



Sharing the Faith Journey in your home

Spiritual Traditions Part 3: Holiness Tradition

By Beth Barnett

Richard Foster's book Streams of Living Water and the Renovare Spiritual Traditions Workbook for small groups encourages us to reflect on the different ways that people have practiced their discipleship in different ways, in different times and places, contexts and challenges over the centuries. Six major 'traditions' or 'spiritual orientations' or 'ways' are identified:

Contemplative
Incarnational
Holiness

Evangelical
Social Justice
Charismatic

We are invited to consider the strengths and weaknesses of the traditions we have been fostered in, followed or found. And we are resourced to draw on patterns other than our own.

Together, all six of the traditions reflect an image of Christ. And we do well to pursue and respect each of them, as well as accept our limitations in them and recognise that we are only part of the body of Christ, and genuinely need others who function differently to us to complete the whole incarnation and presence of Christ in the world.

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| You will need: | Toy cars, street/town carpet Veggie Tales DVDs, CD/MP3 with songs about holiness Bingo Squares |
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Practicing the Holiness Tradition

When we explore the Social Justice tradition, we note the prophetic voice that warns against reducing the dynamic life we are called to live in God to a merely private piety. With that firmly in our consciousness, the Holiness tradition reminds us that taking personal responsibility for our own stuff is important too. If we are wholly captivated by collective action and collective transformation there are dangers. We can become hypocrites. "Get the log out of your own eye before you go after the speck in someone else's", Jesus advises (Matthew 7).

The Holiness tradition reminds us that life is not always as exciting and joyful as the Charismatics would wish, or as full of intellectual stimulation as the Word-centred ones expect, or as deep and meaningful as the Contemplative mystics desire, and sometimes, to the frustration of the Social Justice arms, it just isn't just.

There is a time for just holding to what is good and right, even when it's not exciting, clever, deep or revolutionary. This is what the Holiness tradition encourages, and how it sustains the other expressions through the barren times. The Quakers and Amish are famous expressions of the Holiness tradition, but they also express a justice of simplicity and sustainability, a capacity for ecstatic joy and silent contemplation, and are great listeners for the word of God in their midst.

The pursuit of the virtuous life in the Holiness stream is seriously out of fashion at the moment. Many Christians drink alcohol, gossip, maintain sexual intimacies outside marriage, are rabid consumers of product, dance, use contraception, eat meat, swear, are addicted to substances, dress to impress, lend money with interest... the list of behaviours that were once considered inappropriate for the practice of the holy life that are now acceptable to many Christians is extensive. Rather than advocating or mocking any of these practices, a focus on the Holiness tradition reminds us that we are holy and wholly God's and challenges us to examine our personal practice, morality and virtue in the light of whose we are. As Paul once wrote, perhaps everything is permitted, but not everything is beneficial.



Read together:

God has good ways for us to live. Even though things don't always go smoothly in life, following in God's ways is always good. God's ways show us how to live with truth and honesty, health and peace with others. We are made to be in God's image and God calls us to "Be Holy as I am Holy". To say that God is Holy means there is nothing 'out of whack', nothing that doesn't make sense or add up about God, that God is totally good and right. To be Holy is to be all the best that you can be. Sometimes we need rules to help us know God's good ways, but when we are living right it feels more like we are free than under rules.

What are the activities of the Holiness tradition?

Being aware of your own behaviour and motives, choosing well, accepting limits.

Some things to do together

Veggie Tales

veggie Tales dvds specialise in encouraging the virtuous life. Settle down to watch *Larryboy and the Rumour Weed* or *Trouble on Planet Wait-your-turn*. It's great to be strengthened in these virtues, as well as recognising that they are not the sum-total of what it means to follow Jesus.

Sing holiness

Sing some songs that encourage holiness...Colin Buchanan, amongst others has a few! Both of these are on his 'Favourites' album:
Sin is like a great big crocodile
Blabbermouth

Holy Traffic Jam

Use some toy cars and trucks to explore how God's call to holiness is helpful for all of us. Set out a road way or use a plastic road mat. Allow each person to drive their cars (2 per person) around wherever they want. Allow chaos to reign – The more smashes the better! After a time stop, and take all cars off the roads. Work out some road rules like:

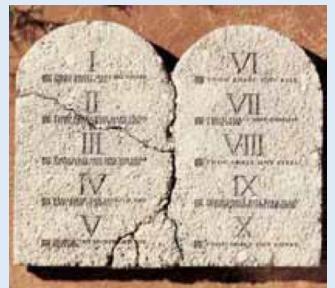
- **'All cars give way to blue cars'**
- **'Keep left'**
- **'Give warning 3 seconds before you want to turn'**

After playing using these rules (and any others you need to add) talk about the rules God has given us so that our lives do not get smashed up or jammed up



The Ten Commandments

The Ten Commandments are not negative. Jesus regarded them as life-giving. They are great promises of a life well lived. For example; "You shall not steal" falls as good news on our ears. No one usually wants to be a thief; we want our communities to be working well so that there is no need of stealing. Read the commandments either in Exodus 20 or Exodus 34. Perhaps you could compare the two lists. Why are they different? What does that suggest about God's intentions for us?



Holiness Manual

Together as a household write a simple 'Holiness' book. Recommend to each other some ways of living that are holy and good. Give each person 2 pages and let them write and illustrate (either by drawing or finding an appropriate picture in a magazine (or on Google images) their holiness idea. Collect the pages together and bind them in a simple book with twine. Some suggestions might be: "Be fair", "Live a thankful life", or "Make the best of your time".

Philippians 4:8 Bingo

Give each person a bingo square and go through each of the squares. Look at what Paul writes in Philippians 4:8 (and a little bit of vs 9 about contentment). Then call each word in random order. If the person can think of an example where they saw the word at work in the day, they cross it off. When any one gets three in a row they call 'Bingo' and tell everyone else the three examples of the items they have crossed. If you have some household members who are very small, pair up and work together. An even better way to play this would be to have one large Bingo board, and to try to identify three in a row collectively.

Philippians 4:8 - Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable — if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think about such things.

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| True | Content | Noble |
| Admirable | Praiseworthy | Pure |
| Lovely | Excellent | Right |