

The King's Highway.

And an Highway shall there, be and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness: The wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. Isaiah 35:8.

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Pure Love.

BY JOSEPH H. SMITH.

I want to speak to you this evening about just simple, pure love, not so much about measure or quantity or increase as about the quality, about the state. Pure love is one of the truest and one of the most expressive titles or names of the state of full salvation. You will find the text in Romans 12:9: "Let love be without dissimulation." Note that word "let." It is a very proper word. Has it occurred to you that our part in the great things of salvation is the part of letting rather than doing? Supposing I state that we need more fresh air in this auditorium; nobody here would run for an air pump; they would just open the window or door and let it come in. And, beloved, do you see anything in love, in pure love, this evening? You don't want to get a little love pump and pump it in. Just open the windows and doors and let in.

When we speak or write of love being with-out (please observe the emphasis is on the word without), we are speaking of your love, without anything else. And under the head of dissimulation, for practical purposes, I would include two classes of things. First, those that are antagonistic to love, and second, those that artificial substitutes for love—cheats, counterfeits. What we call the politeness of society is, to a great extent, just an aping of what perfect love does naturally. Let love be without any aping at love, without any cheat; let it be all pure wheat. Let it be sincere, without any wax, pure strained honey. Let it be without anything put on to look like love, or to imitate love; just let it be pure.

Beloved, it does not matter so much first of all, how much religion we have, as it does whether what little we have is good. Purity has not to do with quantity but with quality. I am to show you, from the context here, from paragraphs of this great chapter, some elements, some phases of pure love. Before I do so, however, let me again seek to impress upon you this thought of "withoutness." The next time you read the great love chapter, please have your eye open for the noes and nots in that description of love. "Thinketh no evil, is not provoked, envieth not," etc. The perfection of love there is in the perfect absence of these tempers and states of soul which are contrary and antagonistic to love. What did the disciples have after the day of Pentecost which they did not have before? some one asks. Brethren, this is a fine way to talk about a fire. A great fire swept over Baltimore, and I will illustrate by that. You say: What is there down in that business section that was not there before the fire? Why, no, you don't; you ask me what is gone that was there before the fire, and the bigness of the fire is proven by the littleness of what is left. You ask me what the disciples had after the day of Pentecost that they did not have before, and I say No, what did the disciples have before the day of Pentecost that they did not have afterward? And if I can show you their self-striving and self-push and self-ambition for the chief places before Pentecost and that they were all swept away and nothing but the little ashes of the consumed self to show the place, you will agree that

there was a big fire. It is proven a big fire by showing what a little is left—what is gone.

Now, beloved, the perfection of love, understand, is not in the degree of love; it is not in the extent of the deeds; it is not in the accomplishments of love. The perfection of love is in the pureness of love, the absence of cheat of love, all that is antagonistic to love, so that you might not have nearly as much love as some one else, or as you are going to have, and yet you might have perfect love and pure love! Prove to me that there is nothing in my heart contrary to love, and that love is there, then you have proved to me that I have perfect love.

Now, let me be without dissimulation. Just keep the back door of your heart open all the afternoon so that if anything turns up or is discovered in your heart is contrary to love, you may just let it go. Let love be without, let love be alone, let love be solitary, let love be without dissimulation. This, as you know, is a wonderful chapter. I am going to give you some little selections from it now. I think it all revolves around Romans 12:1 and 12:9.

I think it is an application of entire consecration and an application of pure love to us.

THE HUMILITY OF PURE LOVE.

First, look at the humility of pure love illustrated by this, "Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate." You see two things there to which pride soars, high things and high folks. Now, brethren, love puts no premium on ignorance, no premium on inferiority, on mediocrity, still perfect love is content with simplicity. Perfect love is at home with poor folks. It is not there just as a patron, but it is at home. Mind not high things, even the high things of knowledge which may be a snare, and the high things of ambition which are sure to be a snare, and the high things of society that are both a pitfall and a snare. So perfect love nestles so low that it would be hard to fall anywhere. Blessed is he so low down that he can not go any way but up. Mind not high things or folks either.

In the tenth verse is another phase of the humility of pure love "in honor preferring one another." Now carnality drags the other fellow back that self may go front, while perfect love keeps back and holds the other fellow up and strives to sustain him in his place of honor and responsibility and is content. Shall I put it the way a very bright brother, a minister and a professor recently put it in a love feast? He said: "Full salvation keeps me comfortable playing second fiddle." Let love be pure, in honor preferring one another. And there is another phase of it, and that is in Romans 12:3: "For I say to every man that is among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think (but mind he strikes the mean), but to think soberly as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." This brings me to tell you that pride is a corruption of self-esteem. The different aspects of the carnal mind are all corruptions of something that is constitutional to the natural man. For instance, covetousness is corruption of acquisitiveness, and pride is a corruption of self-esteem. There is a proper place for acquisitiveness, and it is necessary.

There is a proper place for self-esteem, and here now is the measuring rod for our sanctified self-respect not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but soberly, according to this rule, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. The measure of my faith in Christ Jesus is the proper gauge for my self-esteem. I will give you an illustration.

I was holding a meeting once, and there was present a young woman who had recently come into the experience of a clean heart. She was very conscientious, quite spiritual and a little timid, and in an opening prayer, either from force of habit or from timidity, she said: "Oh, God, give me a clean heart." That seemed a very innocent mistake, but she went all through that service with a clouded face, unhappy. At the close of the service she arose and said: "Brother Smith, may I speak a word? I want to make an apology to God in your presence. I dishonored Him in my opening prayer. I asked God for a clean heart. I should have thanked Him for a clean heart." You see how tender conscience was there.

If you should make an altar call and ask every sinner who wanted to repent of his sins and find pardon, to come, my sanctified self-respect would not let me come. If you should ask every believer who wanted to be sanctified to come, I could not come; but if you should ask every sanctified believer who wanted a fresh anointing and greater victory in his life, then I would come at once. There is a gauge and there is a balance in this matter of humility between pride and self-esteem. Pure love has nothing of self, but will not allow self to discount the work of Christ within us. It magnifies not only the Christ in heaven and the Christ in the Scriptures and the Christ in the atonement, but also the Christ in me. Not only the work he has done in redemption provisionally, but what he has done in redemption actually. If my life should be pure of a carnal pride, it should also be pure of a false humility. It should be without dissimulation.

THE INDUSTRY OF PURE LOVE.

Next, I would like to show you the diligence or industry of pure love. Love cannot be lazy. There are other things about a man that can, but love cannot be lazy. Let me read a much misunderstood text in this chapter: "Not slothful in business." By nine out of ten of us this is applied to our real estate business, or our dry goods business, or our farming business, etc., but it has no reference to any of them. I have a friend who reads the Bible every day in seven different languages, and he told me that ours was the only translation that was so punctuated that anybody could fall into the mistake of thing-ing it had any reference to our business at all; that the others say it is the business of the Lord. Fervent in spirit, not slothful in the business of serving the Lord, is the idea. There are a lot of other things that will keep you stirred up in your business—ambition, necessary, hard times, competition or something will keep you stirred up on that, and, beloved, the great trouble with us American Christians today is that we haven't time to serve the Lord. We have no time for worship, meditation and the like, and many of us in our private devotions only give the Lord the rag

end of the day' when we are worn out and ought to be in bed, instead of giving him the fresh and vigorous hours.

The fact is that the man who is diligently attending to the Lord's business is not likely to be slovenly about his own business. He will dispatch that so as to have time for the Lord's affairs. He goes on to specify somewhat.

"Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering, or he that teacheth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness." The fact is, pure love will keep us busy about the Lord's business, even if the church and our friends do not make it easy for us to find openings to do the business of the Lord. Love will run around and make openings and love refuses to wrap the Lord's money in a napkin or bury it in the real estate business, or any other kind of earth, as some have done.

My mind turns to a plain, simple, somewhat eccentric evangelist, tall, gaunt, awkward and ignorant, but very wise in spiritual things, who went around holding services in all sorts of churches, Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist—anywhere he could get a hearing. He was a local preacher in the M. E. Church. A new pastor came—a little fellow—and he became vexed at this brother going around and holding meetings in other churches beside his own, and so he gave him a lecture about it and asked him to stop. He said: "I will, if you will give me enough to do to keep me busy." The pastor finally said: "If you do not mind and stay at home, I will cut your horns off." He had not studied rhetoric, but he knew what that meant—he would take his license away. He was a great big man, and he looked down on the little fellow and said: "Haggie away. My blood is not in my horns."

While assisted by openings and by position and appreciative of recognition, yet pure love finds that it cannot be still about the Lord's business, whether they help us or not. It is fervent in spirit. You say, "It is cold all around in my church." Look here: you ought to be hot enough yourself to make a hole big enough for one or two. That is what fervent means—hot.

"Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." "I would impress upon your hearts and minds the diligence that is involved in pure love. You see it in your own homes; how the loving wife and mother is always, night and day, doing for those whom she loves. Love cannot be still. Love must be at work. It must be adding ease or comfort or supplying the necessities or conveniences or something. Love never calls a strike. Love keeps at it whether it is paid or not, glory to God.

Now, beloved, keep the back door open and if you find a lazy streak in your love, let it go; if you find anything that needs straightening, here is the place to have it attended to.—Ch. Standard.

More than two-thirds of the habitual drunkards apprehended in London last year were women. An investigation of twenty-one selected public houses in London showed that in four days they were entered by nearly 40,000 women.

Intercession.

Intercession reaches everywhere. Neither time nor place bound it. Wherever grace can come, prayer can reach. We hear of some land where God's glory is endangered; or again we read by intercession, and reach it, too, with efficacy and power. We may work for it without interruption; our ordinary actions may go to it; we may do more than all the ambassadors and legates that ever were, and yet not for an hour be distracted from our profession or our trade. We shall never know, till it meets us at the judgement—a goodly show, a beautiful vision—how much glory we have thus with burning eyes and heart of spiritual distitution of the slaves or aborigines in certain countries. We may be the weakest and most obscure of God's children, yet we can reach all this gained for God, without cost, without toil, almost without advertence, yet with such infinite and eternal recompense. Do at least as much as this: Intercede for those who are being tempted with the same temptation as yourself. If we can do such an immense work for Jesus, with scarcely any trouble to ourselves, can we think to love Him if we are not doing it?—Faber.

Tarry Until.

I. P. MOORE.

I was told of a man in the west who bought a claim in the gold fields. He and his son finding a lead to dig for the gold. They worked hard for many days but finally became discouraged and sold out to another man for a small sum. This man took up the work and only dug ten feet further and found the gold. The former was greatly disappointed and said, if ever again he started for gold he would never stop until he had gone ten feet farther. Of course he meant to say that he would dig until he found. Jesus said tarry until ye be endued with power from on high. Oh! brother, sister, in seeking the baptism of power and love, remember that word until. Thank God there is gold for the one that digs through.—Gospel Banner.

A New York Times correspondent in Messina gives the following statement:

"A new infidel! publication, in its first issue, attacked the church and religion generally, and in a single blasphemous sentence asserted that 'there is no God,' and challenged the Deity to prove His existence by sending an earthquake, which occurred next day. It is said to have made a great impression on the Southern Italians."—Christian Herald

Remember, that if you are a Christian you are a giver, not of money only, not of culture only, not of teaching only, but of the dearest things man may hold—hope, energy, faith, love, and a consecrated selfhood.—Rainsford.

"It is impossible for any one who is not frequently in prayer to have a sense of nearness to God and companionship with Him.—J. H. Dougall.

A candle that will not shine in one room is very unlikely to shine in another. If you do not shine at home, if your father and mother, your sister and brother, if the very cat and dog in the house are not the better and happier for your being a Christian, it is a question whether you really are one.—J. Hudson Taylor.