

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.—Is: 35-8

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The All-Importance of the Sin Question in the Matter of Personal Salvation.

In the matter of theology and personal experience of salvation, all controversy centers in the sin question. By this we mean the natural corruption of the human heart, necessitating a new birth and also a complete cleansing subsequent to this initial experience of grace.

New theology declares that man instead of being a fallen creature, is a climbing, a steadily progressing creature in the realm of morality and spiritual ideals. Calvinistic theology insists that man is so corrupt by nature that the provisions, made by Jesus on the Cross, are inadequate to free him from the pollution of indwelling sin, and he must till death shall accomplish the deliverance, carry in him the corruptions of the carnal mind, which at best can be held in subjection, but never can be extirpated by grace.

The so-called Fundamentalists strongly adhere to the latter view, and while hurling their anathemas at the evolutionists who repudiate the authority of the Scriptures and the necessity of the blood atonement, are equally antagonistic to those who accept the Bible from cover to cover and accept Jesus in all the plenitude of his grace, made real and possible by the agency of the Holy Ghost, culminating in the purifying of the heart and the constant indwelling of the Paraclete. Many of these dear brethren accept the theory of a spiritual baptism for service, but deny the work of subjective cleansing. They define sanctification merely as being set apart for a Holy purpose, while we believe it means, according to the New Testament, also to make holy or spiritually healthy the one who experiences the work of grace in their heart.

Probably the greatest battle ever engaged in along this line took place in the later years of Wesley, between him and the sainted Fletcher on the one side and Toplady, Rowland Hill and Walter Shirley on the other. John Fletcher wrote five volumes called Checks to Antinomianism, in which he hewed the agog of hyper-Calvinism to pieces, established the glorious doctrine of Christian perfection in the clear view of sane and candid inspection, divesting it of all the extremes of mysticism, the contradictions of antinomianism, and the ugliness of stern legality.

In that controversy the spirits of Wesley and Fletcher glowed with holy love towards their disputants, only to arouse in them the venom that hurled the meanest epithets and descended to the lowest billingsgate. When

we read what Toplady and Hill wrote against such godly men as Wesley and Fletcher, we do not wonder that they insisted on the awful corruption of the human heart after conversion and that there was no adequate remedy for the disease. They themselves were good exponents of their theory; the carnal and not the spiritual rose up in them when they were confronted by unanswerable Scriptural arguments. In such emergencies they substituted abuse for argument, vituperation for Christian courtesy and candor. But Fletcher and Wesley always replied to them with strong arguments from Scripture made more powerful by the sweet spirit of Christian courtesy that infused them. They even declared that they (Wesley and Fletcher) believed that their opponents were better at heart than their doctrine would indicate, and that the bitter language they used in their pamphlets did not demonstrate their real character. In other words they addressed the Calvinists as earnest, sincere Christian men, who, in the heat of religious argument, forgot the law of Christian charity and courtesy, to be afterwards sorry for the exhibition of carnal propensities they had given.

It is a fact that those who maintain the necessity of having carnality in the heart till death accomplishes the deliverance, make good their argument so far as they themselves are concerned, for in no controversy like this, does the spirit of malice and spiritual blindness so manifest itself. Preachers in the pulpit who begin to talk against holiness grow red in the face, as with sarcastic smile and most insincere arguments try to discredit, not only the doctrine, but those who profess the blessing of heart purity. The fight has been on and ever will be on as long as the carnal mind of unbelief is what it is. The enemies of this grace must ever dress it up in a bear skin to make it look fearful and odious to those who have hungry hearts and earnest desire for the best God has for them. They will say we teach absolute perfection when we teach only a relative perfection made possible through Christ and never considered apart from his constant indwelling agency.

An evangelist, when asked recently if he believed it possible to have all inbred sin taken from the heart, replied: "No, I do not, for if that were possible how came such a great man as Dr—— to fall into sin?" What a puny question or answer that was. I reply: If Lucifer, the glorious archangel, dwelling

in light with no physical inhibitions, or any satanic agency to tempt him, could fall into the sea of rebellion, carrying away a third of the hosts of Heaven with him, falling down to the abyss of hell to become Diabolus or Satan, the arch opponent of the Kingdom of Christ; if Lucifer, could thus fall, I am sure I can see how possible it will be for the most saintly man to fall, having, as he has, the physical with all its passions and weaknesses to contend with the world and all its allurements to meet, and the fierce assaults of an insidious spiritual enemy, Satan, to withstand.

If Adam and Eve from the vantage ground of their pristine purity of heart, their normal and perfectly healthy bodies, and their delightful environment, could fall into sin, then I am sure that there is no state of grace that precludes the possibility of a saint falling, and the fact that some who have professed the grace of entire sanctification, have fallen into gross sin, does not invalidate the reality of the experience, or the possibility of their once having had the blessing. Paul who professed perfect holiness, declared that he kept his body under and brought it into subjection. He did not imply that he was keeping inbred sin under. That had been crucified and destroyed, but he knew the devil would try through the legitimate passions and appetites of the body and soul, to regain his lost territory and bring the soul in bondage thus lower. But Paul in those things was more than conqueror. He even had super-abounding grace against the world, the flesh and the devil.

Paul never in explaining the sin question, uses any language that would suggest that suppression was the method for dealing with sin. His exhortation is always death, destruction, cleansing, putting off and putting away. Now being made free from sin you have your fruit unto holiness and the everlasting life. The glory of the doctrine and experience of perfect holiness is that it gives us a consistent Bible, which we do not have to imitate and pervert. We can take it in its entirety and not have to avoid a single text, especially that which reads, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it."

Oh, if these dear men who call themselves
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