

The King's Highway

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THE DIVINE ENABLING ... 1 Pet. 1: 14-16

By Harry E. Jessop

Here is the apostolic declaration on Christian holiness. It is immediately evident that the writer is familiar with the Book of Leviticus, where holiness is demanded at least five times of priest and people in the words of the scripture before us.

Peter, in common with Moses, believed that God calls His people to a holy life, and that such a life is not optional but imperative. The scripture before us is vital in nature. If we may put it in the form of a jingle, it is an experience to be experienced. We have said it this way, not for the sake of the jingle, but because of the loose ideas so frequently held concerning the holy life. Many an earnest seeker has been sidetracked on the very border of Canaan through the influence of carnal wilderness wanderers who have misinformed him as to the nature of the experience.

With a fine subtlety, that glorious scriptural expression "in Christ" has been so twisted as to become a dangerous error. "Yes! you are to be holy," they are told, "but only in Christ. It is not in yourself." That, on the surface, sounds good. It magnifies the Lord, and humbles the flesh. The difficulty is not in the expression, but in the interpretation. All we have and are is "in Christ." He is the Center and Source of all good. Yet, having said that, we go farther and insist that while He is the Source and Centre, and from Him all goodness is derived, His nature is to be imparted to us, and possessed by us. True holiness is not an imputation which is reckoned ours by proxy, but an impartation which becomes ours by faith. The Christian is commanded to be holy just as he is commanded to be honest. It is not sufficient to talk about being honest in Christ while we are dishonest in ourselves.

For our holiness, Christ is the Source, not the substitute. It is not that Christ is holy instead of us, but rather that He imparts His holiness to us. God's "Be ye" must mean "Become ye." It is a transfer from himself to the believing heart.

We would further add that this experience is revolutionary in character. Holiness, in any person, will make a definite change. It revolutionizes the life. We are to be holy in all manner of living.

It revolutionizes the heart. True holiness deals with life on the inside. It purifies the heart, making the nature inwardly clean. A holy life is the product of a pure heart. For all this, the Apostle advances two unanswerable arguments, foundational facts on which this truth is based.

The first is the character of God, "For I am holy." No other religion can make such a claim for its deity. Heathen gods were conceived of as patrons of impurity. Their devotees sought to be like them and reveled in the filth. Here Peter would seem to say: If the heathen emu-

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DEATHLESS DEEDS

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Only those actions motivated by the love of God and directed by the knowledge of God possess sufficient vitality to accomplish the will of God. Such is the entangling, smothering power of sin that all actions which do not find their inspiration in the love of God soon exhaust themselves and fade away. God alone has the power of eternal life; therefore, all our works must "begin, continue and end" in Him if they are to survive the present passing order. Thus, and only thus, will they become joined to the unceasing ongoings of His Kingdom.

Totally oblivious to spiritual values, infants and small children live largely in the realm of the senses. The whole area of life is filled by what is tasted, smelled, heard, felt, and seen. This fact accounts for the varying moods of childhood—laughter one moment and tears the next, high elation today and deep depression tomorrow. Many a young convert likewise shows more or less of this same bondage to feelings. He is apt to estimate his spiritual condition or the progress of a revival by the amount of emotion experienced. He sits in the busy market places of life, now piping, now mourning; and wondering why his emotional states have such little influence upon his fellows. He does not realize that to sit or to stand idly in the place of enterprise is to be condemned as one who has little vision and less ambition. Such a self-centered soul badly needs a sense of direction and mission, such as Moses received, which would free him from the petty tyranny of feelings and sense-impressions. This sense of life-mission did not come to Moses at the first, for we read, "By faith Moses when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;—"Everything that could minister to the senses was his for the taking but all this paled into insignificance when his true life-mission dawned upon him. He had arrived at spiritual as well as physical maturity. His deeds now became deathless because they were motivated and directed by the love and knowledge of God and had the relish of salvation in them.

In further considering this theme of deathless deeds, we see that the writings of the Apostle John—the Gospel, the Epistles and the Revelation—show a very definite progression of this thought. The Gospel gives the historical revelation of the love of God; the Epistles give direction for the outworking of this love in us; and the Revelation shows the final triumph of this love as God's will is finally done on earth as it is in Heaven. Thus the the writings of John take us back to the eternity that was and then carry us forward to that eternity that shall be. Such seed-truths of Redemption as the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Resurrection, the necessity for the New Birth and the

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