

HOLINESS

PRECEPT, PROMISE AND PRACTICE

'Preacher, don't tell me how to live. I am born again, but I don't need any preacher to meddle with my life. Saved and secured. I can at least make heaven with the skin of my teeth.'

Many profess to be saved or born again who do not seem to see the importance and the centrality of holiness both in the Scriptures and in the Christian's life. There are many commands in the Scriptures concerning the fact that the Lord has called us to be holy. The precept is clear and unmistakable.

The Precept

"For the Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee..... Therefore shall thy camp be holy: that He see no unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee". (Deuteronomy 23:14). If the Lord is thy God walking in the midst of thee, then there is no escaping the issue. THEREFORE SHALL THY CAMP BE HOLY. How will the camp be holy if every delivered or redeemed person has to sin every day? How will the church be holy when it is the second nature of members to hold grudge and keep malice? How will the Lord not see an unclean thing in the fellowship group when members lust with the heart and lie with the lips? God is holy. If He sees any unclean thing in you, He will depart. Deuteronomy twenty-three, fourteen, says so and Judges sixteen, twenty, confirms it. God is not a liar. It is the devil who says "thou shall not surely die" when you commit sin who is a liar. Samson lusted with the heart, lied with his lips "and he wist not that the LORD was departed from him". Hey, walk by faith and not by sight or feelings. If you walk by faith in the Word of God, you will know that God will do what He says He will do. He says He will leave you if He sees any unclean thing in you. He said what He meant and meant what He said.

Is that the only place where holiness was commanded? "Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness" (Psalm 29:2). I love that, don't you? I had some sisters in the Christian groups I used to help who would worship in the beauty of jewellery, modern mini and slacks and with beautifully powdered faces! "In the beauty of holiness". You mean holiness is beautiful? Oh, I can not describe it. What bride is more beautiful than the bride of Christ adorned with the ripen fruit of the Spirit for her Bridegroom? Loved by God, appreciated by Christ, ministered unto by the Spirit, honoured by angels, feared by devils, they are the very beauty of heaven rather than the streets of gold in New Jerusalem. Are you a worshipper? See the Command: "Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness". Brethren, in holiness. Many times, the sound of drums, the clapping of hands, the melody of singing, the shouting of praises and the emotions of dancing and rejoicing replace the essential thing. HOLINESS!

Liars and hypocrites can clap and dance all they want to, but is that worship? HOLINESS! Let's come back to reality! Worship in holiness. Is that an advice, a suggestion? A command!

A command is to be obeyed. The devil accepts any worship but worship can only be acceptable to God when we worship Him in the beauty of holiness.

It is written, be ye holy; for I am holy". (1 Peter 1:16). When the devil tempted Jesus, He whipped the devil with "IT IS WRITTEN". When the devil makes you doubt the fact of being holy resist him and refuse his insinuation by "IT IS, WRITTEN, Be ye holy; for I am holy". When he tempts you, don't weep' don't pine, don't run, don't yield, take your sword out, throw it at him, thrust it into him, IT IS WRITTEN.

What is written? "Be ye holy, for I am holy" That is the precept. Don't tell me the Lord asks you to do what He knows you can not do. Don't tell me you know human weaknesses more than He knows. He knows infinitely more than you know. He says, be holy. Don't tell me your temptations are so special. He knows and He says be holy. Don't tell me the devil is powerful. That is the devil's lie. "Greater is He that is in you, than he (the devil) that is in the world" (1 John. 4:4). You have no excuse and the only doubts you have are unreasonable ungodly doubts; doubt your doubt and "Be holy".

But is there any help? Any promise to rest upon? I can show you more promises than you need on holiness. Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord" and **without the Lord no man shall see holiness**. It is not by trying, it is by trusting.

The Promise

"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you (that's not Water Baptism, God does not baptize in water, it is a man who baptizes in water by God's Command) and ye shall be clean". When God cleanses you, you will be clean. If you are not clean, then God has not cleansed you. You want to tell me that when you wash a cloth clean, a lizard will make it dirty the very next moment? Are you saying that the dirty devil will not allow the cleansing work of the holy God to abide on me? You can not bring any doubt into my heart. Hear what God says. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean". Oh God, sprinkle it on me, the water and the blood from my Saviour's side which flowed.

Cleanse me and I will be clean thoroughly. "From your filthiness and from all your idols, will I cleanse you". That's enough, I am satisfied. "From all your idols". Since I started to rely on God the Almighty, I have long forgotten the walking-stick of man's making. What weight can the opinions of men have on me when the promise of God is so clearly set before me. He promised to cleanse you "from filthiness and all your idols". That doesn't need struggling. Just go to Him and clean. Some say, 'I wish it were easy to be clean in this dirty world'. But just how hard is it to be washed and cleansed by Another? "Behold, there came a leper saying, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean". Poor leper, saying, "if Thou wilt". Don't ever put an "if" or a "but" or a 'may be' in a prayer for holiness and cleansing. What else is His will if what He promised to do is not His will. "And Jesus touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And **immediately** his leprosy was cleansed" (Matthew 8:2,3). And immediately he was cleansed! Somebody said, I have been seeking HOLINESS for ten years. Hold it. You have not been seeking, you have only been hanging around the altar. "Seek and ye shall find.... For every one that asketh receiveth" (Matthew 7:7,8).

“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you”. “A new heart and a new spirit” – inside. God works from the inside. Man only whitewashes the outside, leaving the inside filled with dirty thoughts and defiling motives. “And I will take away the stony heart out your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh” (Ezekiel 36:25,26). God is up to what He has promised. Has He promised? Then He will fulfil it, When? “Behold, I will do a new thing” That’s what you’ve been looking for. When? “Now it shall spring forth” (Isaiah 43:19).

The Practice

When we read about holiness, some are quick to ask whether there had ever been anybody who lived a completely holy life in this world. Is the question necessary or irrelevant? Many times such questions are prompted by the thought that we cannot do what others have not been able to do. Yet that is the devil’s method of holding us in captivity. When God made the Israelites to go on dry ground through the divided Red Sea, who had ever experienced that? When Moses, by faith, brought water out of the rock, which example could he have looked to for encouragement? When Mary was given the promise of a child, which virgin had she ever seen who brought forth child? Which human being had ever walked on water for Peter to see before he did at the command of Jesus?

God’s promises and precepts are greater than examples. Even if nobody had ever lived a holy life, you can; because God says you must. What God says you must do, you can do. God provides adequately for whatever He requires from you.

But has there been nobody who has lived holy through the history of mankind? Has the devil always had influence in the lives of all that had come to God since the world began? Has no man ever lived holy and pleasing to God? Multitudes have, and you too can.

Paul, writing by inspiration, to the Thessalonians said, “Ye are witnesses, **and God also**, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe” (2 Thessalonians 2:10). The Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write that about himself and others. Did the Holy Spirit inspire a falsehood to be written? The Thessalonians were witnesses of his outward actions and God was a true witness of his inward state and standing. The witnesses of the people and God agreed in one. Paul and others lived “holy, justly and unblameably”.

The seven churches of Asia were real churches of believers in the first century. The church in Smyrna had no blemish, spot or wrinkle to be reproved (Revelation 2:8-11). So also was the church in Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7-13). These whole churches were holy according to the testimony of the true Witness, even the Lord Jesus Christ. How wonderfully clean and holy must the life and heart of John have been when he wrote, “Herein is our love made perfect,.... Because as He is, so are we in this world”. (John. 4:17).

“Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord”. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God”. Are there people who have seen God? Lord? If there are, they must have been holy. “After this, I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. These are they which have washed their robes, and made

them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne and shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them.... And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes” (Revelation 7:9, 14-17).

That is a multitude, rather, “a great multitude” of holy people who were washed in the blood of the Lamb by faith and clean. “For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to ALL that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call” (Acts 2:39). “The oath which He swore.... That He would grant unto us, that we being delivered.... Might serve Him without fear, **in holiness and righteousness before him, ALL THE DAYS OF OUR LIFE**” (Luke 1:73-75).

HOLINESS – DOUBTS AND OBJECTIONS

Many there are who consider men’s words more than God’s. People who convince themselves that holiness of heart and purity of life are impossible experiences would rather learn from men than from God. Some persons consider their own hearts and lives to be the standard for every other believer and they think that no man can be holy in this life because they are not. This is as absurd an argument as to reason that because a lizard is unable to fly, nothing can. The “eagles” would prove the fallacy of such a conclusion (Isaiah 40:3). When God changes our vile nature and sin is gone, all things become new, impossibilities become possible and righteousness reigns in the happy saint who now “can do all things through Christ Who strengtheneth him”

Have you ever heard an angel preach? Suppose an angel who is not blinded by denominational ignorance or prejudice should preach, would you believe his message more than man’s message? Can you catch the meaning of the angel’s message to Joseph? “Thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21). That is different from the popular idea that redemption is nothing more than deliverance from hell and the gift of a home in heaven. It is deliverance from sin, deliverance from the power of sin, from the love and desire to sin, from the nature of sin and from the consequence of sin. Whatever men say, God says, “He will grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve Him without fear, **in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life**”(Luke 1:73-75)

Objection 1: ‘But there are many holiness preachers and advocates who are not holy. Does this not prove that it is impossible to be holy’?

Answer: Do you know that there are preachers and advocates of divine healing who are sick and sickly? What does that prove? That God cannot heal? That Jesus is no more the same yesterday, today and for ever? That it is impossible to be healed and kept healthy? We know better.

In matters of experience, negative testimony is no testimony. Twenty men declare that they did not see Mr. D.M. shoot Mr. W.S and that they do not believe he did, but two men did see the shooting; the result is Mr. D.M. is convicted of murder. Joseph and Samuel of the Old Testament and John and Paul of the New Testament are positive examples and testimonies that

God's grace can make you holy. The failure of those around you to have and live the holiness experience may be because they do not ask, seek and knock earnestly enough (Matthew 11:12). Or they do not seek in faith but hope to attain by works (Acts 26:18) or they seek with improper motives (James 4:3). You seek and find that you may be an example to those who believe it in the head but do not have it in the heart.

Objection 2: Some fellow confessed, 'I have stopped seeking to be sanctified and holy after I was disappointed by those I felt were holy'.

Answer: That is always the result of building your hopes on man. Christ is the example of any truly born-again Christian. Anybody can stumble over the backslider but true believers make steppingstones out of stumbling –stones. Friends, will you give up spending money because you were disappointed by the counterfeit? Are you to believe that there is no genuine money because there is a counterfeit? There can be no counterfeit without a genuine. It is natural that the more counterfeit money we discover, the more likely we are to distrust all money, but our distrust does not take anything from the actual value of the genuine. If you really want to please and love God, claim His promises and fulfil the conditions He set down in the Word and you will have the holiness He gives. Look away from men, "look unto Jesus".

Objection 3: Not on a few instances has mis-interpreted scriptures quieted some who have desired to be holy at the beginning of their Christian life. Consider this "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8). Some point to that verse anytime you want to encourage them to be holy.

Answer: This is not the only scripture that has been twisted in its meaning by people who are not well informed and enlightened in the Word of God. The seventh verse says "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son **cleanseth** us from **all** sin". Do people ever read that? Should any say I don't need the blood of Jesus to cleanse me from sin, that is why the eighth verse is there. Then the ninth verse also says God is "faithful and just to cleanse us from **all** unrighteousness". Verse 8 points out that all have sinned and verse 7 and 9 points to the possibility of being cleansed from all sin and all unrighteousness.

Every sincere Christian who reads through the whole Epistle will see that sin is nowhere defended and holiness is nowhere opposed in the Epistle. Let's begin at chapter one and end at chapter five. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie. Walk in the light as He is in the light" (1 John 1:5-7). "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not" (That's the purpose of writing the Epistle, to uphold holiness, not to defend sin). "We know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar. He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also to walk, **even as** He walked" (1 John 2:1,3,4,6). "Behold, now are we the sons of God.... And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, **even as** He is pure. The Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in Him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (1 John 3:2,3,8,9). Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world. Our love is made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgement: because **as He is**, so are we in this world" (1 John 4:4,17). "This is the love of God,

that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world, even our faith. We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself and that wicked one toucheth him not” (1 John 5:3,4,18).

Any scripture that is interpreted to support sin and oppose holiness is mis-interpreted. “This is the will of God, even your sanctification” (1 Thessalonians 4:3). Your holiness and sanctification is the will of God. How can you quote a person’s word to oppose His will” “For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness” (1 Thessalonians 4:7).

SCRIPTURAL CONFIRMATION

Holiness is taught in the commands.

“Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:16). “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14). “Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matthew 5:48). “The end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart” (1 Timothy 1:5). Be ye perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace: and the God of love and peace shall be with you” (2 Corinthians 12:11).

Holiness is taught in the promises.

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled” (Matthew 5:6). “If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John. 1:7). “Whom we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present **every man** perfect in Christ Jesus” (Colossians 1:28). “Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate” (Hebrews 13:42). “To the end that He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God” (1 Thessalonians 3:13). “This is the will of God, even your sanctification” (1 Thessalonians 4:3). “For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness” (1 Thessalonians 4:7). And He gave some, apostles; and some prophets; and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints... till we all come in the unity of the faith unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11-13).

Holiness is taught in the Prayers.

“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 3 14-21).

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 5:23).
“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, ... through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever Amen” (Hebrews 13:20,21).

From these passages, it is plain to you and every other sincere person that holiness is attainable and must be attained and maintained because: God commands us to attain it and He never commands impossibilities. God exhorts us to seek and obtain it, and God never wastes words exhorting us to seek impossibilities. God promises to give the experience to those who diligently seek it by faith. Any person who says God will not sanctify and make holy makes Him a liar. Both Jesus and the apostles prayed that the church might be sanctified, and God-inspired prayers are always answered.

The message of holiness is seen throughout the scriptures. It breathes in the prophecies, thunders in the law, whispers in the promises, supplicates in the prayers, resounds in the songs, sparkles in the poetry, shines in the types, glows in the imagery and burns in the spirit of the whole scripture from beginning to the end. Holiness! Holiness needed! Holiness required! Holiness offered! Holiness attainable! Holiness – a present duty, a present privilege and a present enjoyment.

All will agree that:

- God is holy.
- Angels are holy
- Heaven is a holy place.
- Whatever pleases God in heaven pleases Him on earth.
- Holiness pleases Him.
- God made man holy.
- Nothing pleases God as much as holiness.
- Whatever is pleasing to God is good for us.
- Holiness is pleasing to God, therefore being made holy would do us good.

“Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight,... looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith” (Hebrews 12:1,2).

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: FOR THEY SHALL BE FILLED” (Matthew 5:6). Are you thirsty? Are you hungry? Are you desirous of holiness as hungry man is of food? Do you pant after holiness as a thirsty man pants after water? Suppose you give a man who is both hungry and thirsty, clothes, money, and other things without giving him food and water, will he be satisfied? He wants food and water, he cannot be satisfied with anything else. Therefore thirst and hunger – and you will be given the holiness your heart desires.

“Ask and it shall be given you: for every one that asketh receiveth” (Matthew 7:7,8).

“IT IS TIME TO SEEK THE LORD, TILL HE COME AND RAIN RIGHTEOUSNESS UPON YOU” (Hosea 10:12).

Some there are who ‘take it by faith’ with no immediate evidence of actually receiving. Suppose the sick will simply accept that healing has been imputed, although he is not in the actual enjoyment of divine health. Such theory along the holiness line is a process of sheer ‘make-believe’, by which the deceived thinks that God will accept a fiction for a fact.

Some shrink from this experience because of the wrong conception that holiness implies a negative attitude of living, and take the experience to restraint and bondage. Holy living is not negative but positive, not restraint but freedom, not mechanism but life. Can anything be more positive than love? Loving the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind, and all your strength and loving your neighbour as yourself? Can anything be more gloriously free than the liberty of an emancipated soul who is free and free indeed from the lust of the flesh and the carnality of the human nature? The grace that sanctifies lifts life above legalism and brings fullness, vitality and power. Holiness does not make people repellent, but radiant; does not make us sour, but sober; not touchy, but tender. Holiness people are people of singing hearts and shining faces.

The experience brings perfect peace – peace without anxiety, without care. Children of God have no more right to worry than they have to get drunk.

Present holiness experience does not hinder growth in the spiritual sense just as perfect health does not hinder growth in the physical sense. And to have health means to be free from disease just as to have holiness means to be free from inward or outward sins. Christ’s imparted holiness does not come by gradual, slow process any more than His healing virtue does not come by a gradual process. Must we be forever striving and forever failing when miracle-working Deliverer, full of grace and power, can heal our sin-cancer and do more than we can ask or think?

But if we are holy and sanctified, and we are sure, will it not lead to pride and loss of humility? How can deliverance from the disposition to pride lead to the loss of humility? Was not our sinless Lord meek and lowly in heart? The blood that cleanses from all sin, cleanses from all forms of pride and the grace that implants the divine nature and imparts holiness also brings with the gift, lowliness, meekness and humility.

Can God? God can. The resurrection of Jesus is the standard of measurement for the power of God. It is the example of what God can do. If He did that, He can do this. He is able. Call on Him NOW and be sanctified – made instantaneously holy by the blood of the Lamb.

HOLINESS – ITS IMPORTANCE AND SIGNIFICANCE

Holiness! Nothing more is required, nothing less is sufficient, nothing else is important. The apostles preached it, expounded it, defended it and insisted upon it continually.

Holiness is a gift of God through faith – not by works or striving. It is provided by promise and accomplished by Christ's shed blood. It can only be obtained by faith. Holiness is simply Christ-likeness in the heart or divine love in the heart. It is not emotions or feeling – it is perfect love for God, for the brethren and for sinners. Stated in another way, it is deliverance from all inward and outward sin. Called by another name, it is sanctification, or full salvation or perfection. Some neglect it because of those who profess to be sanctified who do not manifest the fruit of a sanctified life. The currency of a country should not be judged by its counterfeit and so the doctrine of holiness should not be cast aside because of hypocrites or bigots. Every true seeker should recognize the difference between the phylacteries of Pharisees and the saintliness of saints.

Others oppose it because of the names or title some holiness preachers call it. They question its being called the second work of grace or the second blessing or Christian perfection. Clever people sometimes ask ignorant questions. They ask, if a second blessing, why not the twenty second? If perfect, how can progress be possible? If saved to the uttermost, what is there beyond? If instantaneous, what place is given to the progressive.

Sanctification does not mean that the sanctified believer can never sin for Eve and Adam sinned and lost the presence and image of God, though sanctified, holy and perfect. Perfection can be thought of in three ways, just like salvation can be thought to in three ways. In the Court of God, salvation is justification; in His Temple, it is redemption, whilst in the Family, it is adoption.

So, Perfection is presented and experienced from three angles. The term can mean acquittal without condemnation (in the Court), cleanness without stain (in the Temple), and it is love without reservation (in the Family) (Romans 8:1; John 1:7; 4:17).

Twenty-one pence added to seventy-nine pence make a perfect Pound. That is what is meant by perfection. It is complete deliverance from everything that makes the soul unfit for the will of God; the supply of all grace and whatever else is lacking from obedience to every demand of our loving Father. "Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth". That is perfection. Some calm rather than kindle our enthusiasm by talking of the limitations of Christian perfection. They say, it is not Adamic perfection, yet it is putting on "the new man" which is "after the image of Him that created him". Adam in his perfect state was not perfect in knowledge. The woman sinned because she was deceived – indicating a lack of intellectual perfectness. Neither was their perfection in the sense of being inaccessible to Satan for she was tempted. God's demand is not changed. Man's duty remains unaltered. God asked of Adam no more than that he should love Him with all his heart, soul, mind and strength, and He demands nothing less of us. Love is not a substitute for obedience but it includes it since it is the fulfilling of the law.

In saying "be ye perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" was the Speaker mistaken? Was He a preacher of false doctrine? Or have we forsaken the Word of God? Shall we drop the word "perfect" and send Jesus the Lord to a seminary to be taught how to speak when He made the tongue? Will any man convict God of false doctrine when He said "Be ye holy; for I am holy"? (1 Peter 1:16). Was He ignorant of man's limitation and frailty? Is His demand greater than the provision of grace? Or are we simply unwilling to respond to His call?

God never commands what He cannot enable. He makes possible what He demands. Holiness is deliverance from sin. A higher meaning than this it cannot have; a lower meaning it must not have.

John in his epistle, was clear – sin is lawlessness. Jesus Christ was manifested to take away sins. “Whosoever is begotten of God and abideth in Him does not commit sin. The difference between the children of the devil and the children of God is that one sins and the other does not. Every man born of God quits sin. If a man sins, he is not a child of God but a child of Satan. He that is not with God is with the devil. A sinning Christian and a Christian sinner are both in the same family – the devil’s family. No man is the devil’s by any right of creation. He did not make us. Neither is any man the devil’s by birth. No soul belongs to Satan by any law of necessity. But no sooner does a child have the power of choice than he chooses sin and becomes of Satan. So the Timothy’s need to be born again as well as the Ichabods.

Holiness does not imply infallibility any more than it implies the deity of the believer. A clean heart does not imply a perfect head. There is no scripture that labels physical deformity or infirmity, mental weakness or any consequence of these as sin. These are destitute of moral character. They require no repentance.

“He Himself suffered being tempted.” “He hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” Satan was the tempter, so He was open to attack from the evil source. He suffered being tempted, so there was real conflict in His soul. He was tempted in “all **points** (not in all **forms**) like as we are.” He was tested in every practical sense, and at every point where temptation can assail and He was tried along every avenue by which sin may gain access to the soul.

Yet He overcame. And we can overcome.

The temptation of Christ is our ground for saying that temptation does not decrease one’s holy state before God. It does not bring us under condemnation or make us guilty before God. The sanctified are subject to solicitation to evil. Every believer is tempted and being tempted is nothing strange. Temptation should not decrease our zeal, love, confidence or faith in God. Neither should we repent of temptation or sorrow because of it. Even if we are tempted “in all points,” we can be triumphant. Adam was tempted and he fell. Jesus was tempted and He conquered. In either case there was no “inward depravity” but both were tempted. Grace cannot make us more perfect than Christ and if He suffered being tempted, we surely shall be tempted. We cannot escape it, so we ought to be prepared, putting on the whole armour of God.

When does temptation pass beyond the boundary and the tempted said to commit sin? When any bodily reaction or desire does not have the consent of the will, no sin has been committed. Temptation is not sin; it is consent that brings sin. Our Lord’s temptation followed His baptism so the timing of our temptations need not surprise us. Be watchful, or the Enemy can tempt at an unexpected hour (Matthew 26:41).

H O L I N E S S - (A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE)

Is your heart right with God? Have you a divine evidence, a supernatural conviction of being born-again? Do you believe in the Lord, Jesus Christ? Is He revealed in your soul? Do you know Jesus and Him crucified? Does He dwell in you and you in Him? Is He formed in your heart by faith?

Do you love God “with all thy heart, and with all thy mind and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength”? Do you seek all your happiness in Him alone? And do you find what you seek? Does your soul continually magnify the Lord, and thy spirit rejoice in God thy Saviour”? Having learned “in everything to give thanks” do you find “it is a joyful and a pleasant thing to be thankful”? Is God the centre of your soul, the sum of all your treasure in heaven, and counting all things else dung and dross? Has the love of God cast the love of the world out of your soul? Are you “crucified to the world”, are you dead to all below and is your “life hid with Christ in God”?

Are you constantly doing “not your own will, but the will of Him that sent you”? Is it your “meat and drink” to “do the will of your Father who is in heaven”? Is your eye always fixed on Him? Always looking unto Jesus? Do you aim at the glory of God in whatsoever you do? In all your labour, your business, your conversation? “Whatsoever thou doest, whether in word or in deed” do you “do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God, even the Father, through Him”?

Does the love of God constrain you to serve Him with fear, to “rejoice unto Him with reverence”? Are you more afraid of displeasing God, than death? Is nothing so terrible to you as the thought of offending the eyes of His glory? Upon this ground, do you “hate all evil ways”, every transgression of His holy Word? Do you “exercise yourself, to have a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward man”?

Is your heart right with your neighbour? Do you love all mankind, without exception, as yourself? “If you love only those who love you, what thank have you”? Do you “love your enemies”? Is your soul full of goodwill, of tender affection, toward them? Do your bowels yearn over them? Do you show this love by “blessing them that curse you, and praying for those who despitefully use you, and persecute you”? Do you show your love by your works? As you have opportunity, do you in fact “do good to all men” neighbours or strangers, friends or enemies, good or bad? Do you do them all the good you can, endeavouring to supply all their needs, assisting them both in body and soul, to the uttermost of your power?

Do you do anything to gratify the lust of the eyes? Do you in any degree do anything merely to gratify your curiosity? Are you free from superfluity and finery of whatever kind, either in furniture or clothing, regarding only cleanliness, necessity and moderate convenience? Is fashionable elegance abomination to you? Do you trample all finery, all superfluity, everything useless, everything merely ornamental, however fashionable, under foot?

Are you scrupulous and strict about all idle talk, all trifling conversation, hating and avoiding them as a person who is deeply sensible of the value of time? In like manner, do you dread and

abhor idle expense, watching carefully, lest you should be found an unfaithful steward? Have you the faith that overcometh the world and worldliness?

“Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord”

“Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord”

“Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord”

This is the reason Jesus prayed for your sanctification, suffered, shed His blood and died for your sanctification.

John 17:1-26

- 1. These words spake Jesus, and lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee..*
- 2. As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him.*
- 3. I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest me out of the world: Thine they were, and Thou gavest them me; and they have kept Thy Word.*
- 4. For I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from Thee and they HAVE BELIEVED that Thou didst send me.*
- 5. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given me: for they are Thine.*
- 6. I have given them Thy Word; and world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil.*
- 7. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*
- 8. Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth.*
- 9. As Thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.*
- 10. And for their sakes I sanctify (set apart) myself, that they also might be sanctified (made holy) through the truth.*
- 11. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;*
- 12. That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou has sent me.*

In this whole chapter devoted to the prayer of Jesus for the sanctification of the believers, note the following points for your personal benefit.

1. This chapter was written by the apostle John, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, about sixty years after the death of Jesus. The Gospel according to St. John was the last of the Gospels to be written. The chapter shows the Apostle's faith in the necessity of sanctification.
2. Even if there is no other place where Jesus explicitly taught sanctification as in this chapter, it will still be an important part of the "doctrine of Christ" as much as the Lord's Supper which He mentioned only once. Jesus used the words "born-again" only once, as recorded by John and we hear so much about being "born-again."

3. "Sanctified by the truth" does not mean that studying the Bible is the only means or agent of sanctification any more than "being born again by the Word of God" (I Peter 1:23) means that you are saved through merely studying the Bible. The Word of God reveals that we are sanctified by the truth (John 17:17), "sanctified by God the Father" (Jude 1), sanctified with His own blood" (Hebrew 13:12), sanctified by Christ (Hebrew 2:11), sanctified by the Spirit (1 Peter 1:2), and sanctified by faith (Acts 26:18), just as we are saved or redeemed by the Word, by God the Father, by the blood of Jesus, by the Spirit and by faith. (1 Peter 1:23; Ephesians 2:4-9; Colossians 1:14; John 3:5; Ephesians 2:8).

4. Jesus prayed for the believers' sanctification. These disciples for whom He prayed were already saved and had their names in the book of life. (Luke 10:20). They had believed and had received Jesus and His Word (John 17:8), they had obeyed Him and had been hated by the world (John 17:6,14). Yet, He prayed for their sanctification. He never prayed an unnecessary prayer. He never prayed for trifles. His prayers were always definite and for definite things. His prayers were always answered (John 11:42).

5. The sanctification prayed for in this chapter is not just being set-apart for the Lord's work. The Apostles had been set-apart three years earlier. They had been saved and set-apart for the task of preaching the gospel (Mark 6:7; John 6:70) but they had to be sanctified, for Jesus was now praying for that.

6. The sanctification mentioned was NOT removal of guilt, restoration of peace to a backslider, or ceasing to commit sin outwardly, because the Apostles were obeying the Word and outwardly clean (John 17:9,6; 15:3). The meaning of the sanctification Jesus prayed for is that "they all may be one," "that they may be one IN US". "That they may be made perfect in one" (John 17:21,23). In the choice of the twelfth Apostle to replace Judas in Acts chapter one, there was no argument or disagreement, to place seeking or any manifestation of self-will which was manifested when Jesus was still with them. They were all with one accord in one place" (Acts 2:1).

7. Whenever Jesus prayed for others to be forgiven, they were forgiven definitely and instantaneously, not gradually. Whenever He healed, they were healed definitely (not judicially or legally).

So then when He prayed for the believers' sanctification, it must be a definite experience. He prayed for your sanctification because He knew that you need the definite experience. He did not pray for the sinner to be sanctified. On the cross, He prayed for the sinner to be forgiven, that is saved.

Consecration

Sanctification is obtained by faith just as justification (or salvation) is obtained by faith. Both are free-provided by God through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. But no one can be saved against his will. No one can be saved without repenting of his sins and believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. God cannot repent for the sinner and God cannot consecrate for the believer. The sinner is commanded to repent and the believer is commanded to consecrate or set apart himself unto God's glory and then God sanctifies and makes holy. "I beseech you therefore, **brethren** (not sinner), by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed" (Romans 12:1,2).

Consecration is an act which can only be performed by a child of God. Take the Bible and turn to passages containing the words consecrate, consecration etc., and you will see that God demands only believers to consecrate. God will not accept anything that is not good as a sacrifice to His service. A sinner cannot offer such a sacrifice because he is “dead in trespasses and sins.” He must be born again, made alive, before he can offer “a living sacrifice”.

Complete and Entire Consecration

A bride gives herself fully to be bridegroom. In all true marriage covenants the parties give themselves entirely to each other. All attachments that in any way can hinder the affection or duty of one to the other are forever destroyed. The believer separates himself entirely from everything or person that hinders his attachment for and duty to Jesus Christ. That is consecration. Consecration is what we would do if it were the last day of our lives. What a person ought to be on the last day of life, he ought to be everyday. Our free will is involved God cannot repent for the sinner, neither can He consecrate for the believer. Man consecrates, God sanctifies just as man repents and God justifies.

When the Jewish high priest was consecrated to his sacred office, the blood of the sacrifice was **put** upon his **right** ear, the thumb of his **right** hand and the great toe of his **right** foot. To teach that his ears were to be attentive to hear the commands of God, his hands ready to do the work God commanded, and his feet quick to run on the divine errands. In this dispensation, all believers are “a royal priesthood.” Their bodies are to be given to a living service. The whole body is to be kept in such a manner that the soul can **best serve** the Kingdom of God.

To the Lord or to the church?

Primarily, it should not be ‘loyalty to the church’ but loyalty to Jesus Christ. We should not labour for self or the applause of men. Jesus first, then our denomination. “In all things He must have the pre-eminence.” This being true, a man may be consecrated to God and be misunderstood by the visible church. (See Acts 11).

A fully consecrated man is like Jesus, willing to suffer reproaches even from those he is endeavouring to benefit. But being thoroughly consecrated to God, He does not waver. He is not affected by the “fear of man” or praise of man.” This marks the difference between those who are consecrated to God and those who are consecrated to the people. We are following a Master Who made Himself of no reputation. John Wesley was bitterly attacked by opposers of the holiness message. His brother Charles told him that he had better write, showing the public the falsity of the charges, which he could easily do. He replied that he had made a series of daily appointments to preach the gospel in north of England and in Scotland, and if he stopped at home to reply the attacks, those people would not hear the gospel. “I gave my reputation to the Lord many years ago and He will have to take care of it now.” He went right away and left his reputation in the hands of God- his reputation had a good keeper. Would you dare to do that? Those who are so fearful about their reputation usually do not have a reputation worth worrying about. If we die to the opinions of those who would hinder our supreme loyalty to God, we shall surely get great victory.

How can I be sanctified?

Sanctification is the work of God's free grace. The textbook of holiness lays down the essentials to sanctification. This Book teaches that we are sanctified by – God the Father (Jude 1)

God the Son (Ephesians 5:26)

God the Spirit (1 Peter 1:2)

God's Sacrifice (Hebrews 13:12)

God's Truth (John 17:17)

Our Faith (Acts 26:18).

The meritorious cause of sanctification is the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and the conditional cause is our faith in Christ. On the divine side, the essentials for the sanctification of His people are all ready. The Gracious Father is ready (Luke 1:73-75). The interceding Christ, through His sanctifying blood has made the way accessible (Hebrews 13:12). The will of God which is our sanctification is present (Thessalonians 5:23,24). All the essential conditions necessary have been fully provided.

Then what can delay the blessing? One thing and only one- the absence of the sole condition required of us: FAITH.

“If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established” (Isaiah 7:9).

“Therefore I say unto you, **what things so ever** ye desire, when ye pray, **believe that ye receive them, AND YE SHALL HAVE THEM**” (Mark 11:24).

Your spiritual welfare is our concern. For more help write or contact:

DEEPER CHRISTIAN LIFE MINISTRY

Visit: www.dclm.org

HEADQUARTERS

Email: info@deeperlifeonline.org