

HEALING THE HURT SLIGHTLY

C. V. Fairbairn

There is being thrust upon hungry souls a holiness which does not make holy, a sanctification which does not sanctify, a so-called eradication which does not eradicate. Nor is this preaching by obscure, little men only but are not some big holiness preachers—Brother Well Known, Brother Much-in-Demand, Brother Fill-the-Altar and Brother Heard-only-in-big meetings engaged in this very work? "They have healed the hurt of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace." Terrible words for Jeremiah to use; but more terrible than words the thought, IT IS ALL TOO TRUE.

What a deep seated malady is inbred sin; how subtle in its workings; how paralyzing its effects! Nothing but the cleansing efficiency of the blood of Jesus applied by the burning Holy Spirit can root it out. But, praise the Lord! this can be accomplished in this very way.

But let us be careful here. Notice: There is not in all scripture a promise given to the sinner of such a work of grace for him. The word to sinners is "confess," "repent," "believe," "be born again," while the other words "cleanse," "sanctify wholly," "make perfect," "be baptized with the Holy Ghost," are all spoken to those who already "are not of the world even as" He is "not of the world," and who can rejoice because their "names are written in heaven."

The first step then, toward seeking holiness is BE SURE YOU ARE JUSTIFIED. This is where the difficulty arises. How frequently so-called holiness preachers strike a church where everything is as dead as the Valley of Dry Bones and professors of religion as worldly as the crowd at Vanity Fair. Jesus says: "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." James says, "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be the friend of the world is the enemy of God." John plainly declares, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Yet in spite of these plain words, along comes Brother Much-in-Demand and says: "My friends, you need holiness."

Brother Much-in-Demand, no doubt they need holiness, but they are not candidates for holiness. To descant against their worldliness might rob you of some of your popularity, but, my brother, you will only be spiritually honest when you do so. Remember, God says, "If any man love the world, THE LOVE OF THE FATHER IS NOT IN HIM." The worldly church member is not a candidate for holiness, but rather a candidate for conviction for sin along this very line. The poor thing either never has been saved, or else has grievously backslidden.

Many people seek holiness because they experience a sense of loss. Others because they feel somewhat of condemnation. All efforts by such to obtain entire sanctification will be in vain. They need to be justified. The truly justified soul does not feel a sense of loss, but rather a sense of need. He carries no load of condemnation; his load fell from his shoulders the night he knelt at Calvary's Cross. The truly justified person is no worldly; he is "not of the world even as" Jesus is "not of the world." He lost his relish for worldliness the moment Jesus said, "Thy sins which are many are all forgiven."

For a worldly person, suffering from a sense of loss and condemnation, to seek a second blessing is about as sensible as the suggestion of a railroad cafe waitress at London, Ontario. Said a traveller: "This second cup of coffee is better than the first." "Why didn't you drink the second one first?" was her inquiry.

I see poor, cold, formal worldlings as they listen to Brother Fill-the-Altar. Their hearts hunger for a real experience. Believing they need to be sanctified, they rush to the altar. They are honest. God helps them. They are urged to get up and "claim it by faith." They do so. But are they sanctified wholly? Very often they are only reclaimed, possibly in some cases, regenerated for the first time in their lives. They think the old man has been cast out, while in reality he has only received a hard blow and they can THINK and THINK as long as they wish and as hard as they like, but they will never THINK the old man off their premises. Sooner or later, under the test, the old monster awakens, stirs, yawns, sits up, stretches, and the poor soul wonders, "What has happened?" I thought holiness meant eradication. Was that preacher deceived? or was he a deceiver? Perhaps Keswick suppression is the correct theory after all. Maybe I need a third touch. Perhaps Tongues."

Hold steady, troubled one. Don't throw faith overboard. And don't play the hypocrite. If the old man is there, don't testify that he is not. God surely CAN, and DOES, sanctify wholly, but Brother Fill-the-Altar failed to tell you that, as a worldling, your need was not holiness, but regeneration. You did not get sanctified but lost your sense of condemnation. You got back what you had lost. You were restored to Divine favor. You were reclaimed, re-justified. Get your bearings here and go on unto perfection." The next time you meet Brother Fill-the-Altar, ask him, for Jesus' sake, to stop healing the hurt of God's people slightly, saying, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace." It may be the poor fellow needs a trip to the altar himself."

In a sermon on "The Lost Axe-head," Rev. W. E. Shepherd came right to the point and said, "There are hundreds of people all over the world who have leaked out, lost the witness of the Spirit and they come to the altar to get sanctified. They are not ready for sanctification. You cannot get impatient, cross, lose your temper, say cutting, biting words, do things that you know to be wrong, leak out in your soul and think you can get sanctified over the top of that kind of experience. No backslider can get sanctification any more than any other sinner can get it without first being forgiven. If there is any condemnation on your heart, anything unforgiven, do not try to get sanctified until you have confessed out and been reclaimed."

Brethren of the holiness peoples, as one of you I appeal to you. Let us as preachers "ask for the old paths, where is the good way and walk therein." Let us get back to sermons modelled after the one on the Mount and we will see seekers hunting up that offended brother, plucking out that right eye which lusts after worldliness, bringing forth fruits meet for repentance. When men thus build on the rock, they become candidates for holiness to whom we can go with that first New Testament message on holiness, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall

see God." "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

HOLY OR HOLINESS?

It means more to be holy than to profess holiness. There is a great difference between a holy church and a holiness one. A person may be perfectly orthodox concerning the doctrine of entire sanctification and may be able to define the terms theologically as clear as can be and yet not have the experience in his heart or the fruit of it in his life.

The mission of Methodism is to spread scriptural holiness over the land. Scriptural holiness is of the pure kind—that makes the heart holy by the eradication of the carnal nature and the endowment of the Holy Spirit that empowers for service. It means death to self and selfishness, to pride, anger, covetousness, and every other manifestation of the sin principle in the heart.

What a blessed experience to realize that every inclination of the heart toward that which is sinful and vile has been completely removed, and the fulness of the love of God fills the soul.

One of the best definitions of entire sanctification that we ever heard was given by Rev. J. T. Michael at a camp meeting in Maryland, in 1879, as follows:

"The heart of the converted person so wrought upon by the Holy Spirit that by that operation it is brought into a state where it has no affinity for or propensity toward anything which it perceives to be wrong."

We must be careful that we, as a church, so walk in the light of God that we will not only be known as one of the holiness churches, but as a holy church, having the glory of God in view in all the relations of life, and measuring up to the divine requirement as expressed in I. Peter 1:15-16: "But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

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No doctrine of God stands upon the knowledge, experience, faithfulness, or unfaithfulness of man; it stands on the veracity of God, who gave it. If there were not a man to be found who was justified freely through the redemption that is by Jesus; yet the doctrine of "justification by faith" is true; for it is a doctrine that stands on the truth of God. And suppose not one could be found in all the churches of Christ whose heart was purified from all unrighteousness, and who loved God and man with all his regenerated powers, yet the doctrine of Christian perfection would still be true; for Christ was manifested that He might destroy the work of the devil; and His blood cleanseth from all unrighteousness. And suppose every man be a liar, God is true.—Dr. Adam Clarke, in "Entire Sanctification."

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No more can an effect subsist without its cause, than a sanctified soul abide in holiness without the indwelling Sanctifier.—Dr. Adam Clarke, in "Entire Sanctification."

The truest wisdom is a resolute determination.—Napoleon.

Wesleyan Methodist

To give a man a full knowledge of true morality, I should need to send him to no other book than the New Testament.—John Locke.