

## THE CAUSE OF SPIRITUAL DECLINE.

Whenever a Christian begins to lose the sacrificial spirit he begins to decline in spiritual life and power.

The blessing of entire sanctification is obtained by the fully justified believer yielding himself a living sacrifice upon the altar of God. The Holy Spirit falls upon the sacrifice to consume the dross of indwelling sin, and the Spirit abides to help clean and to energize all the faculties of the soul for efficient service for Christ.

From henceforth the sanctified believer is to reckon himself as fully the Lord's. He is to be a living sacrifice. He has received a blessing, not to sit down and selfishly enjoy, but he is to go forth to be a channel of blessing—a vessels unto horror sanctified and meet for the Master's use. The consecration once made must be continually perpetuated, if the fire is to continually burn upon the altar of the heart. Service, trial, temptation and fellowship with the sufferings of Christ are to be his now as never before. He has been blessed to be made a blessing. Whenever this vision is lost and this attitude of soul broken, the fire burns low, the glory begins to depart and there is a serious leakage of love.

Perhaps no man since Paul ever more fully maintained the sacrificial spirit than did John Wesley. When he received thirty pounds a year he lived on twenty-eight and gave two pounds away. When his income increased to fifty, his living expenses remained the same; twenty-two pounds went to charity; and when his income had gone up to hundreds of pounds a year, he still practiced the most rigid economy and gave all he could to the Lord. In services he knew no let up through all the years. His life was a perpetual sacrifice. He taught the people called Methodists the experience of entire sanctification. He truly exemplified it in his life, even though his carnal wife refused to live with him and heaped upon him reproach.

The early Methodists had the same spirit in so far as they were partakers of the same grace. But Wesley, before he died, lamented the fact, that as the people called Methodists increased in material substance, they declined in spiritual life and power. Their habits of temperance, industry and economy developed by the grace of God, led to material prosperity. Wesley said, "the only way to make such prosperity a blessing is to let our benevolence keep pace with our prosperity, otherwise it will prove a curse to us, and not a blessing."

It is a fact that few people can stand prosperity. Few preachers grow in grace with an increase of salary or their elevation to high official position in the church. "Jeshuran waxed fat and kicked." So do many today. Here is a young girl brought up in a holiness church. She received the blessing when young. Her testimony had in it the unction and power of God. She married well and went with a man who loved her dearly and loved to bestow upon her every comfort of life. In her photo today she shines forth as a beautiful woman, according to worldly standards. The gown is elegant and made to set forth all the charms of her beautiful form. But the pose, like exremely low neck and all, makes it come nearer the appearance of an actress than that of the truly sanctified child of God. What is the reason? She got out among the worldly set. She had a husband who wanted her to look beautiful. She naturally had a love for beautiful things. Gradually and unconsciously she conformed to her environments, still, no doubt, giving some to charity and even to holiness; but the real

spirit of sacrifice is gone, and at times there comes to her lean soul a longing for the rich fullness she once knew in Jesus, for the things of sense do not fully satisfy.

When God has laid it upon our hearts to rebuke some for their worldly conformity, reminding them of the early days when they loved to be with the humble and despised people, they have turned and said, "we have gotten out and seen differently. We are more broad-minded now. They were good people and we love them, but oh, so narrow, and a lot of them so ignorant. But we have heard bigger men, and have seen the world and know better." Yes, they have their low-necks, short sleeves. A prayerlessness and a carelessness indicate it. They had rather go to a chateau tea than a holiness camp meeting. They may try to talk soft and beautiful and nice, but the fire is gone. Why? The sacrifice is no longer on the altar. They cannot forget the former days and former joys; but alas, there are only ashes now.

Again a holiness movement can only move so long as this sacrificial spirit is maintained. The prosperity that builds up good churches with substantial salaries may become a menace. If preachers begin to get their eyes on good places to occupy, and once they are in, to settle down and have a nice comfortable place for themselves, they will soon be in the cradle of carnal security. Now a good church building and a comfortable salary are good in their place, but the adversary can make them the object of selfish desire and strife. A preacher can measure his grace by knowing his attitude of soul towards these things. When he loses the real sacrificial spirit he may remain doctrinally correct and manifest a good degree of activity. But the old-time fire and joy are not there. He has gone in for the saving of his life (and a little for a rainy day), and he has lost the best things God could bestow.

We know a great camp ground in New Jersey founded by Inskip, Macdonald, Cookman, Osbourn and others. Thirty years ago it was the greatest centre for holiness in the world. The surroundings were the most simple. There were no amusements to attract. The watchword was "holiness unto the Lord." Hungry hearted people flocked there. Thousands were saved and sanctified. But someone suggested they should make the place more attractive and have places of recreation and observe special days, etc. Gradually these things were introduced. The programme was made broader and broader. What do we find today? The place has become the centre of amusement, recreation and entertainment. A Methodist preacher, who is not a holiness man, said, "I went there and was so grieved and shocked at things that were permitted in the line of entertainment that along with a couple of others I made protest to the management." They still keep up a little holiness meeting. It is held in an isolated place but has no prominent place in the announcements.

Beware when a place established for spiritual achievement along holiness lines begins to become popular as a summer resort and a place of recreation. The tennis court, the baseball diamond, etc., will be followed by the popular lecture, and all will creep in to gradually tone down, drive out, definite, radical, spiritual teaching on entire sanctification that kills the "old man."

We pity the person whose conscience is so weak they cannot enjoy innocent recreations with their children in the proper place. But let the church lose the sacrificial spirit that belongs to holiness, then these things are given

a big place in the programme of the church's activities. A letter from a young girl who had gone to a Christian institute for a week is nearly all about the jolly good times they are having. "The great fun,—a little lecture in the morning and athletics all the afternoon. These institutes are led by experts who are training the young people for service. Of course the young people at such places have a good time—a jolly good time. The church in the wilderness was in for a good time; the "people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play." Just what they are doing today. Get up a banquet have plenty of amusement and you will attract and hold the people they say. But the true church of God has spiritual ideals. Its watchword is "holiness," and it can remain prosperous only so far as it honors the Holy Ghost and depends upon Him for success.

W. E. S.

## THE LAST WEEK AT BEULAH.

Some friends from Grey's Mills came over to the Wednesday night prayer meeting. Rev. Mr. Thomas was present also, who expects to go to the front quite soon. This meeting was one of the best. The Lord met with us and blessed all present and we were conscious of the power of the Holy Spirit brooding over the meeting.

Many seemed reluctant to depart, as we were so soon to be separated after spending several weeks together so pleasantly.

The grounds were quite deserted by Saturday, only a few remaining over Sunday; yet we had a morning service, which was grand, quite a number from outside of the grounds being present. Brother Smith preached a good sermon, which was very helpful—real spiritual food for our souls.

The last session of our Sabbath school proved to be our best. Although we had a down-pour of rain, 27 were present.

J. F. Bullock, our superintendent, and his good wife, have been very faithful in their work for the Master. Their labors have been crowned with success. All have enjoyed these S. schools.

Brother Bullock presented each teacher and scholars with views of Beulah.

These gifts were very much appreciated, and we know our Father will richly bless our brother and sister in return.

The school then tendered a vote of thanks to the superintendent for his labor of love.

We left only G. B. Storey and family, who will also go as soon as Sister Storey is able to be moved to Moncton, and Mrs. Hickson, her son, and mother, Mrs. Read, and they will remain for about two weeks.

Rev. A. H. and Mrs. Trafton goes to St. John Tuesday to spend a few days with their daughter, then on to Woodstock to their home.

We all were sorry to say good-bye to Beulah until 1916.

I. M. K.

## THE WANDERER'S RETURN.

Luke 15, 11-32.

Verse 11—Two sons. 12—Not satisfied. 13—Left. 14—In want. 17—Hunger. 18—I will arise. 19—Unworthy. 20—He arose. 21—Confession. 22—Welcomed and clothed. 23—A time of rejoicing. 24—The dead alive again, the lost found, "and they began to be merry." Backslider, remember this: Christ will never turn you back.

HAROLD ELLISON.