

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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ATTRIBUTES OF HOLINESS—

LOVE TO GOD

Rev. Benjamin T. Roberts was not only a faithful minister of the gospel, but was a writer of ability. He could make truth very plain, and easy to be understood. Under the title given above, he presented some very practical truths that will have the indorsement of many of our readers, we are sure. They are as follows:

There can be no such thing as Christian holiness without supreme love to God. This is its very substance. It may be summed up in this. A being possessed of the proper intelligence, and actuated at all times by supreme love to God, would never be wanting in any duty. Every obligation would be fulfilled. The *great Commandment* is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind" (Matt. 22:37). A failure here involves failure everywhere. Who is pleased with professions of love when convinced that the affection is wanting? So Christ assures us that acts of devotion are unutterably loathsome unless they spring from love. "So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:16).

Love to God does not differ in its nature from love of our fellows. The more pure our conceptions of the object of our affections, the more exalted is the sentiment. God is infinite in all the wonderful attributes of His nature; and hence, love to Him is the most exalted and ennobling affection of which the human mind is capable. It includes delight in Him, desire to enjoy His presence and His approbation, and a determination to do His will. "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments" (1 John 5:3).

It is manifested by a desire to please Him. Anything we feel satisfied will be pleasing to God, we are anxious to do, although it may involve painstaking and self-denial. David's men loved him; and when he expressed a longing for water from a well which was within the lines of the enemy, and carefully guarded, they sallied forth, and, sword in hand, obtained it at the risk of their lives. So one who truly loves God will rejoice at any intimation of his ability to perform any service acceptable to Him. Many of the martyrs went rejoicing to the stake, because an opportunity was given them to demonstrate to the world that the love of God is stronger than the love of life. He who chooses a religious life because, instead of its being attended with any serious interference with his love of ease, and of worldly pleasures, and of worldly popularity, it will add to his reputation among men, is utterly wanting in the very first element of a holy character. Unless our first aim is to please God, we need inquire no farther. There is a fundamental lack. She who puts on apparel to please men rather than God should make no pretensions to sanctity. There can be none. To profess it is absurd.

He who truly loves God will honestly and carefully endeavor to ascertain His will. "O how I love Thy law! it is my meditation all the day"

(Psa. 119:97). And again, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee. I have rejoiced in the way of Thy testimonies, as much as in all riches. I will meditate in Thy precepts, and have respect unto Thy ways" (Psa. 119:11, 14, 15). This is the language of one who loves God. He studies the Bible—not as a literary critic, but with a sincere desire to know the will of God concerning him. There was never a saint who did not love the Word of God. The knowledge that a holy person desires above all other is a knowledge of God's will. So he studies the sacred writings—not to establish a doctrine or prove a disputed point; but to really find out what God requires of him. He would not pervert it, nor make it bend to his convenience or his prejudices. But let one lose the love of God out of his heart, and the relish for the Bible is gone. It is generally neglected. If read, as it may be when the light becomes darkness, it is that its meaning may be perverted so as to form an excuse for an unholy life. There are many now, as in the apostle's day, "who handle the Word of God deceitfully."

A holy person has his ear open to the voice of God in the soul. There is a still, small voice, that one who loves God does not fail to hear. He who formed the ear can speak to the ear. In many things respecting which the Word of God is silent, or speaks only in general terms, we need specific directions by the Holy Spirit. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:14). If we love God, we delight to hear Him speak to us. Even if reproof is given, we rejoice to hear it. We are glad to listen even to the warnings that our heavenly Father gives. But His voice of approbation compensates a thousand times for any hardships we may have undergone, or any sacrifices we may have made. In whatever way God speaks, or whatever may be the import of His message, He always finds in those who love Him attentive listeners. They are so thankful for the condescension showed that they listen with the utmost reverence and attention. In their hearts they say, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth."

The truly devout also take delight in ascertaining the will of God as shown in the physical laws by which our bodies and other material substances are governed. A lover of God is likely to be a lover of nature.

If we love God we have a high relish for that preaching and that reading which most plainly discloses, and most strongly enforces, the will of God. We try those who say they are apostles. It is to embodied spirits—to preachers and teachers of the gospel—that the apostle refers when says, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God:" for he assigns as a reason, "because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1). We shall hear and support preachers—not because they are talented or eloquent—but because they speak the word of God faithfully. This will be to us of prime importance. No amount of polished oratory will be accepted as a substitute for fidelity to God. A holy person can not give en-

courage to compromisers and trimmers. He can not lead them God-speed who bring another gospel. He does not help false prophets—no matter though they may belong to his denomination—by giving them his presence and his money. This, again, will make trouble. But holiness, in a sinful world, has always been a troublesome thing. It is so because it is holiness.

Again, if we love God we shall manifest it by unquestioning obedience to all His commands. There can be no real love to God without the spirit of obedience. Our Savior makes obedience the test of love. "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him" (John 14:21). This is clear and conclusive. Professions of love to God, when attended by manifest disobedience to His commands; show how easy it is to be deceived. Christ can not be mistaken; but the most intelligent among us may be very much out of the way, especially in the opinion which we entertain of our own state of grace. We are safe only as we measure ourselves by the standard which God gives. And He repeatedly gives obedience as the test of love.

We must have respect to all of His commands. It will not do for us to make choice of those which it is fashionable to obey, and disregard those that are commonly disregarded. Such a course would prove that we are the slaves of fashion, instead of being the servants of God. This was what brought upon the Pharisees the severest denunciations the Savior ever uttered.

Finally, he who loves God has a spirit of devotion. He loves the worship of God, secret, social and public. The saints have always been a praying people. They talk a great deal to God. If they can not use the enticing words of man's wisdom, they can plead before the throne with "groanings that can not be uttered," and their prayers avail. They know that they have the things they ask for. They love the mercy-seat. Those who have been mighty on earth for God, were mighty in prayer. David was a valiant warrior; but his fiercest battles were fought out in his closet. Elijah was too strong for his king, had power over the elements, and openly conquered death, because he prevailed in prayer.

Prayer answered turns to praise. Hence one who loves God delights in His praises. With the Psalmist he says, "I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth" (Psa. 34:1). See how full the Psalms are of the praises of God. In the New Testament we are commanded to "rejoice in the Lord always." Now if we love God, we shall delight to do this. We would as soon think of hiring others to eat our necessary food for us, as to hire them to praise God for us while our own tongues are silent. A holy people will never employ others to worship God for them! Never! Acts of worship performed by the ungodly or indifferent, even though they be done decently and in order, and paid for by the church, are but open

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