

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH.

Rev. David Anderson, Evangelist.

Present day conditions are such in the religious world that the love of many is waxing cold, and leaders in religious circles are substituting building of character and mere reformation for Regeneration, and loyalty to the church for Entire Sanctification.

Many kindly look toward a world wide revival in the near future because of the millions of money recently subscribed in the various denominations for the propagation of the gospel. But money, though a necessity in the spread of the gospel will not produce a revival. Genuine revivals are the product of travail of soul and importunate pleading with God until victory comes.

No person who clings to any sin is qualified to prevail with God for a revival. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." What an amazing number of professors of religion are disqualified to have an audience with God for others, because they remain in sin themselves! And sadder still, it is very common to hear both pastor and people plead for sin, and boldly declare that we cannot be freed from it. Listen to St. Paul: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" Rom. 6: 1, 2. St. John also rings clear. "He that committeth sin is of the devil." "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." I. John 3: 8, 9.

No battle can be successfully fought with wooden soldiers, and in this great struggle between God and the devil we need soldiers of the cross who have been separated from sin by the power of the blood of Christ. What kind of a soldier would a pro-German make in the ranks of the Allies? And what sort of a warrior for God would a person make who fights holiness, and sees no harm in the theatre, movies, parlor dance, cards, etc., even though they sign a "life service" card in the recent drive for the extension of the Kingdom of God?

The church will never do exploits for God until she returns to the "faith of our fathers" which is practically considered obsolete. In the days of the early church the essential qualification for effective work was the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. The disciples of Jesus were commanded not to depart from Jerusalem until they were endowed with power from on high. They obeyed and received the mighty baptism (Acts 2-4). They went everywhere preaching the word and mighty revivals were the result, until people said, "These that turn the world upside down have come hither also."

It is a rare thing to hear about heart cleansing and the Baptism of the Holy Ghost these days. This accounts for the deplorable condition of affairs in the average house of worship. Where this is neglected, even the Bible standard of Regeneration is crowded out; and instead of insisting on the New Birth, the common method is to place the babes on the cradle roll, later they are taken into the Junior

League, then the Epworth League, then into membership on probation in the church, and later into full communion, without ever having any change of heart. No wonder they eventually become holiness fighters because they know nothing of the joys of salvation experienced only by the new Birth.

Shall such a class rule the house of God and dictate to the pastor what he must and must not preach? Yet that is what conditions have come to in many places. What then must the faithful preacher do, who has an experimental knowledge of sins forgiven and purity of heart? And what must the members do who experience the same grace? We must be true to the light we have received. No man can afford to sin against light. If we do, we bring a reproach upon the cause we claim to represent. We cannot come down to the level of those who are blind to the glorious gospel of cleansing from all sin. We are to contend earnestly for the faith delivered once for all to the saints.

Paul was commissioned to preach the two works of grace (Acts 26:18) and he declared he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. He felt the responsibility so keenly that he said "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel"—not merely "woe is me if I stay not in the ministry" because it is possible to stay in the ministry and never preach the real gospel.

For a number of years the average pulpit has fed the people on war conditions, civic righteousness, prohibition, ethical culture, etc., but what about the old main line of Repentance, Regeneration, Consecration, Entire Sanctification and Holy Living?

Such is the dearth of Spirituality that some holiness preachers think it not quite necessary to be as radical on second blessing holiness in order that we might have more favor with people in general. Such reasoning savors largely of carnality. Christ would have had more favor with the Jews if He had not proclaimed Himself the Messiah. He would have had more favor with the scribes and Pharisees if he had not been so strict in His manner of living and teaching. He would have been more heartily received among the professors of religion in the synagogue had He not "cleaned house" among moneychangers and dovesellers at the bazaar.

No, brother, if God has sanctified your soul you must never lower the standard. You will certainly be criticized and probably ostracised in some quarters, but you can well afford to take the way the Master went and go forth without the camp bearing His reproach.

Since it is the doctrine of practically all the churches in Christendom that inbred sin is not destroyed at conversion, why do not the opposers of the second work of grace show us a more excellent way if we are wrong? This inherited depravity must be destroyed before we can enter heaven. Purgatory is false; death cannot sanctify; growth theory never produced a witness, hence the only remedy is the blood of Jesus and the blessing received by Faith. Acts 26:18. Our opponents are content to have sin dwell within them all through life and yet expect to go to heaven without the

essential qualification—holiness (sanctification R. V.) without which no man shall see the Lord. (Hebrews 12:14) They know their stand is inconsistent but are not willing to take the clear cut, uncompromising, full-salvation route because of the reproach it brings from carnal professors of religion, yet they secretly admire a man who has the courage of his convictions and preaches a full gospel.

A prominent minister, in conversation with the writer a few months ago made this statement: "I wish the ministry was endowed so that a man could preach his convictions for one year and be sure of his salary," to which I replied, "Brother, you have sold out; you have sold your birthright for a mess of pottage." He admitted it was so, and stated that he knew many more who were doing likewise.

The Bible plainly tells us that the "time will come when people will not endure sound doctrine but will heap to themselves teachers having itching ears and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables." (2 Timothy 4: 3, 4.) Often the faithful Ambassador of God is not invited to return as pastor for a second year, if he preaches against all sin. A complaint is lodged with "the powers that be" that the preacher is not popular with the young folks because he opposed the "fox trot" and the "bunny hug;" nor with the older ones if he mentions cards or the immorality of the theatre or the moving pictures; and of course if he preaches sanctification as a second work of grace they are mightily alarmed lest he "split the church."

They want a man to leave the word of God and preach fables. They relish stories and essays that have no bearing on the sin question. Quotations from the ancient philosophers are very acceptable and make the congregation proud of their pastor's extensive mental resources. And of course the temperance question is so popular now that preachers who feared twenty years ago to open their lips on the subject are acclaimed heroes today because of their "major attacks" launched against the rum citadels.

It is possible to be deeply engaged in the moral issues of the present day and yet be devoid of spiritual life. The specific call of God to the ministry is to get people delivered from sin by the power of the gospel. We are to preach the word—not to make any new scripture, but to faithfully proclaim what God has left on record. Multitudes of congregations have never heard a sermon from any of the following cardinal texts of scripture:

"Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

"In hell he lift up his eyes being in torments."

"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin."

"He that committeth sin is of the devil."

"The very God of peace sanctify you wholly."

"Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

(Continued on Page Seven)