

The King's Highway.

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness.

And an Highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness.—Isa. 35-8

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HOLINESS

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REGENERATION NECESSARY TO HOLINESS

"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again" (Jno. iii.7). (Digest of sermon by Mr. Wesley)

If any doctrine is fundamental to the Christian religion, regeneration is. Originally man was "created in righteousness and true holiness, pure and full of love, justice, mercy and truth. Man was created able to stand, yet liable to fall; but not without being duly warned of God. By one wilful act man declared that he would not be governed by Divine Will; that thenceforth he would seek his happiness in the world and in the work of his own hands. God had said, "Eat and that shalt die," and his word could not be broken; so man died that most dreadful of all deaths, he died to God. He lost his eternal life, the life of God; he was cut off from the very source of his spiritual life. Immediately his acts showed that he was alienated from the life of God; his love was gone and he ran from God; he lost the knowledge of God out of his soul and he tried to hide from his eyes. Unholy, unhappy, he sunk into pride and self will, the image of the devil; and into sensual appetites and desires, the image of the beasts that perish. All his descendants are born in his fallen likeness and come into the world spiritually dead, dead to God, wholly dead in sin, void of that image wherein man was created. Born in the image of their father Adam, they now bore the image of devils and beasts. Hence, since by nature man is entirely corrupt, "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

How such a corrupt nature can be changed, the wisest man under the sun cannot explain fully. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (Jno. iii.8). "Born of the Spirit." "born from above," yes, "born again, born anew." The eyes of his understanding are opened. His ears are opened; he hears words of pardon and peace. He feels the mighty workings of the Spirit of God. He is conscious of peace, and joy and love. His spiritual senses are exercised to discern both good and evil. He now lives, quickened by the Spirit; yea, Christ liveth in him. He lives a life which the world knows not; his life is hid with Christ in God. He breathes out his breath of prayer to God; he breathes

in the breath of heaven, the Spirit of God. He begins to grow toward the "full measure of the stature of Christ."

The new birth, or regeneration, is that great change which takes place in the soul when God brings it from death in sin to the life in righteousness. He is "created anew in Christ Jesus." He begins to be "renewed after the image of God." Love of the world is displaced by love of God. Pride disappears and humility takes its place. No longer does he think more highly of himself than he ought to think; he feels himself the creature that he really is. Hatred, envy, malice, jealousy, are displaced by the love that loves thy neighbor as thyself. The earthly, sensual, devilish mind is renewed in its very spirit, so that "we have the mind of Christ." "So is everyone that is born of the Spirit."

Why should we be born again? (1) It is necessary in order to holiness. Holiness is the image of God stamped on the heart: The whole mind which was in Christ Jesus; all heavenly affections and tempers mingled together in one. It is the complete restoring and renewing of our nature, so that it is natural to love God and fellowman. It is living blamelessly before God "in all holy conversation and godliness." Such cannot commence in the soul until we are renewed: Therefore, regeneration is necessary in order to holiness. (2) Since "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. xii. 14): and since regeneration is necessary in order to holiness; therefore, it is absolutely necessary that we be regenerated in order to our enjoying eternal salvation. Men depend upon their morality, their church, its last rites, or their last chance; but God says, "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Man must be regenerated. "Ye must be born again."

(3) No happiness is possible without regeneration. Nemo malus felix—no wicked man is happy. Unholy tempers are uneasy tempers; they will not allow rest or peace. Passions indulged finally give us more pain than pleasure. Pride, self will, etc., are but sources of misery. All these reign within until the bent of our nature is changed. "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

Baptism is not the new birth: for it does not effect such a change. Baptism is the act of man, regeneration is the work of God. One purifies the body; the other purifies the soul. Nor does the new birth accompany baptism. Many who have been baptised show by their lives that the water has not changed the fruits

of the tree; and if the fruits are not changed, then the tree has not been changed. They are still the servants of sin.

Regeneration is not the same with sanctification, though it is the gateway to sanctification. Sanctification, heart purity, commences here.

If a man shows that he lives in sin, we must say to him, "Ye must be born again." He may profess religion, he may belong to church, he may have received her rites, all this makes no difference; if his fruits are sin, we must say to such a one, "Ye must be born again."

If there is sin in the life, it is because there is sin in the heart, and "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (Jno. iii.5). Then "follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. xii.14).

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IN TUNE WITH HEAVEN

It is a true analogy when we speak of the heart being in tune with the nature and will of God. There may be few thus attuned, but it is just as possible as it is to be a unit in an orchestra.

A soul in tune with God may sympathize with a frail body, suffer the depression of bad environment and feel no better than other souls, till the great Musician moves upon his instruments. Then the one that is right will respond in the manifestation of sweet harmony; the one that is not in tune will experience the jar of discord.

To be in tune and to make melody are not analogies of the same experience. A violin may be in perfect tune lying on a shelf; so we may be, with no expression or feeling. But when the Master lays his hand on that violin the response is quite different from that of the instrument out of tune. Indeed, since the Master knows the instruments, it is the one responsive to being tuned that receives his more frequent visits. So the hearts that stay where their Master puts them will hear from him more often.

Genuine emotions of love, joy, and peace are like a deep river. We need to learn that emotions and motions do not necessarily go together. People who are strong on the former are not always long on the latter; and vice versa; many who are long on the latter are not strong on the former.—Sel.