

THE PURITY OF THE BRIDE, SANCTIFICATION

AND to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Revelation 19:8).

To have the righteousness of the Son of God imparted, imbedded in our very nature, so that we may live it out moment by moment and hour by hour, we must have the inbred sin-nature absolutely and forever destroyed and taken out by the Blood of Jesus Christ. It is marvellous and glorious and powerful to know that the God of Heaven rules supreme in the heart.

He Suffered Without the Gate

He suffered that we might have this glorious experience of purity within. He walked on earth with nowhere to lay His head. He went to the Cross and was nailed there between two thieves. His humiliation was wonderful and yet terrible. He suffered outside the gate that you and I might be sanctified. "Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Hebrews 13:12). It was for our sanctification. The devil hates it, and false prophets and false teachers are trying to do away with it. They would rob men and women of that most definite life of purity within, the holiness which enables us to become the Bride of Christ.

"Sanctify them through thy truth"

Before Jesus suffered in the garden He prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." He said, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." (Read John 17.) How Jesus loved the church of God that the Father had given Him! He "gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:25-27).

The Church of Christ had been really established in the hearts of the disciples, and Jesus knew they would never get away from the truth He had planted in their hearts; but there was much to be done in those forty days that He walked the earth after He rose from the dead. He brought them together and removed the doubts and fears that had come into their hearts, opened the Word to their understanding, and breathed upon them the Holy Ghost before He went away; and they were ready for the outpouring of the Spirit, the Holy Ghost.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

Scripture clearly teaches two definite works of grace. God revealed this truth clearly to this world years and years ago. The saints and martyrs testified to it down the ages, and yet false prophets in these days dare to deny it and say that you get justification and sanctification at one and the same time, when God's Word teaches that it takes two applications of the Blood—one for pardon, and one for cleansing. How can those who have once received the experience and taught it to others deny it? They do it because they are backslidden from God and filled with carnality, and too proud to confess their lack of godliness, and get down and seek God. That is the condition of the people who have accepted the "one work" delusion.

What the so-called church needs today most of all is a real, definite work of salvation. If you have never

been really born of God, or if you once had the experience and have grown cold and backslidden in heart, you need to seek first a definite work of salvation. Then you will be hungering and thirsting for the second, definite work, sanctification, according to the Word of God. The Word of God is like a two-edged sword. It reveals the thoughts and intents of the heart, and shows you your need of forgiveness and cleansing. You can have God's best, the real, the genuine, if your heart is open to the will of God.

Sinai, a Type of Sanctification

God led the Children of Israel to Mount Sinai that He might sanctify them wholly. He fully intended to write not only on the tables of stone but on the fleshy tables of their hearts if they would have stood and heard His voice speaking to them out of Heaven, in the midst of that great fire ascending and the earth quaking. God was leading His people to Mount Sinai that He might place a godly fear in their hearts. There is a great lack of fear in the hearts of God's people today. Every soul who is sanctified wholly, who received the sanctifying power of the Blood of Jesus Christ, has a holy, godly fear in his heart. It is a fear that surpasses the fear that comes at justification. It is glorious to be born again, delivered from sin, but it means far more -to be sanctified wholly.

The deliverance from Egyptian bondage was a type of justification. God commanded the lamb to be slain and the blood to be sprinkled on the doorposts. It pointed down to the righteous Sacrifice that was to be slain on Calvary. But right there in Egypt God proved His power when the death angel passed over and not a soul who was under the blood was slain. Then God took them through the Red Sea, a perfect type of water baptism. They were "baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." How their hearts rejoiced! and they praised God on the other side.

God knew what was in the hearts of His people, Israel. God knows when you kneel before Him whether deep down in your soul you are willing to pay the price and go all the way. God knew that their hearts were rebellious and uncircumcised, and that they were a company of stiff-necked Israelites. God knew that so long as the inbred nature remained, the time would come, under pressure or temptation, when they would lose all fear of God out of their hearts and begin to murmur and rebel against Him; but He knew that if He could get the Blood upon their hearts and the root of sin destroyed they would go directly through into the Promised Land (Hebrews 3:19). There was power sufficient on Mount Sinai to destroy the sin-nature in every one of those thousands of Israel.

But they drew back from God. Why should they have drawn back from hearing God speak to them, and the earthquake and thunder? It was God who brought them out of Egypt. He had sent a fiery pillar. He had fed them with manna in the wilderness, and had given them water in the desert. He did all those miracles before their eyes, and yet only two of that generation, Caleb and Joshua, entered into the Promised Land. The others bleached their bones in the desert.

Many today draw back when they see how much it will mean to go on into the fullness of God. The enemy is telling them not to seek holiness, not to seek purity of heart, for people will expect much more of them when they claim to be sanctified. Then if they fail in their home, and uprisings and impatience come, they will say, "I don't claim to be sanctified, anyway." Such have lost their salvation, and need to repent and do their first works over.

The Promised Land

Many persons would like to settle down at Justification, like the tribe of Reuben and Gad who wanted to plant their stakes on this side of Jordan, but God has in view the Land of Canaan for His own people. God knew what it would mean for them to possess the promises He had given unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And Moses reminded them that forty years before, when the people came to Kadesh-barnea, they drew back and lost sight of the God who divided the Red Sea and piled it on one side and on the other and they

marched triumphantly through on dry land. But two of the spies who viewed the Land of Canaan said, "We are well able" to take the land. They looked beyond the giants and the walled cities and saw the Captain of their salvation, and it made sin and every difficulty shrink before their eyes.

If you are a child of God, if your purpose is wholly to follow the Lord, you are not caring what the world does, what the nominal church says, but you are saying, "I need everything God has promised me." When God makes provision in His Word for your spiritual welfare, you can well afford to say, "I am well able to take the land."

Those people who failed to believe God and obey Him all perished in the wilderness; and their children, who they said would be a prey to the enemy, were the ones who went over Jordan and possessed the land. The power of God is just the same today. It is not for you to grow fainthearted and wonder whether you can make it or not; but to go forth in the name of God, and you will enter into that wonderful experience of victory and holiness as surely as God's Word is true.

"Thy Sin Purged"

The Prophet Isaiah was sanctified when he got one glimpse of the holiness of God; when he saw that marvellous vision of the Lord, high and lifted up, and heard the seraphims crying, "Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." When he saw the Son of God he felt his great need and cried out, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." One of the seraphims flew and took a coal of fire from off the altar and laid it on his lips and said, "Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." He cried out, "Here am I; send me." His iniquity was purged — for God said it was. God had done the work in the soul just the moment Isaiah caught a glimpse of the One high and lifted up. All you have to do is to get a look of faith at the Lamb of Calvary, at His power and holiness, and His cleansing Blood will reach your soul.

The Sanctified Life

If you are wholly sanctified there is a perpetual incense ascending from the altar of your heart. It is praying "without ceasing," in everything giving thanks. When Jesus comes in with His sanctifying power your will is wholly Swallowed up in the will of God; and from the innermost part of the heart, day and night, the praises of God ascend as long as the heart keeps sanctified before God. You may wake but a moment in the night, and instantly your heart is open to the great God of Heaven, and you are thanking Him that Jesus suffered outside the gate to sanctify you. What a Saviour we have! What a marvellous plan of salvation!

The experience of salvation will draw you on into that wonderful and glorious experience of sanctification. Who would dare to say, it is not for all people? If you have never been sanctified God will give you that experience.

An Honest Heart

If you have an honest heart, all you have to do is to open your heart's door wide and say, "O God. reveal to me my heart." Some persons have a reserve. They are not willing to lay their life at the foot of the Cross and throw their very life open, every avenue of their being, and say, "O God, search me, try me!" They "say it with their lips, but Hannah of old prayed deep in her heart and said, "O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt ... give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life" (I Samuel 1:11). She made her consecration and kept her vow. Have you that prayer in your heart — "O God, if You will give me Your best, I will lend my life unto You all my days; I will give You all I possess; it shall be in Your hands; I will be Your steward; God, send me and I will go; tell me to stay and I will stay"?

Hundreds Have Received It

Hundreds of people are sanctified in this work today; and if God can manifest Himself in their lives, He can in yours. All I wanted was to see one person who was sanctified and I knew I could get it. It was in the Word — I saw it — but there were things in the Word I thought I could not get, and if I saw someone else get sanctification, I knew I could get it.

Then I saw a man who was sanctified wholly. All he did was to open his mouth and say, "Hallelujah!" He said again, "Hallelujah!" I said, "O God, he has what I want. I have found it at last, I have found the people who have it, and I am going to have it." I received it because I paid the price and made the consecration. If God can do it for one, He can do it for you.

When the outward consecration is complete, you then go down before God for that deeper inner consecration that is blessed and priceless. Your very innermost soul and life is borne by the Spirit unto God to obey His sacred will, to live or die, to go or to stay, to be or not be anything — only a broken vessel at His holy feet.

There is nothing more holy and sweet in the human life on earth than sanctification, the second work of grace, wrought by the Blood of Jesus Christ. God lets the fire drop down on the altar of your heart. The Blood cleanses, washes whiter than snow; the fire burns; the frankincense and myrrh ascend in praises and thanksgiving to God from the very depths of your soul. You have the praises of God at justification, but you do not have them in the measure that you have at sanctification. Whatever trial or test overtakes you, the praises will ascend to the Throne of God; they flow continuously. That is sanctification.