

Christian Holiness

By Rev. J. Sidlow Baxter, Edinburgh, Scotland

It is a great thing to be converted. It is a big thing to be in union with the Son of God. Never entertain little views of the Christian life. No conversion to Christ is simply an incidental or fortuitous circumstance. Every genuine conversion, on the human side, means a decision, an act of will; but on the Divine side it is the out-working of the age-long purpose of God, which is eternal in its sweep. For "He has chosen us before the foundation of the world." That is the doctrine, the tremendous truth of Divine election or selection; and it is accompanied by the doctrine of sanctification in these words: "Chosen us in Him, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." Election is never arbitrary. It always has its basis in moral and ethical purpose, and that purpose is this: "That we should be holy before Him."

If there is one thing more important than another in the Christian life it is this: that we ought to be perpetually and vigilantly concerned about our personal holiness of character and conduct. All the marvels of science and wonders of nature are little compared with this truth, that from the remote ages of the past, God has had us little people in contemplation and in anticipation. He fixed His love upon us and decided that the blood of His incarnate Son should redeem us, and thus to predestinate us to His eternal glory. It is bewilderingly staggering, and if preachers were to preach it, without it being given in this Holy Book, we should say that they had gone stark mad; but it is here in all its wonder. The only conceivable reason why the Eternal Omnipotent Sovereign Deity should set His love upon me is that I should be holy and without blame, before Him in love.

There is

A Second Work of Grace

in the soul, quite distinct from, though not necessarily subsequent to, conversion, in which, by the surgery of the Holy Spirit, inbred sin is dealt with, and the soul is lifted into a deliberation from it and filled with the Spirit—lifted into an experience of fellowship, holiness and perfect love never experienced before. I believe in that further experience because it is in God's word. That is God's purpose in us—holiness. Whatever ideas we may have about it, don't let them put us off from God's fundamental plan in our salvation.

In the Greek text of this verse there is one verb—"chosen," followed by three adverbial phrases, all of which can be explained in this way: When did God choose us? "Before the foundation of the world." How did God choose us? "He hath chosen us in Him." Why did God choose us? "That we should be holy and without blame before Him." One verb and three amplifying phrases. That brings up the whole matter as to what **holiness is, not Faultlessness**. It is blamelessness.

When we come into the experience of Scriptural holiness we are not necessarily put back at once into the position that Adam occupied before he fell. Physically, mentally and morally he was perfect—fresh from God's hand, without the slightest taint, unsoiled by the smallest tinge of imperfection. The unfallen Adam was a perfect creature. In our experience of holiness we are not put back there, physically,

THE PROMISE OF FAITH

How often have decent, kindly folk when overtaken suddenly by tragic loss or stunning agony cried out, "What have I done to deserve this? Why should God allow this to happen?" Plainly this reveals an entirely unchristian philosophy of life. An easy road and roses all the way was never the promise of the Father even to the well-beloved Son. The very symbol of Christian faith is the Cross—not an ornament but an instrument of pain.

Experience comes to good men and bad quite impartially. The same weather tests houses built on rock and on sand. The rain descended and the floods came and the winds blew on both houses. When the storm was over, the wisely-founded house survived. And does anyone fail to recognize that this is equally true of persons? Jesus has survived many storms—the same yesterday, today and forever. For all possible conditions there is guidance here. The place for this compact, unerring counsel to every man is not merely on our shelves but in our souls. Here indeed is the key to recovery.—Presbyterian Tribune.

HE KNOWETH THE WAY

Hold fast this thought, that God will choose thy way,

Nor strive to see the path that lies before;
Walk with thy hand in His from day to day;
Trust Him to lead; thy soul can ask no more.

He knows the rocky place, the waters deep;
Think not He hath forsaken if thy frame
Is bruised and weary; thou art His to keep.

Can He forsake who calls upon His name,
Today is filled with pain, but canst thou say
What blessed joy tomorrow holds in store?

Hold fast this thought, that God will choose thy way;

Trust Him to lead. Thy soul can ask no more. —Alliance Weekly

intellectually, spiritually. As long as we are in this present life and under the present system of things, we shall be subject to the clog, the infirmities of a fallen human nature. We can have a perfect heart, without a perfect head, a good motive and a bad memory. The holy man can make mistakes, but mistakes are not sins. Some of the holiest men I have ever known have had a decidedly imperfect judgment in many economic matters.

Holiness is not the conferment of any kind of infallibility. Nor is it faultlessness. The epistle of Jude expresses this wonderful promise and prospect in the words: "Now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." There we shall be perfect replicas of Christ—yes, then, but not now. Faultlessness has to do with our powers. Blamelessness has to do with our motives. When all the motives are clean, pure, wholesome and God-glorifying that is blamelessness. This is how I sing the familiar chorus: "Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me—take me, cleanse me, fill me, use me." What I give He takes. What He takes He cleanses. What He cleanses He fills. What He fills He uses.—From "The Intercessor."

Relax on God

By Oliver G. Wilson

At the ticket office of a great airline I purchased a ticket from Buffalo, New York, to Kansas City, Missouri. I paid the price indicated by the agent, surrendered all my baggage into the hands of another, and then climbed aboard the great ship. The stewardess examined my ticket and said, "You are entitled to any seat not occupied." I chose a seat near the centre of the cabin and relaxed in its comfort.

While we were literally flying through the air I was reading the thirty-seventh Psalm. Coming to the fifth verse, "Commit thy way unto the Lord," the Holy Spirit began to whisper some lessons to me.

As I had fulfilled all the requirements of the airline company and then committed myself to the skill of the pilot and the power of the Lord, so I was to commit myself unto the Lord. The margin has it, "Roll thy ways upon the Lord."

Do not miss the essential thing here, before I could commit myself to the airplane I had to submit to the company's condition for passengers; I paid the price of the ticket, I surrendered all my baggage—submit, surrender—a most difficult thing for we poor weak mortals. Somehow we would rather trust our fragmentary knowledge than God's infinite wisdom. God's condition, however, is that man must submit, then God will remit. These two words, submit and remit, sum up true religion.

Commit all to Christ without reservation; relax upon His mercy; rest upon His goodness and you will make the port of Heaven on schedule time.

A little while before a young man was to be ordained to the Christian ministry, an old and very successful minister said to him: "My boy, at first you will think you can do anything. After a time you will be tempted to think you can do nothing. But do not let yourself be cast down—you can do what God has for you to do.

To live fully committed to Christ, to recklessly attempt what He directs and rejoice in His presence and power, this is LIFE.

Despite all temporary conditions Infinite Love rules. Commit wholly, commit now, then relax on The Great I AM of the ages.

EVERY PROMISE

Every promise of Scripture is a writing of God, which may be pleaded before Him with this reasonable request: "Do as Thou hast said." The Creator will not cheat His creature who depends upon His truth; and, far more, the heavenly Father will not break His word to His own child. "Remember the word unto Thy servant, upon which Thou hast caused me to hope" is most prevalent pleading. It is a double argument: it is Thy Word, wilt Thou not keep it? Why hast Thou spoken of it if Thou wilt not make it good? Thou hast caused me to hope in it, wilt Thou disappoint the hope which Thou hast Thyself begotten in me?—Spurgeon.

"Doing the will of God is the Christian's daily task, his reward is God's divine blessing!"