in chapters 1-6. Make an outline with your titles. Mark in blue every occurrence of the word holy.
3. Focus upon 1:2-2:10. What laws of structure control the relationships between these paragraphs? How do each of these assist in understanding:
 - a) the state of Israel’s spiritual life?
 - b) their relationship to God?
 - c) what God desires to see in Israel?
 - d) how this is to be accomplished?
4. How does 5:24c characterize the relation of Israel to God discussed in chapters 1-5?
5. What is the relationship of chapter 6 to 1-5? Why does not the testimony of the prophet come first?
6. What does chapter 6 tell us about the character of God: Describe a N.T. passage of Scripture where another person has a similar vision of God. What law of structure calls attention to the central focus of the vision? What is the relationship between the kingship of God and the Holiness of God?
7. What key words are used to describe the nature of the prophet? What law of structure describes the relation between his nature and god’s nature?
8. What law of structure best categorizes the relation between the state of the prophet (vs 5) and the subsequent change (vss 6-7)? Was the nature of the change like a conversion experience or something else? Substantiate your answer with data from the text.
9. Summarize by listing every major teaching about holiness in this chapter.
10. What is the relation between the change in Isaiah and the Lord’s subsequent commands in chapter 6? How could this be seen as a personalized example of Exodus 19:5-6? Does this give any clue to why this personal testimony of the prophet comes in chapter 6 rather than at the opening?
11. How are Exodus 19 and Isaiah 6 related to Isaiah’s discussion of the servant in chapters 42:1-44:5?

