

SERMON BY C. J. FOWLER, D. D.

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Just this, the holiness preacher is. He is uncaral. Here are his peculiar responsibility and privilege. Here is grounded the expectation of God concerning him. Here is why I say, and get my proof, that God expects more from this class of preachers than from any other class under the sun.

Standards.

Not that there are different standards for conduct, where things are equal. The standard, so far as God is concerned, is the same in Africa as in America, but a native of Africa could do there and be guiltless, what one could not do in this country where you and I live, and be guiltless. The difference is not in the *standard* but in the people's *conception* of it. Paul clearly recognizes and teaches this when he says, "sin is not imputed when there is no law," i. e., though one may do what is contrary to divine law and thus sin, yet this is not charged up to him *as sin* because he did not know that the law forbade it. Light—knowledge—determines the question of guilt.

Here also we must see and say that no class of people are under obligation to live as well as the holiness people. Notwithstanding that the holiness people are, as a class, made up of the *common* people—those who do not represent education, position, wealth, business prominence, political influence and the like, still because of their peculiar relation to the illuminating spirit they have this responsibility and this privilege. As the Jew had peculiar responsibilities because unto him "were committed the oracles of God," so have the holiness people, because they are made the channels of special spiritual truths to the church of Christ.

Holiness folk recognize, as none others, that *holy living* is the requirement of God. Just *this* stamps them with striking peculiarity. *They do not believe in the necessity of sinning, or apologize for it, nor practice sinning.* Between holiness people and others there is a difference that is fundamental. *It is a question of one's relation to sin and sinning.*

But the holiness movement has and has had a sound and scriptural philosophy. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." It teaches that the inner man controls the outer man; that character conditions conduct; hence it has held that a clean heart, a sanctified nature, an inner holiness was possible *because* the external conduct God demanded could only be realized when the nature was such as to produce it. A bitter fountain must send forth bitter water; a sweet stream demands a sweet fountain.

Character and Conduct.

While this is true, which we have just emphasized, in the teaching and testimony of holiness, yet the emphasis has been largely on *character*, with, rather than on *conduct*. This may seem, at first, to be a strange statement for me to make and a strange admission; yet I regard it as both a fact and one that is reasonable to assert and allow.

I may make myself plainer at this point, especially to the holiness people—if I state it thus: The holiness people have given larger attention to the *getting* sanctified than to the *living* sanctified—to the condition and glory of the experience of holiness, rather than to the conditions and necessity of living the holy life. And yet I must not and do not mean to say that we have been *indifferent* to the matter of holy living, for this would not be true; but that we have, as I have said, placed the larger emphasis on the one than on the other.

This has come about easily if not naturally. There has been so much to do by way of showing what the doctrine is and how to get the experience of it and get people in, that the labor has been as it has. Hence we are more familiar with the *doctrine* of holiness, than with the *discipline* of holiness—with what it means to *get* it, than what it means to *keep* it.

Peculiar Perils.

The holiness movement, in the very nature of things, has peculiar perils. When I say "holiness movement," I do not mean any particular section of it, but the whole of it—indeed, all holy people whether they would consider themselves with the movement or not, or would be beckoned in by the movement itself.

Our very privileges create our perils. The great opponent of holiness is, of course, the devil. The battle is an old one. It began in Eden when Satan attacked holiness and it has continued during all the centuries. Satan's success with our first parents and, sad, to relate, his success so frequently and fatally since, has made him confident and impudent in his matter and methods.

One word spells the devil. *Sin*. He is sin's exploiter. Sin is his business. He has no other. He is sin's representative and embodiment—"the devil sinneth from the beginning." But, the devil met his match and his master in the Second Adam and was beaten, badly beaten in the fray, and is mad about it, exceedingly mad. His defeat has terribly angered him. The Scripture says that the inhabitants of the earth and sea are in peril because the devil has come down to them "having great wrath."

Holiness is peculiar. As we have observed, it is striking, in that it is an un sinning religion. Mark, an un sinning religion. Holiness and sinning are direct opposites. But how can sin-wrecked, sin-poisoned, sin-pinioned man get free from sin and sinning? Sure enough! Can he? The devil says *no!* and most people say the same.

Another Adam.

This brings into the arena and into view the Adam that the devil assaulted but could not down, Jesus Christ.

"Jesus! the name high over all,
In hell, or earth, or sky;
Angels and men before it fall,
And devils fear and fly."

His name shall be called "Jesus," and *why*? There is a reason for this name, "For he shall save his people from their sins." *From* their sins and not *in* them. There is a wide difference in those little prepositions; and, John farther says, "The blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin."

Just here the religion of Jesus Christ is challenged; it is put to the test. Is this religion a doctrine, primarily? No. Is it a teaching, primarily? No. Is it a profession, primarily? No. Is it a history, primarily? No. Is it a creed, primarily? No. It is *conduct*; it is not, in its relation to men, even *character*, as it is *conduct*. Character is inner and invisible. It cannot be seen. Its expression is behavior. "What doth it profit * * * though a man say he hath faith and have not works?" It is what one does that tells men what he is.

If Christ can produce holy conduct, he has won and the devil is defeated; if Christ cannot produce, in his people, holy conduct, the devil has won and Christ is defeated.

Exactly so! The devil does not care how orthodox we are in sentiment, or in statement; he does not care how correct we are in theology or in theory; he does not care how instant and insistent we are in profession, if only we *do not have Christly conduct*. This the devil

seeks and is determined to destroy, if possible. This done, and "the word of God is of none effect."

Of course the holiness movement cannot be reached, as such. Like community, it must be reached by way of the individual. Of course to down and destroy one holiness person wrecks the movement by that much; yet, the enemy seems to strike at the *masses* of us—at the movement itself. See the history of his assaults upon the holiness following in a given locality; now he seeks to disrupt it. See his presence in holiness associations and churches in his seeking to divide them. See his working in holiness schools to disjoint them. See his tricks upon the holiness papers to defeat them—a systematic, stratagetic, Satanic onslaught of hell upon the whole holiness movement to down it; he seems to be giving attention to platoons, companies, regiments, divisions and corps of the holiness army in his decided, determined and deviled attention.

And to what end? we again ask; to deny the theology of holiness? the teaching of holiness? the tradition of holiness? or even the truth? (for that is the *mere letter* of truth if it has no concrete example and illustration in the life?) no, *but he seeks to defeat the consistent conduct of holiness.*

But.

There is a *but*, thank God! There is a nevertheless—a something more to be said. "He giveth more grace." This is our hope and it is enough. So, none need despair, for one's self or for the kingdom of God, for, He can cause us to stand. Paul does not hesitate to give in detail a striking portrayal of our dangers when he says that we "wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. These he represents as some of the "wiles of the devil" and that the "day" is an "evil" one when these forces have to be encountered; *but* we may "stand" and "having done all, stand."

"As true as God's own promise stands,
Not earth nor hell with all their bands
Against us shall prevail;
The Lord shall mock them from his throne;
God is with us; we are his own;
Our victory cannot fail!"

What a privilege to live for Christ and thus *prove* the claims of the gospel of God to a lost and on-looking world. I beg that we all read again and devoutly reflect upon the words with which we started in this sermon and see what aged men may be and aged women; see what young women and young men are expected to be who wear the Christian profession, and the servants likewise—all patterning after the divinely equipped preacher, and follow him as he follows Christ.

Where is Deliverance.

John Fletcher, that prince of Christians—if we may so designate a man—and writer of such distinction and worth in early Methodism, gave a fearful description of indwelling sin. To read it and reflect upon it is enough to startle into instant action to get rid of it, if such a thing as being rid of it is possible. He said: "Indwelling sin is not only the sting of death, but the *very hell of hells* * * * By so much of indwelling sin we carry about us, so much of indwelling hell; so much of the sting which pierces the damned; so much of the spiritual fire which will burn up the wicked; so much of the never dying worm which will prey upon them; so much of the dreadful instrument which will rack them; so much Satan's image which will frighten them; so much of the char-

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