

## PLACING THE BLAME NO. 3.

Rev. W. E. Smith.

Text: Art thou he that troubleth Israel?

In a previous article we touched on some incidental things that conspire to make the preaching of sin-killing holiness unpopular; we now wish to diagnose the particular cause of all hostility to the doctrine and experience of entire sanctification.

First, last and all the time the trouble lies in the sinful condition of the human heart—the condition of carnality that remains in the regenerate. All evangelical churches and others in their creeds teach that there still remains in the justified child of God a bias to evil, dispositions that antagonize the Spirit of God. Episcopalian, Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregationalist and Methodist, and even Roman Catholic agree that the child of God is not wholly sanctified at conversion. They all agree that the work must be accomplished in the heart of the believer to make him fit for Heaven; the battle takes place as to the time it may be wrought. The Roman Catholics teach a post-mortem sanctification in purgatorial fires; they are far more consistent than Protestants who deny the possibility of being wholly sanctified before death, but provide no purgatory between death and Heaven.

When the Bible is taken as the standard of teaching, we see into what inconsistent situations all deniers of this glorious experience are placed. We do not wish to engage in carping criticism we will contend for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints. Error, even though it clothe itself in the garb of sanctity, must be exposed. Hungry souls must be taught the truth as it is in Jesus, and the blood of Christ, God's remedy for sin, exalted to its highest efficacy.

The carnal heart gladly accepts erroneous teaching to soothe the conscience, and encourage itself in a sense of false security. We wish to note some of the unscriptural teachings that avoid the question of complete sanctification, and make it unnecessary.

There is the doctrine of Imputation that teaches that the righteousness of Christ is so absolutely imputed to the believer, that the moment one accepts Jesus as his Saviour he becomes as holy as Christ in the eyes of God, and has eternal life made secure to him even though he commit all the sins in the catalogue of transgressions. In other words, God never looks on the believer as he is. The believer can never be holy, but in Christ he has a holy standing, even though his state be that of pollution. Thus we see Jesus did not mean what he said in the words, "make the tree good and the fruit will be good." It is folly to think about being "pure in heart" or "purifying ourselves even as he is pure." This teaching says that Christ by his active and passive righteousness fulfilled all the law and therefore I am exempt from the claims of the law. I have no more to do with the law. All the claims of the law against me are false, even though I violate it every day. I have an eternal standing in Christ. State may be variable, but standing is eternal. You may throw a diamond into a pig-stye; its state is very bad, but it is a diamond just the same; a sheep cannot become a goat, even though it chew old boots, rags and such

rubbish, it is still a sheep. And so a believer may commit murder, practice adultery, steal, lie, covet, live like the world and have an eternal standing in Christ. David they say even in the embrace of Bethsheba was polluted as to state but as holy as Christ as to standing.

Now look at the philosophy of such teaching. It is like painting the curb of the well to purify the water; it is like putting a white cloth over a running sore and calling it healed; it is like calling a barnyard pure with a beautiful fall of snow covering its pollution. God practices deception upon himself in calling believers pure when they are corrupt. Could anything be more unscriptural! The word says, "He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us (not in Christ) who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." Not the hearers of the law but the doers of the law shall be justified. "He that committeth sin is of the devil." "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin."

These antinomians destroy the force of this last passage by changing the personal who into the impersonal it, and say there is a principle of divine life in the believer's heart that cannot sin, but he has a carnal nature that must cling to him till death that will always sin.

Against all this unscriptural antinomian delusion we put the plain teaching of the Book of imparted righteousness by faith in Christ. The Psalmist says: "Thou desirest truth in the inner parts and the hidden parts thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean; wash me and I shall be whiter than snow." Purging and cleansing never mean to cover up and impute. When John said, "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's son, cleanseth from all sin." He did not say, covers it up. When Paul says, "Put off the old man with his deeds which is corrupt and put on the new man, he did not teach the putting on of a beautiful white shirt with a diamond stud in the bosom, over a vile old ragged garment. He said, 'put off' and then put on. When Paul said, 'Knowing this that our old man is crucified with him that the body of sin might be destroyed that henceforth we should not serve sin,' he referred to a work that must be accomplished in us. We have heard drunken men on the streets of Glasgow at an open air meeting say: "Yes, yes, I was justified and sanctified over nineteen hundred years ago, Jesus did it all for me on the cross." That abominable doctrine of imputation had a sure place in their minds and hearts—a very easy method of salvation. It demands no self renunciation or self crucifixion. "Jesus paid it all." I am free to drink whiskey, give way to all manner of sinful passions and impulses but my salvation in Christ is secure.

A multitude of man-pleasing preachers today are deceiving the people with this delusion. They urge people to confess Christ by holding up the hand, joining the church, being baptized, and all that, but they fail to ring the changes on the absolute need of holiness inwrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost; the gaining of that sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord."

II. Again there is the teaching of Suppression. This teaching assents to the proposition of the need of a second blessing, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit, that gives victory over the power of sin, but repudiates the idea of the destruction of all carnality in the heart. In other words the devil has done a work in us that Jesus Christ cannot undo.

Even though many eminent and godly people have espoused this teaching, we must go by the word of God.

Some years ago Reader Harris, K. C., of England, challenged any scholar to come forward and prove by scripture that the principle of sin must be suppressed and not eradicated. A controversy arose, but instead of the suppressionists quoting scripture they merely ridiculed Mr. Harris and Hugh Price Hughes and all who teach the destruction of inbred sin. We challenge any person with a knowledge of Greek to quote a Greek verb used by the sacred writers that indicates suppression. They could have used words that imply to keep under, restrain, hold in check, etc., but they used words in dealing with sin that imply "to purge," "to crucify," (which always means death), "to put off," "to make dead at a blow."

When Paul said, 'I keep under my body,' he did not mean the body of sin and death, that had been killed in Paul by the baptism with the Holy Ghost; he referred to his 125 lbs. avoirdupois. "When Paul ate he had a sanctified use of food and controlled his appetite. All of his physical appetites had been purified. But the 'old man' had been crucified.

We have met a good many people who for years went to meetings that taught a baptism for service. They received blessing but soon fell down in the same old place. Finally they heard of entire sanctification that kills out inbred sin. They sought and found the deepest work of grace and rejoice in it today.

III. So the third phase of teaching we emphasize is that of soul cleansing, soul purifying power known as entire sanctification. This is the teaching Satan hates and he gets religious teachers to dress it up in a bearskin to distort it in various ways so that the work of God may be hindered.

This was the doctrine John Wesley said God had raised up the Methodists to propagate. All of the earliest itinerants professed and taught it. It was this glorious experience that made early Methodism Christianity in earnest. When this is lost sight of Methodism becomes Christianity in cold storage. Wesley himself said, "Wherever his preachers failed to preach entire sanctification definitely there the work of God declined.

Many able Divines may call it an error and a delusion, but what a brilliant galaxy of soul winners have rejoiced in the all cleansing power. We can name only a few—Fenelon, Madame Guyon, John and Charles Wesley, Carvossa, Billy Bray, Bramwell, General Booth and wife, Catherine, Bishops Simpson, Ames, Peck, McIntyre, Oldham, Drs. Collins, Steele, Fowler, Morrison and thousands of others. All these testify to a definite experience wrought subsequently to conversion that killed sin in their hearts and gave them perfect love.

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