

# Message Notes

Invitation to the Pursuit of Holiness

# Scripture Passages

(taken from the New International Version)

Introduction – “A New Series!”

Redeemed

Colossians 1:9-14

Life

John 10:7-10

Set Free

Romans 6:19-23

## The Pursuit of Holiness: an invitation to the pursuit.

False Perceptions about Holiness

1. Not Important
2. It's for Prudes
3. Just need to make the curve
4. It's unattainable
5. It's not Gospel-Centered

A Biblical Look at Holiness

1 Peter 1:10-21

Four Things about Holiness

1. Gospel of Grace is starting point
2. Holiness requires Action/Effort
3. It is an integration of our hope and faith
4. God's Holiness is the Motivation and Reason for our Pursuit of Holiness

Gospel Application: “Are you willing to pursue holiness this summer?”

Colossians 1:9-14

<sup>9</sup>For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. <sup>10</sup>And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, <sup>11</sup>being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully <sup>12</sup>giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. <sup>13</sup>For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, <sup>14</sup>in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

John 10:7-10

<sup>7</sup>Therefore Jesus said again, “I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. <sup>8</sup>All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. <sup>9</sup>I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. <sup>10</sup>The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Romans 6:19-23

<sup>19</sup>I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness. <sup>20</sup>When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. <sup>21</sup>What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! <sup>22</sup>But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. <sup>23</sup>For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 Peter 1:10-21

<sup>10</sup>Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, <sup>11</sup>trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. <sup>12</sup>It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

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# The Redeemed Life Set Free

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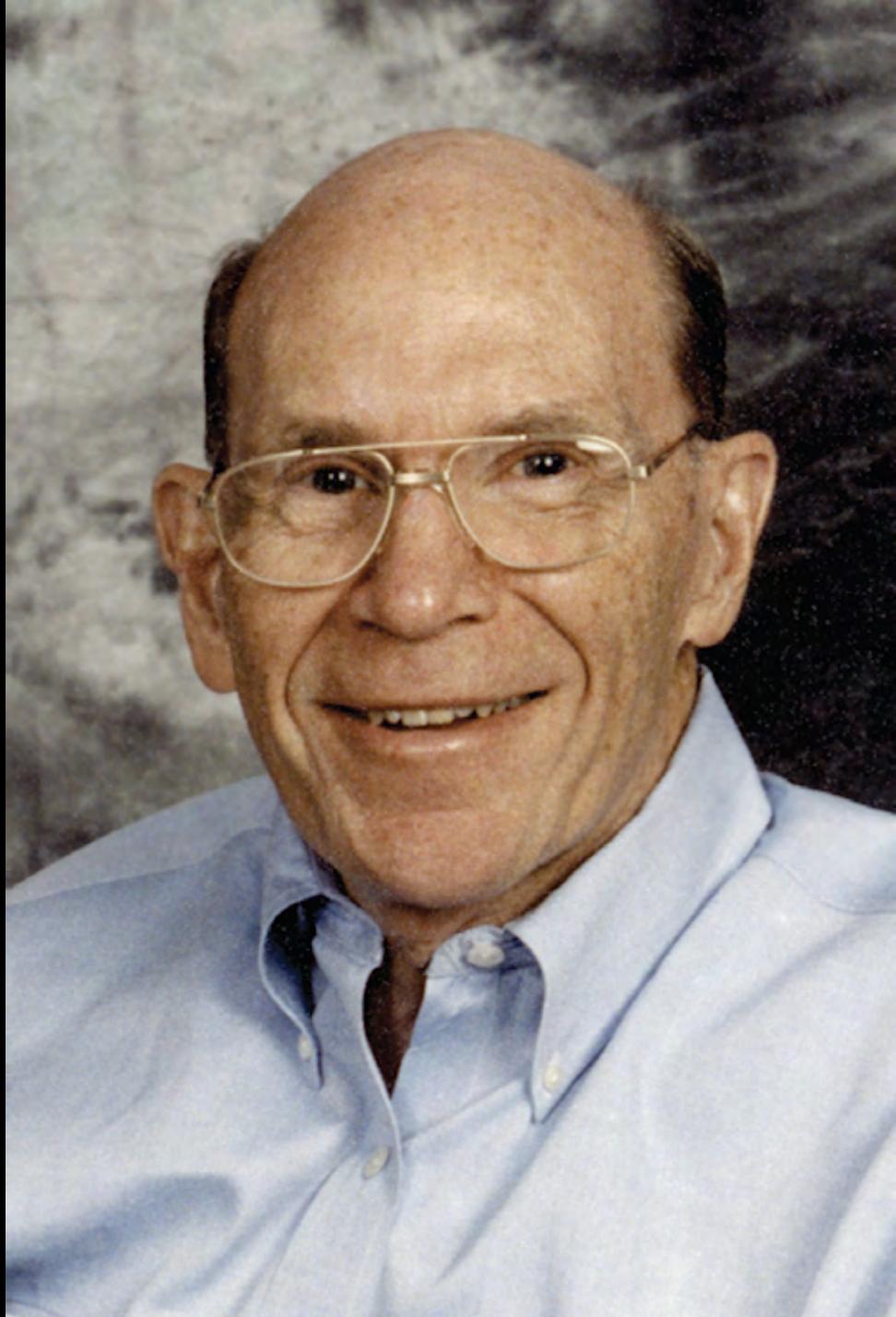
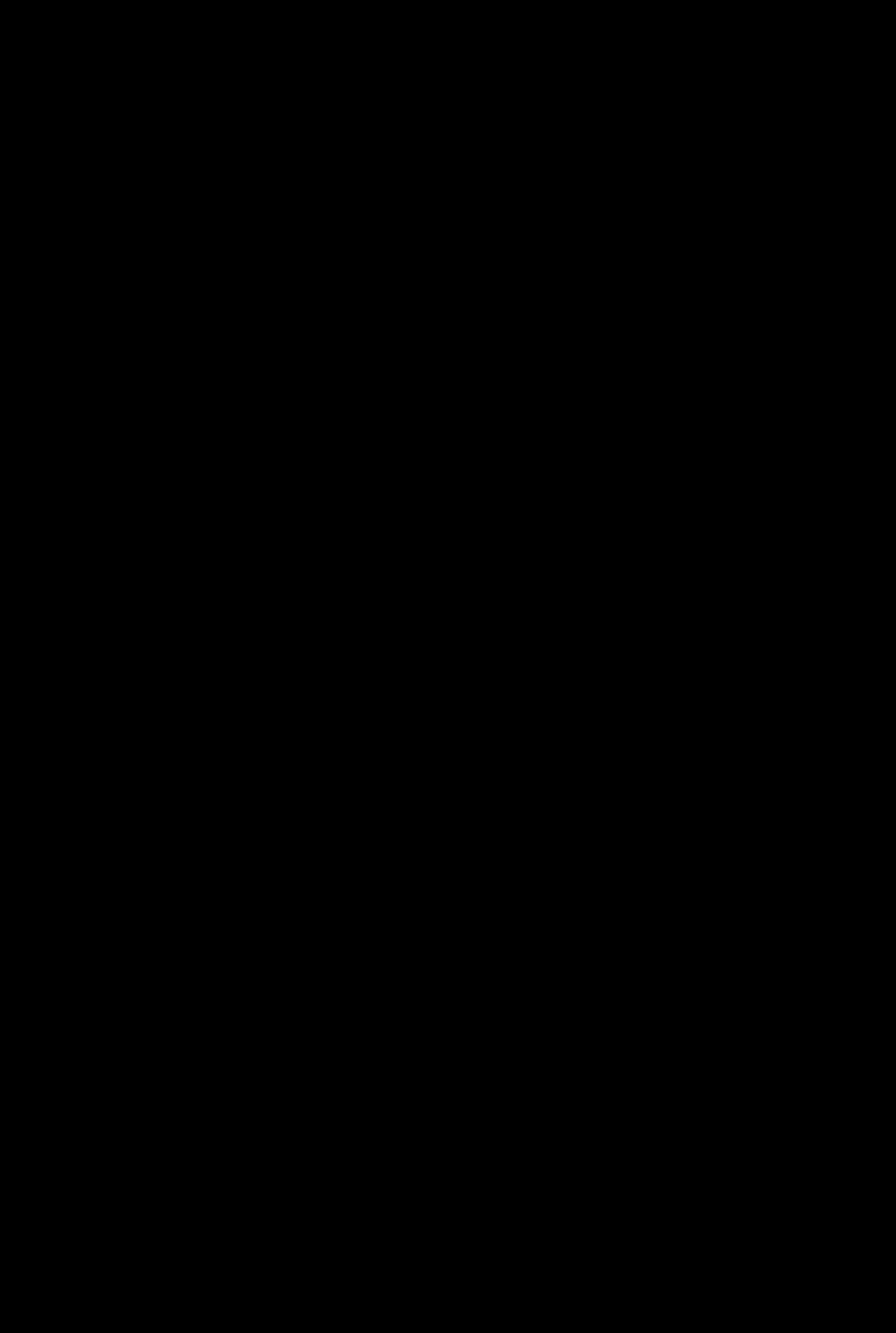
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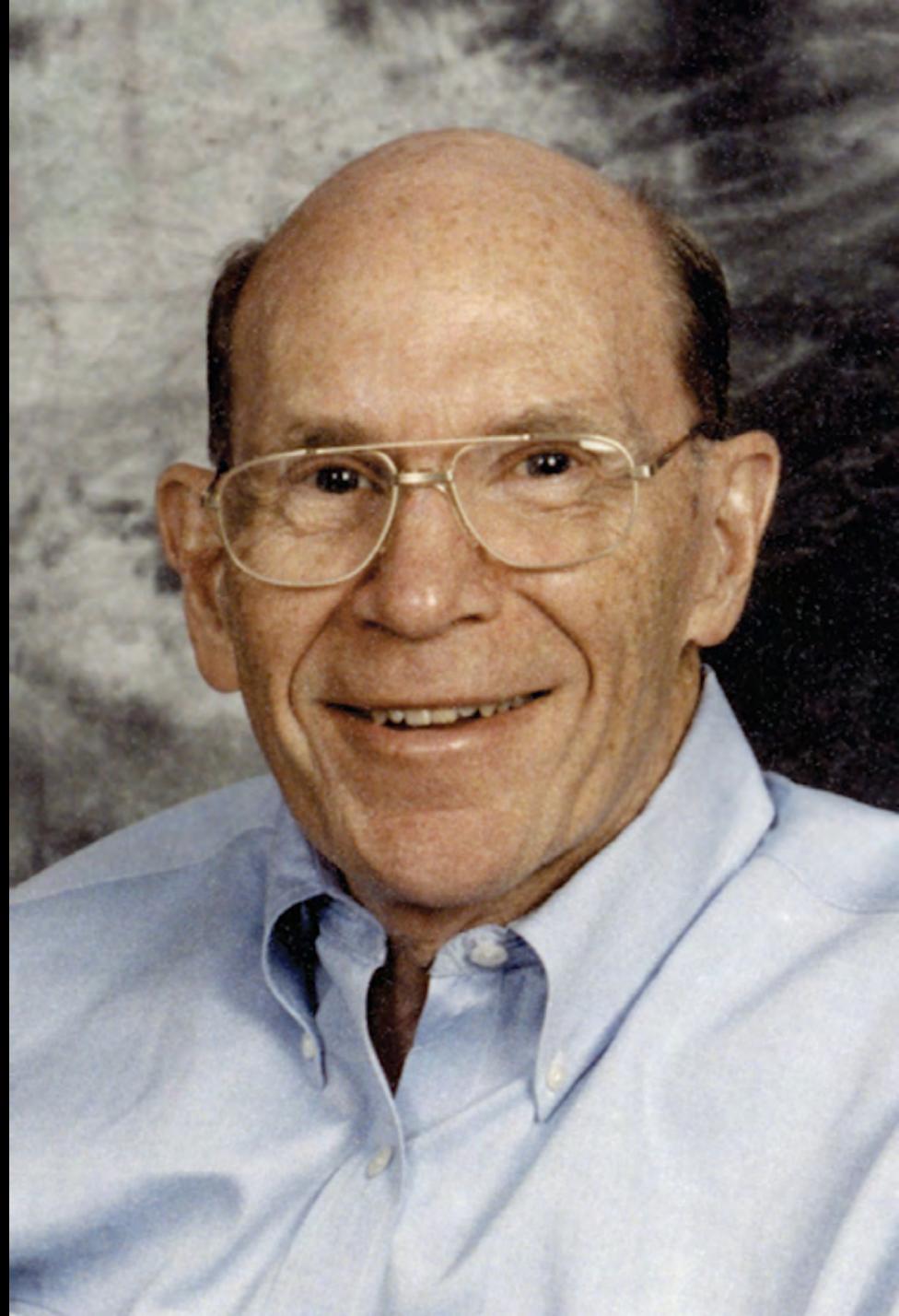
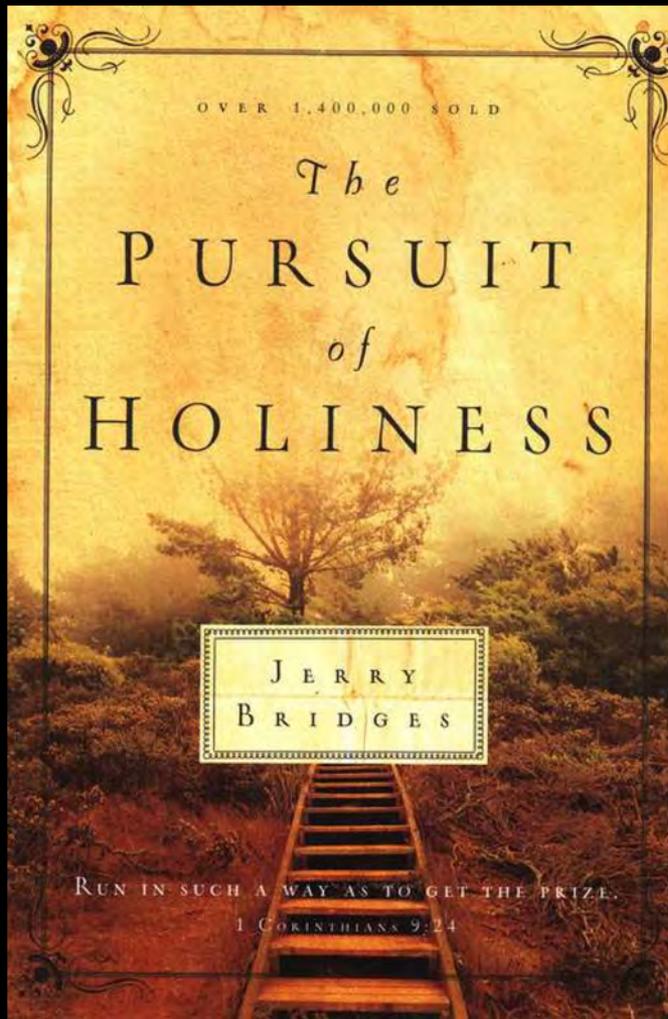
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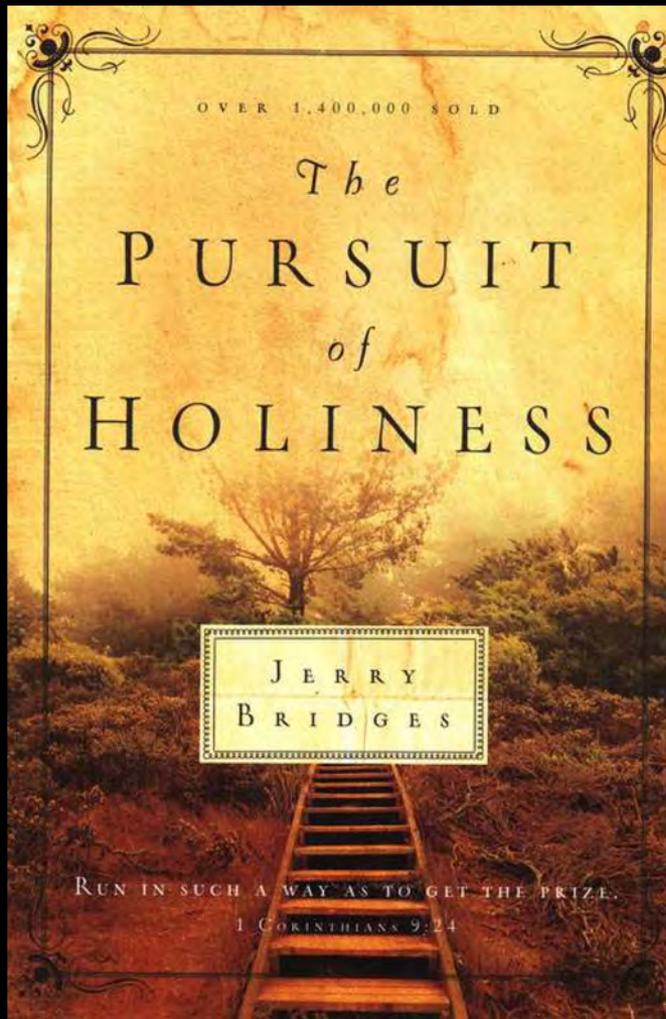
**THE PURSUIT  
OF HOLINESS**



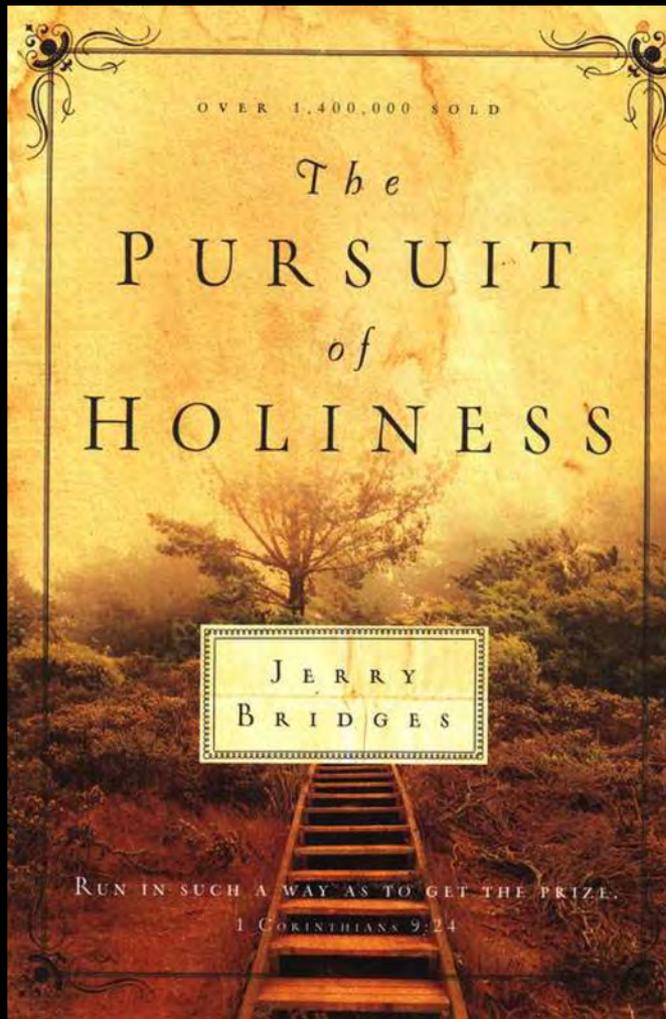


“A farmer plows his field, sows the seed, and fertilizes and cultivates – all the while knowing that in the final analysis he is utterly dependent on forces outside of himself. He knows he cannot cause the seed

to germinate, nor can he produce the rain and sunshine for growing and harvesting the crop. For a successful harvest, he is dependent on these things from God. Yet the farmer knows that unless he diligently pursues his responsibilities to plow, plant, fertilize, and cultivate, he cannot expect a harvest at the end of the season.

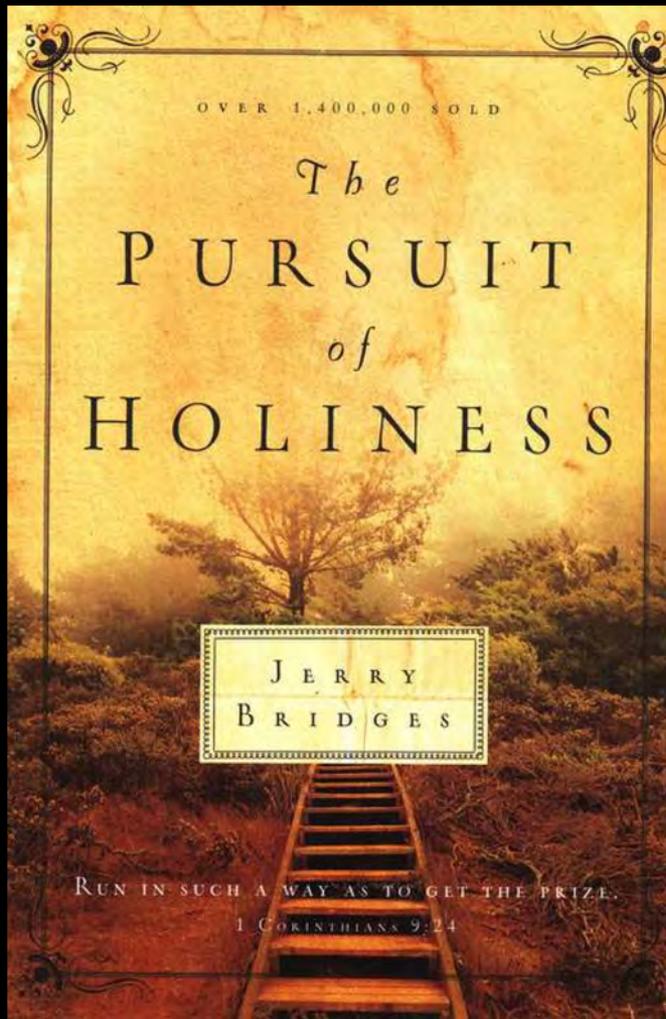


In a sense he is in a partnership with God, and he will reap its benefits only when he has fulfilled his own responsibilities. Farming is a joint venture between God and the farmer.



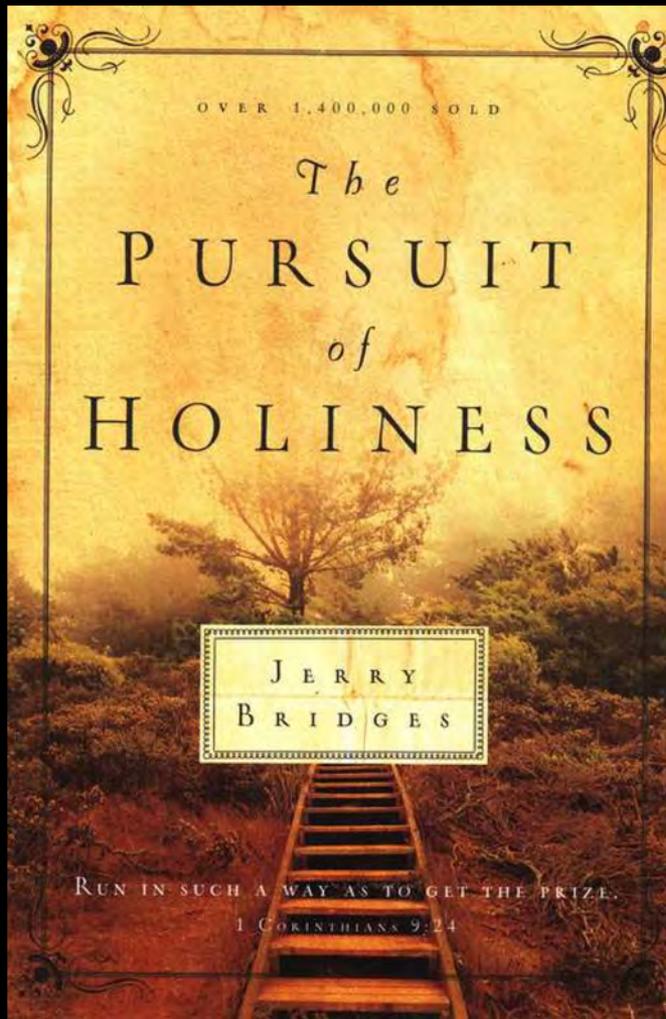
The farmer cannot do what God must do, and God will not do what the farmer should do. We can say just as accurately that the pursuit of holiness is a joint venture between God and the Christian. No one can attain any degree of holiness without God working in his life, but just as surely no one will attain it without effort on his own part.

God has made it possible for us to walk in holiness. But He has given to us the responsibility of doing the walking; He does not do that for us.



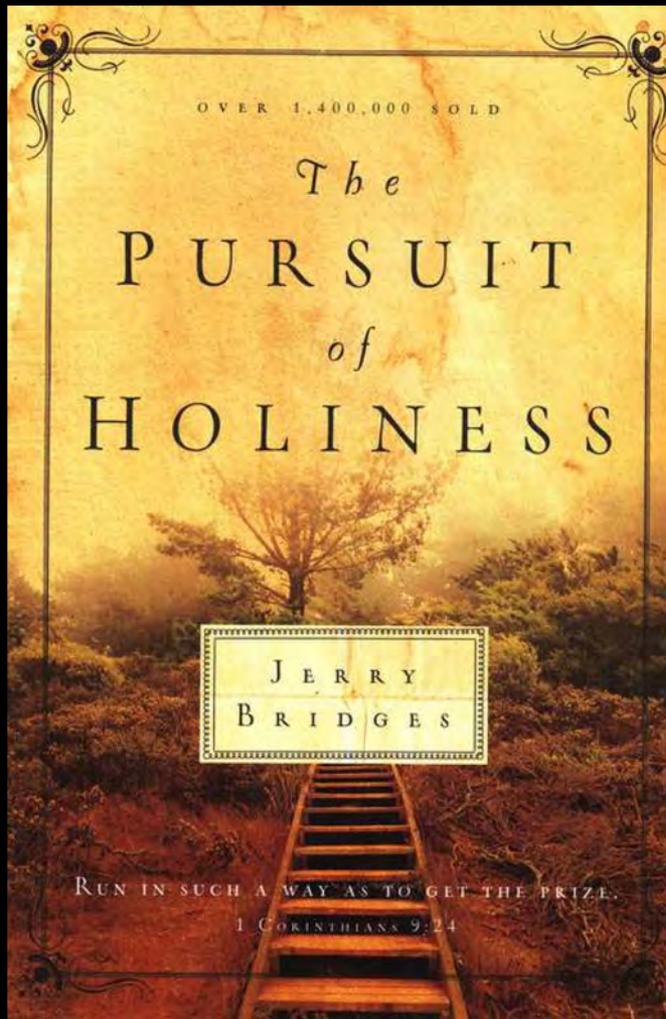
We Christians greatly enjoy talking about the provision of God, how Christ defeated sin on the cross and gave us His Holy Spirit to empower us to victory over sin. But we do not as readily talk about our own responsibility to walk in holiness.

Two primary reasons can be given for this. First, we are simply reluctant to face up to our responsibility. We prefer to leave that to God. We pray for victory when we know we should be acting in obedience.



The second reason is that we do not understand the proper distinction between God's provision and our own responsibility for holiness. I struggled for a number of years with the question, "What am I to do myself, and what am I to rely on God to do?" Only as I came to see what the Bible teaches on this question, and then faced up to my own responsibility, did I see any progress in the "pursuit of holiness."

The title for this book comes from the biblical command, “Pursue holiness, for without holiness no one will see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14, author’s paraphrase). The word *pursue* suggests two thoughts: first, that

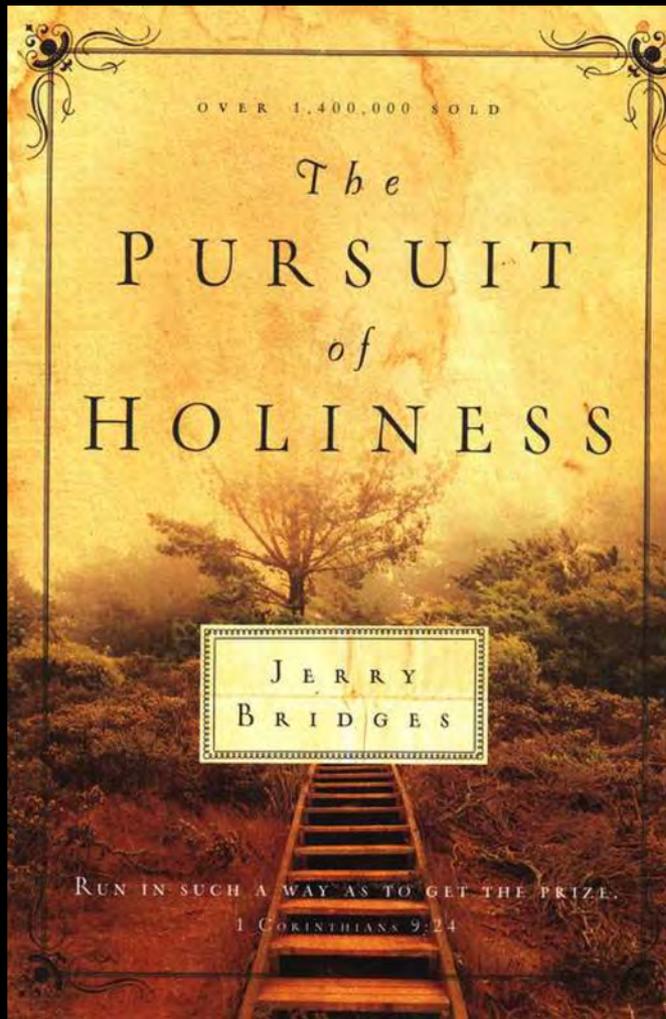


diligence and effort are required; and second, that it is a lifelong task. These two thoughts form a dual theme throughout this book. While seeking to set forth clearly and accurately God’s provision for our holiness, I have deliberately stressed our responsibility, feeling that this is an emphasis sorely needed among Christians today.

At the same time I have sought to emphasize that holiness is a process, something we never completely attain in this life. Rather, as we begin to conform to the will of God in one area of life, He reveals to us our

need in another area. That is why we will always be pursuing – as opposed to attaining – holiness in this life.

~ Jerry Bridges., (1978). *The pursuit of holiness* (page 9). Colorado Springs: Navpress.



# False Perceptions about Pursuing Holiness

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## 1. It is not important



# False Perceptions about Pursuing Holiness

## 2. It is for Prudes



HOLIER  
↑ THAN ↑ THOU  


# False Perceptions about Pursuing Holiness

## 3. It's about being as good as everybody else



“As the Christian culture around them is more or less holy, so these Christians are more or less holy. But God has not called us to be like those around us. He has called us to be like Himself. Holiness is nothing less than conformity to the character of God.”

~ Jerry Bridges (1978). *The pursuit of holiness* (page 22).  
Colorado Springs: Navpress.

# False Perceptions about Pursuing Holiness

**4. It is about unattainable  
perfection**



# FAILURE

If you fail, try, try again.  
But give up soon because you don't want to look like an idiot.

# False Perceptions about Pursuing Holiness

## 5. It is not Gospel-Centered



# Biblical Teaching on Holiness

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## 1 Peter 1:10-21

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*Thoughts on 1 Peter 1:10-21*

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The feeling for mystery, even for the Great Mystery, is basic in human nature and indispensable to religious faith, but it is not enough. Because of it men may whisper, "That awful Thing," but they do not cry, "Mine Holy One!" In the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures God carries forward His self-revelation and gives it personality and moral content. This awful Presence is shown to be not a Thing but a moral Being with all the warm qualities of genuine personality. More than this, He is the absolute quintessence of moral excellence, infinitely perfect in righteousness, purity, rectitude, and incomprehensible holiness. And in all this He is uncreated, self-sufficient and beyond the power of human thought to conceive or human speech to utter.

Through the self-revelation of God in the Scriptures and

Holy is the way God is. To be holy He does not conform to a standard. He is that standard. He is absolutely holy with an infinite, incomprehensible fullness of purity that is incapable of being other than it is. Because He is holy, His attributes are holy; that is, whatever we think of as belonging to God must be thought of as holy. God is holy and He has made holiness the moral condition necessary to the health of His universe. Sin's temporary presence in the world only accents this. Whatever is holy is healthy; evil is a moral sickness that must end ultimately in death. The formation of the language itself suggests this, the English word holy deriving from the Anglo-Saxon halig, hal, meaning, "well, whole."

~ A.W. Tozar, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter 21

# Gospel Application:

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An invitation to  
The Pursuit of Holiness

“These [issues] will be addressed in greater detail in subsequent chapters of this book. But before moving on, take time to settle these issues in your heart, right now. Will you begin to look at sin as an offense against a holy God, instead of as a personal defeat only? Will you begin to take personal responsibility for your sin, realizing that as you do, you must depend on the grace of God? And will you decide to obey God in all areas of life, however insignificant the issue may be?”

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