

WHAT HOLINESS REALLY IS!

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"And the Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul." (Deut. xxx.6). In our last article we dealt with WHAT HOLINESS IS NOT; our religion is not, however, one of negatives only! Thank the Lord! There are real positives about it too. While the gospel preacher must faithfully declare the negatives, he must also, just as faithfully, preach the positives. Let us notice, then, the positive side of this question, and deal with WHAT HOLINESS REALLY IS.

Remember, there is no salvation apart from holiness. "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto he hath called you by our gospel" (2 Thess. ii-13:14). Regeneration is holiness begun. This is followed by growth in holiness up toward entire sanctification. This second work of grace perfects the heart in love. This epoch is followed by growth in holiness more pronounced and progressive than that which follows regeneration; for the heart, the centre of impulse, now rid of all that was at enmity with the love of God, is at last lost in its proper element, swallowed up in Divine Love, and is therefore so properly and happily circumstanced as to have the best opportunity to grow in grace it has ever had in all its history. Resurrection power will add the holy touch of glorification to our physical man. Heaven will be holiness triumphant. Eternity will be one everlasting backing in the smile of the God of Love, filled with love, thrilled with love, with all that would hinder, or thwart, or subvert, or frustrate, or antagonize love completely gone! Internally gone; eternally gone. Glory! THERE IS NO SALVATION, INCIPIENT, PROGRESSIVE, COMPLETE, FINAL OR ETERNAL, APART FROM HOLINESS, THANK THE LORD! WHAT, THEN, IS HOLINESS?

Holiness is freedom from actual transgressions; not freedom from mistakes, or errors in judgment or other human infirmities, but, THANK GOD! freedom from the practise of sin. This, as Mr. Wesley says, a salvation from all sin, is the lowest state of grace possible; for "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." This holiness begins in regeneration.

Holiness of heart, perfected or completed in entire sanctification, is freedom from all that is at enmity with divine love. This happy state is called Heart Purity.

We have said hitherto that entire sanctification is not perfection of conduct. The faults, failings, errors, mistakes, etc., to which as humans we fall heir, militate against perfection of conduct. But, glory be to Heaven's King, ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION DOES INSTITUTE PERFECTION OF HEART MOTIVE. The glory of God is now the whole heart's whole purpose. And, since "as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he;" since "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh;" since "from within out of the heart of men proceed" the actions of their lives; we can readily see that perfection of heart motive initiates a powerful, holy leavening of thought and word and deed, i. e., of character and conduct. Thus entire sanctification reigns-up our infirmities to and for the glory of God. It declares hostilities against

our faults, and undertakes a keen day-in-and-day-out perpetual war of fault reduction. It whole-heartedly, honestly, determinedly takes its aim at perfection of life and conduct. Nor is the fight wholly unsuccessful; for the Lord Almighty takes a hand in the strife; yea, the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him." Consequently, by the help of the Lord, there is, as time goes by, an increasing improvement in conduct. There is constant increasing of Christlikeness. There is real, definite progression toward and accomplishment in perfection of conduct.

Sanctification begins in that setting apart from all sin, which takes place in the believer at regeneration, else he is not regenerated at all. God says, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing and (if you do) I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters." The plain inference is that if we do not meet Him on these terms, He will not receive us; He will not be our Father, we can by no means be His sons and daughters. That is the beginning of holiness; but that is not entire sanctification. To quote the catechism of the Canada Methodist Church, "Entire sanctification is the attainment of the fully consecrated believer upon exercise of his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as a Saviour from all sin, whereby he is enabled to love the Lord his God with all his heart, soul, strength and mind, and his neighbor as himself."

That is Perfect Love. Christian Perfection, Heart Purity or whatever you prefer to call this, THE SECOND BLESSING. This is Plato's "virtue." It was he who said that "Virtue is the approximation of the human to the Divine to the full extent of human possibility." Jesus said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." To "rise to walk in heaven's own light, above the world and sin, with heart made pure, and garments white, and Christ enthroned within," is the approximation of the human to the Divine to the full extent of human possibility.

In that very pronounced and progressive growth in holiness, which follows this epochal work of entire sanctification, and is the normal experience of the life which follows, the prayer is answered of him who sings:

"O for a heart that is whiter than snow;
Calm in the peace that He loves to bestow;
Daily refreshed by the heavenly dews,
Ready for service whene'er He shall choose.

"O for a heart that is whiter than snow;
Then in his grace and his knowledge to grow;
Growing like Him who my pattern shall be,
Till in his beauty the King I shall see."
McPherson, Kansas.

"We rise to the highest form of love by cultivating the lower forms of love. To love anything makes it possible to love something greater. So from love of home and country and craft we rise to the love that takes hold on God, and loves Him supremely."—The Free Methodist.

"God gives feeling only when He sees that we trust Him apart from all feeling, resting on His own Word, and on His own faithfulness to His promise."

REVIVALS

To the end of the Age

By Joseph H. Smith

"Times of Refreshing" are to characterize this entire dispensation. This is evident from Peter's words—Acts 3:19—which declare that these times of refreshing are due to come from the "presence of the Lord," and this Presence is promised to the end of the age. For He himself said, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Malachi's gracious prophecy of such a revival as would rebuke and restrain all manner of evil, purge the church of its selfishness and corruption, and sanctify the priests, was predicted of the Lord's presence of visitation of His temple. And so long as we have proofs that the Spirit is not yet wholly withdrawn from a man's soul, we have grounds to believe and hope that he may yet be saved; and just as it is evident that we are under the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, and that the night-fall of a sinful earth's doom has not yet fully fallen upon the world, just so long we may pray and believe for the Salvation of the Lord to manifest itself in gracious revivals of spiritual life.

The oft-repeated instances of the decline and apostasy of Israel are meant to illustrate the principle in the divine economy so often seen, likewise, in the history of the Christian Church that when spiritual life had dropped to low tide and various infidelities became rampant, the Lord made special openings of the windows of heaven, and new Martins and George, and Johns and Dwights have risen to lead the church out of the wilderness. The Bible, the Holy Spirit, and Christian experience have thus been restored to their rightful places in Zion.

The reason for the recurrences of revivals throughout the entire age, does not arise altogether from the retrogression, but also from the progression of Christianity. An early example and proof of this is seen in Acts four where "Being let go, they went to their own company," and seeing the opportunity as well as the opposition that was before them, they spread the whole case before the Lord, and **prayed**; prayed not for a reviving or a restoration—for they had lost nothing, neither had they backslidden—but were laying-hold for added power, courage, and multiplied manifestations of the Divine Presence. Their prayer was answered. And with what result? **Great power, Great gain, Great sacrifice, and a great man.** Barnabus was sent to reinforce their advancing and aggressive work. "When they had prayed" they found themselves in the midst of the most gracious revival that they had even yet experienced.

Now then, how will demands ever make revivals a necessity of the age in which we live? The demands of retrogression which may be ever necessary, and the demands of aggression which may be ever advancing are readily seen. And Christ's answer meets the case, "I am with you always, even unto the end." Peter's announcement gives us the true philosophy of revivals and assurance of this result of His Presence, "times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."

This leads us to the question which is sometimes being asked of us these days—maybe more in these days than ever before: