

CLEANSING AND CONQUEST

By Rev. R. G. Flexon

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Cleansing, practical Christianity, and conquest are inseparable. The baptism of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost did many things for the disciples, but there were three outstanding things which it did, namely: gave purity of heart, righteous practice or behaviour, and progress or enabled them to do conquests for the kingdom.

Purity. "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." Practice. "... and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." "And the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." How did the people recognize that they had been with Jesus, and why were they called Christians? No doubt it was because they acted like Christ, their behaviour or practice was Christ-like. Progress. "And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word." "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." Such descriptive phrases indicate conquest with a vengeance.

Purity

The greatest need of the Christian church is for personal purity. It is not only cleansing from outward transgression that is needed but an inward heart purification. It is not only a cleansing from disobedience but a cleansing of the disposition. When the disciples were baptized with the Holy Ghost they were delivered from the sin principle and not from the practice of sin. It is not the so-called great sins of the sinner that are hindering the growth of the church but the bad tempers of worldly professors of religion that cause many people to turn away from the paths of righteousness. The bad tempers, gossiping tongues, evil surmising, envious looks, and jealous place-seeking are disastrous to the church. The new birth and the heart cleansing wrought through entire sanctification are followed by a practical life of holiness and freedom from the symptoms listed above.

Practice or Behaviour

Those people who expect to go to a holy heaven should live holy now. To preach the doctrine of Christianity and leave its practices to every man's conscience is not sufficient. To be a Christian one must actually be Christlike in all things. To be Christlike is to be single-minded. Jesus was. His one great object in life was to do the will of his father. Paul, Christ's great follower had that one object. He said, "this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before. I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Jesus was radical, and to be like him one must be radical. He was not unduly bound by custom and precedent, he practised progress. His teachings are the most radical teachings the world has ever known. He never did work merely on the surface. He went direct to the root of any matter. When he dealt with the woman at the well, he did not go way around

to get at her trouble. He said, "Go, call thy husband." That was a direct thrust. That one statement laid open her whole sinful life. Many people do not like to be called radical, but to be Christlike is to be radical. If Christ were here on earth now, he would no doubt be termed a leader of radicals. Jesus was more greatly interested in character than in expediency. He knew that flattery could not add anything to any man and that criticism could not take anything away from him. He was not a conformer, but a transformer. He did not live on dreams of past glories, but of future possibilities. He was not a liberal in the sense that he took in everything and everybody, smoothed over sin and compromised principle in the interest of harmony. He was a radical in that he condemned all sham, uncovered hypocrisy, cleansed the temple by the use of whips, broke over all unscriptural Jewish traditions calling white white, and black black. He never gave any quarters to the wrong and never shrank from the suffering attendant upon doing the right. Relationships, friendships, positions, praise or censure never detoured him from the path of right. When you measure yourself by him can you feel you are a practical Christian and are you following in his footsteps?

Progress

Pentecost brought propagating power. "Ye shall be witnesses unto me." In other words, "Ye shall be heralds of religious propaganda." Heart purity lays the foundation for Christian character. The fullness of the Holy Ghost gives power for Christian conquest. "But the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits."

The experience of entire sanctification goes to the innermost nature with its cleansing power and to the outermost reaches of the earth with its God-created desire for spiritual conquest. This being so, it is evident that in the lives of many people that profess holiness, the experience of entire sanctification is long overdue. They live in the realm of inquest rather than conquest; of intention rather than apprehension; of pleading mercy for weakness rather than witnessing of victories. They can quote history by the yard, but they do not make history. Like hero worshippers they bow before religious giants, but they are religious pigmies themselves. Outside of the sin of backbiting, envy, jealousy, deceit and emulations, perhaps the greatest sin of holiness professors is the sin of doing nothing. That verse of scripture, "be sure your sin will find you out" refers to the sin of doing nothing as well as positive wrong acts.

No doubt one reason the altars in our holiness camps and churches are so many times filled with repeaters is because there has been a lack of conquest. To keep healthy physically one must not only eat, but he must exercise. Overeating without exercise will lay the ground work for many diseases. The same obtains in the spiritual realm. Perhaps all the unhealthy attitudes and relationships between people on the holiness movement is because of too much feeding on Sunday and not enough wholesome spiritual exercise on week days. We often forget that pure religion consists not only in keeping one's self unspotted from the world but also in visiting the sick, the fatherless and the widows in their affliction. Too many of us shout on Sunday and slump in doubts on Monday. We talk faith on Sunday and act fear on Monday. We talk about

being fishers of men on Sunday and spend the most of next week fishing for pleasure, wealth and ease. We have learned how to use the language of Pentecostal power, but we are unwilling to pay the price that gives that power. We render so much lip service without much sacrifice. We talk of conquest, but we do not really want it if it will cost us any comfort. The world often listens enthusiastically to our preaching but too frequently looks hopelessly for our holy practices. They rejoice in the testimony of our consecration but they are disappointed with our conquest. They expect the baptism of the Holy Ghost to do what we declare the Bible says it will do, but they fail to find practice and progress corresponding with profession, so often conclude we are either deluded or God was wrong. Seeing these things are facts, may we not conclude that in many churches and in many lives real holiness is way past due.

THE JUDGMENTS OF JUDE

By J. B. Chapman

The little Book of Jude comes just before the Great Judgment book—the Book of Revelation, and it puts into forceful prose the same truths that Revelation gives in apocalyptic form. Jude warns of coming judgment, John describes these judgments as they actually appear to him in panorama. With Jude the gulf that separates sinners from saints is still passable. With John in Revelation the gulf is fixed, so that "He that is holy let him be holy still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still."

Jude recalls the judgments God sent upon Israel for unbelief, upon the fallen angels for disobedience, and upon the corrupt Sodomites for all their ungodliness that he may show what impenitent sinners may expect in the age-end period of correction and retribution in the final day of adjudication yet ahead. Depraved teachers of false doctrines come in for odious description, and upon them stinging woe is pronounced.

Jude gives Enoch and the apostles of the Lord as examples of judgment prophets who have preceded him. Enoch came to foretell the doom of the ungodly. The apostles condemned the mockers whose appearance was harbinger of the last days, and the final collapse. Wicked, impenitent sinners and conniving, bestial, selfish teachers of heretical doctrines are warned with all solemnity and condemned without mitigation.

God's true people are solemnly exhorted to withdraw so fully from every evil deed and unholy thought as to hate even the garments that have been spotted by the leprosy of sin (the equivalent of Paul's "Abstain from all appearance of evil"), hoping for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. Administrators of discipline are asked to have compassion on the penitent, and to seek to save souls, even those who are already scorched by the close approaching fires of a hopeless hell. Mercy for those whose feet have well-nigh slipped!

Our fathers used to turn from the reading of Jude to pray, "O Lord, show the lost how even now they hang suspended by the brittle and slender thread of life over a bottomless pit that burns with fire and brimstone. And grant unto us also, that we may be more serious than we have ever been in fleeing from the wrath to come." And may that prayer be answered for our generation too.