

Pursuing Holiness Wholeheartedly

By Rev. Dr. J. Patrick Bowman

Sample Interview Questions

1. What was the process that preceded the writing of the book?

From the preface:

My research for this project began informally and unexpectedly in January 2013. I began what was to be a year of study pursuing holiness. Looking back now, I acknowledge the absurdity in such a quest. First of all, to set a time limit on such a broad and deep subject is presumptuous at best. Secondly, to think one can obtain with any certainty the object of pursuit is also presumptuous.

I began my quest by reading *Spiritual Sobriety- Freedom and Recovery from Cultural Christianity* by Frank Manno. I progressed from there to *Holiness, Truth, and the Presence of God* by Francis Frangipane. I was off and running with those initial books, turning over soil that had long lain fallow in my life. Throughout that year, I spent time with Oswald Chambers, Steve Hill, J. Lee Grady, Smith Wigglesworth, George H. Warnock, C.H. Spurgeon, and a second-round with Frangipane in *The Days of His Presence*. I read and re-read Art Katz's *Apostolic Foundations*, marveling at his teaching on the correlation between the priesthood and the apostolic ministry.

I listened to hours of preaching by David Wilkerson, Carter Conlon, Leonard and David Ravenhill, Nancy Leigh DeMoss, and other men and women of God from a variety of denominational backgrounds. Their messages were not always explicitly concerning holiness, but their spirits, immersed in the experience of holiness, spoke as profoundly as their sermons. Some were fiery in applying the truths they expounded, and some were very conversational in their delivery. The lifestyles behind the styles impressed me with a need to fully explore the unseen in the seen. It is the same with authors. Not every book I read was about holiness, but I found holiness in every book.

My presumptuously absurd journey did reach a favorable destination that year. Was I able to accomplish what I wanted? Oh, yes, and more. Was I able to “catch” holiness? I rather believe that holiness caught me instead. Although I reached a destination that year, my journey has yet to end. Nine years later, I am still pursuing and still expecting.

2. What sources did you choose to use in the book?

My research for this project continued and expanded that initial investigation of a diverse selection of writers and their writing. Sources include Church Fathers, Doctors of the Church, saints, medieval ecclesiastics, Pietists, Puritans, Reformers, Wesleyans, leaders of the First and Second Great Awakenings, Holiness and Pentecostal pioneers, and contemporary wordsmiths, as they interact with holiness.

3. What do you hope to show by this research?

I hope to show that despite time, social, political, and religious conditions, cooperation, and conflict, diverse personalities from unique life experiences express symbiotic ideas regarding holiness in their writings that connect them in a holy paper trail leading back to the first century.

4. Why was this diversity in your sources so important?

Because holiness is not a static object of study fully considered in a single examination at a set point in time. As a concept, holiness has evolved as people from different eras with different theological and philosophical biases have examined and expressed it. As a personal religious experience, holiness is as varied in its form as those who seek to live it out. The concepts and practices of holiness, over the ages, reflect both divergence and congruence. Only a broad outlook of sources has a chance to take it all in, if even possible.

5. How exhaustive was your research?

The scope of my research is not exhaustive. Its goal is to consider a representation of holiness literature and writers across the last two thousand years. Therefore, the vast quantity of available sources necessitates not every writer nor the entirety of what the writers penned about holiness warranting inclusion. What makes this project unique is its historical-contemporary connection, bringing together diverse voices over two thousand years of exploration, dialog, debate, and consensus.

The methodology adopted for research is a combination of content analysis that considers the writer's audience, message, motivation, and the historical context of their work—the who, what, and why often determined by the when. A secondary consideration is the writer's ecclesiastical heritage. A broad sampling of writers and literature within the limited scope of the research is essential in achieving balanced conclusions.

6. What is the importance of such research and its resulting conclusions?

My goals are to reinforce the historical validity of holiness thought and practice and its continued influence on contemporary scholarship. Secondly, I will show that holiness is neither ancient nor contemporary but eternal. The difference between the two is a matter of perspective; what God allows man to comprehend and what God maintains as the incomprehensible.