

Guest Editorial

THOUGHTS ON THE HOLINESS MOVEMENT

Editor, "Pilgrim Holiness Advocate"

The holiness movement has had a long and honorable record. It has been a burning and a shining light in this world of sin and sorrow. It has been used of God in opening churches and launching whole denominations. Its full salvation literature runs into millions of papers, tracts, and books. It has built Bible schools and colleges, opened missions and sent gospel evangelists and missionaries to the ends of the earth. Multiplied thousands of precious souls have been led to our Lord Jesus Christ through the ministry of its servants.

But the holiness movement as a movement is threatened with an eclipse. It is in danger of losing both its distinctiveness and its power, and becoming no more than an indistinguishable part of modern christendom. How deep the shadows may become, or how long they shall last we do not know. But one thing we may be sure of is that God wants all of us to stay out of these shadows. And we may, by the grace of the living God, refuse to let the eclipse become total where we are!

To keep the light clear and strong we must take our stand by and in the Word of God. If there are any valid criticisms leveled against us (and there are!) one of them is that we do not put enough emphasis upon the Word of God. We can quote any number of authorities, ourselves included, but the man of our counsel must be the Bible. The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God.

There needs to be definite teaching and preaching of the Word of God on the subject of heart holiness. Jesus said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled" (Matt. 5:6). Scriptural preaching and witnessing by those who have themselves been baptized by the Holy Ghost gives God a chance to bring conviction to the hearts of those that hear them. It is when the Word is preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven that he can and will convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. It was so on the day of Pentecost; it is so in our day!

Perhaps nothing brings spiritual darkness any more certainly than to be satisfied to hold scriptural truths in theory only. We say that we believe in holiness, which is both necessary and good, but do we have the experience? We may be known as good people, but is the grace of full salvation working in our life and service? One of the common experiences of the day is to find whole congregations professing holiness but with little or no evidence of the power and presence of the Spirit.

If we are to escape the darkness there must be a clear, scriptural break with the world, the flesh, and the devil. This means that we turn our back upon everything that is questionable or has about it even the appearance of evil. Jesus said of the end-time conditions, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Matt. 24:12). The current popularity of those borderline evils which have become acceptable to many, seems to give the sanction of righteousness to that which is wrong. This is where the devil often sets his snare.

Holiness as taught in the Word of God has always called for men and women who were out and out for God. "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" has been a sound rule of conduct proclaimed from many a holiness pulpit. The Bible's plain talk about what we wear and where we go and the pleasures we seek, is still a rock of stumbling to the worldly minded. But it is well to remember that we are going to be judged by the Word of God and not

by the prevailing opinion of friends and neighbors.

Organizational Christianity is deadly to true spirituality. This is because it tends to supplant it, and exalts man and his efforts rather than Jesus Christ. The Laodicean church was a prosperous group with money in the bank, but they blindly mistook material prosperity for spiritual well being. Their halfway, lukewarm attitude towards both God and the world made them wholly unacceptable. Yet how common is such policy in the church in our day—and how often applauded!

"God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness" (I Thess. 4:7). The call unto holiness is twofold. It is a call to the experience of a pure heart, and to consecrated service. Jesus said to his disciples, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19). Everything worthwhile on earth, and our destiny in the world to come depends upon being rightly related to Jesus Christ. And nothing can take the place of following him who is both Lord and Saviour.

The Word of the Saviour to us is that if we follow him, he will make us fishers of men. A purified heart is zealous of good works (Titus 2:14). Holy zeal springs out of a holy heart. It cannot be otherwise. The zealous often need instruction and direction in their efforts, but the love that constrains them is of God. A worthy soul, Augustus Strong, whose concept of a missionary can be taken in the fullest sense, once wrote:

"What are the churches for but to make missionaries?

What is education for but to train them?

What is commerce for but to carry them?

What is money for but to send them?

What is life itself for but to fulfill the purpose of Missions!

the enthroning of Jesus
in the hearts of men?"

EFFECTIVE EVANGELISM

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cure for the world's ills." He was interrupted by a questioner. "Hasn't the Church anything to offer?" He paused a moment and then with the utmost sincerity said. "Yes, the Church could do what we are doing if it would go out and put the principles of love in the teachings of Christ into effect. But they are too indifferent and lazy, or blind, or ignorant, or selfish. It looks as if they did not greatly care."

Let every believer brush aside all indifference and flimsy excuses and go out to witness to others that Jesus satisfies the deepest longings of the soul.

Let every church plan and pray and make all necessary preparation for a heaven-born revival. This will require deep humiliation, contrition, confession and the seeking of divine forgiveness.

Let every minister, pastor, evangelist "do the work of an evangelist." To this end seek for a fresh anointing with the Spirit and a re-evaluation of your prayer and Bible study habits.

Go deeper and farther with Christ—deeper in devotions, farther in sacrificial service.

"The harvest is white"—"Go ye"—"Gather fruit unto eternal life."

Set your goals and begin.

The gladdest saints have always been those who made themselves a living sacrifice to their Saviour. To have nothing which we call our own, but to name all we have as Christ's—this is the secret of gladness.

Dinsdale T. Young.