

A VERY IMPORTANT QUESTION ANSWERED

By Howard Paschal

Q. Should a seeker for the experience of Entire Sanctification testify that he has received the Holy Ghost before he receives the witness of the Holy Ghost to his own heart, that the work is done?

A. This is a much discussed question among holiness people. One group of teachers and altar workers say that when a seeker is positive in his own mind that his all is on the altar, he should then testify that the Holy Ghost has come and that he is sanctified by faith. Another group of teachers and altar workers take the opposite side and say that a seeker should not believe that he is sanctified until he has received the witness of the Spirit to his own heart, nor until the Holy Ghost has come. Upon the surface, it would seem that both teachings are correct, but upon close study, one will see that while there is an element of truth in both teachings, yet neither one is altogether correct.

While it is true that we are "sanctified by faith," it is also true that a seeker does receive the witness of the Holy Ghost to his own heart when the Holy Ghost comes, and the Holy Ghost never comes in without witnessing to the individual when He comes. Now, look at the other side. While it is true that the Holy Ghost does witness when He comes in to the heart in sanctifying power, we must realize that we are not sanctified by the witness but by faith, and the seeker must believe before he can receive, and if a seeker takes the mental attitude that he will not believe until he receives the witness, that seeker is not exercising faith, but is arguing the case with God.

The middle of the road in this question is God's way. Now I know that you will ask, "What is the middle of the road?" I will do my best to make this clear. If a seeker for the baptism with the Holy Ghost comes to the place where he feels that his all is on the altar, including himself, and yet he does not receive the witness of the Spirit to the incoming of the Holy Ghost, by all means he should not testify that the Holy Ghost has come into his heart. Neither should he take the stand that he will never say that he is sanctified until he receives the witness. What he should do, and must do, is to take an attitude of faith and obedience and perfect submission toward God. He must guard against struggling and discouragement; he must talk faith to God and tell the Lord how much he loves Him and that he expects to be fully His forever. He should walk in a state of constant expectation, expecting the Holy Ghost to come, and that if there is anything else that the Lord wants to reveal to him, that he is ready to have the Lord to reveal it, and that he will walk in the light.

The seeker that will take this course will not go very far until his faith will operate, the Holy Ghost will come into his heart in sanctifying power, he will have the witness of the Spirit clear and plain to his own heart, and he will have all the joy, peace, and sense of purity that he will know what to do with. The question will be forever settled in his own heart. He will know as definitely, as plainly, and as surely, that he has received the Holy Ghost as an instantaneous work of grace in his heart, just as clearly and probably even more so than he knew the moment when he was born again.

Let me add that the same general rules applied to the sinner seeking to be born again will bring the clear witness of the Spirit to his heart that he is forgiven. Romans 8:16.

No one is ever satisfied that they have been

converted or sanctified without having received the witness of the Spirit directly to their own heart. The religion of the Lord Jesus Christ is a "revealed" religion. To reveal means to be assured in your own heart by a supernatural agency. This is Webster's definition of the word reveal, and we know that that Supernatural Agency is the Holy Ghost. The Lord calls men and women, boys and girls to be pastors, evangelists, teachers, singers, missionaries, personal workers, intercessors, and to many other calls, but the Lord never has, does not now, and never will call any human being to tell a seeker that they are saved or sanctified. That is the work of the Holy Ghost and He always looks after His work. He is never one moment late. When the witness has not come, the Holy Ghost knows that there is something in the way. It may only be a mental reservation or a struggling spirit, but just remember that the Holy Ghost will witness at the time his work is done.

Many times altar workers get in the way of the Holy Ghost and side-track the seeker or cause them to stop short by telling them to "take it by faith." True it is that our salvation is by faith, but remember, faith will not work as long as there is one thing to hinder it. Again, altar workers discourage seekers and keep them from believing the Lord by praying right into the ears of the seeker and saying such things as "Oh Lord, don't let him be mistaken; hold him to it until he really gets the witness; don't let him merely take it by faith; give him something that is real this time."

One of the reasons that we have so many people in the religious ranks that have the doctrines and professions of being born again and being sanctified wholly and yet are struggling with doubts, fears, inward battles and desiring worldly entertainment, is because they were rushed through on the so-called "by faith" route and never received the witness to their own hearts, and thus the work was not really done in their hearts. They became professors without really being possessors. They have no supernatural, God-given help in their lives such as genuine saved and sanctified Christians have. They are void of that inward peace, blessing and satisfaction, and, naturally, they make demands for things of the world to satisfy them. This is why religious movements down through church history have all backslidden sooner or later. It is when the human program takes the place of the Holy Ghost program. This grieves the Holy Ghost and He leaves the movement and starts another.

In closing, I feel it necessary to also call your attention to the fact that a Christian not only receives the witness of the Spirit at the time of his conversion and at the time of his sanctification, but the Holy Ghost continues to witness to the Christian that walks in the light. Praise God for the privilege of walking with Him, talking with Him, having communion with Him, being blessed of Him, living under His anointing, being conscious of His abiding presence, or in other words, having the Holy Ghost to continually witness to our hearts that we are walking in a way that pleases Him! Praise God for real salvation that satisfies every longing desire of the heart! The person that has this continual Witness will not have to be fed with carnal religious programs, but rather, will have a desire for spiritual things and will want more of God.

Before my conversion I worked towards the Cross, but since then I have worked from the Cross; then I worked to be saved, now I work because I am saved.—D. L. Moody.

EXTREMES IN MILLENNIALISM

By Rev. W. G. Ketcheson

Among those who have made a special study of prophecy the most discordant opinions prevail; with them, a great variety of interpretations are advanced.

This line of study seems to have a strange fascination to it, and once drawn into it there seems to be a great difficulty in getting out again. The dim and mystical features of it appear to help constitute the attraction.

This teaching brought about a great commotion at the beginning of the tenth century. In the preceding century it was the universal opinion of the church that in just a thousand years after the first advent of Christ the world, or age, would come to an end, notwithstanding the statement of Jesus that neither men nor angels knew when this event would take place, and that it would transpire at a time when men would least expect it.

In the previous year (999) there was terrible anxiety and solemnity, for it was considered to be the last year of time. Folk claimed that all the signs and prophecies indicated that.

What effect did this have on the people? Did it cause goodness and righteousness to prevail? Far from it! Their seed was not sown, their fields were not planted. They said, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." Then in the face of death, as they thought, sin raged as never before. There was almost universal anarchy; no law nor order. The powers of government were largely annulled, and there was no safety anywhere.

Approaching this period, there were wars and rumors of wars. Repairs were not made to property; everything was left to go to waste. The language was, Why improve anything, when in a few months all is going to be swallowed up in a general conflagration? With sin, the condition of society became almost unbearable. No crops now, and robbers ravaged villages and towns. The famine was so great that when mice and rats could no longer be obtained for food, women and children were killed or permitted to die, and their flesh sold for meat on the markets. Is it not strange that in danger, and in the face of death, people so frequently plunge into the most hideous sins, even those who go to war to be a target for the enemy, and not knowing the second when they will be blown to atoms, still, in many cases, they live the most wicked and immoral lives? It is the same with the aged; the grey hairs do not alarm them, but in general the nearer people come to eternity, the less concerned they are about the salvation of their souls.

As the year 999 drew to an end, people held their breath in fear while they watched the results. For a whole generation the pulpits throughout the land had been ringing with the text, "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him that he should deceive the nations no more; and after that he must be loosed a little season." Sometimes people think they know a lot until God's providence teaches them otherwise.—Free Methodist.

Death only ends a life that cannot last and begins a life that cannot end.