

June 30, 1913.

HOLINESS AS A SPECIALTY.

Among other hindrances interposed by Satan to the work of God, is the cry of "Specialty," "Specialists," "Hobby," "Holiness hobby," and the like. He knows that the whole world is ready to catch at a straw, if it will furnish an excuse for avoiding holiness. He knows full well that a little bubble against holiness will outweigh the logic of men and angels, in its favor. Hence the cry of hobbyism. Many who take up and re-echo the cry are sincere, but good men ought to know whose gospel they are heralding. Eternity will reveal the fact, that such, and all other statements made to prejudice the mind against the holiness teaching, originate with Satan. Whole systems of doctrine are full of them. Doctrinal tenets, as dear as life to many, may be traced to this source. False statements about the teaching of holiness ministers are, therefore, accepted without question, and heralded as truthful. We plead guilty to the charge, however, and rejoice to make holiness a specialty for the following reasons:

1. Holiness is one of the special attributes of God. This made such an impression on the four living creatures before the throne, that they cry incessantly, 'Holy, holy, holy. Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.' With this attribute of the Godhead we are, also, so impressed, as to make a specialty of crying, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God of hosts; heaven and earth are full of his glory." We are very sincere in this.

2. His law is holy in every part. Holy in itself, because it came from God. Holy in its demands upon all moral agents; requiring holy hearts, holy conversation, and holy conduct. Hence it appears necessary to make holiness a specialty.

3. His gospel is holy. "The glorious gospel of the ever-blessed God." Holy in its origin, holy in its principles. From foundation to top-stone there is not a command, nor a requirement, nor a provision, nor a promise, which does not lead to holiness as the ultimate result. Hence, it is important to make holiness a specialty.

4. Holiness is the normal condition of the human soul and body. As God from eternity, in himself, has ordained holiness as man's special condition, and made him for that condition only, it is absolutely impossible for any soul of the race to find complete rest without complete holiness. Hence, it is right to make holiness a specialty.

5. The plan of redemption was instituted to restore man to holiness. The God-man, who came to accomplish this work, was completely holy—holy in His Godhead, holy in His manhood. His holy humanity exemplified the condition which He came to restore to His followers; not in some other world, nor at some period in the eternity to come, but on earth and now. In the world where this image was lost, it is to be restored; "for as He is, so are we in this world."—1 John 4:17. His life was holy; His teachings were holy. The offering on the cross was holy, and the object of its presentation was to make men holy. "Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate."—Heb. 13:12. Is it then strange that we should make holiness a specialty?

6. To this end the Holy Spirit is given. He comes, as the executive officer of the Godhead, to lead men to holiness. His presence

makes the ungodly shiver, because He is holy. He is an unwelcome visitor to the lukewarm professor, because of His Holiness. He comes uninvited into the heart of backsliders, for His coming makes their condition more terrible.

The Holy Spirit convinces of sin, that he may lead to pardon; He executes pardon, that He may lead to holiness. He alarms the backslider, that He may restore him to justification. He restores to justification, that He may bring him to holiness. He persistently whispers in the ear of all God's justified children, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." "That the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost." Why not make holiness a specialty?

7. It is the absolute demand of the Trinity, that every moral being in the universe should be holy. The demand is imperative. It is the essential requisition of the divine nature, and is revealed in His law, in His gospel, and in the leadings of the Holy Spirit. It is indicated by the joy of angels, and the agony of devils; by the happiness of heaven, and the misery of hell; in the rest of those who are holy on earth, and the restlessness of the multitude who refuse to be holy.

8. Holiness includes all that is good, and rejects only that which is evil. It demands uncompromising submission to God, even to bringing "every thought into obedience to the law of Christ." It restores to harmony with the whole pure universe by bringing its subject into harmony with the divine will. It separates the evil from the good, even to the thoughts and intents of the heart. Who should hesitate to make holiness a specialty?

9. Holiness is the object of God's revelation to man. Bishop Foster says, "It breathes in the prophecy, thunders in the law, murmurs in the narrative, whispers in the promises, supplicates in the prayers, sparkles in the poetry, resounds in the songs, speaks in the types, glows in the imagery, voices in the language, and burns in the spirit of the whole scheme, from Alpha to Omega, from its beginning to its end. Holiness! holiness needed, holiness required, holiness offered, holiness attainable, holiness a present duty, a present privilege, a present enjoyment, is the progress and completeness of its wondrous theme. It is the truth glowing all over, welling all through revelation—the glorious truth which sparkles and whispers and sings and shouts in all its history, and biography, and poetry, and prophecy, and precept, and promise and prayer—the great central truth of the system."

10. Holiness is a necessity to the greatest Christian usefulness. Because—

(1) It delivers the soul from the fear of man, "which brings a snare." The most spiritual bodies of Christians are greatly hindered by "loiterers," or "hangers-on." Many of these were truly converted, but failing to obey God and "go on unto perfection," they continually shrink from the duties assigned them. Every one of these would be ready, at any moment, and for any duty, if wholly sanctified. This one feature of the holiness experience—the deliverance from the fear of man—is sufficient to demonstrate its importance, and its distinctness from the experience of justification.

(2) Holiness alone removes from the heart the inclination to disobey God. The warfare which is continually going on in the soul of justified Christians against unholy affections

were not removed in justification. No; God makes a specialty of removing unsanctified affections, only when the soul is sanctified. It is, therefore, quite impossible for any Christian to reach his full measure of usefulness, while so much of effort must be put forth to control these evils in his heart.

Every child of God not wholly sanctified, is painfully conscious of the fact that the unbelief of his heart is a great hindrance to his usefulness and happiness, and testifies to the presence and power of this inward foe. Can any intelligent Christian deny that the removal of all unbelief from the heart would at once give him more power with God and men?

(3) Holiness prepares the heart for the abiding of the Holy Spirit, as promised in the New Testament. Holy men have found a wonderful contrast in the experience resulting from the occasional visits of the Holy Spirit, and the steady assurance which the abiding Comforter brings to the soul.

All Christian experience is false, if this is not true. The Holy Spirit cannot abide in the soul till all that is impure is cast out. He cannot adorn and polish his temple till it is made pure. Hence, the power for usefulness, which is given by the indwelling Holy Spirit, only, can prepare us to fill the measure of usefulness God designs, and as holiness is necessary to prepare the heart for the Holy Spirit's continued presence, we feel that we must make a specialty of holiness.

11. Holiness alone delivers us from the fear of death, and robs the judgment of its terrors. There are periods in the experience of every faithful child of God, in which he has complete victory over death and the grave, and the judgment has no terrors; but this is not the abiding condition of the soul. In justification (as is elsewhere shown) we receive the title to all there is in the great Calvary purchase, including complete holiness and heaven, but neither the one nor the other is yet in possession. When the Holy Spirit visits his child to encourage his faith and reassure him of his title, he comes as an earnest of the purchased possession, and gives a foretaste of complete victory; but it is never abiding till the heart is made holy. It is not newborn love, but newborn love made perfect, which brings complete deliverance from these fears. "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."—1 John 4:17, 18.

12. Holiness is the only possible fitness for heaven. God has prepared a habitation of spotless purity where saints and angels are to reside. Shut in by walls of jasper, each resident is blessedly conscious that "sin can never enter there." The unfallen sons of the morning are there, their robes of light blazing with the holiness of God. Of all the millions of the ransomed, not one will be there who has not been washed and made white in Jesus' precious blood. Not washed in heaven, for nothing unclean can enter there. No stain was ever removed in heaven. No soul was ever made holy within its glorious walls. Entrance within its portals, without holiness, is eternally impossible. As the decree has gone forth from God, that none can see His face or dwell with His angels without holiness, and the only time allotted to secure this grace is on this side of

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