

Preaching for the Glory of God

Rev. A. W. Orwig

Certainly there should be no other kind of preaching. And that means that the salvation of the unsaved and the upbuilding of Christians should be the only motive of every preacher of the gospel. But alas! this does not always seem to be the case. As to the guilty ones, may we not ask, "Lord, is it I?" The apostle Paul said, "If I pleased men I should not be the servant of Christ." And he also declared, "nor of men sought we glory."

The divine command is, "Do all to the glory of God." In nothing is it more applicable than to the work of the ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, how the Saviour should be exalted, and self abased and crucified! An eminent and very useful preacher once declared that at one time he had sought the praise of men more than the glory of God. And when the great "Welsh Revival" was in progress, some years ago, its human leader, Evan Roberts, on one occasion suddenly and quietly left the service, simply because curiosity and expectancy concerning him were so very distasteful to his consecrated soul. Then a godly young woman arose and exclaimed, "Whom are you after, Evan Roberts or Jesus?" And the meeting proved more than ordinarily successful because only the glory of God was sought. Verily our constant aim should be "that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ."

An old incident is that the distinguished Rev. Dr. Bonar had a dream that some angels analyzed his motives as a preacher of the gospel. To his astonishment they found fourteen parts of selfishness, fifteen parts of sectarianism, twenty-two parts of ambition, twenty-three parts of love to men, and twenty-six parts of love to God. Deeply humbled, he very earnestly sought to perfect desire to glorify God only.

Quite a number of years ago I very intimately knew a preacher (now deceased) who dreamed that he had died and ascended to the gate of heaven, expecting a welcome entrance. But an angelic being said to him, "You cannot enter now. Go back to the earth and preach for the glory of God alone, and some day you may be admitted." He had told the solemn and insuspicious dream to a friend, but it afterward came to my knowledge.

A far sadder occurrence was that of another preacher who dreamed that a popular ministerial friend of his approached him and said. With great emotion, that he had just dreamed that he had died at four o'clock in the afternoon and that he was lost! To this the other preacher, in his dream, solemnly and alarmed, replied, "Lost! Why!" The mournful answer was, "Not because I did not preach the real gospel, but because I sought the applause of men more than the glory of God, and verily I have my reward!" The first mentioned preacher of these two, dreaming that while he was on his way to church for the evening service, was met by a friend who asked, "Have you heard of the sudden death of the able minister, Doctor——?" The reply was that he had not, but still somewhat agitated by his strange dream, inquired as to the time of the death. "At four o'clock this afternoon," was the reply.

IMAGINARY INSULTS

By J. M. Byars

A tragedy occurred on November 9, 1950, in a small Central New York town. Hubert Bradley was murdered. According to the newspaper, Walden Thomas said he killed Hubert Bradley because he called his pretty wife a Cherokee Indian when in reality she was a St. Regis Indian.

I do not know why the accused murderer considered the slur by Bradley such an insult; he certainly could not have given a more ridiculous reason. Without doubt, if he could recall the situation he would act differently perhaps laugh it off as a trivial matter, but it is too late for him to think about self-control in this instance.

Quick tempered, easily insulted Joe Crane and I were good pals when we were boys in grammar school. One of our schoolmates, Bob Greene, always rubbed Joe the wrong way. Joe began to wear his feelings on his sleeve when Bob was around and frequently he would feel that he had been offended. Often the supposed offences led Joe to challenge Bob to a fight. Bob always won. As I look back over the years I can see now how absurdly comical it was the time Joe said, as he wiped blood from his nose, "I won't take that off anyone."

Joe maintained this disposition until he was twenty-three years old. Several times he narrowly missed being killed by someone because of his explosive temperament. One night while attending a revival service he met Jesus and accepted Him as his Saviour. Later the Holy Ghost sanctified his heart. I know Joe had some pretty rough treatment in subsequent years, but he never retaliated.

One day I asked him, "Joe, what happened to that violent temper of yours?"

"The Lord sanctified it," he replied quietly.

"How do you feel now when you are crossed, Joe?"

"Well, I don't exactly enjoy it, but when circumstances are not to my liking God gives me the victory. Instead of aggravation I have peace."

The Bible depicts many characters in pathetic plight brought on by their own foolish ideas. Inevitably they offer some preposterous excuse to justify themselves, but it neither satisfies their own conscience nor the laws of God. Walden Thomas tried to justify himself for the murder of Hubert Bradley, but the court will never accept the outburst of angry pride as a valid reason for taking a man's life.

Are you easily insulted? If so, go to Christ as Joe did. Without His presence in your heart you are in danger of committing some hasty act that you may spend the rest of your life trying to amend.—Wesleyan Youth.

Of course all three preachers were most intensely glad that their dreams were not dread realities. But that they were delivered from all seeking of their own glory can scarcely be questioned. And what a great mercy on the part of God thus to warn His servants! It may be, however, that God, according to His sovereign will, does not always warn all who prostitute their high and holy calling largely in self-exaltation. The sacred Scriptures inform us that some highly gifted men, able gospel preachers and even miracle-workers, will finally be rejected by the Lord. How solemn and dreadful the thought!

—American Holiness Journal.

Holiness: God's Purpose for Man

By Roy H. Cantrell

Holiness, God's purpose for man, is a claim grounded deep in the character of God. Pious men of days gone by have declared this great truth, but the precept is not based in their preaching. This truth has a stronger basis even than the teaching of St. John and St. Paul, though John declared, "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself," and Paul wrote, "God hath . . . called us . . . unto holiness." We are to be holy for no lesser reason than the glorious fact that we worship a holy God.

Holiness, God's purpose for man, is sometimes reputed to be a strange, new doctrine fathered by a small new sect. As a matter of fact, the creed of every evangelical church teaches this all-important truth; Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, Lutheran, Episcopal, Roman Catholic, Free Methodist, Pilgrim Holiness, Nazarene, etc.—holiness now, or at death, or before entrance to heaven. But we must have stronger authority than even the oldest church creeds.

The world is full of folks who need this holiness, which is God's purpose for man. They are helpless to make themselves what they ought to be. Their dispositions, their tempers, have proved too much for them. Only a sanctified heart will set them free from the bondage of carnality, to live lives of happiness and usefulness. Holiness makes better citizens, better husbands, better wives, better children, better workmen, better individuals—but we are obligated to holiness not even because of its effect on the individual.

We are to become inhabitants of a holy heaven; there shall enter nothing that defileth. But we are to be made holy not merely because heaven is holy. We are to be companions forever of holy angels, but there is a weightier reason for holiness than the holiness of angels.

Adam was created a holy being, and God's purpose in creation is defeated unless humanity can be restored to its original status of sinless purity; but the restoration of the human race is not the fundamental reason why man is to be holy.

God says, "Be ye holy; for I am holy." This is the ultimate basis of holiness or God's purpose for man. The ultimate moral fact of the universe is the utterance of God, "I am holy."

To catch the full force of holiness, God's purpose for man, we must view it against eternal horizons. For us to think holiness merely against the background of time is not enough. True holiness even in such a limited setting is thrilling and marvelous; but only when we think of the plan of God from eternity to eternity do we have the full scope of His purpose.

Paul, in his Ephesian letter, reveals through the Holy Spirit these eternal horizons. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." The sweep of this concept from eternity to eternity is breath-taking. Nevertheless, it is all contained in the ultimate purpose of divine will as it comprehends our eternal salvation, "holiness, God's purpose for man." So in the picture of the purpose of His will for us are included the unity of this eternal fellowship, the revelation of His eternal glory to them

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