

## Guest Editorial

### TRUE HOLINESS

by W. T. Purkiser, Editor, Herald of Holiness

Much that is called holiness would not measure up to the New Testament standard outlined in Ephesians 4:22-24. Here are placed in balance two great essential aspects of what Paul calls "true holiness": the putting off of "the old man" and the putting on of "the new man."

The first, of course, deals with what is sometimes called the negative aspect of holiness. It is the crucifixion of "the old man," the principle of inner sin the Bible elsewhere calls the carnal mind, the mind of the flesh, the law of sin and death, or the root of bitterness. Sinful dispositions and tendencies must be purged out if true holiness is to be experienced.

The new birth takes care of the problem of outer sin, the sins of the life. But nothing short of the thorough cleansing promised to those who walk in the light (I John 1:7) can remove the poisonous root which soon begins to manifest itself in un-Christlike attitudes and evil dispositions. Envy, jealousy, covetousness, resentment, animosity, malice, bitterness, explosive temper, conceit, and deep inner conflicts against the will of God must all be cleansed away.

But true holiness is much more than the absence of sin, just as light is much more than the absence of darkness. It means not only putting off "the old man," but it means putting on "the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (v. 24).

It is in the area of the much more that we most commonly fail to grasp the full truth of our holiness heritage. It is very easy to fall into the habit of thinking of holiness in terms of what sanctified people do not do. There are always two perils in regard to negatives. One is to ignore them, and the other is to stop with them.

The new man stands for positive holiness, for the radiance, the unction, the winsomeness which is a reflection of the abiding Spirit of Christ. The new man is "after God," just as the old man was after the world. He is concerned about the things of God, the house of God, the people of God, and the work of God.

We still have to come to grips with the searching question our Lord asked in connection with His command to perfection in Matthew 5: "What do ye more than others?" (v. 47) It is not hard to tell some things we don't do that others do. We slow up a bit when it comes to telling the things we do which others do not.

The demand for positive holiness is an insistent note throughout the entire New Testament. The empty house, swept and garnished, is an open invitation for seven demons worse than the first to move in and take possession (Luke 11:24-26). Christ not only redeems from all iniquity, but He purifies unto himself a people especially His own, "zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14).

True holiness means that in addition to freedom from sin there shall be the unfolding fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and temperance (Galatians 5:22-23).

Positive holiness brings an increased burden for the salvation of the lost and an active participation in every soul-winning activity of the church. Jesus always related the coming of the Holy Spirit to the outreach of Christian life in the direction of a lost world.

Not only nature but the God of nature "abhors a vacuum." To be good always means to be good for something. The ambition to be good in commendable, if it does not work out practically in being "good for nothing."

After all, what makes holiness attractive isn't what we are not, but what we are.

It is said that, before the great gold discovery in Australia in the nineteenth century, geologists had studied the rock and quartz formations in Victoria and had said that gold was to be found there. But there was no particular excitement, and few went to look. Then one day some natives came in from the bush with nuggets of soft yellow metal in their pockets, and showed them around the town. Before night the great Australian gold rush was on. The theology of holiness is Biblical and true, but however much it may proclaim, "There's gold in those holiness hills," it takes the actual nuggets to start the search in earnest.

True holiness, then, involves both the negative and the positive. Without either, it is bogus and counterfeit. "Put off...the old man...put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

### THE WAY OF REVIVAL

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revival. That revival illustrates my other statement that spiritual awakenings often begin with special and fervent prayer for the descent of the "power from on high".

Every pastor ought to be constantly on the watch, with open eye and ear, for the first tokens of a special manifestation of the Holy Spirit's presence. Elijah on Carmel not only prayed; he kept his eyes open to see the rising cloud. The moment that there is a manifestation of the Spirit's presence, it must be followed up promptly.

I have no doubt that very often a spark of divine influence is allowed to die out from want of being fanned by prayer and prompt labor. Worse yet, it is sometimes dashed out as by a bucket of cold water thrown on by inconsistent, worldly-minded, or quarrelsome church members! It was to Christians that Paul sent the solemn message, "Quench not the Spirit."

When a church is in such a condition that a revival is sorely needed, it is wise to offer penitential confessions of sin and direct and fervent prayers for the outpouring of the Spirit's influence. That godly man, Thos. H. Skinner, told me that when he was the pastor of the Arch Street Church in Philadelphia, he and some of his elders met together every evening and prostrated themselves before God in humble confession and supplication. Then they invited a few others to join them. The fire thus kindled until the whole congregation was under a baptism of heavenly flame! A large number of Christians were quickened, and many sinners were converted.

Revivals of the clear-cut type as I have described are not as abundant as they once were. They are not sought for, and prayed for, and labored for as they ought to be. Ministers, too, often send off for professional evangelists instead of preaching pungent sermons themselves, and calling on their people to be "up and doing."

Every pastor should determine to be a soul winner. Every church should be a harvest field. Personal responsibility for souls deeply felt, and personal efforts for souls faithfully put forth, are pretty certain to pioneer glorious revivals.

Oh, how they are needed! They will begin when Christians begin to hunger for them, and to pray and work for them. God never defaults in His promises.

—Wesleyan Methodist.

One evidence of the value of the Bible is the character of those who oppose it:—Anonymous.