

SEPARATION AND HOLINESS.

By E. C. Reber.

God has always desired a holy people. It was His plan in creating man that he should not only be a creature, but that he should bear the likeness and image of his Maker. Through disobedience this image of holiness was lost. Sin bespoiled the first pair in the Garden of Eden. God thrust them out. They no longer walked and communed with Him in the cool of the day. Sin separated them.

Through prayer and sacrifice they sought the blessings of an offended God. A family religion was observed. We read that the life and sacrifice of their second son Abel proved more acceptable to God than did the sacrifice of Cain, their first born, who failed to do well. Here sin brought a separation between brothers. The line of righteousness and sin has ever been well defined.

Enoch, by choosing to walk with God rather than with worldly minded associates, not only had the enjoyment of congenial companionship, but the distinction of a deathless transport to a better world.

Righteous Noah saved himself and family by obedience and faith. He built the ark as commanded and for years kept himself separate from the people, preaching salvation through unconditional submission to God alone.

What can be more significant and convincing than the commandment of God to Abram, that he was to get out of his own country; and from his own kindred and from among his father's house to a new country that God had chosen for him, with the assuring promise that God would be his shield and exceeding great reward, and that at last he should go to his fathers in peace, and be buried in a good old age!

His faith and obedience gained for him the fulfillment of all of God's promises: also the title, "Father of all the faithful." His righteous integrity has been an example to all of God's people these many centuries past.

The outstanding difference between Jacob and his brother Esau was that he purposed to hold himself separate from the nations around about, in obedience to Isaac's request not to take a wife of the daughter of Canaan. Through all his wanderings he kept this covenant which undoubtedly prepared him to successfully wrestle with the Angel of the Lord, prevailing as a Prince. God is pleased to be called the "God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."

In Leviticus 20:26 God said to Israel, "Ye shall be holy unto me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine." The same truth of separation is found in Lev. 20:44, 19-2, and 20:7, emphasizing the necessity of separation in order to be a holy people unto Himself.

Moses declared unto the people, "Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself" (Deut. 14:2.) This fact was ever held before the people that their love pledged to God

would make them guilty of sacrilege if they worshipped other gods. The oracles of God had been committed unto them and God not only commanded, but expected them to be true to their trust. To do so was to secure the blessing and favor of their God both in temporal and spiritual welfare. Every time Israel failed and turned to other gods, punishment and disaster were inflicted upon the disobedient.

The same holds true today. If God's professed followers keep consecrated and separated from the world, God's blessings are enjoyed. To turn to the world always brings spiritual decline and an unfitness for the great purpose of the church.

NOTES BY J. C. B.

Holiness begins in repentance—"an inward turning from all sin to all holiness."

The call of God is "unto holiness" and is imperative—Be ye holy.

Regenerated people are holy but not sanctified wholly.

It is the privilege of the truly regenerated to enter into the holy of holies by the new and living way.

Acceptance or adherence of the doctrine of holiness does not eradicate sin. The theory of holiness does not and will not "cast out fear."

Holiness in theory only is not the experience of entire sanctification any more than the plan of a building is the building itself.

Holiness is the one and only qualification for heavenly association, world without end: "Be ye holy for I am holy."

One's moral assimilation to God and the retention of the experience is accomplished by or is the result of "walking in the light as He is in the light."

Holiness which does not necessitate cleansing one's self from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit is quite acceptable generally but will prove a disappointment—"There shall in no wise enter in anything that defileth."

Holiness preachers, or "Higher Life" preachers who do not insist on the complete and immediate destruction of inbred depravity are quite well received generally but their hearers do not "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour."

Holiness is the state of the soul after the work of entire sanctification—which filled with the fruit of the Spirit—has been wrought.

Holiness or perfect love gives an insatiable passion for the salvation of the lost and counts no sacrifice too great to reach them.

Holiness will ultimately triumph in the earth. It is yet to be written on the pots and kettles and on the bells of the horses. He shall not fail nor be discouraged till

He have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for His law.

Holiness is the only cure for the unrest, strife and selfishness of the age. O Lord, sanctify Thy people.

Holiness means life "more abundantly" and consequently by its own activity annihilates cold prayers, dry testimonies and juiceless professions of religion.

IMPORTANCE OF A RIGHT FAITH.

The popular adage is, "Oh, it makes no difference what a man believes, so he is sincere."

Let us see. A family was poisoned in Montgomery county last year by eating toadstools, which they sincerely believed to be mushrooms. Three of them died.

Did it make no difference?

A man indorsed a note for a friend, whom he sincerely believed to be an honest man. He was a scoundrel, and left him to pay the note.

Did it make no difference?

A traveller takes the train going north, sincerely believing it is the southern train. Will it make no difference? Will he bring up at the south all the same?

If a man sincerely believes a certain thing, while the truth about it is entirely different, will his sincere belief make it all right?

The truth is, the popular adage is a lie—and a very transparent one at that! If a man is sincere, he will take pains to know the truth. For, where facts are concerned, all the thinking in the world will not change them. A toadstool remains a toadstool, whatever we may think about it—The Covenant.

PRAYER.

A Christian girl who was very fertile in her methods of helping to advance an interest in the cause of missions, on one occasion, after she had made a suggestion as to overcoming some seemingly insuperable difficulty, was answered by her friend with the remark, "Bessie, I believe that if you were put on an island, alone, shut in a solitary cell, debarred from communication with a solitary person, you would contrive to do something for missions." "Certainly," said Bessie, "I would do there the greatest thing possible for missions; I would pray."—Selected.

God does not change many circumstances for the sake of His children, but He does do a greater thing; He changes His children and makes them overcomers of their circumstances. He does not remove the ordinary annoyances of life, but He does transform them into vehicles for bearing blessings to His beloved. He does not destroy the stumbling stone. He just transforms it into a stepping stone. He does not always cause the "thorn in the flesh" to depart, but He does always make its presence the occasion for giving more grace so that our strength may be made perfect in our weakness.