



A.M. HILLS



SCRIPTURAL HOLINESS
&
KESWICK TEACHING
COMPARED

CHAPTER IX.

MUCH THAT THESE PREACHERS CALL HOLINESS IS ONLY REGENERATION.

Let us not forget the discussion of regeneration and its definition in the second chapter., The Bible standard of regeneration, as we have said, is a life of OBEDIENCE. “Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because His seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God. In this the children of God are manifest and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God” (1 John 3: 9, 10).

We have quoted this definition of regeneration: “Regeneration is that moral change in man wrought by the Holy Spirit, by which he is saved from the love of sin, the practice of sin, and the dominion of sin, and is enabled, with full choice of will and the energy of right affections, to love God and to keep His commandments.”

Both the regenerated man and the sanctified man are alike held to strict and cheerful obedience to every known will of God. The difference between the two is not in their *outward conduct* so much as in their inner *state of life*. The regenerated man finds in himself the “remains of inbred corruption” or “remaining pollution” as a TENDENCY to pride, anger, envy, or any other form of sin. But the sanctified man is cleansed from this corruption, so that he has a “pure,” or “sanctified,” or “holy” heart. “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all SIN”: “sin” in the singular number, the sin principle. In sanctification the Holy Spirit cleanses the moral nature from the pollution of depravity. This is *Scriptural holiness*.

Now, bearing this distinction between the regenerated and the sanctified man in mind, it will be seen that much that is called “holiness” by Keswick teachers is only the obedience of regeneration. Notice these quotations: “Do not, be afraid of being too perfect. There never will come a day in your life in which you are not conscious of being very imperfect. But that is not what I am specially referring to. What I am speaking about more particularly is this: God pointing out to you, at the beginning of this Convention, that there is something wrong—something that is inconsistent with your position as a Christian; are you willing to give it up?”

Now, we do not see, how anybody could either get regeneration or *keep* it without giving up everything that he knew to be wrong. But the result would not be holiness.

Again we quote: “The heights of the absolutely holy will always tower above us in the blue sky: but in spite of all, we may BE KEPT FROM KNOWN AND CONSCIOUS SIN. In the holy sight of God, and judged by His perfect standards, our best will be full of infinite deficiency, but *up to the measure of our knowledge* we may walk before Him in holiness and righteousness all our days.”

The reader will notice that in this closing passage of an eloquent sermon, not a thing is said about having a “*pure*” heart or a “clean” heart; but being “kept from known and conscious sin,” and obeying God “up to the measure of our knowledge” is held up as holiness. The attention of the audience was wholly turned to the outward *doing* and not to the inward *state of heart*. And this correct *conduct* was called by the preacher “holiness.” But this, as we have seen, is only genuine, Scriptural REGENERATION.

Here is another Keswick preacher: “The special mission of Keswick is to promote a Scriptural standard of holiness. To this it has devoted itself for more than thirty years. It is important to ask what is God's standard of holy living. 'Can I do no sin?' you say; in one sense you can. You can commit no known sin. There is a great deal of sin, you may be sure, that you commit that you do not know. It is absolutely atrocious that a child of God should step on the platform of sin when he knows it to be sin.”

There was great confusion of thought in that quotation about the nature of sin against God which we will pass by. But here is a distinct announcement that the Keswick platform teaches that “Scriptural holiness “ is only refraining from the COMMITTAL OF “KNOWN SIN.”

We do not hesitate to say that this utterly misses the Scriptural idea of HOLINESS. If it were, then the only synonym for “holiness” would be “obedience.” But why, then, does God say so much about: a “pure heart” and “a clean heart,” and about “purifying” and “cleansing” and “purging” and “circumcising” the heart, by “removing” something from it, and “taking away” something, and “putting off” something, and “crucifying” and “destroying the body of sin,” and “making dead,” and “sanctifying,” and “sanctification”? Away with an interpretation of Scripture that brushes aside with a wave of the

hand this tremendous array of expressions which all teach HEART CLEANSING, and substitutes for them all *outward obedience*, and avoiding “conscious sin”!

Here is a quotation from another sermon: ‘When will we be done fooling with sin? There is nothing more appalling about sin than the fact that it tempts even the saints to trifle with the deadly thing. God has two great words, ‘Repent,’ ‘Forsake’: that is repentance. ‘Lay hold’: that is faith. ‘Hold fast’ that is perseverance. These three cover the whole territory of our experience.” . . . “There is that kind of sinless perfection in which every Keswick teacher believes: the sinless perfection of instantaneously and forever renouncing every known sin.” Now this is some more of the same bad theology. It simply holds up regeneration, and calls it “holiness.” But we flatly deny that repentance, and faith for regeneration, and perseverance *cover the whole territory of our experience.*” We can bring ten thousand humble witnesses to testify that after they sincerely repented of sin, and believed for pardon and regeneration, and faithfully persevered in the same, walking in the light as God gave it to them, they were convicted by the Holy Spirit of their need of A CLEAN HEART. With great heart-hunger they went to Jesus, consecrated all their ransomed powers to Him, and all their good things to be the Lord’s forever. They pleaded for Jesus to baptize them with the Holy Spirit for a holy heart. In simple faith they claimed the blessing. The Spirit came, and wrought a cleansing in their heart, and gave them the experience of sanctification, as clear, as distinct, and as marked, and as definitely witnessed to by the Holy Ghost, as was their conversion. I believe there are thousands of people who could testify to such an experience this minute.

The following is taken from another sermon: “If there is anything for which Keswick has stood for thirty years, it is for the necessity of obedience in order to light, in order to blessing. Not one of the ‘teachers on this platform has ever winked at disobedience in any form, or given any soul any comfort while continuing in disobedience, and it is taught here consistently that obedience must be a studious obedience, that looks, at little as well as at great things. . . . Dis-obedience is deadly. It tends unto death. It tends to the decay of all spiritual affections, and spiritual convictions, and spiritual sensibilities, and spiritual choices. Whether you are a child of God or not, at once stop your disobedience. Turn your back at once on everything sinful or doubtful if you want to walk in the light.”

This is well said. I do not complain of it. I am only saying, it is not all that the Scripture means by “holiness” of heart. It is only the experience of regeneration, as the Bible pictures it. *The lowest state of grace in God's Word is a life of obedience.*

One other passage of this kind ought to be sufficient to prove what I am saying, that most of these preachers teach only a *regeneration experience* for holiness. Here it is: “just walk right out on the divine promise, (he does not tell which one), trust it absolutely, trust it for the SUBDUING OF SIN, trust it for the answering of prayer, trust it for the dispersion of darkness, and the triumph of faith will be VICTORY OVER INIQUITY.”

Here, then, is the, largest hope and the most exalted privilege held out to a believing child of God by this preacher; it is to have the indwelling SIN WITHIN HIM “SUBDUED,” and have “VICTORY OVER INIQUITY!” The reader will see that this is only regeneration as God describes it in the verses quoted at the beginning of this chapter.

Is this the highest privilege of God's child to have the indwelling sin only “*subdued*” and repressed, but still left, within us, to torment the life? Even this preacher cannot quite make himself believe it; for in another sermon he accidentally stagers onto the truth after this fashion : “It seems as though the disease of sin were so desperate that it has invaded the psychic centres of our being, paralysing the mind and heart and conscience and will with its terrific power. . . While there is a spiritual sense of the law of God, there is a carnal slavery to the law of sin.” . . . “Be sure you come to the Great Physician. The devil is a quack. His methods are abnormal; they, are palliative but not curative. When he sees you have got a deadly disease, instead of applying the knife and cutting out the cancer, he applies a palliative.” . . . “I think the Lord as a Physician uses very drastic and decisive measures in dealing with the disease of sin. Like a skilful physician, He has four measures:- First, the DESTRUCTIVE measure: as when the physician uses the scalpel, the lancet, the cautery, to DESTROY SOMETHING like a cancer or tumour. Secondly, the PURGATIVE: as when cathartics or emetics are used to cleanse the system of something that is deadly in its influence.”

Hallelujah! What an oasis of truth this is in the midst of such teaching! “DESTRUCTIVE measure” of treating the disease of Sin! “PURGATIVE measure” to cleanse from the moral being the “deadly” carnality! “CUTTING OUT THE CANCER” of the carnal mind which is enmity against God!

Why, brother! That is what the other holiness teachers are proclaiming all over the world, that Jesus Christ can “cleanse” out, “purge out,” “bum out,” “destroy” “the body of sin,” by the fiery baptism with the Holy Spirit. We tell sorrowing, dissatisfied, sickly Christians that the Great Physician has a “CURATIVE” treatment that can rid us of the disease of sin altogether. But this is contrary to the whole trend of Keswick teaching.

It is for the blessing of real, inward holiness that the heart of every believer longs:-

Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole,
I want Thee for ever to live in my soul;
Break down every idol, CAST OUT EVERY FOE:
Now wash me, and I shall be WHITER THAN
SNOW.”

O for a heart to praise my God!
A heart from sin set free;
A heart that always feels the blood
So freely shed for me:

A heart in every thought renewed, And full of love divine,
Perfect and right and pure and good,
A copy, Lord, of Thine.