



"You will know them by their fruits." Mt. 7:16

Witnesses to The Doctrine of Holiness

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Chapter Twelve

INSPIRED DIRECTIONS IN SEEKING

Matt. 5:6, Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled" Hunger and thirst is the true sign of that new life on which those born of the Spirit have entered; and it is after righteousness, i.e., perfect conformity to the will of God." (ALFORD).

"Hunger and thirst, after the holiness here described. They shall be satisfied with it" (WESLEY).

"When a soul is awakened to a sense of its wants and begins to hunger and thirst after righteousness, or holiness which is its proper food, we know we must be purified by the Holy Spirit, and made partakers of that living Bread (John 8:48) as God never inspires a prayer but with a design to answer it, he who hungers and thirsts after the full salvation of God may depend on being speedily and effectually blessed, or satisfied; well fed, as the

word implies” (CLARKE).

“Here is something more than mere vacuity or penitence, or tranquil readiness; it is an ardent longing, a holy appetite for all that is right and good” (WHEDON).

“Inwrought conviction makes the soul reach out beyond itself for help, and makes it willing to accept the Divine word as its sure support against despair. Such conviction is the heart pang by which faith is begotten . . . Never did Adam Clarke believe unto full salvation until his soul became so agonizingly conscious of inbred sin (his fallen nature), and so painfully desirous for deliverance from it, as that he felt he must believe, and be saved, or add to the sin of his heart the condemnation and darkness of unbelief” (KEENE, Faith Papers, p. 10).

Isa. 6:5-8, Then said I, 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: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. [MARG., for I am cut off]

“The narrative is all fact” (Expositor’s Bible).

“The second part of the vision begins here, containing the sanctification of the prophet . . . Having a live coal in his hand, both a token and an instrument of purification, which he had taken from off the altar of burnt offering. The seraph took it from the altar to show that we are to expect the expiation of sin, and purification from it only by the mediation of Christ, whom the altar manifestly represented, and by that purifying and refining grace of the Holy Spirit which was signified by this live coal. And he laid it upon my mouth, to signify not only that all the gifts and graces that purify the mind and fit us for the discharge of any particular duty, or function, come from God; but that there must be a real application and communication of them to our souls . . . We must really receive and possess them” (BENSON).

“There is something exceedingly affecting in this complaint, I am a man of unclean lips. I can not say holy, holy, holy, which the seraphim exclaim. They are holy, I am not so; they see God and live; I see and must die, because I am unholy. Only the pure in heart shall see God, and they only can live in His presence for ever” (CLARKE).

“This could not be an inauguration of Isaiah to the prophetic office, for that he had filled during Uzziah’s reign. Woe is me, at the sight of that display of divine holiness; the prophet is dismayed.

The fire of purity he fears will not cleanse, but consume, him, conscious as he is of impurity. A man of unclean life, and yet he had dared to prophesy in the name of the thrice Holy. Midst of a people of unclean lips; impure, not only inwardly and individually, but by contagion from without. The filthy tongues of neighbors and countrymen have contaminated my ears, heart, and soul” (WHEDON).

“It is evident that he prophesied before the death of Uzziah, and there is reason to suppose that the order of time is observed in the previous chapter . . . The profound

worship of the seraphim; the attendant majesty and the glory had deeply impressed him with a sense of holiness of God, and his own unfitness either to join in worship so holy or to deliver the message of so pure a God . . . To understand this, it should be remembered that fire among the Orientals has always been regarded as an emblem of purifying. Is purged, is purified, is removed . . . it was emblematic of such a purifying.

Who will go for us? The language here indicates the design, for which this vision was shown to Isaiah. Here am I. This shows at once his confidence in God and his zeal. He had been qualified for it by the extraordinary commission, and he was now ready to bear the message to his countrymen” (**BARNES**).

The sanctification of Isaiah is an object lesson to us. The vision appears above the mercy seat. If we fail to have conviction, hunger and thirst, and conviction for holiness, it will be found at the mercy seat. The seeker is not an unconverted sinner, but a child of God, who has already had visions of God, and had begun the work of his mission. The sinner is convicted by a sight of God’s broken law (Rom. 3:19, 20), but conviction for holiness is by a vision of the holiness of God, which no sinner can receive. Conviction for holiness is the feeling of unworthiness in a child of God, to stand in the presence of a holy God, on account of the uncleanness or the remaining depravity of his nature. The sinner confesses his sins; the seeker for holiness confesses his uncleanness, or depravity: his indwelling sin or fallen nature.

When the sinner confesses all his sins, immediately he is forgiven; when the seeker for holiness confesses all his uncleanness, immediately the holy fire touches him, and burns away his leprosy of indwelling sin. Under this fiery cleansing and illumination, the child of God now feels fully prepared and eager to run on the mission of God, and cries out to God, “Here am I, send me!” It is noted that the vision of Isaiah became more exalted and spiritual, and he describes the scenes in his prophecies as though he were present as an eye witness. Like generating steam in a locomotive, like charging a battery with electricity, so the fiery baptism not only purifies, but empowers, the child of God to become a witness for God.

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, 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 by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.” Romans 12:1-2,

“Present, the set expression for presenting animals at the sacrificial altar” (**MEYER**).

“Your bodies, an indication that the sanctification of the Christian life is to extend to that part of man’s nature which is most completely under the bondage of sin” (**ALFORD**).

“Present, offer up, as spiritual priests, your bodies, yourselves or your whole man. A part is put for the whole. The body is named because it is the soul’s instrument in the service of God. As a living sacrifice. We must be quickened and alive to God, not ‘dead in trespasses and sins.’ Holy, the sacrifice under the law was to be without blemish” (**POOLE**).

“Present your bodies. A metaphor taken from bringing sacrifices to the altar of God. A living sacrifice, in opposition to those dead sacrifices. Holy, without spot or blemish, referring still to the sacrifices required by the law. Acceptable, the sacrifice being perfect in its kind, and the intention of the offerer being such that both can be acceptable, and

well pleasing unto God, who searches the heart. Be transformed, be ye metamorphosed, transfigured, appear as new persons, and with new habits. That ye may prove: that ye may have practical proof and experimental knowledge of the will of God. Perfect, finished and complete. When the mind is renewed and the whole life cleansed, then the will of God is perfectly fulfilled; for this is the grand design with reference to every human being” (CLARKE).

“Be not conformed to this world, in which good and evil are mingled, but form yourselves after the pattern of the absolutely pure, heavenly world . . . Renewal comes exactly with sanctification” (OLSHAUSEN).

“Prove; that is, ascertain by a full, rich, actual experience” (WHEDON).

“Prove; know by trial; which is easily done by him who has thus presented himself to God” (WESLEY).

“To a believer that is seeking heart purity, this consecration means complete self-dedication to God; without this, faith for cleansing is impossible. To attempt to believe for full salvation until all is put upon the altar of God, is useless effort and wasted time. When I was seeking a clean heart the moment I got the consent of my heart to say, ‘I am Thine, wholly Thine for evermore,’ believing followed immediately and naturally. And I have never found any difficulty as I have walked in the way of holiness, in believing when I was conscious of being wholly the Lord’s” (KEENE, Faith Papers, p. 15).

Entire consecration is a necessary condition to entire sanctification, just as the forsaking of all sin is a necessary condition to pardon, and must precede faith. Then faith becomes the natural exercise of the mind. When Abraham laid his sacrifice upon the altar (Gen. 15) he put no fire to it, but watched by it, driving away the birds of prey, and still waited though a horror of darkness fell upon him, till the fire came down and consumed the sacrifice. Happy the man who consecrates all to God, and in faith patiently waits for his acceptance: for he will soon realize in his own experience the blessed fulfillment of the promise.

“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Rom. 6:11

“Likewise, thus, after the manner of Christ, do ye also, [imperative] account yourselves dead indeed unto sin” (ALFORD).

“Die as truly unto sin, as He died for sin; live as truly unto God, as He lives with God” (CLARKE).

“To be dead to sin as an act is not to do that act; to be dead to sin as a state is not to be in that state . . . A state of grace in which is no more response to the suggestions of sin than is made by those who are lying in the church yard of Trinity Church, New York, to the traffic and bustle of Broadway” (STEELE, Milestone Papers).

“As the scion lives in the stock, so believers are alive to God in Christ Jesus, receiving from Him that virtue whereby their spiritual life is begun, maintained, and perfected” (POOLE). (“scion” refers to a piece of tree being grafted into another; the stock.”)

“As when you reckon with your creditor, or host; and when you have paid all you reckon yourself free; so now reckon with God, Jesus paid all; has paid for thee; has purchased

thy pardon and holiness; therefore it is now God's command, Reckon thyself dead indeed unto sin, and thou art alive unto God for this hour. Oh, begin, begin to reckon now. Believe, believe, believe, and continue to believe every moment. So thou shalt continue free, for it is retained, as it is received, by faith alone" (**JOHN FLETCHER**).

"As chemical action immediately ensues, when the proper fluids come in contact with the proper metals in the electrical jar, producing electrical current; so the moment the soul believes the word of faith, spiritual action ensues . . . The soul must recognize that it can believe; must choose to believe, must say 'I will believe,' and persistently reckon its purity on God's word, in the face of every temptation to doubt, arising from any source whatever" (**KEENE**, Faith Papers, pp. 124, 134).

The actual reality of this death to sin and life to God is stated emphatically by the use of the word translated "indeed", the primitive definition of which is truly we are to die to sin, and to live to God, in very truth.

1 John 1:9, If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." God is faithful to His promise, is just in His dealings; and both attributes operate in the forgiveness of the penitent now, and hereafter; and in cleansing them from all unrighteousness . . . Observe the two verbs are aorists" (**ALFORD**).

"To forgive our sins, to take away all the guilt of them, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, to purify our souls from every kind and every degree of it" (**WESLEY**).

"Under the image that unrighteousness (that is, an inward preference for that which violates the law) is an impurity impregnating our being, the blood through the Spirit is sent to cleanse the impurity away. The distinction between the forgiveness and the cleansing should be carefully retained" (**WHEDON**).

"Confess (present) . . . Forgive (aorist) . . . Cleanse (aorist). The cleansing is just as definite, distinct, and decisive as the forgiveness" (**STEELE**, Milestone Papers).

"The voice of God to your soul is, 'Believe and be saved.' First, believe that God has promised to save you from all sin, and to fill you with all holiness. Second, believe He is able thus to save to the uttermost all that come to God through Him. Third, believe He is willing, as well as able, to save you to the uttermost; to purify your heart from all sin, and fill up your heart with love. Fourth, believe He is not only able but willing to save you now. Not when you come to die; not at any distant time; not tomorrow; but today. He will then enable you to believe it is done according to His word" (**WESLEY**, Sermons, vol. 2, p. 224).

The past confession of our sins can not be made to take place of the confession of all our unrighteousness: it too must be confessed if we would be cleansed from it. But when we confess all our unrighteousness, **He who was faithful and just to forgive our sins will be found faithful and just to cleanse us from all unrighteousness in the same way.**



