



Mr. Leon Cogswell, May 65

# the King's highway

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A Home for the Aged?

### GUEST EDITORIAL

Dr. Donald Demaray

#### IS THE HOLINESS MOVEMENT RELEVANT?

Someone has calculated that if my own denomination had kept just those born into it, not to speak of accessions, it would now have well over 1,000,000 members. Our current world membership is about 100,000, one-tenth of what it could have been by just holding onto its progeny. Numerous other groups in the Holiness Movement have similar records. With all our talk of personal evangelism, Sunday School growth, doubling in a decade, and what have you, we are caught in the embarrassing slough of stagnation. The whole picture hurts and smarts, especially in the light of the fact that the real purpose of holiness experience is the winning of the lost.

Why is this the picture? What are the real reasons?

I do not think our slow growth is primarily due to lack of contacts, unfriendliness, our standards, or indeed any number of other factors that could be mentioned. Could it be, rather, that we are not meeting the real soul needs of our people? Could it be that our image is one of dodging rather than answering the honest questions of our people?

Let us become more specific.

(1) What relevant pronouncements are we making to a world in moral revolution? Are we saying anything meaningful and downright helpful? Or are we isolating ourselves from the revolution, pretending it isn't taking place? or ignoring it?

(2) What about the ecumenical movement? Are we actually involved in it, standing up to be counted where it counts most? Are we vigorously promoting the movement toward unity in our own Holiness ranks?

(3) What about our theology? Could it be restated to carry the sword-sharp thrust of meaning it is supposed to carry? Or do we persist in the old terminology, with its non-communication cliches. We are talking to a new generation whose everyday language precludes very much understanding of yesterday's word patterns. Is our theology released to meet the varying needs of people as it was in the Acts of the Apostles?

(4) What about spiritual renewal? Do we pray and believe for it? Or do we persist in the out-worn and artificial patterns we know to be all too often unproductive?

The questions are those of  
**REVOLUTION  
 RELATIONSHIP  
 RESTATEMENT  
 RENEWAL**

These, then, are some of the questions relevant to our own day. They are hammering at our door to be answered, answered honestly and clearly. If answered honestly, corresponding good works will follow as surely as good fruit on good trees.

**I. REVOLUTION: Are we speaking prophetically in this day of morals revolution?**

I have the feeling that had John Wesley been living today he would not have left it to **Time** and **Newsweek** to expose the Sex-plosion on the college campus. The **Arminian Magazine** would have carried the expose along with a definite point of view! The secular press would not have had quite the freedom to leave the impression that "since it is done it must be right." Wesley, as Pearl Buck has done, would have cried out against the problems of illegitimacy overseas in connection with the armed forces; Wesley, as well as Dean Fitch, would have denounced the modern-day trend toward sexual laxity; Wesley, as well as **The Ladies' Home Journal** and C. S. Lewis in the **Saturday Evening Post**, would have delivered cogent words about the sacredness and responsibility of the sex act.

Moreover, the outrageous sexual stimulants of our day, which seem to have come to an all time and daring high in the current television season, would have been hit hard by John Wesley. Still further, he would have made clear the necessity of a program of sex education for our junior high youth, and demonstrated that the threat of an atomic explosion is perhaps not as risky as the threat of the sex-plosion.

There is the further matter of business ethics. Think of the shady "deals" expected in the contemporary business world, with an eye on money more than the sacredness

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