

IMPORTANCE OF THE DOCTRINE AND EXPERIENCE OF HOLINESS TO SPIRITUAL LEADERS.

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"Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

A mighty man inspires and trains other men to be mighty. We wonder and exclaim often at the slaughter of Goliath by David, and we forget that David was the forerunner of a race of fearless, invincible warriors and giant-killers.

If we would in this light but study and remember the story of David's mighty men, it would be most instructive to us.

Moses inspired a tribe of cowering, toiling, sweat-begrimmed, spiritless slaves to lift up their heads, straighten their backs, and throw off the yoke; and he led them forth with songs of victory and shouts of triumph from under the mailed hand and iron bondage of Pharaoh. He fired them with a national spirit, and welded and organized them into distinct and compact people that could be hurled with resistless power against the walled cities and trained warriors of Canaan.

But what was the secret of David and Moses? Whence the superiority of these men? David was only a stripling shepherd-boy when he immortalized himself. What was his secret? To be sure, Moses was "instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," and, doubtless, had been trained in all the civil, military and scientific learning of his day, but he was so weak in himself that he feared and fled at the first word of questioning and disparagement that he heard (Exodus 2:14), and spent the next forty days feeding sheep for another man in the rugged wilderness of Sinai. What, then, was his secret?

Doubtless, they were men cast in a kinglier mould than most men; but their secret was not in themselves.

Joseph Parker declared that great lives are built on great promises, and so they are. These men had so far humbled themselves that they found God. They got close to Him, and He spoke to them. He gave them promises. He revealed His way and truth to them, and trusting Him, believing His promises, and fashioning their lives according to His truth—His doctrine—everything else followed. They became "workers together with God," heroes of faith, leaders of men, builders of empires, teachers of the race, and, in an important sense, saviours of mankind.

Their secret is an open one; it is the secret of every truly successful spiritual leader from then till now, and there is no other way to success in spiritual leadership.

1. They had an experience. They knew God.

2. This experience, this acquaintance with God, was maintained and deepened and broadened in obedience to God's teaching, or truth, or doctrine.

3. They patiently yet urgently taught others what they themselves had learned, and declared, so far as they saw it, the whole counsel of God.

They were abreast of the deepest experiences and fullest revelations God had yet made to him. They were leaders, not laggards. They were not in the rear of the procession of God's warriors and saints; they were in the forefront.

Here we discover the importance of the doctrine and experience of holiness through the baptism of the Holy Spirit to Salvation Army leaders. We are to know God and glorify Him

and reveal Him to men. We are to finish the work of Jesus, and "fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ" (Col. 1:24). We are to rescue the slaves of sin, to make a people, to fashion them into a holy nation, and inspire and lead them forth to save the world! How can we do this? Only by being in the forefront of God's spiritual hosts; not in name and in titles only, but in reality; by being in glad possession of the deepest experiences God gives, and the fullest revelations He makes to men.

The astonishing military and naval successes of the Japanese are said to be due to their profound study, clear understanding and firm grasp of the theory, the principles, the doctrines of war; their careful and minute preparation of every detail of their campaigns; the scientific accuracy and precision with which they carry out all their plans, and their splendid and utter personal devotion to their cause.

Our war is far more complex and desperate than theirs, and its issues are infinitely more far-reaching, and we must equip ourselves for it; and nothing is so vital to our cause as a mastery of the doctrine and an assured and joyous possession of the Pentecostal experience of holiness through the indwelling Spirit.

I. *The Doctrine.*—What is the teaching of God's Word about holiness?

1. If we carefully study God's Word, we find that He wants His people to be holy, and the making of a holy people, after the pattern of Jesus, is the crowning work of the Holy Spirit. He commands us to "cleanse ourselves from all unlikeness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord" (2 Cor. 7:1). It is prayed that we may "increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men . . . to the end He may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God" (1 Thess. 3:12). He says: "As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy" (Peter 1:15, 16). And in the most earnest manner we are exhorted to "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14).

2. As we further study the Word, we discover that holiness is more than simple freedom from condemnation for wrong-doing. A helpless invalid lying on his bed of sickness, unable to do anything wrong, may be free from condemnation of actual wrong-doing, and yet it may be in his heart to do all manner of evil. Holiness on its negative side is a state of heart purity; it is heart cleanness—cleanness of thought and temper and disposition, cleanness of intention and purpose and wish; it is a state of freedom from sin, both inward and outward (Romans 6:18). On the positive side it is a state of union with God in Christ, in which is "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." It is moral and spiritual sympathy and harmony with God in the holiness of His nature.

We must not, however, confound purity with maturity. Purity is a matter of the heart, and is secured by an instantaneous act of the Holy Spirit; maturity is largely a matter of the head and results from growth in knowledge and experience. In one, the heart is made clean, and is filled with love; in the other, the head is gradually corrected and filled with light, and so the heart is enlarged and more firmly established in faith; consequently, the experience deepens and becomes stronger and more robust in every way. It is for this reason that we need teachers after we are sanctified, and to this end we are exhorted to humbleness of mind.

With a heart full of sympathy and love for his father my little boy may voluntarily go into the garden to weed the vegetables, but, being yet ignorant, lacking light in his head, he pulls up my sweet corn with the grass and weeds. His little heart glows with pleasure and pride in the thought that he is "helping papa," and yet he is doing the very thing I don't want him to do. But if I am a wise and patient father, I shall be pleased with him; for what is the loss of my few stalks of corn compared to the expression and development of his love and loyalty? And I shall commend him for the love and faithful purpose of his little heart, while I patiently set to work to enlighten the darkness of his little head. His heart is pure toward his father, but he is not yet mature. In this matter of light and maturity holy people often widely differ, and this causes much perplexity and needless and unwise anxiety. In the fourteenth chapter of Romans, Paul discusses and illustrates the principle underlying this distinction between purity and maturity.

3. As we continue to study the Word under the illumination of the Spirit, who is given to lead us into all truth, we further learn that holiness is not a state which we reach in conversion. The Apostles were converted, they had forsaken all to follow Jesus (Matthew 19:27-29), their names were written in Heaven (Luke 10:20), and yet they were not holy. They doubted and feared, and again and again were they rebuked for the slowness and littleness of their faith. They were bigoted, and wanted to call down fire from Heaven to consume those who would not receive Jesus (Luke 9:51-56); they were frequently contending among themselves as to which should be the greatest, and when the supreme test came they all forsook Him and fled. Certainly, they were not only afflicted with darkness in their heads, but, far worse, carnality in their hearts; they were His, and they were very dear to Him, but they were not yet holy, they were yet impure of heart.

Paul makes this point very clear in his Epistle to the Corinthians. He tells them plainly that they were yet only babes in Christ, because they were carnal and contentious (1 Cor. 3:1). They were in Christ, they had been converted, but they were not holy.

It is of great importance that we keep this truth well in mind that men may be truly converted, may be babes in Christ, and yet not be pure in heart; we shall then sympathize more fully with them, and see the more clearly how to help them and guide their feet into the way of holiness and peace. Those who hold that we are sanctified wholly in conversion will meet with much to perplex them in their converts, and are not intelligently equipped to bless and help God's little children.

4. A continued study of God's teaching on this subject will clearly reveal to us that purity of heart is obtained after we are converted. Peter makes this very plain in his address to the Council in Jerusalem, where he recounts the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon Cornelius and his household. After mentioning the gift of the Holy Ghost, he adds, "and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:9). Among other things, then, the baptism of the Holy Ghost purifies the heart; but the disciples were converted before they received this Pentecostal experience, so we see that heart purity, or holiness, is a work wrought in us after conversion.

Again, we notice that Peter says, "purifying their hearts by faith." If it is by faith, then it is not by growth, nor by works, nor by death, nor by purgatory after death. It is God's