



Rev. R. T. Benson, Sept. 65

the King's highway

In This Issue

MISSIONARY OFFERING

MINISTERS CONFERENCE

GUEST EDITORIAL

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IS THE HOLINESS MOVEMENT RELEVANT?

SECTION 2

II. RELATIONSHIPS: Are we really doing what we could to promote ecumenical relationships, especially among ourselves, where we should begin? Have we indentified with that movement of the Spirit in our own day called the ecumenical movement? That is, have we identified with it as we can? For we cannot, by the very nature of our movement, identify in the sense of compromise.

First of all, we need to say to ourselves that **we need each other**. Indeed, we need each other desperately. In the past our Holiness denominations have tended to be suspicious of one another. We have feared the loss of individual denominational identity, perhaps because of our minority feelings. But is it not high time we cast off the mantle of fear and step out into the deep to effect with greater speed and efficiency our unity in Christ and in His teaching on Holiness? The Holiness Movement, of all movements, should be taking the lead in such matters, for we advocate the doctrine of **wholeness**, of unity, not simply of the individual but of the whole corporate Body, the Church.

Should the Holiness denominations be so bold as to initiate its own 1980 plan, as the British Churches have? At their recent meeting, reported in the October 9, 1964 issue of **Christianity Today**, they said, "Unit-

ed in our urgent desire for One Church Renewed for Mission, this Conference invites the member Churches of the British Council of Churches, in appropriate groupings, such as nations, to covenant together to work and pray for the inauguration of union by a date agreed amongst them . . . We dare to hope that this date should not be later than Easter Day 1890." Should the denominations of N. H. A. organize a council to consider our own 1980 plan? In this hour of crisis do we have enough confidence in our unifying Wesleyan Holiness doctrine to prove to the world we mean what we preach?

If this were to come, think of the fellowship, the communion, the **kononia** that would be ours. What we have in a measure now could flower into unexpected fulfillment. Think how such an act could be used of God to win outsiders and on-the-fencers. We might even find our movement growing more rapidly than we can dream of at this point in our history.

III. RESTATEMENT: Should our theology be restated? We have a great theology. But it is too frequently unexposed. It is covered over by an obsolete phraseology. My plea is that we loose our theology and let it go, let it go out into a world of desperate need of God in his fullness. In a day of theological and world revolution our phraseology must be brought up-to-date, lest it be found wanting and non-commun-

icative. If our beliefs are not put in relevant and understandable language we will continue to have confused people in our churches. I am convinced, moreover, that a recasting of our language would be of great help in the central business of introducing un-sanctified people to the infilling of the Spirit.

What are the steps we can take to alter our theological language? Here are some suggestions. (1) Let us become more Biblical in emphasis. Not only would this be in keeping with the contemporary movement of Biblical theology, it would also give greater solidity to our position. Our distinctive calling is that of a two-works of grace theology. That is good; and the dual message is for the purpose of making clear, to a sick and sinning world, that man can be forgiven, and that he can be released from the power of sin to the power of God. But we have emphasized the two works of grace so much that the impression has been left that there is no more. Granted, we don't believe that, but we have left that impression. The scriptures plainly teach that there is an initial infilling of the Holy Spirit and that there are subsequent fillings. Peter, for example, was filled at Pentecost and refilled in Acts 4. Stanley Jones, in telling his own experience, says he has had many such experiences.

Again, it is dangerous to leave the impres-
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