

THE KING'S HIGHWAY

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

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SPECIAL NOTICE

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EDITORIAL

REVERENCE FOR THE HOUSE OF GOD.

Among other things which we find in religious circles, these days which are detrimental to the spirit of true worship and the cause of Christ in general, is the growing tendency to irreverence for the House of God.

Our buildings which are commonly called churches, which are meeting-houses for Christian worship, are different from any other buildings in the community. They are different because of the purpose for which they were built. They are especially built and dedicated as a place where the people not only meet to hold religious services but also where God has promised to meet with His people, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them."

God has always commanded His people to show special respect for the place of worship. Back in the early days of Israel as a nation, when they worshipped in a tent or tabernacle, before the first temple was built, God said to His people, Keep my Sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary.—Lev. 19-30. He also would have them show the same respect for the temple of Solomon, when it was dedicated. He so filled it with his presence and glory, that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud. 1 K. 8-11. Isaiah also in his wonderful vision saw the Lord sitting on a throne and his train filled the temple. In the days of our Lord's ministry on earth, when he found buyers and sellers and money changers in the temple he showed his displeasure in a very radical way. He made a scourge of small cords and drove them all out, and said it is written: My Father's house shall be called a house of prayer, and ye have made it a den of thieves. The apostle Paul also reproveth the people in his day for using the place of worship to eat in. He wrote to the Corinthians: What have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God. What would he say to so many today who use their churches for socials, and suppers, and places to sell their wares to raise money for church work. What do you think our Lord would do if he were here again in the flesh, and found people so desecrating the place of worship. And what shall we say of those who come into our meetings, and talk, visit and gossip before the service begins. Talk so loudly, and about almost anything except spiritual things. Others will look about the room, laugh and chew gum. Beloved, are such actions becoming to those who come into the presence of

the Most High to worship. Can we expect God's blessing on our souls when we do these things.

Children who are old enough to know better, and should have been trained by their parents to be quiet in the house of God, are often allowed to sit in a back seat away from their parents during the service, and thus disturb others who come to worship. Well, if parents come in and visit, talk and laugh, why should they expect the children to be quiet. I have some very sacred memories of some church services which I have attended. The people came in reverently, went to their accustomed places, knelt down by their seat, and prayed quietly for a few minutes, then sat up in a quiet attitude, waiting for the service to begin. They seemed to be in that prayerful frame of mind like those of Cornelius' household who said: "We are all here before God to hear all things commanded thee of God." This attitude of heart and mind on the part of the people seemed to be pleasing to God, for there was a conscious sense of His presence in our midst. The preacher found it easy to preach for the people were praying for him, and the worshippers were blessed. And you remember also that meeting at Cornelius' house: "While Peter yet spake, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." So let us show respect for the place of worship, and reverence for the house where we expect to meet Him, and we will be blest.

CONVICTION FOR SIN

Rev. H. C. Morrison

Our Lord Jesus tells us in John 16:8, that when the Holy Ghost is come he shall "reprove (convince) the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." This is a powerful and gracious work of the Holy Spirit that cannot be wrought without him. We are living, just now, in the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, when he is among us in his person and fulfilling his various offices in the Church and among men. Ignoring him and his work, means failure. It cannot be otherwise. It matters not how magnificent your temple of worship, how sweetly your choir sings, in what splendid robes your preacher may appear, or how eloquently he may talk on social uplift, scientific discovery and the progressive times in which we are living, if there is no oil of spiritual life and power in the vessel there will be the stench of smoke rather than the light which illuminates the souls of men.

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Conviction for sin, a profound sense of one's wickedness before God, of the fact that one is lost and without hope, apart from divine mercy in the application of the atonement made by Christ, is a gracious work of the Holy Spirit and very important. It leads to true repentance, to a hatred of one's sins. One looks back to his wicked deeds with horror; he wonders and laments that he should have committed sins, which the Holy Spirit reveals to him, in all their turpitude. His burden is almost unbearable; it makes him to cry out, "O God, be merciful to me a sinner." That prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner," covers quite a territory. The sinner who offers it admits, believes and confesses there is a God, that he has sinned against him; that he is guilty; that his only hope for salvation is in the compassionate mercy of the God against whom he has sinned. All of this is quite a creed for the unconverted to which he subscribes fully, when he says, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

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Under the conviction of the Holy Spirit he un-

covers and reveals the wickedness of sin, and the lost condition of the sinner; with the awfulness of coming judgment, there is nothing left for the sinner to do, but to forsake his sins, to sorrow for them and to cry for mercy. This work of the Holy Spirit is very humiliating, very destructive to pride and strut, and the good opinion of one's self; his supposed righteousness becomes as "filthy rags." Passing through this sort of experience, pardon is most desirable, and when received there is gratitude, thankfulness, praise; there is a sense of the wonderful blessedness of the atonement. A heart warmed with love for Christ adores him. This conviction and pardon have taken one through an experience which the Lord Jesus Christ calls being "born again." This broken-hearted, penitent sinner, through grace, mercy and forgiveness has become, in Christ, a new creature. The things he once loved, he now hates; the things he once hated, he now loves. Old things have passed away and all things have become new. What a marvelous experience in the history of one's soul. Out of heaven has come marvelous light which has confounded him. He has had a broken heart and a contrite spirit. He has deeply felt his lostness, his dependence upon Jesus Christ, and now he is from sin set free. He is ready to say with the ancient hymn writer of Israel, "Bless the Lord, Oh, my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

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This writer is a firm believer in deep, pungent conviction for sin; in true repentance which involves sorrow for sin, forsaking of sin, and confession of sin. No doubt this is the return road of the prodigal to the Father's house, which is sure to be welcomed with forgiveness and a sense of divine love. We understand that all convictions are not alike, but we must insist that there must be a sense of lostness; there must be a forsaking of sin; there must be the exercise of faith that brings a sense of pardon. We cannot, and will not, consent to anything less than this. For the child, the most moral man or woman, the most refined and best educated that would be saved, must have the operation of the Holy Spirit in bringing to their conscience a sense of sin, a need of forgiveness, and that old cry of prayer which admits so much, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

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What a farce it is in any sort of religious revival, or reception of people into the church, to ignore the Holy Spirit and his gracious work of revealing sin, righteousness and judgment. The convicted sinner longs for righteousness and trembles at the thought of judgment. What an extractor of pride and conceit. To ignore all of this, and take people into the church without a sense of their lostness, repentance, saving faith and a gracious experience of pardon, is a tragic farce, a crime against the God who created us, the Christ who redeemed us, and the Church which should be the home of the re-born, and the poor deluded soul who is made to believe that he or she has secured salvation by a profession, coming into the church in their sins and continuing to commit them. This sort of thing is going on in a startling way.

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If we are to have a revival; if there is to be a religious awakening in this nation; if our country is to be saved from the wreck of morals and the breaking down of everything that promotes peace and civilization, and keeps us from final catastrophe, and the wreckage of all that is really worth while, there must be some plain, earnest preaching; there must be men in the pulpit so dead to self that they are willing to suffer; above

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