
"TRUE HOLINESS"

AND OTHER MESSAGES

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BY

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
"TRUE HOLINESS" - - - -	7
"A SECOND GRACE" - - - -	23
"WHEN . . . OVER JORDAN" - -	41

“TRUE HOLINESS”

“*True Holiness.*”—Ephesians iv. 24.

THE very expression “true holiness” shows us there is such a thing. Living in an increasingly sinful world, getting so many shocks from other Christians, and perhaps about as many from ourselves, we are apt to get cynical and sceptical as to whether there is or can be in this life such a thing as “true holiness.” But this expression inspired by the Spirit of God gives us solid ground under our feet for believing that true holiness by the grace of God is a possibility.

Let us make sure on our quest we get the genuine article for there is a good deal passing today by the name of Holiness that is not true holiness. There are those who will tell us that the very word “holiness” amongst many Christians is offensive because there has been so much fanaticism and extravagance and I think one might say unholiness connected with what is called the Holiness Movement. Personally I am not inclined to surrender a word so thoroughly Scriptural because it has been misrepresented and misunderstood.

There is however a good deal of holiness so-called which is intellectual and controversial. People will argue at great length for this doctrine or that and will fight for what they believe to be true holiness. There is holiness so-called which is largely emotional, which depends largely upon thrills and ecstasies. There is a holiness so-called which is largely sensational which depends upon the display of the supernatural and there is what is sometimes passed as holiness which is sanctimonious which would better be called, not holiness, but oiliness.

There are three aspects of holiness. The doctrinal aspect, the experimental aspect and the practical aspect, all these go to make up true sanctification.

Some time ago three sentences in 1 Timothy struck me very forcibly :

1 Timothy i. 10 :

"Sound doctrine."

In 1 Timothy iv. 6 we have the words :

"doctrine whereunto thou hast attained."

and then 1 Timothy vi. 3 :

"doctrine which is according to godliness."

Sound doctrine speaks to us of truth. The doctrine "whereunto thou hast attained" speaks of experience, and "the doctrine which is according

to godliness” speaks to us of life and godly character.

There is the sound doctrine of holiness. There are all sorts of doctrines with regard to holiness, some are sound and some are unsound. There is the way of salvation and there is the way of holiness. If you want to know salvation as an experience you must know it through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work on the Cross, accompanied by repentance. If you want to know the doctrine of holiness, it is well expressed in that hymn of Miss Havergal’s :

“Holiness by faith in Jesus
Not by effort of thine own.”

I think there is as much full salvation in that hymn as you would often get in a whole Convention.

There is the way of holiness. The doctrines of holiness are important.

If a man has plenty of flesh but has not got any bones he will be a flabby character, he must have bones to make his body erect. Doctrines are the structure, they are the bones. If you want to know real holiness you must take the trouble to see from the Word of God that there is a real way of holiness.

After Christ has saved you and has blotted out all your sins and forgiven them he seeks to do a deeper work still. He wants to deliver you from

the sin in your heart, to deal with the disease of sin, to cleanse you from all filthiness and from all your idols and He wants to take away the stony heart, to replace it by a new heart that is tender, a heart of flesh that responds to the touch of God. We do not believe that you have to carry about with you till death a heart that is full of iniquity and filth.

The Old Puritans used to paint the depravity of the human heart in lurid colours. But this is not a true description of a heart that has been cleansed by the blood of Christ, one that has been filled with the Holy Spirit and indwelt by the risen, living spotless Son of God. The heart of such an one can be made clean and pure, what the Old Testament calls perfect, fit for Christ to live in, to make His home.

We believe that is part of the doctrine of holiness, sound doctrine. There is also "the doctrine whereunto thou hast attained."

There must be the experience of holiness. However sound your doctrines are they will not help you very much if they do not lead you into an experience that corresponds to those doctrines.

I am reading one of John Wesley's many biographies over again just now and I find that before Wesley had entered into the experience of sanctification, and before he was converted in fact, he drew up a little statement of what his idea was of

holiness; but it was not till years after that he was converted and ultimately came into the deeper experience of sanctification. Afterwards when he was asked to draw up a sort of creed of what Methodism stood for he incorporated that little statement, and he did not feel he had to correct or alter one single word, he had got the intellectual grasp of it before he was even saved.

You can go to Conventions and you can get the theory of holiness, and you may have the right theory, but yet you may not have the corresponding experience. You may believe all that you have heard and yet your heart may be unclean. You may believe that it is possible to be filled with the Spirit, but it may not be your experience. You may be satisfied with the bones but a body that is all bones is almost worse than a body without bones, it is a skeleton. What a poor specimen of humanity a man is who has the doctrines of holiness without the corresponding experience, he is at the best a skeleton.

Then there is the doctrine which is “according to godliness.” It is very vital to have clear proof as to what God has revealed in His word but it is more vital to have the experience, but more vital than the truth and experience is the life and the character, the conversation and the disposition which should be the outcome of the doctrine and experience.

Surely the true goal of a Holiness Convention is not to turn out people who can recite a Holiness Creed without a mistake. It is not merely to turn out people who can go back and testify to thrilling spiritual experiences. We are surely all agreed on this that the ultimate goal of such a Convention is to turn out men and women whose lives, whose character, whose daily walk shall be such as can honestly be called true holiness. It is rather strange, but I am afraid it is so, that there are people—I have met some and perhaps you have too—people connected with the Holiness Movement, upon whom it does not seem to have dawned that the acid test is not the creed they hold, or the experience they have, but the life they are living. True holiness of life, such as the Lord Jesus Christ came to manifest, should be the outcome of the blessed experience into which we are led by a clear grasp of the Truth.

Now what is the standard of holy living? Well, it is not the resolutions of Lambeth. A reverend gentleman said recently in one of our well-known publications that the resolutions of Lambeth were to form a new text book for Christian work. We need something a little higher than that. What is the standard of holy living? It is not Keswick, it is not the J.E.B., it is not the life and teaching of John Wesley, it is not the standard

of the Overcomers, or of the Pentecostal League. What is it then? I think the answer to that is so simple, it has been becoming more and more clear to me of late, the standard of holy living is the perfect life and character of Christ. It takes some of us a long time to see that which ought to be A.B.C., but when you look at it like that you never stop, however far God has led you, however much He has blessed you, you can never rest on your laurels.

We read “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” “All have sinned” in the Greek is in the past, and “come short” is in the present. Peter tells us in his Epistle (1 Peter iv. 1) that “He that has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin.” Paul would have said “he that has been crucified with Christ is dead to sin.” The life of sinning may be a thing of the past, we need not always be sinning, but we shall always, while we are in the body, be coming short. Not one of us would ever dare to say that we are as holy as Jesus. We may have a heart that is perfectly pure and clean, with nothing left in it that is antagonistic towards God and His will, but to the last we are coming short of the perfect life and character of the Lord Jesus. What we want to see, dear friends, is that we may have everything that is in the heart antagonistic towards God cleansed away, so that the Lord Jesus may come in and

make His home in the heart, and then we can go on and on. We shall never absolutely reach the goal in this life, but some of God's children have made very wonderful progress along that line of being transformed into the character and disposition of the Lord Jesus.

Let us look at Leviticus ii. 1. There we find the Meal offering (one of the five offerings to be offered up in the Tabernacle and in the Temple) which stands for the perfect life and character of the Lord Jesus. It has nothing to do with His death, there is no mention of blood or death. Christ was the Bread of God, the One who perfectly satisfied the heart of God, and Christ was the Bread of Life, the One who is to be our life, and in the meal offering we have various things told us that illustrate what this marvellous perfect life and character of Jesus was.

The meal offering was composed of fine flour, mingled with oil, sprinkled with frankincense, and seasoned with salt, and it was never to be contaminated by leaven or by honey, and each of these ingredients have something to teach us about the perfect life and character of the Lord Jesus.

There was to be no leaven. Leaven stands for sin. We can never here claim to be sinless in the same manner in which Christ was sinless. We can have the leaven purged out of our hearts

but to the end we are sinners, sinners saved by grace, sinners sanctified by grace. We can have a heart which has been cleansed by the precious blood of Christ, in which the sinless Christ lives by the Holy Spirit His life, and as we allow Him to live out His life in us, in the heart that has been cleansed, and as we abide in Him and He abideth in us, we are kept from sinning. That is my conception of holiness, and I believe that to be “sound doctrine.”

“Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not.” I do not believe in absolute perfection of character this side of Eternity, though you can have a heart that is pure, clean and perfect. The Lord Jesus Christ living in the heart that has been saved and sanctified, that is the life of true holiness. Christ living in us. There was no leaven in Him, and as He lives out His life in us there will be no leaven in us.

And then there was to be no honey. Honey is made from the essence of flowers. Flowers are the most beautiful things in nature. Look at a beautiful flower, it does not seem to have a blemish about it but it has in it the seed of corruption. Honey stands for natural goodness, natural nobility of character. Some people seem to have almost more than their share of natural nobility, natural goodness, but for all that they have the seed of corruption in them. Natural

goodness, natural nobility will never never do for holiness, which is all Divine. Holiness is the life of Jesus in us. "This is a hard saying who can bear it?" Maybe you cannot bear it now but when the Spirit of God takes possession of the soul, He has to put to death that which is natural so that He may make the life supernatural. The perfect life and character of the Lord Jesus Christ was not mere human goodness, it was because He was receiving again and again life from His Father that He was perfect.

Then there were those four ingredients. Fine flour, frankincense, oil and salt.

Flour speaks to us of suffering. Before flour is flour it has to be ground in the mill, and before it is ground it is threshed. Before it is threshed it has to be cut down and before it grew at all the corn had to die, and that reminds us that the perfect life of Jesus was a life of suffering from the cradle to the grave, from the manger to the Cross and you must not be surprised dear friends, to find that a life of holiness means suffering.

Pastor Stockmayer used to say "you cannot at the same time desire to live the life of the Lamb and desire to escape suffering." If a perfect Saviour lived a life of suffering you and I ought not to expect to escape.

But it was not merely flour, but fine flour

which speaks to us of that which is even and smooth. You can run fine flour through your fingers and there are no grits or lumpy bits. This speaks to us of the all round perfectly balanced character of the Lord Jesus. He was the bravest of the brave, and yet the most tender, patient and sympathetic. Some people are fearless and bold, as bold as lions, but they are not gentle, and some are gentle but they are not brave. The Lord Jesus could wait two days while Lazarus was dying because the time had not come (some people cannot wait two minutes but must rush off immediately), but when the time had come they could not keep him back. He could drive the moneychangers out of the Temple with a scourge of cords but when He was dying on the Cross He could pray for His murderers. Some of us pride ourselves on our strong points, which is equivalent to admitting that we have a good many weak points. When the Lord Jesus is living in your heart He will lead you on and on; He will conform you unto His own image. That is true holiness.

Then there was the oil. Oil was to be poured over the offering, or the offering was to be anointed with oil. Oil speaks to us of the Holy Spirit. Let us remember that true holiness is not merely humanity at its best. Some people would eulogise Jesus as merely the carpenter of Nazareth.

Dr. F. B. Meyer, after he had come back from America where he had heard many big men speaking about Jesus the carpenter of Nazareth said one day in my hearing "I could not stand it any longer, I said for God's sake tell me about Jesus Christ the Son of God Who shed His blood for my sins and conquered the devil."

Jesus was not holy merely because He was a pure man but because He was Son of God, He depended on God. Some people do not know the difference between humanity at its best and true holiness. Humanity at its best is never true holiness.

Then we get the frankincense which speaks to us of the fragrance of the life of Christ. Andrew Jukes points out that frankincense gave out its best perfume when fire was applied to it. That is not so with many of us. An Irishman once said, "I can stand anything except temptation." And that is true of many of us but there are the tests, the fiery tests which God allows to come into our lives. Jesus was always patient, but never more patient than in those last hours, or more loving than when it cost Him most to be loving. That is true holiness.

Then there was the salt. Salt is that which checks corruption, and is the exact opposite of leaven. Salt ratified the covenant between this party and that party and there was always something about the Lord Jesus, about His conversation,

habits, and ways that made people feel there was a covenant between Him and God. There should be something of that in us which would make people say that there is a covenant between us and God, so that we do not have to advertise the fact.

Do we all see the doctrine of holiness? Is there anyone who is not yet convinced that there is such a thing? That you may receive heart cleansing in exactly the same manner as you received the gift of eternal life, which brought about the New Birth? God wants you to put in your claim for holiness by faith in Jesus, “not by effort of thine own.” If you do that God will bring you into the experience. You cannot feel the experience first, any more than you can in the matter of salvation. Real faith in the Lord Jesus will lead you into the experience. It will then be sound doctrine, “whereunto thou hast attained.”

Some of us have studied and read about this experience, and we have agonised. I tried fasting and praying and agonising, reading every book on the subject I could get hold of, but at length there came to me one little word from the Lord and as I trusted the Lord on that little word I got the experience.

May we all see the doctrine and have the experience and above all live the life of true holiness.

“ A SECOND GRACE ”

“ A SECOND GRACE ”

“ That ye might have a second benefit,” (margin “second grace”)
2 Cor. 1. 15.

ST. PAUL here speaks of both a gift, and of a work of grace. That ye might have a second gift of grace, a second work of grace. The Apostle is telling how anxious he is that the Christians at Corinth, who were converts of his previous visit, should have a second visitation of God, that they should receive a second gift of grace, and experience a second work of grace done in them by the Holy Spirit.

There is a great difference between the purpose of a Mission and the purpose of a Convention for the deepening of spiritual life. Each has a definite purpose and a definite objective in view. The purpose of a Mission is to bring souls from darkness to light, to bring souls to definitely accept the Lord Christ, and having accepted Him to receive forgiveness of sins and God's free gift of eternal life which is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

The purpose of a Convention for the deepening of spiritual life is that God's children may be helped and blessed and built up, but more

specially the purpose of such a Convention is that believers may be led to experience a second work of grace if they have not experienced it already. That they may receive this special gift of God's grace if they have not already received it, of course all the time seeking that one and all of us, however far we may have got in the spiritual life, may have that spiritual life enriched and deepened, but the definite objective before such Conventions is this, that people may be led to take this definite step for which Conventions exist, and for which they stand, and if Conventions for the deepening of spiritual life do not stress this second great blessing, then, in my humble opinion, they are failing to fulfil the purpose for which God brought them into being.

Those of us who know anything of the Japan Evangelistic Band Conventions know well enough that the purpose ever before them is that believers may enter into what is sometimes called the experience of holiness or of sanctification, and sometimes called the life of perfect love, sometimes called the overcoming life, sometimes called the rest of faith and sometimes called the Canaan life, and we do not apologise for stressing this truth. Personally I would humbly say that I glory in it for four reasons.

First of all because the Scriptures are so full of it. I want to say more about this later on,

Secondly, because the biographies of saints so often record a second great gift of grace, a second great experience of God's work of grace.

I would say in passing that nothing has helped me personally in my own spiritual life, next to the Bible, so much as reading the biographies of saints. I have about seventy or eighty of them in my study and I have read them again and again and the more I have read them the more I have been struck by this fact that in the lives of many of these saints of God, there has been this second great experience which has made a mighty difference in their Christian lives, and Christian service. May I mention a few.

GEORGE FOX. The Founder of the Society of Friends. He had some quaint ideas which I do not suppose we would altogether endorse, but if ever there was a saint it was George Fox and he had a most definite experience along this line.

MADAM GUYON, the French saint, who, I think, came nearer to St. Paul in the marvellous way in which she was able to endure suffering for Christ's sake than anyone else outside the Bible and she had a most definite second experience.

JOHN FLETCHER OF MADELEY, of whom John Wesley said he was the holiest man he had ever met.

BILLY BRAY, known all over the Christian world. A drunken Cornish miner, first soundly converted and then wonderfully filled with the Holy Spirit.

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL, the great hymn writer had a most definite second experience.

CANON BATTERSBY, the Founder of the Keswick Convention, was able to bear testimony to a second great work of grace.

HUDSON TAYLOR, the greatest missionary of modern times. Oh what a crisis there was in his life in the matter of sanctification.

MOODY, the greatest Evangelist of modern times. If I am not one of his children then I am one of his spiritual grandchildren. He had a most definite experience of being filled with the Spirit.

BISHOP HANDLEY MOULE gladly testified to a second work of grace, though he had previously found fault with this line of teaching.

CHARLES INWOOD and F. B. MEYER, the apostles of modern Nonconformity, and many others gave similar testimony.

You will find these men and women who have made their mark for God were not only converted but sanctified. God visited them in a second way, and they received a second benefit, a second gift of grace.

Then thirdly, I have seen so many other people enter into this experience and seen their lives and their witness and their whole being transformed, in some cases years after they had first of all become children of God.

Lastly my own personal experience for what it is worth. God visited me in a second work of grace years after my conversion and I can only say in my own case it made far more difference than ever my conversion made.

It is because of the testimony of Scripture, because of the biographies of saints and because of personal experience ; because of all these things we do not apologise for stressing the fact that there is this second work of grace, this second gift of grace that God wants to do and to give to all who have not received it, and who have not experienced it. These four reasons are all important but what weighs most with us of course is the testimony of Scripture and I want therefore to confine myself now to this.

If in this matter I am elementary and if I go over ground that to some is extremely familiar, please remember the people I have in my mind are those who are not familiar with this line of teaching, and those who are seeking and enquiring along this line and possibly some who are prejudiced against it. I want them to see that we have the clear testimony of Scripture to the fact

that God is able and willing to visit a believer, and give that believer a second definite gift of grace, and work in that believer a second definite work of grace.

I have noticed that Moses was commanded in Numbers x. 2 to make two silver trumpets, not one silver trumpet but two, and all these details which have been given have a meaning and a powerful significance, and I think we are justified in saying that these two silver trumpets typify the proclamation of the Gospel, but it was not one silver trumpet but two. Both were made of the same material, silver, which speaks to us of redemption, and both sounded out together and the two sounding out together made the complete note of a full Gospel. The Gospel for the sinner, Trumpet No. 1. Gospel for the saint, Trumpet No. 2.

"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound."

If you know anything about a band you know that a silver cornet is very melodious, and the sound of the Gospel is the sweetest melody on earth. The sweetest melody because it reaches the heart of the sinner and tells the sinner that there is pardon and forgiveness for every sin, and possibly sweeter still, it reaches the heart of the saint and tells him that he is not only saved from the sins but from the sin itself which caused the sins and brought condemnation.

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”—1 John i. 9.

Trumpet No. 1 speaks to us of forgiveness of sins, Trumpet No. 2 sounding out the full Gospel speaks to us of something more, cleansing from all unrighteousness.

Then again in Jeremiah xxxiii. 8 :

“I will cleanse them from all their iniquity ; whereby they have sinned against Me ; and I will pardon all their iniquities whereby they have sinned and whereby they have transgressed against Me.”

Pardon for all their iniquities and cleansing from all the iniquity which caused the iniquities. Not pardon only but pardon and purity, not forgiveness only but forgiveness and cleansing. God’s full Gospel as it sounds out tells us that no matter how awful our sins have been there is forgiveness and pardon for everyone, and further there is deliverance so that we need not go on committing those same sins again and there is deliverance from that which causes the sins.

Now let us look at Psalm li. We have here again the two trumpets sounding out ; a two-fold cry from the heart of David.

“Blot out my transgressions.”—v. 1.

“Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.”—v. 2.

David wants his iniquities to be blotted out of God’s black book and he wants the iniquity

to be blotted out of his black heart. In the same Psalm verses 9 and 10 we read :

"Blot out all mine iniquities."—v. 9.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God."—v. 10.

There again he is asking that God will blot out all his iniquities but there is another cry which rises up, he wants his heart to be made clean. I believe there must rise up sometime or other from the heart of every regenerate soul the cry "Oh make me clean," not only blot out the sins and iniquities and transgressions from God's black book but "make me clean." "Create in me a clean heart."

In Romans v. we find much about justification and in Romans vi. there is much about sanctification. The word "sanctification" is not actually used in the English but the word "holiness" is, and wherever you get the word "holiness" or "sanctification" they are interchangeable.

Dr. Pierson gives a good definition of justification. He speaks of it as "giving the sinner the standing of an innocent party," i.e., the man is not innocent, he is a sinner, but when he trusts in Christ Who took his place on the Cross and bore his sin on the Cross, God gives him the standing of an innocent party. He is not righteous but unrighteous, yet God counts him righteous because of the righteousness that is put upon him by faith.

What is sanctification? Something very much more than that. Sanctification is taking the sinner who has been accounted righteous and making him righteous, not merely giving him the standing of an innocent party but doing something within his soul that makes him holy.

What does sanctification mean? Some would tell us it means out and out separation from the world, that is all about it.

Dr. Edersheim says: “The Hebrew term for “Holy” is generally supposed to mean separated, set apart. But this is only its secondary signification. Its primary meaning is to be splendid, beautiful, pure, uncontaminated.” The Old Testament word for holy and the New Testament word for holy or sanctified means something more than merely being separated from the world outwardly, it means being made pure, splendid, beautiful, uncontaminated. There are many people who are separated outwardly, they are like Samson. They are Nazarites outwardly, they do not dance, do not attend the theatre, or the race course, they do not bet, drink or smoke, but like Samson they have never been separated inwardly. Samson never had the Nazarite heart, he was never separated from his own self will, never separated from his own inborn uncleanness. You may be separated from the world and yet

you may be extremely difficult to live with, to work with. God wants us to be separated outwardly but He wants us also to be separated inwardly, made pure and holy and clean within.

These two trumpet notes must sound out together to give the full proclamation of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus.

In Psalm 130. 7 we read :

"With the Lord there is mercy."

Well that is good. Is there anyone wanting mercy? Is there anyone a backslider? If so you need not fear to come near to God. "With the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption, and He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities." Mercy for the sinner and plenteous redemption, redemption and plenty of it enough to deliver you from your self and inborn sin.

Then we might study this subject from the types of Scripture. The crossing of the Red Sea stands for the New Birth, and the crossing of the Jordan getting the people out of the wilderness into the land, stands for the second great gift of grace and the second great work of grace. I know there are many hymn writers who have said that crossing the Jordan means dying and going to Heaven, and so many of our hymns in the last verse have

something to say about Jordan's chilly waves, or something equally terrifying, and John Bunyan in his immortal allegory gives us a picture of the pilgrim going down into the Jordan and on the other side going through the gates which lead to the Celestial City.

Such an interpretation is undoubtedly justified but the primary interpretation of the crossing of the Jordan is to be found in Hebrews, chapters 3 and 4. The crossing of the Jordan and the coming into the land of Canaan is an experience that if we will believe we may enter into now. “We see that they could not enter in because of unbelief” (Heb. iii. 19).

I wrote to a clergyman's wife sometime ago with whom I had had an earnest talk on this subject and I said, “Never rest until Canaan is your permanent address.” I did not mean till she got to Heaven. I meant till she had trusted the Lord to take her into real fellowship with Christ in His death and resurrection and had come into newness of life. If you are hazy about this question, if you are not quite sure, never rest until you can say :

“I have reached the land of corn and wine.”

Reached that blessed blessed life when you can say :

“How much more than satisfied
Are the thirsty lips at last.”

Then let us look at one of the characters of Scripture :—Jacob.

If you could find Jacob in the other world and say to him "I wish you would tell me please which you consider were the two outstanding experiences in your spiritual life and the two great red-letter days," I have not the slightest doubt what his answer would be. He would say : "The first great outstanding experience of my spiritual life was when I met with God in Bethel and there for the first time I said from my heart—'The Lord shall be my God,' and there I started on the way for the first time." (I think we should call that story, not so much the story of Jacob's ladder as the story of Jacob's conversion.) "The second great outstanding experience in my spiritual life was when nearly twenty-one years after that, God met with me definitely at Peniel and there he did a work deeper than the first work. It was more of a crisis and it transformed me from Jacob to Israel." In the interval Jacob had been living a mixed life. One side was shallow, the other real. One side spiritual, the other carnal ; what Madam Guyon called the mixed life of sin and of holiness. Sometimes one was on top and sometimes the other. Before Jacob was changed he was crooked. Rev. W. P. Nicholson said that "Jacob was such a twister that he could not hide behind a corkscrew

without being seen.” But God undertook to make the crooked straight. For a long time after he first accepted the Lord, Jacob was crooked, though not so crooked as at first. There are people who were not straight before they were converted, you could not be always quite sure of them and there is a good streak of the old nature still in them. They are more or less crooked still.

We want to listen to the sound of the full Gospel. Maybe you have only heard the one trumpet sounding out, you need to hear the other trumpet. When God met Jacob a second time He gave him brokenness as he yielded to Him, He transformed him; and that is what sanctification does to us.

Now let us go to the Acts of the Apostles.

In the second chapter we read of the Apostles being definitely filled with the Spirit. God visited them when they were gathered together. Many of them had been His disciples for two or three years, but they needed a second gift of grace, a second great work of grace and God filled them with His Holy Spirit.

In Acts viii. we read of the people of Samaria, who had received the Word of God, and when the disciples heard about it they sent down Peter and John that they might receive the Holy Ghost. (I think I am right in saying that whenever you

read in the Acts of people receiving the Holy Ghost it always means being filled with the Holy Ghost). So the disciples came and they laid their hands on the people at Samaria, and they received the Holy Ghost though already converted.

Another case of someone receiving this second gift of grace we find in Acts ix. Saul of Tarsus was converted on the road to Damascus and then three days later Ananias was sent to him that he might be filled with the Holy Ghost. In the tenth chapter we read of Cornelius and his little band of friends, and while the Gospel is being preached to them not only are they saved, but at the same time filled with the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost falls upon them; they are baptised with the Holy Ghost at the moment of their new birth.

In the case of the apostles there was an interval of three years, in the case of the people of Samaria perhaps about three months, with Saul of Tarsus three days and in the case of Cornelius alone no interval at all.

In Acts xix. we read of Paul going to Ephesus and he says to the disciples there "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" Or "did you receive the Holy Ghost when you believed?" (R.V.). Were you one of the few who were filled with the Holy Ghost at the same time as conversion? Or did you at some subsequent

period receive the Holy Ghost ? I want to leave that question with you. I will close where I started. There is a second gift of grace, a second work of grace and the Lord Jesus says to us “ Ask and receive that your joy may be full.”

“ WHEN . . . OVER JORDAN ”

“WHEN . . . OVER JORDAN”

“When the people were clean passed over Jordan.”

Joshua iv. 1.

THE charge is often brought against the teachers of holiness that they speak a great deal about the initial experience of sanctification but they do not tell one enough about what is going to happen afterwards. Our text speaks of what came to pass when the people were “clean passed over Jordan.”

I want to speak about living on the other side of the river Jordan. Most of us by this time have probably come to see that there is an experience in the spiritual life corresponding to the crossing clean over the Jordan. This life is the life for which Canaan stands, a land flowing with milk and honey, a land of fulness of blessing, a land we have always thought of as the Holy Land.

Let us then first of all see clearly that this life has a definite beginning. There must be a venture, a great venture that will take you clean over Jordan before you can live the Canaan life. It is a truth we cannot stress too often that you do not grow into sanctification ; you do not slide into it, you do not glide into it, you do not develop

into it as we understand it. It is as definite a step and crisis in the spiritual life as the New Birth. The crossing of the Jordan took place on a certain day just as the crossing of the Red Sea took place on a certain night. This life has a definite beginning, you cannot live the Canaan life until you get there. You must cross over, venture out and trust the Lord to make your heart clean and fill you with the Holy Spirit and give you real deliverance from that inward corruption which has been the trouble with so many of us all our Christian lives.

There are four classes of people. There are those who are not yet out of Egypt, those who are still living an unconverted life, a wasted life, a worldly life, an unsatisfying life, and a sinful life, and the message to them is "Come out of Egypt." "Come to the Lord Jesus."

There are those who are not only out of Egypt but out of the wilderness and clean passed over Jordan and the message is "Still there's more to follow." Then there are those who have been up to the brink and have considered the question and possibly they did get over, but somehow things have been unsatisfactory and they are more or less confused and despairing, the word to them from the Lord is to re-consider the whole question, and believe that there is this Canaan life in spite of all failures in the past. Then there may be those who

are on the brink of Jordan, longing to cross over but saying, “What we are wanting to know is what is going to happen afterwards? Supposing I do take this step, supposing I do make the venture, supposing the Lord does fill me with the Holy Spirit and cleanse my heart from sin, what is going to happen afterwards?” The Book of Joshua can answer that question. For one thing it makes it clear that when you are clean passed over Jordan you begin to live a life in which you really enjoy salvation in abundance.

Let us look at Joshua v. 12. We might almost say about the Children of Israel “they *did* eat.” Caleb and Joshua had already tasted of the milk and honey, the fruits of Canaan and when the people had clean passed over Jordan they began to eat those fruits in abundance, they began to enjoy that for which God in the first instance had brought them out of Egypt. If we are wise we shall never rest until we can say, looking up to God honestly and sincerely in our hearts “I have reached the land of corn and wine.” Have you got there friends? Until you are absolutely sure you are clean passed over Jordan you will not begin to enjoy salvation in abundance, the abundant life, abundant peace, abundant joy.

Then we find the life over the river Jordan was full of new experiences of victory, but it was a life of war and of battle.

In chapter iv. 13 we read :

"About forty thousand prepared for war passed over before the Lord unto battle to the plains of Jericho."

In another place we read "they passed over right against Jericho." We are so anxious to entice people into the promised land, that we tell them of the rest and relief, but we give them sometimes the impression that when they are clean passed over Jordan there is no more warfare and no more battle. The life of full salvation is not an easy-going life, with no difficulties. If you want to be an Alpine climber you must take risks. If you want to get to the South Pole you must be willing to expose yourself to hardships. If you get to know anything about the Spirit-filled life you will often have tremendous conflicts with the devil. You have got to face the fact that the trouble is now not so much with the outward world, not so much with your inner life, but with the devil; you are right up against the powers of darkness, and so more than ever we need an Almighty Saviour to give us the victory, but He is more than enough for the powers of darkness.

It is not going to be child's play. It is real war, a real battle. You will have your Jericho right against you but you will not be fighting yourself any longer, you won't be fighting that sinful old man. You cannot have a heart that

is pure and clean and at the same time have the old man in your heart. There is no such thing as victory without a fight but you will realise that the Lord has won the victory for you over the Evil One and that you are in alliance with an Almighty Saviour.

But let us remember dear friends, this life is a life in which defeat is possible. People misunderstand holiness, they think we believe and teach that we get an experience which brings us beyond the possibility of defeat or sin. Anybody who has lived this life for six weeks does not say that. After that wonderful victory when the Children of Israel captured Jericho, the strongest city in the Holy Land, there came that defeat at the little city of Ai. It was not a big defeat. In many of the Old Testament battles the casualties ran into hundreds and thousands, but in the case of Ai there were only thirty-six, but that was thirty-six too many. It was a comparatively small reverse in the light of many big reverses we read of in the Old Testament.

And in our lives when we are clean passed over Jordan what the world would not call defeat but an infirmity, we call sin. We do not want to be morbid. (An American lady once said of me that I suffered from “scrupulosity.”) But you cannot be filled with the Holy Spirit without getting a new conscience and what others would

call a little sin, or a little defeat, oh how big it seems, how it holds up all progress, and until that little sin is dealt with there is no peace or rest. You may have said something you ought not to have said, how it pains you, and the Spirit is grieved, and you are grieved, and very often you have to make an apology. Some people would rather die than apologise to a fellow-Christian. It is the little matters that go to make up life more than the big things. Well it may be victory all along the line.

I suppose no-one would ever dare to say that they had not sinned since they got clean over Jordan.

We must always remember that we have three great enemies. The world, the flesh and the devil. Someone has said the world is the external enemy, the flesh the internal enemy and the devil the infernal enemy.

It seems to me that you have to deal with these three in that order. You have to be separated from the world, get deliverance from yourselves and when you get clean over Jordan then you get to grips with the devil. You know the devil is going down and we are going up. The devil started in Heaven and he is going to finish in Hell ; we started our lives here and we are going to finish in Heaven. We were brought out of the pit and when we have clean passed over Jordan we come

up into the heavenly places where we meet with wicked spirits (Eph. vi. 12). We are going up and the devil is going down. When you are filled with the Holy Spirit you begin to enter the front line of the battle, and you will begin to know something of the devil's power.

This life over Jordan is a life in which you must not be independent.

God gave Joshua instructions for him to pass on to the Children of Israel, but in one case they failed, that was in the matter of the Gibeonites.

Chapter ix. 14 and 15. They made league with the Gibeonites instead of destroying them as was God's purpose. They were getting independent, they did not seek clearly the guidance of God. And the devil is always trying to get us out of the straight road into some bypath, he is very subtle and much more clever than you or I. He does as these people did, they worked wilily and got Joshua to make a mistake which was rather costly. The devil will try to make us independent. May I sound this note of warning here? When you first begin to know something of the leading of the Spirit be very careful that you do not mistake your own selfwill for the leading of the Spirit or your own impulse for the leading of the Spirit. All sorts of weird things have been done by people who will tell you that the Spirit led them to do this or that, and if they could only see it it was

their own selfwill, their own desire, their own impulse. One secret of guidance is, to put it in a nutshell :

"If any man will do His will he shall know" (John vii. 17.) To be perfectly willing to do the Lord's will when once we know it.

An old lady at two cross roads was throwing a stick up into the air when a man came along, and after watching her for some time he said, "What are you doing? Why are you throwing that stick into the air?" Her answer was, "I want to know which way to go, this way or that, and I am going whichever way the stick points." But said the man, "You have thrown it up two or three times already," and she replied "Well the stick always will point that way and I want to go the other way." Are we not often like that? When we are doing God's will it takes the friction out of life, out of your domestic life, out of your business life and out of your Christian work. If we will be guided and directed of God, we can be kept from going astray.

If you have not got clean passed over Jordan it is quite possible you do not know what this means. If you will make the venture you will enter into the reality of God's guidance. Then lastly this life over Jordan is a life in which you may come far short.

The first four chapters of Joshua give us a

description of how the Children of Israel got over Jordan but the remaining twenty tell us what happened when they were clean passed over.

At the end of the twelfth chapter we have a list of the thirty-one kings they conquered. It was a wonderful thing to conquer thirty-one kings, it was victory all along the line.

However in Chapter xiii. 1 we are told “There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed.” The early chapters of Joshua tell us of the land they entered and possessed and the later chapters tell us of the land that they failed to possess. It was not so much defeat as failure to advance.

There is no-one yet who has possessed all the land. Some of us who profess to be living in Canaan, we come across other people and they have got such a long way ahead of us that we wonder whether we have any right to say we are in the same land. Two men came to John Wesley one day about George Whitfield and his Calvinistic teaching and they said to him, “Do you think we shall see Master Whitfield in Heaven?” John Wesley said (though he was an Arminian) “I am not sure whether we shall, for probably he will be so near the Throne and you and I will be so far away we shall possibly not be able to see him.”

St. Paul asks, “Where is boasting then,” and the answer is “it is excluded?” I have heard people giving their testimony along the line of

holiness and perhaps they do not mean it but sometimes it has sounded perilously near to boasting. I think that this is one of the most subtle temptations in the life of holiness, to get to think that you are better than other people who do not possess this life. Finney says that anybody who is leading a revival needs to be broken up about once every three weeks to keep him humble, and the Lord has to break many of us up very often.

We can easily fall, it is a life in which defeat is possible. It is a life in which we must not be enticed into independence. One of the joys of the life of holiness is that the guidance and leading of the Spirit become such a reality to you in your daily life. You begin to find out as never before that God has a plan for your life though you may be a very insignificant person.

If there is anyone here who is still in Egypt God's word to you is "Come out and start on the way to the better land." Perhaps there is someone here who is out of Egypt but you are not clean passed over Jordan, God is saying to you "Come in, come across, here and now. Be cleansed from sin and filled with the Holy Spirit. Come in, the waters are rolled back and the way is made open through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and thus you may get clean over Jordan."

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