

God is looking for holy people to use

by Rick Warren

God is looking for people he can use – those he can bless and honor in great ways. And he’s looking to use people who want to be holy.

When you, as a leader, want to be holy, you’ll see God. Hebrews 12:14 (TLB) says, “Try to stay out of all quarrels, and seek to live a clean and holy life, for one who is not holy will not see the Lord.”

That’s what we want as Christian leaders – to see the Lord and then help others see the Lord. As a Christian leader, there’s no greater way to be used. And we’ve got to be holy to do that.

What does it mean to be holy? Psalm 24:3-5 (TLB) says, “Who may ascend to the hill of the Lord and who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart who does not lift up his soul unto an idol nor swear by what is false. He will receive the blessing from the Lord and vindication from God his savior.”

In this passage we find four characteristics of holy people:

- 1. You’ve got to have clean hands.** “Clean hands” simply means a clear conscience. Does that mean we’re perfect? No. None of us is perfect. But we can keep short accounts with God. 1 John 1:9 (TLB) says, “But if we confess our sins to him, he can be depended on to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong.” So when we sin, we just say, “God, I was wrong. I confess it.” There is no power without a clear conscience.
- 2. We need a pure heart.** We need to lead with pure motives. God can do tremendous things through people who don’t care who gets the credit. In our private moments, we need to be saying, “God, examine my heart, clear out the dross, and make my motives pure before you.” Jeremiah 48:10 (KJV) says, “Cursed be he who does the work of the Lord deceitfully.” We can’t lead with mixed motives.
- 3. We must remain humble.** Psalm 24 says that a holy person “does not lift up his soul unto an idol.” We are our own most dangerous idols. When we’re prideful, we’re making ourselves into idols; we’re putting ourselves before God. Pride goes before destruction. There is no sin God judges faster than the sin of pride. The Bible says, “Before honor is humility” (Prov. 18:12).
- 4. We must be honest.** The psalm also says that the person who doesn’t “swear by what is false” will receive the blessing from the Lord. To be holy, we’ve got to be honest. Even broader than that, as leaders we’ve got to watch what we say. Psalms 39:1 (NIV) says, “I will watch my ways and keep my tongue from sin; I will put a muzzle on my mouth as long as the wicked are in my presence.”

I’ve needed a muzzle on my mouth many times! We must watch our words. You lose spiritual power by talkativeness. It’s like a steam engine. If a steam engine is always letting off steam through the whistle, it builds up no power and it has nothing to move with. But if it stores up that steam, when it lets it loose it moves an engine. We need to ask, “God, where do I need to watch my words? Do I tend to share angry words or sarcastic words or put-downs?” If so, you’ll need to muzzle your mouth.

“As leaders, none of us are perfect. But we can keep short accounts with God.”

Rick Warren

If we want to be the kind of leader that God uses, then we've got to have a clear conscience and pure motives, remain humble, and watch our lips. Do that and you'll be pursuing holiness.

And God uses holy people.

Rick