

REMAINING BLAMELESS AMID A CROOKED GENERATION

Note to the speaker:

Impress on audience the need to remain blameless from God's standpoint, measuring up fully to his requirements. Help them understand that such is possible for imperfect humans. Being aware of the enticements of this crooked generation will help us to maintain our blameless standing with God

SERVANTS OF GOD MUST BE BLAMELESS (3 min.)

Jehovah's servants have always sought to remain blameless, faultless

Noah was "faultless among his contemporaries" (Ge 6:9)

Jacob was noted for being blameless, in contrast with his brother, Esau (Ge 25:27)

Job was called blameless by Jehovah (Job 1:8)

Zechariah and Elizabeth, parents of John the Baptizer, walked blamelessly before God (Lu 1:6)

Our being blameless gives us a clean conscience, a good relationship with our fellowman, and, above all, a good standing with Jehovah

Emphasizing this, Paul gave clear counsel at Philippians 2:14, 15 (Read)

IMPERFECT BUT BLAMELESS (6 min.)

Can imperfect humans be blameless? Yes

When describing humans, term "blameless" must be viewed as relative, not absolute (*it-1* 337)

To the degree that we measure up to what God expects of us, we are blameless

As already noted, men of faith of ancient times merited being called "faultless" or "blameless"

This was not because they were free from error or wrongdoing, but because, within the limits possible for them to attain, their devotion and loyalty to God were complete, sound

They measured up to what Jehovah expected of humans who, though faithful, were marred by imperfection

Manifested "a complete heart" (or "a perfect heart," *AS, KJ*) toward Jehovah (2Ki 20:3)

Whenever they erred, they humbly accepted correction and discipline (Job 42:1-6; Ps 51:1-4, 7-11)

Despite their errors and weaknesses, they did what God required of them, and God *did not require of them more than they could attain* (*w71* 9/15 565-6)

Jehovah God was pleased with their worship

Comforting to know that he will deal with us in the same understanding way, requiring of us only what we are actually capable of doing

Additionally, we have benefit of ransom sacrifice (Heb 7:25)

WORLD TODAY IS CROOKED AND REPREHENSIBLE (10 min.)

Since Adam's fall, way of majority of mankind has been one of crookedness, disobedience to God

As wickedness mounted, God took action

Jehovah considered earth ruined because of bad conduct of people in Noah's day and swept them away by Flood (Ge 6:11-13; 7:1)

Some 2,400 years later, Jews made up crooked generation that deserved destruction (*w95* 11/1 14)

Rejected Messiah sent by God and impaled him (Lu 17:25)

That Jewish world suffered ruin in 70 C.E.

World today is worse than that of Noah's day and of first century

Wickedness, corruption, and immorality abound among people of this present generation

Collapse of morals, ethics, and principles increasingly evident

Much of problem is due to spiritual degradation of Babylonish religion

Result has been bitter hatred between religious, racial, ethnic, and national groups; much bloodguilt (*w94* 12/15 28-9)

Wrongdoing condoned, even advocated

Horrific weapons, abortion, death-dealing products such as tobacco and drugs allowed and approved

Christians to shun wicked ways of world and remain blameless (Eph 4:17-19; 1Th 5:23)

Satan seeks to trap the unwary, make them lose their blameless standing (1Pe 5:8)

Entertainment industry promotes immoral life-styles, perversions of all sorts, and lack of respect for life and human dignity (*g92* 11/8 5-7)

Video games lure inexperienced into things grotesque and demonic (*g95* 5/8 25)

Greed and ambition are motivating factors that drive the world

If we become accustomed to world's ways, we may become desensitized and start to accept them as normal

How can we successfully resist Satan's influence?

PUT UP A HARD FIGHT TO BE BLAMELESS (22 min.)

True lovers of God must be willing to put up a spiritual fight to acquire and to maintain blamelessness amid this crooked generation (Jude 3)

Jehovah requires exclusive devotion, so we must separate completely from all contaminating teachings and practices (2Co 6:14-18; Re 18:4; *kl* 48-52)

Stay clear of all forms of spiritism (De 18:10-14; *kl* 111-17)

Develop a love for what is holy and clean *and* a hatred for what is bad (Am 5:15a)

Be wary of social events that invite worldliness and excesses (1Co 10:31; *w92* 8/15 16-20)

Watch conduct with opposite sex (Eph 5:3, 4)

Respect duly constituted authority as God's arrangement (*w94* 7/1 19-23)

Includes subjection to worldly rulers and payment of taxes (Ro 13:1-7)

Wives to show submission to husbands, children to obey parents (Eph 5:22; 6:1, 2)

Within the congregation, respect to be given the elders and others taking the lead (Heb 13:17)

In turn, those in authority must shun favoritism, nepotism, abuse of power (Jas 2:9; *w86* 8/15 14-18)

Display honesty and integrity in all our dealings (Heb 13:18)

Beware of using sharp business practices, taking advantage of our Christian contacts (*w86* 11/15 15-19)

Avoid lure of materialism and "the love of money" (1Ti 6:9, 10)

Follow course of peace and true Christian love (Ro 12:18-21; Col 3:12-14; *w71* 9/15 567-8)

Pray continually for God's help and for his holy spirit (Lu 11:13; 18:1)

Blamelessness involves not only avoiding a wrong course but actively doing what we should

Maintain spirituality by regular Bible study, meeting attendance (Ps 1:2; Heb 10:25)

Need to be active in proclaiming the good news

Must "look after orphans and widows" and others in need (Jas 1:27)

Use time, resources, and talents to support Kingdom work; uphold Jehovah's name and sovereignty (2Co 8:12; 9:7)

The gap between true Christians and the world must widen continually

Idea is to see, not how close we can come to edge of reprehensibility, but how far we can remain away from it

If we imitate the world or become indistinguishable from it, then we dishonor Jehovah and are not blameless in his sight

Can become stumbling blocks to sincere ones seeking the truth

Even those long in the truth must be careful not to drift away (Heb 2:1)

JEHOVAH APPROVES HIS BLAMELESS ONES (4 min.)

In this critical time of the end, important to be found blameless by Jehovah (2Pe 3:14)

Only faultless ones will have his protection and blessing (Ps 15; Pr 2:21, 22)

By remaining blameless amid this crooked generation, we provide an answer to Satan's taunts and bring pleasure to Jehovah (Pr 11:20; 27:11)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)