

# SCRIPTURAL FREEDOM FROM SIN

Henry E. Brockett

being

A Defence of the Precious Truth

of

Entire Sanctification by Faith

and an

Examination of the Doctrine of "The Two Natures"

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## **DEDICATION**

To all those Christians, standing for the precious truth of entire sanctification by faith and whose faithful lives and testimony have so greatly enlightened me and strengthened my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as an uttermost Saviour from sin, this book, written in defence of the truth, so precious to them, is gratefully and lovingly dedicated.

## **PREFACE**

If the Son therefore shall make you free [i.e., free from Sin], ye shall be free indeed (John 8:36).

In my first book "The Riches of Holiness," I gave my testimony to the power in my own life of the truth of entire sanctification by faith. This second book, "Scriptural Freedom from Sin," is a defence of that precious truth. The object of the book is to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ as an uttermost Saviour from sin and to unfold something of the glorious meaning of our Lord's words quoted above.

The menace to personal and national freedom in various parts of the world has caused us to value freedom in a way, perhaps, that we have never done before. But there is a freedom more precious than even personal and national freedom. It is that freedom which only the Lord Jesus Christ can impart and which He referred to when He said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). This book is a study in that "truth" that makes gloriously "free." I have proved the power of this truth in my own life.

The book also contains an examination, in the light of the Word of God, of the doctrine of the two natures as taught in Dr. H. A. Ironside's book "Holiness: the False and the True." My reasons for examining Dr. Ironside's book are stated in Chapter 3.

This book is sent forth with the earnest prayer that, in spite of its defects, the Lord may graciously condescend to use it to help some earnest, hungry Christians, longing for true holiness of heart and life, to know and experience the truth that makes "free indeed."

I am greatly indebted to my friend, Principal J. D. Drysdale of Emmanuel Bible School and Missions, Birkenhead, for kindly examining the manuscript and writing the foreword.

Henry E. Brockett

## FOREWORD

By Principal J. D. Drysdale

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I am so glad my friend and brother, Henry E. Brockett, has been led to write "Scriptural Freedom from Sin," a defence of the precious truth of entire sanctification by faith. The word "defence" is very significant; for surely no truth has been so misrepresented and unscripturally assailed by its opponents as the glorious doctrine set forth in this heart-searching and inspiring volume. This book is a polemic; and has been written to counteract the teaching propagated in a book entitled "Holiness: the False and the True," written by Dr. H. A. Ironsides, pastor of the Moody Memorial Church, Chicago. His book is an attack upon the doctrine of entire sanctification by faith and has upset many in their quest for true and scriptural holiness. Well do I remember its subtle effects upon my own heart as a young sanctified believer.

For long I have felt that Dr. Ironside's book should be answered by someone who knew the experience and could explain the doctrine of entire sanctification scripturally, and, but for the fact that my own life is so full, I would have attempted it long ago. I am exceedingly glad, therefore that my friend has written this book. It is, as I have already said, controversial, but I think that the spirit in which it is written is beautiful.

I, personally, have not the slightest desire to cast reflection upon the Christian experience of Dr. Ironside; far from it I believe our brother's life and testimony must be such as glorifies our Lord, otherwise he would not occupy the position he does as pastor of the Moody Memorial Church.

Not only does Dr. Ironside attack the doctrine of entire sanctification by faith, but he passes severe criticisms upon Christians connected with the holiness movement, and especially the teachers and leaders of the movement who stand for this particular truth. I can testify, however, that it has been my privilege and joy to associate with the exponents of this doctrine for well-nigh thirty-five years; and, while I am forced to admit that amongst us there have often been sad and extravagant expressions, which doubtless have brought upon us much adverse criticism, yet I must confess I have found such fellowship as my heart has craved for nowhere else. I have found the "holiness people" so-called, ready for sacrifice, prayer, and aggressive Christianity such as I have not found amongst the generality of Christians. I have found them

to be really unworldly and ready to bear ignominy and shame for His dear name's sake, such as I have not found amongst those with lower standards.

I think of such stalwarts of the doctrines as the Wesleys, John Fletcher (whose "Checks to Antinomianism" are unanswerable), Bishop Asbury, Bramwell, Collins, Dr. Carradine, Dr. Daniel Steele, Frances Willard, Mrs. Phoebe Palmer, Dr. Asa Mahan, Dr. Adam Clarke, General and Mrs. Booth, Rev. Phineas Bresee, Dr. H. C. Morrison; Commissioner Brengle, Commissioner Railton, Dr. G. D. Watson, Reader Harris, David Thomas, Rev. Oswald Chambers, Thomas Cook, Mr. Paget Wilkes, Rev. Samuel Chadwick and hosts of others whose life and ministry led multitudes to Christ and into the experience of entire sanctification, and I say to myself, if the doctrine is a heresy as some would try to make us believe - - then God marvellously blessed the ministry of those heretics.

In writing this foreword my desire is, as I am sure it is my friend's in writing the book, to vindicate the glorious doctrine of entire sanctification which has meant so much to us both and many of His glorious saints down the centuries. The book may not convince every reader that there is such an experience obtainable here and now, but I am convinced that it will at least show that there is another side to that propagated by Dr. Ironside.

Well do I know the prejudice against the doctrine of holiness and how paralyzing this prejudice can be in keeping hungry hearts out of the blessing. May He who said "the truth shall make you free" guide the reader, by the Spirit of Truth, into all the truth.

May God richly bless the book, and may it fall into the hands of those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness; for such it has a message, which will bring fullness of life, absolute freedom from the power and pollution of sin, and perfect love to God and men.

J. D. Drysdale

## Chapter 1

### A VITAL QUESTION FOR EVERY CHRISTIAN

Is there such a thing as a critical definite work of God's grace in the Christian subsequent to the work of God's grace in regeneration? For the sake of convenience and brevity, we shall refer to this subsequent work of grace as "a second work of grace." Sooner or later, every Christian who earnestly desires to know the secret of true holiness of heart and life, has to face this question. It challenges him and he cannot really rest until he has found a scriptural answer. The answer to this question has a most important bearing on the subject of this book, namely, "Scriptural Freedom from Sin."

In raising this question, however, it is essential to make it quite clear that it is not intended to minimize in the slightest degree, the reality and completeness of God's work of grace in the new birth. That work is a mighty work of sovereign grace. It is a work of the Holy Spirit in a sinner whereby a new life -- life from God -- is imparted to him. He is "born of the Spirit" (John 3:6 and 8), and God's "seed remaineth in him" (1 John 3:9). Consequently, the Apostle John declares that such a one does not commit, or practice sin, because he is "born of God." The one who is truly born of God has thus commenced to live a completely new life. He also stands in a new relationship to God. He is a sinner who stands forgiven and justified before God on the ground of the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 3:24-26 and 5:1). He is accepted in the beloved (Eph. 1:6). He is truly a child of God by faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26). He also has the Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9). He is no longer of the world, he belongs to Christ and is, therefore, in that sense "sanctified in Christ Jesus" (1 Cor. 1:2).

But a further problem now arises. What about holiness of heart and life? This problem may be considered from two main points of view, namely, Indwelling Sin and the Indwelling Spirit. What is the extent of salvation from indwelling sin and what is the extent of the power of the Spirit that may be enjoyed in this life? These are vital questions for every Christian. It is the object of this book to endeavour to give a scriptural answer to these questions.

The answers given by Christian teachers to the question raised in the preceding paragraph may, for the sake of simplicity and vividness, be limited to two different conceptions of sanctification which, for brevity, may be termed (1) The Doctrine of the Two Natures, and (2) The Doctrine of Entire Sanctification. There are differences on various points between these two theories, on the question of indwelling sin and the indwelling Spirit, but the main difference, expressed in a nutshell, is as follows:

## 1. The Doctrine of the Two Natures.

According to the "two natures" theory, indwelling sin must ever remain in the heart of the believer in this life and it will always oppose the new nature implanted by God in the work of regeneration. There are, therefore, two opposing natures existing, side by side, in every Christian and this will be so until death or the Lord comes. It is denied, therefore, that there is such a thing as a subsequent definite work of grace whereby the heart is cleansed or freed from sin. It is admitted, however, that as the believer yields to the Holy Spirit who is given at the new birth, he represses the indwelling sin in the heart and the believer is thus enabled to overcome the

## 2. The Doctrine of Entire Sanctification

According to the entire sanctification theory, indwelling sin is not removed from the heart in regeneration, but there is such a thing as a subsequent definite work of grace whereby the heart is cleansed, freed or delivered from sin, sin is destroyed, and the Holy Spirit then comes in His fullness to possess and empower the believer to live the life of holiness. This is the full blessing of Pentecost and is maintained by faith and obedience. In a nutshell, according to the two natures theory, indwelling sin can only be repressed in the heart; according to the entire sanctification theory, indwelling sin can be removed from the heart.

### The Balance Of Faith

Which of these two theories is true and scriptural? Does it, after all, really matter? Surely it does! The sin question is the crux of holiness. Can Christ effect in the Christian, in this life, a perfect or only a partial cure of the awful disease of indwelling sin? Our testimony to Christ as a Saviour from sin will vary according to the way in which we answer this question. This question is therefore of profound importance to every true believer in Christ and, in endeavouring to find the scriptural answer, there are two extremes to be avoided. On the one hand, we must beware of exaggerating the truth of deliverance from sin and thus falling into the error of thinking that it means either Adamic perfection or a fixed state of sinless perfection, that is, a state from which we can never fall or in which we can never be tempted. On the other hand, we must also beware of underrating the truth and thus falling into the error of minimizing the power of the blood of Christ and of the Holy Spirit to effect a glorious deliverance from sin for the believer even in this life. We shall try to find the scriptural balance of truth between these two extremes of error.

Error, whether it is caused through exaggerating or underrating the truth of God, always has a harmful effect upon the spiritual life of the believer. If we overstate the truth we shall set the unattainable before believers

and thus utterly discourage them or they will be misled into thinking that they have reached a false attainment, thus causing self-deception and ultimately painful disillusionment. On the other hand, it is equally harmful to underrate the truth of God. If we do not give full credit and force to the words that the Holy Ghost teacheth concerning freedom from sin in this life then we shall dishonour God by "limiting the Holy One" and minimizing the power of the blood of Christ and we shall thus hinder believers from exercising full sanctifying faith. We must also beware of trying to tone down the full force of God's truth because of human experiences of failure. If necessary, we must be prepared to "let God be true, but every man a liar" (Romans 3:4).

At this point it will be very appropriate to quote the following wise words of the late Mr. Reader Harris, K.C.:

The proper field for discussion is not whether or not any individual Christian lives unintermittently without committing sin. That is a matter between his own conscience and God and he is not called upon to give account of himself in this respect to his fellowmen.

What we ought to discuss is this: Has God made or has He not made an adequate provision for complete deliverance in this life from sin? To argue that God has made an adequate provision, but that, for some reason or other, no Christian ever receives the benefit of it, is really to prove that it is inadequate and therefore useless. -- From *18 Sin a Necessity?* p.73.

Free Indeed

It will be well at this stage to declare the position which will be maintained in this book. This book is a defence of the precious truth of entire sanctification by faith and an examination of the doctrine of the two natures. We propose to show that the doctrine of the two natures, as expounded by a strong advocate of the theory, namely, Dr. H. A. Ironside, in his book "Holiness: the False and the True," does indeed underrate and obscure the scriptural truth of full deliverance from indwelling sin. We shall demonstrate that there is a blessed God-given experience of deliverance from sin available for every believer by faith. This is what we mean by "Entire Sanctification by Faith." But a God-given experience of blessing must be based upon God-given truth. Hence the supreme importance of knowing "the truth," not merely as a dead theory, but as the medium of the vitalizing power of the Holy Spirit. We shall appeal to the Word of God, therefore, as the source and authority for the truth that sanctifies.

The scriptural foundation for our firm belief in such a glorious blessing as "Entire Sanctification by Faith" is contained in the following words of our Lord: "If ye continue in my word then are ye my disciples indeed: and ye

shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free ... whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. . . . If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed (John 8: 34-36).

Made free by the Son: free indeed! Glorious word! What did our Lord mean? The context shows that He means "scriptural freedom from sin." This blessed freedom must be something very real and exceedingly precious -- a glorious freedom. And scriptural freedom from sin involves, as an inevitable consequence, the fullness of an indwelling Christ. The doctrine of the two natures denies, however, the glory of this blessed inward freedom and inward fullness. But when the scriptural truth of this blessed freedom from indwelling sin and fullness of an indwelling Christ, grips the heart in the power of the Holy Spirit, it produces deep and lasting joy, and continuous thanksgiving to God; it strengthens faith and imparts the note of joyful victory to the life. It will enable the Christian to be a real, scriptural "overcomer," to pass patiently and yet triumphantly through the times of strain, stress and trial in which we live today, and to bear a continual effective witness to Christ in the power of the Holy Ghost

May the Lord grant that all who read these pages may see clearly the divine provision whereby we may be made free indeed from sin by the Son, and thus "being delivered out of the hand of our enemies [and, surely, our worst enemy is indwelling sin] might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life" (Luke 1: 74, 75).

## Chapter 2

### MY TESTIMONY

In writing this defence of the truth of entire sanctification by faith, I am not contending merely for a dry theological theory of no real practical value. On the contrary, this precious truth is one which has undoubtedly brought untold blessing to multitudes of the Lord's people. The full story of the blessing that this truth has meant to me is told in my book, "The Riches of Holiness." It will be well, however, at this point, to relate very briefly how I was first led into the light of the truth.

#### Hungering And Thirsting After Righteousness

I was brought up in a Christian circle in which the doctrine of holiness advocated in Dr. Ironside's book was taught. I knew, therefore, about the teaching of perfection of "standing" in Christ and of the two conflicting natures "in state." . When I entered into an assured new-birth experience, I accepted this two-natures system of holiness without any question. About two years after the new birth, I came into contact for the first time with the teaching of a second work of grace and of entire sanctification by faith. At first I opposed this teaching but afterward I prayed to the Lord to give me light and guidance on the matter. How did God answer my prayer? The Spirit of God revealed to me in a way I had never felt before, the depravity of my heart. I was humbled in the dust before God because of the Spirit's revelation of the corruption of indwelling sin. The language of my heart was expressed by those words of Isaiah when he saw the glory of the Lord and exclaimed, "Woe is me for I am undone" (Isaiah 6:5), and also by Paul's words in Romans 7:24, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

The prospect of a continual warfare with this indwelling sin within the heart seemed an intolerable burden to me and I sought the face of God. I felt that what God had showed me was wrong within He could put right I was then enabled by His grace to take a definite step of faith. It was nothing emotional but a solemn transaction of faith, bowed down as I was in the presence of the Lord. I trusted the Father for Christ's sake to sanctify me wholly (1 Thess. 5:23); that is, to cleanse (1 John 1:9), and free my heart (Romans 6:6 and 23), from this loathsome indwelling sin, which I abhorred and dreaded and to fill me with the blessed Holy Spirit I trusted Him to make real in me the fulfilment of that great and glorious promise, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire" (Matt 3:11). That is just what I felt I needed. I needed the Holy Ghost, as the divine sin consuming fire to burn up the dross of indwelling sin, thus purifying my heart (Acts 15:8,9), and then I needed Him in a new way to come and take full possession of the heart He had cleansed.

The Lord graciously responded to this attitude of confession and faith. I know it. It says in James 4:10, "Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord and he shall lift you up." Praise God, He truly "lifted me up." He met my deep, deep heart need. That step of humbling before God and of faith marked for me the critical entrance into a new experience of inward heart purity from sin and a blessed realization of the glory of an indwelling Christ, which I had not known before. The Comforter made His presence and power known in a new way, because He glorified the Lord Jesus Christ by making the truth of freedom from indwelling sin and the fullness of an indwelling Christ a new and wonderful reality. I began to know the blessedness of freedom and fullness in Christ, or, in other words, the blessing of entire sanctification by faith.

God forbid that I should, for one moment, boast of anything as of myself. I dare not do so. It is all of His grace. I am writing this, over twenty-two years after I had that solemn transaction with God, surely quite long enough for me to discover whether it was really of God or not. Have I any doubts whether that crisis was of God? Not at all. He has been faithful. He has preserved and maintained His own work. To Him alone be all the praise and glory.

#### My Searching For Holiness Truth

In his book, "The Philosophy of Sin," Oswald Chambers says:

At first we experience a need, then we hunt for the satisfaction of that need; when the need is supplied we turn our whole nature in the direction of an explanation of how the need was supplied (p.9).

The above extract describes exactly what happened to me immediately after passing through the crisis for holiness. When I entered into the blessing of entire sanctification by faith, I entered into the experience "heart" first, not "head" first. The principle that with "the heart" man believeth unto righteousness is as true of sanctification as it is of justification. I am so glad that, when, as a child of God, I became conscious of my need of entire sanctification and saw the Canaan land of blessing lying in front of me, I undertook the venture of faith and crossed the Jordan almost at once. I had hesitated to take the step of faith until I had understood to my satisfaction the doctrine of entire sanctification by faith in all its bearings. I should very probably have been wandering in the wilderness until now. This venture of faith, however, cut completely athwart the two natures and imputed holiness doctrine I had previously held. That doctrine denies a second work of grace, but when the Holy Spirit revealed to me my need of heart deliverance from sin and the filling of the Holy Spirit, any lingering prejudices I might have had to such a second work of grace were swept aside like cobwebs before a mighty wind.

After I had entered into the heart experience of entire sanctification by faith, I then tried my best to understand all about the doctrine. I wanted my "head" to harmonize with my "heart." Spiritually, I felt like a person who had been living in a state of dim twilight, suddenly lifted up into a new realm of broad daylight, but whose eyesight was not yet fully adjusted to the new conditions. I was, as it were, looking around and trying to find my bearings in this new sphere of blessedness. I was like a man who had discarded an old suit of clothes (the doctrine of the two natures), but had not yet become fully accustomed to my new suit (the truth of entire sanctification).

### Differences among Holiness Teachers

I began to study writers of differing schools of thought on holiness in order that I might get established in a clear understanding of the truth. I soon discovered that on a vital matter, namely, the question of indwelling sin, there was great conflict and confusion of thought. Roughly they could be divided into three categories. The first taught a radical cleansing or freeing from indwelling sin by the blood of Christ and the baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire as a definite second work of grace. These writers blessed my soul most of all. My spiritual temperature rose highest under this teaching. The second class taught the need of the filling of the Spirit for power in service, but they were not clear and definite as to what Christ did with indwelling sin in the heart. They seemed to teach a cleansing of a sort, but it still left indwelling sin within the heart. In the third category, were those who were horrified at the very idea of an actual cleansing of the heart from indwelling sin in this life. They resolutely opposed this teaching and contended strongly for the necessary continuance of indwelling sin in the heart of every Christian as long as we are in this world. Teachers of this type considerably lowered the temperature of my heart.

When I read Dr. H. A. Ironside's book, "Holiness: the False and the True," I found that it came within the third category and, in the next chapter I explain why I propose to examine his teaching.

## Chapter 3

### WHY I EXAMINE DR. IRONSIDE'S BOOK

It was while I was passing through this stage of seeking to be clear on the doctrine of entire sanctification by faith that I was given a copy of Dr. H. A. Ironside's book by a Christian friend, who at the time thought I had been sidetracked into error. The book certainly challenged me more than any other book I had read on holiness. Undoubtedly there is truth in the book. It specially emphasizes what we may term the objective aspect of sanctification, that is, the perfection of the work of Christ for us. It is what the book denies concerning the perfection of the work of Christ in us in relation to indwelling sin that renders the teaching of the book erroneous and harmful. The book is an exposition of the doctrine of the two natures and denies the truth of entire sanctification by faith. For instance it denies that scripture teaches that the blood of Christ can cleanse -- the heart of the fully trusting believer from indwelling sin (p.116), it denies that scripture teaches that perfect love is to be developed within the Christian (p. 90), and denies that the coming of the Holy Spirit in His fullness as at Pentecost had anything to do with the cleansing or freeing of the believer from sin (p.96). We shall examine these denials and show that they will not stand the searchlight of the Word of God.

#### The Vision Is Obscured

The reading of Dr. Ironside's book at a time when I was endeavouring to see clearer light on the truth of entire sanctification confused my mind and hindered my faith. The Holy Spirit had given me a blessed vision of Christ as an uttermost Saviour from indwelling sin and as a glorious Indweller. The reading of this book and other writings of the same school, blurred and obscured that vision of faith. I am afraid I paid more attention than I ought to have done to the criticisms of opposers of the precious truth of entire sanctification, and so I got "fogged" in my mind. I confess that fact with sorrow. At that early stage of my new experience of faith, I did not know how to answer all the criticisms, and I was even tempted to cast away my confidence and think that the very blessing God had given me was all a delusion. This is the effect that Dr. Ironside's book had upon my soul. It would have been a tremendous help to me just then if there had been a book in existence replying specifically to his arguments, but I knew of no such book. If this little effort of mine, defective though it may be, can be used, through God's blessing, to help earnest hungry hearts who are seeking the full glorious vision of a liberating, indwelling Christ, I shall feel amply repaid for the effort.

What challenged me most of all, however, was the account which Dr. Ironside gave of all his own spiritual experiences. In my case I first of all accepted the doctrine of the two natures, but afterward entered into

fullness of blessing through the truth of entire sanctification by faith. He, however, first accepted the truth of entire sanctification, theoretically at any rate, but afterward rejected it and taught the doctrine of the two natures. Why was this? We shall answer this question in the next chapter.

Although the reading of Dr. Ironside's book created difficulties and raised questions in my mind, which I was not able to answer satisfactorily at the time, yet the Lord knew my heart. I knew in my inner heart that I had received a definite gift of grace and I dare not go back upon my testimony. I earnestly prayed to the Lord, therefore, to give me further clearer light on the truth of entire sanctification by faith. In due course I put Dr. Ironside's book away in my bookcase and got on with the work the Lord had given me to do. For several years I was engaged in village mission work as superintendent of a village mission, but not in connection with the holiness movement. During this time I was not in touch with the holiness movement at all, but nevertheless, I taught the truth of sanctification by faith according to the measure of light I then possessed.

### The Lord Answers My Prayer

After about fourteen years the Lord gave me an abundant answer to my prayer for further light on the truth of entire sanctification by faith. Fourteen years may seem a long time, but how true it is that through faith and patience we inherit the promises (Heb. 6:12). It is well worth while waiting for God. Though the vision tarry "wait for it; because it will surely come" (Hab. 2:3). And a clearer vision did come to me. It commenced by a new movement of the Spirit in my heart and life and, by providential leadings, the Lord focused my attention in a very special manner once again upon the precious truth of entire sanctification by faith.

As I look back now and survey the way that the Lord has led me for twenty-two years, I can see that I had been greatly hindered in my faith by the erroneous teaching in Dr. Ironside's book and by others who limit the cleansing power of the blood of Christ in 1 John 1:7 to a judicial and positional cleansing only and flatly deny that the blood of Christ effects an actual cleansing of the heart from indwelling sin. It was this erroneous teaching that, in a sense, had "held me up." But now the Lord utterly swept aside that "barrier." The Spirit of God opened my eyes and threw a flood of light upon the depth and the glory of the meaning of the two "alls" of cleansing of 1 John 1:7, and 9. I have explained this fully in Chapter 9. Yes, the Spirit of God can, in a moment, so open the eyes of our understanding, that He enables us to see and feel and enjoy the glorious power of a passage like 1 John 1:7, that we could never obtain by years of argument.

## The Clear Vision

This revelation of the Spirit filled my heart with wonderful new light and joy. I tasted something of the blessedness that Frances Ridley Havergal experienced when she had a similar revelation by the Spirit of the glory of the cleansing of 1 John 1: 7. I quote her testimony on page 80. See also Thomas Cook's testimony to the power of the same revelation by the Spirit, quoted on page 79.

As a result of this new revelation of the Spirit, the Lord gave me liberty to witness with greater conviction and power to the truth of entire sanctification by faith. But I had to pay the price. I met with great opposition to the truth on the part of some who rejected all testimony to anything in the nature of a second work of grace. I was not allowed to speak or testify at all and certain doors of service for the Lord were closed upon me. But the Lord overruled all this opposition for blessing. Although I was shut out of certain places where I had previously ministered the Word of God, yet those who shut these doors could not shut the glory out of my heart. I had the glory in my soul. The Lord graciously opened other doors of witness for me, and, instead of allowing my testimony to be silenced, the blessed Spirit of God stirred me up to do a thing which I had never dreamed of doing before, namely, to publish my testimony in book form. Thus it was that my book, "The Riches of Holiness," came to be written and published. I have had many indications that it has pleased the Lord to make that simple testimony a blessing to precious souls.

When I had finished writing "The Riches of Holiness" I paid special attention once again to Dr. Ironside's book, "Holiness: the False and the True." As I read it through again and studied it very carefully in the light of the Word of God, I began to see the errors that were mixed up with the truth. Certain difficulties and questionings that had arisen in my mind through his book were completely cleared away. As I saw clearer light, I began to write notes until at last this book was completed.

## The Danger of Dr. H. A. Ironside's Book

There is one very important matter which I would like to make quite clear. In examining the book I shall not in any way criticize the writer personally. That is farthest from my intention. Dr. Ironside is the pastor of the well-known Moody Memorial Church, Chicago; he is a prominent Christian leader, well known on both sides of the Atlantic, and I esteem him very highly in love as a servant of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. But it is because he is so well known that it is all the more necessary that this book should be subjected to a searching test of the Word of God, lest seeking hungry souls should be misled.

I want, however, to be perfectly fair to Dr. Ironside. He explains that his book was written mainly to help persons of a special type, namely, those who have lost their spiritual bearings through unhealthy emotionalism and a crude extreme form of "perfectionist" teaching. If the truth contained in his book has been used by God to this end and to help to give assurance of salvation to doubting souls, we unreservedly give thanks to God. On the other hand, the fact that there is truth in the book must not blind our minds to the errors, and it is just these very errors that may have a harmful effect upon believers of quite a different type from those just mentioned. I refer to those who are assured of their salvation, who are not seeking any mere emotional experience, but are hungering and thirsting after deep deliverance from sin and true holiness of heart and life. The strong opposition throughout his book to anything in the nature of a definite work of grace in believers subsequent to regeneration, may greatly hinder such seeking believers from exercising full sanctifying faith in our Lord Jesus as an uttermost Saviour from indwelling sin and others who have taken that step but are not established in the truth may be greatly confused. Herein lies the danger of Dr. Ironside's book.

As an instance, I will mention a case which came within my personal knowledge. Recently I had a long talk with a student in training for the mission field. He told me that after the new birth he began to feel his deep need of something more. He began seeking true holiness. In this seeking condition he read "Holiness: the False and the True." "What effect did that book have upon you?" I asked. He replied, "I stopped seeking for a time and got worse in soul." Fortunately, however, he resumed his seeking and eventually found full heart satisfaction in Christ. He then told me that he read the book the second time, but that he found it confusing. This instance and my own experience illustrate the hindering effect that Dr. Ironside's book may have upon earnest believers hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

#### As To Controversy

"We do not want controversy," some may say when they read the title of this chapter. That there is danger in controversy if it is not conducted under the restraining hand of the Holy Spirit I fully acknowledge. On the other hand, it is often through controversy that error is exposed and truth seen more clearly. If we refuse to read any book concerning the truth of God because it is of a controversial nature then we might as well refuse to read the Bible itself. The Bible, especially the New Testament, is full of controversy. Beloved Fletcher of Madeley well says:

Controversy, though not desirable in itself, yet, properly managed, has a hundred times rescued truth groaning under the lash of triumphant error.

We are indebted to our Lord's controversies with the Pharisees and Scribes for a considerable part of the four Gospels.

To the end of the world and after, the Church will bless God for Paul's controversies in the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, as well as the controversies of James, Peter, John and Jude with the Nicolaitanes or Antinomians.

It is with the object of "rescuing" the precious truth of entire sanctification by faith from error, that this book is written.

## Chapter 4

### THE MISTAKES OF A HOLINESS SEEKER

As was mentioned in the previous chapter, the precious truth of entire sanctification by faith, namely, that there is a divine provision in the atoning work of Christ whereby the heart of the believer may, in this life, be cleansed and freed from indwelling sin and filled with the Holy Ghost and perfect love developed in the life, is rejected in Dr. Ironside's book, and is called "Holiness the False." He contends that this is an unscriptural and unattainable standard and is "perfection in the flesh," and he passes some very strong criticisms on all holiness teachers and movements that teach this doctrine. What is the reason for this extreme attitude? The answer is contained in Part 1 of his book, which we shall examine in this chapter.

The book is divided into two parts. Part I (Autobiographical) gives an account of his early spiritual experiences. Part II (Doctrinal) contains his teaching on holiness. It is very important to refer briefly to Part I, because it affords the key to Dr. Ironside's attitude to the doctrine of entire sanctification by faith. In a nutshell, the reason for his opposition is as follows. He tells us that in his earliest Christian days he belonged to a holiness organization, in which the doctrine of entire sanctification by faith was taught. He sought the fullness of blessing, but missed the way. He failed to find full heart satisfaction, while he was associated with this holiness organization. He eventually left the organization, rejected the doctrine he had previously taught and wrote his book against it. It is vital, therefore, to a correct understanding of his book to explain briefly why it was that he missed his way. We refer to his own account of his experience.

#### Mistakes In Seeking Holiness

He tells us that he was converted when he was about fourteen and he soon became known as "the boy preacher." He joined the holiness organization referred to and began to seek the "second blessing." He gives full details of his seeking. When he was only about fifteen, he went alone one night about midnight into the country and he says, "I prayed in an agony for hours." But what was he actually seeking? He tells us that at so young an age "My thoughts of sin as well as of holiness were very unformed and imperfect." This is undoubtedly true because he tells us, "earnestly I prayed for this Adamic sinlessness." This was his first mistake. He thought Christian holiness meant the same as Adamic perfection. He had thus imagined he could reach an utterly unscriptural and unattainable standard. (See Chapter 6 of this book.)

We proceed with his story. He says that after a long time:

My brain and nerves were unstrung by the long midnight vigil and I fell almost fainting to the ground. Then a holy ecstasy seemed to thrill all my being. This I thought was the coming into my heart of the Comforter.

This was his second mistake. He thought that this feeling of ecstasy which came over him while he was in this overwrought nervous condition was the infilling of the Holy Spirit by faith. But mere emotion and ecstasy are not evidences of real faith. That he was mistaken is evident, because he tells us that it was not until five or six years afterward that "I found my all in Christ" Next day, however, imagining that he had received the infilling of the Holy Spirit, and had become as sinless as "unfallen Adam," he declared what he thought God had done. This was his third mistake. He testified to an experience of grace which he had not actually received. He says, however, "Every meeting that day added to my gladness. I was literally intoxicated with joyous emotions." Alas, how misleading are mere emotions.

### Disillusionment

Dr. Ironside goes on to say:

For some weeks after the eventful experience before described, I lived in a dreamily happy state, rejoicing in my fancied sinlessness.

Then he says, "But gradually I began to 'come back to earth' as it were." And then what happened? We are not at all surprised to read that he passed through a long and painful process of disillusionment. His account makes depressing reading. Spiritually he had wrongly put himself under the law of works, the law of Adamic sinlessness. He soon found himself, therefore, in that spiritual condition of inward conflict, doubt and bondage which Paul so vividly describes in Romans 7:14-24; the state of a soul "under the law" and not yet "under grace." Eventually he got so low spiritually that he says:

I did not dare to confess to myself that I was literally an agnostic; yet for a month at least I could only answer "I do not know" to every question based on divine revelation.

Thus it was that he missed his way as a young man for the reasons before mentioned.

### Restoration

Dr. Ironside goes on to explain how he was restored to faith in Christ. He was struggling in the slough of self-occupation and introspection. Clearly, what a soul needs in such an unhealthy spiritual condition is to get the mind fixed upon Christ. It was in this way that restoration came. He was brought into contact with teaching that emphasized the objective aspect

of sanctification, namely, the Person of Christ in glory, the perfection of His sacrifice, etc. This aspect of truth came with healing power so that he was lifted out of the slough of self-occupation and introspection and restored to faith in Christ. We are indeed very glad to read of this restoration.

He expresses in a nutshell the particular aspect of truth that restored him to faith in Christ. He says:

I had been looking within for holiness instead of without . . . I had been looking at the wrong man -- all was in another Man and in that Man for me.

This statement, of course, expresses only one aspect of the truth as we shall see. It completely overlooks the other glorious aspects of truth, namely, Christ dwelling in the believer by faith. If Dr. Ironside had been looking within himself for holiness apart from Christ and without first knowing the secret of an indwelling Christ, no wonder he fell into despair.

#### The Swing Of The Pendulum

The statement we have just quoted, however, gives the key to Dr. Ironside's teaching on sanctification. His own personal experience is undoubtedly reflected in the doctrine he teaches. In abandoning, however, the error of Adamic sinlessness, he went to the other extreme and denied the truth of heart cleansing from sin and perfect love within the believer. Thus the pendulum swung, as it were, from one extreme to the other. This is the reason why his book gives an unbalanced presentation of the truth of holiness. We shall endeavour to restore the scriptural balance of truth.

There is no doubt that the painful spiritual experiences that Dr. Ironside relates in his autobiography made an indelible impression upon him and affected his whole outlook upon the truth of entire sanctification by faith and the holiness movement. Because he passed through those struggles when he was associated with a holiness organization teaching the doctrine of entire sanctification, he blames that teaching for his painful experience, strongly opposes it in his book, and condemns the holiness movement as a whole. But it was not the doctrine that was to blame. Those painful experiences were the consequences of the mistakes which we have already explained. The doctrine itself is perfectly scriptural as we shall demonstrate from the Word of God.

#### The Failures Of "Holiness Professors"

No useful purpose would be served by dealing in detail with all the sweeping condemning criticisms that Dr. Ironside passes upon the

holiness movement. We will comment on only one of his statements. Christians who believe in entire sanctification by faith as a second definite work of grace are referred to by him as "holiness professors" and "perfectionists," and in order to discredit the doctrine they hold, he emphasizes that there have been many breakdowns amongst such Christians. He says:

The path of the holiness movement is strewn with thousands of such moral and spiritual breakdowns.

We fully admit, with sorrow, the sad fact that there are such breakdowns but, on the other hand, it is also true that the path of the holiness movement is lit up with the consistent holy lives of thousands of God's choicest saints who have trusted Him to cleanse their hearts from all sin and to fill them with His Holy Spirit as a definite second work of grace. As Dr. Harry E. Jessop says in his recent book, "Foundations of Doctrine":

It would not be difficult to pack an entire volume with the direct and definite testimonies of men and women of repute who have enjoyed this experience (that is, entire sanctification by faith) and have rejoiced to declare it (p.242).

I will just mention one case whose life has been an inspiration to me. I refer to the late Commissioner Brengle of the Salvation Army. He firmly believed and taught the very truth that Dr. Ironside so strongly opposes. Brengle wrote "Helps to Holiness" and "Heart Talks on Holiness," books that God has blessed to multitudes of precious souls. And, as a practical illustration of the power of the truth of entire sanctification, I would strongly advise the reading of "Samuel Logan Brengle, Portrait of a Prophet," by Clarence W. Hall. It will be a spiritual tonic.

## God's Truth and Human Failures

It is the easiest thing in the world to attempt to bring discredit upon the precious truth of entire sanctification by faith by pointing the finger at the inconsistencies and breakdowns of those who profess that blessing. There are a variety of reasons for such breakdowns. Some may be mistaken and profess, without possessing, the real heart experience as was originally the case with Dr. H. A. Ironside himself, according to his own account Others may lose the full blessing by subsequent disobedience to the will of God or by failing in various ways to observe the conditions of the maintenance of God's deliverance dealt with in Chapter 13. Thus instead of being diligent to "stand fast in the liberty with which Christ had set them free," they become again entangled in the yoke of bondage, whether it be bondage to law or to sm.

The fact that there are moral and spiritual breakdowns amongst believers professedly holding the truth of entire sanctification by faith, no more disproves that truth than the fact that there are similar failures amongst those professing the new birth disproves the scriptural truth of the new birth. Nothing whatever is gained, therefore, by exposing publicly, as unfortunately is done in "Holiness: The False and the True," the failures of fellow Christians professing the blessing of entire sanctification. Their failures do not alter, one iota, the truth of God's Word. Truth is not served by such an exposure and Christians are not edified by it. Love, we are told, "covers a multitude of sins" (1 Peter 4:8), and does not therefore, needlessly expose to public gaze, the "wounds" and "bruises" of our fellow members in the Body of Christ.

The sole standard and authority for Divine truth is God's Word and we must never let any man's experience of failure cause us for one moment to doubt God's truth. On this point we may well quote the following words of Dr. Adam Clarke in his book, "Christian Theology":

"No doctrine of God stands upon the knowledge, experience, faithfulness, or unfaithfulness of man; it stands on the veracity of God who gave it . . . . And suppose not one could be found in all the churches of Christ whose heart was purified from all unrighteousness and who loved God and man with all his regenerated powers; yet the doctrine of Christian perfection would still be true; for Christ was manifested that He might destroy the work of the devil; and His blood cleanseth from all unrighteousness."

### Seeking Priceless Treasure

In spite, however, of all these outward human failures and breakdowns, there is a deep inward reality, a glorious "secret of the Lord," which many of these hungry spiritual seekers are really longing to discover and appropriate. To know Christ personally as the One who sets free from indwelling sin and fills with His indwelling presence is to discover that wisdom which is "more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her" (Proverbs 3:15). It is to know Christ as the "hidden wisdom of God" (1 Cor 2:7); Christ made unto us sanctification, Christ in us, the hope of glory (Col. 1:27). This is a "secret of the Lord," hidden from the world and from the carnal believer, but revealed to the wholly yielded, fully trusting child of God by the Holy Spirit who alone can show us the deep things of God. Let us not, therefore, be stumbled by the failures of those who profess the blessing of entire sanctification or by those who oppose the truth, but let us seek with all our hearts to discover for ourselves, this precious secret of the Lord. It is to help such seekers to discover this secret that the following pages are written.



## Chapter 5

### WHAT IS SIN?

We will now deal with the problem of sin. But first of all, what is sin? What does it mean to us? Anything? "I don't know what you mean by sin," said one to me on a certain occasion when I was discussing with him the question of Christ and the atonement. He was certainly quite frank. There are many today in the same state of darkness. But no Christian can afford to be vague or indefinite on the question of sin. Show me one who has but a light, superficial sense of sin. There is one who has but a light, superficial knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is impossible to have a deep love for Christ and a light sense of sin.

#### Sin And The Agony Of God

As the Christian reads the history of mankind and sees the state of the world as it is today, how can he possibly reconcile it all with his belief in a supreme God of the universe who is omnipotent, holy, wise, infinitely just and, above all, a God of love? He realizes he is face to face with an awful mystery. There is evidently a terrible mysterious something, a force, a power, utterly contrary to this Holy God of love, at work in human hearts and lives. What is this awful power? It is sin.

The only explanation and solution of this great mystery of sin in the universe is in the Bible -- the Word of God. It partly draws the veil of mystery aside and reveals that in the remote past a high heavenly dignitary was uplifted by pride and revolted against God. It was through the temptation of this fallen being -- Satan -- that our first parents fell into sin and disobeyed God.

Thus it was through one man's disobedience that sin entered into the world "and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5). This revelation from God himself also tells us that sin "reigns" and that all are "under" sin. What an awful indictment of the human race. But it is the solemn truth. Scripture reveals, however, something else. It reveals God's remedy for sin, and here we face another mystery -- the mystery and the glory of redemption. God himself has suffered in order to provide the remedy for sin. God called myriads of stars, etc., into existence by a word, but in order to deal with sin it meant the agony, blood-shedding and death of the Son of God on a cross of shame. The depth of the mystery of it all we cannot fathom, but we believe, and worship and adore the God as revealed in Christ in the Scriptures.

What is sin? What does sin mean to God? For answer, we turn to the cross of Calvary and face its challenge, "Why did the sinless Son of God die on that cross?" And the scripture answers, "Once in the end of the age hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb.

9: 26). Sin caused the sacrifice of the Son of God! That is what sin means to God.

## Sin and Sins

But the Christian is concerned, not only with sin as a power external to himself, working in the human race as a whole, not only as something that Christ dealt with on the cross, but he is very much concerned with sin as a power within his own heart -- indwelling sin. When we speak of indwelling sin, we do not refer to sins but to sin -- sin itself. It is essential to see this scriptural distinction between sin and sins. Sins are the acts of unrighteousness; sin is the state of unrighteousness. Sin is lawlessness. (1 John 3:4, R.V.) . It is that inward bias against God and toward evil in every descendant of Adam from whom it is inherited and transmitted. Sins are like the fruit of the tree, sin is like the root and trunk of the tree. Sins cause condemnation and render the sinner guilty before God. The sinner needs to be forgiven and to be justified. Sin is inward spiritual pollution causing defilement from which we need to be cleansed; it is a hostile power from which we need to be freed and delivered. But whether it be sin or sins, there is only one divinely appointed remedy, namely, faith in the cross and the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, applied by the Almighty power of the Holy Spirit.

## The Character Of Indwelling Sin

The fact that there is a deep evil power or pollution within the human heart is clearly taught in scripture. This inward evil is referred to by a variety of terms. We quote just a few:

"Iniquity" and "Sin" (Psalm 51:5); "Filthiness" (Ezek. 36:25); "The stony heart" (Ezek. 36:26); "The body of sin" (Romans 6:6); "Sin that dwelleth in me" (Romans 7:17); "The body of this death" (Romans 7:24); "The carnal mind at enmity to God" (Romans 8:7); "The evil heart of unbelief" (Heb. 3:12); "lawlessness" (1 John 3:4).

These few scriptural terms are sufficient to indicate the vileness in the sight of God of this indwelling evil root. The evil manifested fruits produced from this evil root are termed by Paul "the works of the flesh" and he gives the following black list in Gal. 5: 19-21:

Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings and such like.

The apostle concludes with this solemn warning, "They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." He also solemnly warns believers, "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die" (Romans 8: 13). How profoundly important, therefore, for every Christian to know what is

meant by "Scriptural Freedom from Sin" and to appropriate by faith the full deliverance according to the truth that makes "free indeed."

Scripture refers to "indwelling sin" in the following passage:

What I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me (Romans 7:15-17).

Romans 7:14-21 is a divinely given revelation of the working and power of indwelling sin. It is the sworn enemy of all holiness and opposes everything that is of God. What a bitter humiliation to a believer when he is brought face to face with the solemn fact that this terrible power at enmity with God is present within his own heart. Only the Holy Spirit can reveal its presence to us. Have we had this humbling revelation?

Dr. Ironside comments on Romans 7:15-17 as follows:

There is a power within me, with which I have no desire to be identified, which keeps me from doing what I acknowledge to be good. Thus I have learned to distinguish "sin that dwelleth in me" from myself. It is a hateful intruder, albeit once my master in all things (p.127).

We heartily agree with Dr. Ironside's description of indwelling sin as "a power," "a master" and "a hateful intruder" within the believer.

### Regeneration And Indwelling Sin

While the power of indwelling sin is broken in regeneration and it does not, therefore, reign, yet, alas, sooner or later, the true child of God, longing for inward heart holiness, discovers that this "hateful intruder" is actively present within the heart and often provokes an inward conflict with the Spirit -- "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit" -- thus causing painful heart unrest. This "hateful intruder" manifests itself and causes grief and great spiritual loss to the child of God in a variety of ways such as bad temper, bitterness, covetousness, pride, envy, jealousy, cooling off in love to the Lord, a bent to backsliding, hankering after the world, self-will and, worst of all, that which is the very root and essence of indwelling sin, namely, unbelief. Yes, both scripture and Christian experience testify to the truth of Article 9 of the Church of England, "And this infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerate." We shall not labour this point any further as this book is written to unfold the truth of God to those longing believers who desire to know what scriptural freedom from sin really is, and to confirm the faith of those who have trusted the Lord for full deliverance. We shall, therefore, concentrate on the intensely vital, practical question, "How free can God make me in this life from this 'hateful intruder' -- indwelling sin -- if I trust Him fully?"

## Self And Sin

Dr. Ironside correctly states, "I have learned to distinguish 'sin that dwelleth in me' from myself." Exactly, there is clearly a distinction between "the self" and "the sin." Indwelling sin is, as he admits, a "hateful intruder" within the self. True, then it follows, does it not, that this "hateful intruder" can be separated from the "self"? The believer must certainly be set free from this "hateful intruder" before he enters heaven because nothing that defileth can enter there. We now come to the crucial question. When is it God's time to set us free from this "hateful intruder"? Now Dr. Ironside's position is that this "hateful intruder" must remain within the self as long as we are in this world. But if this is so, when can we be set free from this "intruder"? At the moment of death? There is not a line of scripture to support such an idea. We may well quote the following words of Fletcher of Madeley:

If you credit them all dying believers have a nature which is still morally corrupted and a heart which is yet desperately wicked. These believers, still full of indwelling sin, instantaneously breathe out their last and, without any peculiar outpouring of the sanctifying Spirit, corruption is instantaneously gone. . . . Yet they think it incredible that God should do for us, while we pray in faith, what they suppose death will do for them, when they lie in his cold arms, perhaps delirious or senseless.

Then is it after death that the "hateful intruder" is removed? Again there is no scripture that teaches this. Scripture declares "Now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2), and we shall demonstrate from the Scriptures that this salvation includes full salvation from all indwelling sin, now, in this present life.

### Where Does Sin Dwell?

The next point on which it is vital that we should be clear is this -- where does sin dwell within the believer? Does it dwell within that part of his being which can be reached by divine power in this life without waiting for death or the Lord's coming? If it does, then obviously there is no reason whatever why we should not be set free from "the hateful intruder" now, if it is clear from God's Word that He has made provision for such a deliverance.

Where then does this sin, this "hateful intruder," dwell within the believer? On this point we have to disagree with Dr. Ironside. He teaches that this sin dwells in the mortal body. On page 88 he says:

The very pith and marrow of the apostle's teaching is that though sin remains in my mortal body, I am not to let it reign there (Rom. 6:12).

The idea that sin dwells in the physical body is a relic of the old Gnostic error that all matter was ineradicably evil. Sin is not something physical; it is infinitely deeper than that. True, sin exerts its authority within the physical body, but Scripture regards the dwelling place of sin as "the heart," not of course the "physical" heart, but the moral heart, the centre, source and origin of the will, desires and affections.

Scripture declares "the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart (Jeremiah 17:9, 10). Clearly "the heart" in this scripture is not something to do with the mortal, physical body. It has to do with man's moral nature and disposition. Now why is "the heart" thus deceitful and desperately wicked in God's sight? Is it not because the heart is the dwelling place of this dark, mysterious, evil, moral something called sin? Our Lord said, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts (that is, reasonings), murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Matt. 15:19). How similar to the black list of Galatians 5:19-21? What causes these sins to proceed out of the heart? Is it not because the "heart" is the dwelling place of sin? Indwelling sin does not, therefore, dwell in the mortal physical body. It dwells in the root and centre of the invisible, immortal part of man, in his moral nature, his inward disposition, termed in Scripture "the heart."

That great Puritan divine, Dr. John Owen, wrote an exhaustive treatise on indwelling sin in believers. Although he teaches the two natures doctrine, he makes it quite clear that the seat of sin is not the physical body but "the heart." In his book, "Indwelling Sin in Believers," he says:

As for the seat and subject of the law of sin, the Scripture everywhere assigns it to be the heart. There indwelling sin keeps its special residence. . . . Its seat its workhouse is said to be the heart . . . (pp. 20, 21).

"The heart" is variously used in the Scripture; sometimes for the mind and understanding, sometimes for the will, sometimes for the affections, sometimes for the conscience, sometimes the whole soul (pp. 22, 23).

In the outward part of the body, sin is not seated (p.69).

It is important to be clear on this point of the dwelling place of indwelling sin. If we mistakenly imagine that sin is something which dwells in the physical body we shall not, of course, expect any glorious deliverance from indwelling sin until either death or the Lord's coming. If, however, we see the truth that sin is something in man's invisible, moral being, then there is no reason why we should not be "cleansed" and "freed" from it while we still possess a mortal, physical body.

## The Two Natures Theory Denies Real Deliverance

What is the extent possible in this life, of deliverance from this "hateful intruder" -- indwelling sin? This is the vital question we are to consider with special reference to the two natures theory of sanctification taught by Dr. Ironside. We will first of all turn, therefore, to his chapter on "The Two Natures." He describes the heart experience of a believer longing for deliverance from sin. He says:

So wretched am I made by repeated failure, that I feel like a poor prisoner chained to a dead body -- which nevertheless has over me a terrible control. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" This is the cry that brings the help I need. I have been trying to deliver myself. I now realize the impossibility of this and I cry for a deliverer outside myself. In a moment He is revealed to my soul and I see that He alone, who saved me at the beginning, can keep me from sin's power. "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." He must be my sanctification as well as my redemption and my righteousness (p. 128).

Now can we truly say, "So far, so good." Dr. Ironside leads us right up to the point of thinking that he is about to show what a glorious freedom from this hateful intruder -- sin -- can be effected by our blessed Lord as Deliverer. But the gist of what he means by deliverance is expressed in two sentences that follow shortly after the above extract He says:

I will not therefore struggle to be holy. I will look up to the blessed Christ of God and walk in the Spirit assured of victory while occupied thus with Him who is my all.

Again we say, "Good, so far as it goes," but it leaves unanswered a vital question, namely, "What does the Divine Deliverer do to the 'hateful intruder' -- the indwelling sin?" That is what we want to know. Does He cast "the hateful intruder" out of the heart? Does He free the struggling believer from the sin? Does He cleanse the heart from this vile, indwelling pollution? To such questions Dr. Ironside gives an emphatic "No," in his book. He is horrified at the very idea. It would be "perfection in the flesh" as he terms it Dr. Ironside insists that this "hateful intruder" can never be removed from the heart in this life. Then if, according to him, Christ will not remove "the hateful intruder" sin, from the heart, what does He do to it? Does He stop it from causing conflict within the heart? No, He does not even do this, according to Dr. Ironside. In the very same chapter on "The Two Natures" from which we have quoted, he speaks of:

"The conflict which every believer knows within himself, sooner or later. This conflict is definitely declared to go on in every Christian." (Gal. 5:16, 17).

We shall specially consider Gal. 5:16, 17 in a subsequent chapter, but notice the words in italics. Dr. Ironside insists that a conflict continually "goes on" in every Christian, without any exception. This idea is the very foundation of the "two natures" theory. But who or what provokes this inward conflict with the Spirit, or the new nature? It can only be indwelling sin. What then does deliverance from sin amount to as taught by him? All that it can mean is that, as a believer looks to Christ he will get the victory over this indwelling sin, but, mark this, this "hateful intruder" remains in the heart provoking an inward conflict which continually "goes on in every Christian." This is all that deliverance means according to the "two natures" theory. But this is not a real deliverance at all. It is merely the repression of continually active indwelling sin, involving a state of civil war in every Christian's heart all through life. Is this the "glorious freedom from sin" which our Lord meant when He said, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed"? By no means! Such a theory makes Christ to be only a partial Deliverer from indwelling sin.

Christ is an uttermost Saviour from sin and when the Son makes free from sin indeed He brings this inward state of conflict to an end; He unifies the whole life through and through so that we find perfect soul rest in Him This will be made clear as we proceed to unfold the truth that makes "free indeed."

## Chapter 6

### HOLINESS TRUTH SAFEGUARDS

#### Not Adamic Perfection

Before we proceed any farther to unfold the glorious truth of entire sanctification by faith, it will be well if we now specify some of the safeguards which must always be borne in mind when we speak of freedom from sin in this life. It is necessary to be clear on these safeguards so that we do not exaggerate the truth of God and thus fall into harmful error.

In order, therefore, that we may have an understanding of what "scriptural freedom from sin" really is, we will first of all make it perfectly clear what it is not. In the first place, it is not Adamic sinlessness or perfection. In Chapter 4 we saw the harmful effect that this misconception had upon Dr. Ironside in his early days. This strange misconception seemed to persist in his mind even when he wrote his book. He designates those teachers with whom he disagrees, as "perfectionists," and he refers to the alleged teaching of these "perfectionists" in the following terms:

Today, the average work on holiness pictures the perfect Christian as a man restored, to all intents and purposes, to the Adamic condition, save that the usages of society and the condition of men still in the natural and carnal state demand the continuance of "coats of skin"! (p. 101).

I have read a fair amount of the holiness literature by the "perfectionists" alluded to by Dr. Ironside, but I am bound to say, in all fairness to them, that a greater misrepresentation of their teaching on "perfection" could hardly be expressed in as few words as the extract quoted above. In order to show how very definitely the "perfectionist" teachers criticized by Dr. Ironside, disavow anything in the nature of Adamic perfection, I quote a passage from a holiness teacher who would undoubtedly be regarded by Dr. Ironside as a "perfectionist," because he clearly teaches entire sanctification as a definite second work of grace. I quote from "Our Lost Estate" by Dr. J. G. Morrison, published by the Nazarene Publishing House, Kansas City. He says:

We do not profess to be angels, when we receive this great blessing (namely, entire sanctification), but just common men and women, woefully weak, still under the curse of the fall as to mental and physical powers, but pure and holy in the heart, and filled with His perfect love.

Then again, entire sanctification is not, as we have intimated above, the sort of complete perfection that was the happy privilege of Adam and Eve when they occupied the Garden of Eden in their unfallen state. Their

bodies were perfect, while ours are full of the possibilities of pain, weakness, abnormal appetites and passions, decay and final death. Their minds were perfect and they needed not to learn, but possessed an intuitive knowledge. The minds of human beings, even after they are wholly sanctified, are subject to weakness, frailty, imperfect judgment, poor memory, indecision, and failure often to see the effect that will spring from a certain cause; all of which have been entailed on them by the fall of the race, and will last this life out . . .

Today His faithful people can have the sin problem completely solved, and come into His holy presence with a pure heart, but all these days we must carry with us the defects of our fallen and imperfect bodies, and the weaknesses and imperfections of our blighted mentality (pp. 100, 101).

I quote from one more "perfectionist" writer, namely, Dr. Harry E. Jessop, Dean of Chicago Evangelistic Institute, who writes on "Christian Perfection" in his book, "Foundations of Doctrine in Scripture and Experience," published 1938. He says:

"It is not the perfection of Adam in His Eden home. His was a sinless soul and a deathless body. His mind had no memory of committed sin. Every power, spiritual, physical, mental and moral, was fresh from his Maker's hand. He had never seen an open grave; never felt a twinge of pain; never known a feeling of remorse. He knew no fear of the animal creation, nor of the forces of nature. He needed no clothing for in that unfallen condition his very body was bathed in light Who today would think of claiming a perfection such as that?" (p.164).

I hope that the above quotations will finally dispose of the utterly false idea that those who believe in a second work of grace and refer to it, amongst other terms as. "Christian Perfection," teach that we are restored to the unfallen Adamic condition. "Adamic" perfection is "Perfection the false."

There are certain other safeguards and limitations which must never be overlooked when we speak of "perfection," "freedom from sin" and "entire sanctification," etc., in this life. Some time ago, a Christian wrote and asked me the following question: "Is there really nothing unholy in your life, thought, word, or deed?" An extract from my reply may, I hope, indicate some of the safeguards referred to.

If I were to make the bald, unqualified statement, "There is nothing unholy in my life," etc., it would sound like Pharisaical pride which is abhorrent to me. Speaking of myself, as I am alone, apart altogether from divine grace, I would say, "In me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." Christ is my sanctification and I have no holiness whatever apart from Him and His indwelling. And even with His indwelling, I am

not yet entirely freed from the effects of sin and the fall, being still in a fallen condition with a mortal, corruptible body that needs "keeping under," possessing very limited knowledge and with very imperfect powers of mind, judgment, etc., all through the fall. Even if I may not be conscious of sin, there may still be faults and failures in my life which the Lord may see but of which I may not be aware. From this point of view, I still fall short of the glory of God, and hence, I need continually divine mercy and grace, the intercession of Christ, the efficacy of His precious cleansing blood and I need continually to be learning more of the will of God through His Word. I am only a sinner saved by grace. For these reasons, I would not make the unqualified statement, "There is nothing unholy in my life." It would be liable to be terribly misunderstood.

### "Blameless" But Not "Faultless"

In the light of the foregoing, we can see the important distinction between being preserved "blameless" and "faultless." A little child, out of a perfect heart of love, may write a letter to her mother, but the letter may be full of mistakes in spelling, blots, etc. Is the mother displeased with the child? No. In spite of all its faults, the letter is the expression of a heart of perfect love to the mother. The child is "blameless" but not "faultless." Now, as we intend to show from scriptures, God can so set us free from indwelling sin in our hearts that we may have a heart perfect in love toward God and man and we can be preserved "blameless" (1 Thess. 5:23). But we shall never be "faultless" before God until we stand in glory before His throne with exceeding joy (Jude 24).

By virtue of the fact that we are still in a fallen condition so far as our bodily and mental powers are concerned, we are subject to many infirmities, we lack the perfect knowledge of God's will in all things (this has to be learned by degrees), we are liable, therefore, to errors of judgment, etc., and various other faults which may not be known to ourselves but are all seen by God. Hence the holiest Christian, from this point of view, may daily pray that humble prayer of confession, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," and will confess:

Every moment, Lord, I need

The merit of Thy death.

Yes, every moment we need the cleansing efficacy of the precious blood of Christ and the high-priestly intercession of our Lord Jesus if we are to enjoy the unclouded fellowship with the God who is infinitely holy.

Hence we see that the holding of the truth of entire sanctification by faith produces an attitude of self-abnegation and deep humility in the presence of the Lord. And yet, all the time, we can have a deep joy because we know that we have been set free from our greatest inward

enemy, namely, indwelling sin and possess the glorious blessing of an indwelling Christ (that is, if we truly know the blessing of entire sanctification. Hence, as Dr. Thos. C. Upham says in his beautiful treatise on entire sanctification:

While it is proper for all to make a confession during life, it is nevertheless true that the mind of a person who is truly in a sanctified state is chiefly occupied with supplications and thanksgivings. Such a person may be said for the most part to be always praying, always supplicating, and in everything giving thanks. The state of those who possess this blessing is very different from the condition of persons who have nothing but their sins to speak of. Such is their peace of mind, such their sense of inward purity . . . that their prevalent state must necessarily be one of divine communion and of holy rejoicing. -- "The Interior or Hidden life," p.301).

## Christian "Perfection" Final And Present

### I. Final "Perfection."

We see, therefore, from the foregoing that "Christian perfection" or "entire sanctification" in this present life is not angelic, Adamic or final perfection. Final or "faultless" perfection is that state of sinless perfection which Christians will attain when they are glorified. We shall then enter a realm where Satan and sin do not exist. We shall forever be freed from their very presence. We shall, therefore, know temptation no more. There will be no danger then of falling into sin. Our corruptible bodies will be replaced by glorified bodies, like unto His body in glory, and then "we shall know as we are known." The final perfection, the goal; the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus is all summed up in one phrase, pregnant with eternal glory, "to be conformed to the image of his Son." Glory indeed! There cannot possibly be anything higher than that and it is to this goal of glory that God has called every Christian. This is the "perfection" to which Paul was referring when he said in Philippians 3:12, "Not as though I had already attained either were already perfect." He was like a runner in a race -- pressing on to win the prize. He was running but he had not yet secured the prize.

### II. Present Perfection

There is, however, a sense in which a Christian may be "perfect" in this life. In the very same passage in Philippians 3, he says, "Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded" (verse 15), that is, let those who are "perfect" press on to become "perfect" finally. There is the "perfection" of a runner in a race, and the "perfection of the runner when he has completed the race and received the prize. A perfect runner is one who is perfectly healthy and fit, has discarded every ounce of unnecessary clothing and puts forth all his energies to press on to the

goal. That is a picture of the "perfect" Christian as Paul speaks of him in Philippians 3:15.

Bearing in mind the safeguarding limitations specified in the previous chapter, there is a sense in which scripture speaks of "perfection" in relation to a Christian while here on earth. The illustration of the runner in the race will make clear the meaning. To put it in a nutshell, "perfection" in this sense means to be fitted to fulfil the purpose of God in the particular dispensation and circumstances in which we have been placed by His providence.

### Progressive Holiness

God's purpose is that each Christian should press onward in the life of holiness aiming at final perfection, like a runner in a race. God has made provision for each Christian to be a "perfect" runner. In running a race it is half the battle to make a good start. And in the Christian race, it gives a tremendous impetus to the believer if he starts and continues with a clear, steady faith in Christ for full deliverance from sin. What is the greatest hindrance to a Christian starting and continuing in this glorious race? Surely it is indwelling sin. But praise God, as we shall show, we may be set gloriously free from this indwelling, entangling hindrance, we may be made perfectly whole and clean within and filled with the blessed Holy Spirit. This is "Perfection the True." Thus we can, through grace, fulfil the command, "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12:1, 2). . .

## Chapter 7

### FREE "INDEED" FROM SIN

In the previous chapter we dealt with the 'imitations of holiness in this life. We shall now show that subject to these limitations, the Word of God teaches that Christ is a present perfect Saviour from all indwelling sin and that, consequently, there is a glorious present experience of "Scriptural Freedom from Sin." A simple illustration may help to make this clear. Suppose I have a disease germ in my blood which causes a fever. Now if I am to be perfectly cured of the disease it would mean not only that I must be freed from the outward symptoms but also from the hidden, inward germ that causes the fever. But although I might thus be freed from the germ itself, yet some of the results of the disease might persist through life, for instance, a weakened heart, etc. Now the possession of a mortal, corruptible body, infirmities, defective memory, powers of judgment, etc., are some of the persisting results of sin. Nevertheless, the Word of God teaches that there is full provision in the atoning work of Christ whereby we may be made free indeed from the sin itself (John 8:31-36). Now what our Lord meant by being made "free from sin indeed," is unfolded by the Apostle Paul in Romans 6, which we will now consider.

Chapter 6 of the epistle to the Romans is, perhaps one of the clearest expositions of glorious freedom from sin that Paul ever wrote. He uses the most drastic terms, "dead to the sin," "free from the sin" and "body of sin destroyed" in order to convey the full extent of deliverance.

Dr. Ironside's teaching concerning Romans 6 to 8 can be summed up briefly in the following passage:

"While I live in this world, I shall never be actually free from sin's presence, but I can and should be delivered from its power. God hath condemned sin in the flesh, not rooted sin out of the flesh, and I condemn it too and refuse all allegiance to it, walking in the Spirit with Christ as my soul's object, I am delivered from its control." (p.88).

Now in the previous chapter, we saw that Dr. Ironside teaches that a continual conflict "goes on" in every Christian -- a fight against the Spirit and the new nature -- which obviously can be caused only by the presence and active hostility of indwelling sin. That is what the "presence" of sin means according to him. What then are we to understand by being freed from the "power" and "control" of sin? All it can mean is, that while the believer looks to Christ he can get the victory over the power of this indwelling sin, but it is still present, and mark, not merely as something inactive, but as a positive, active, hostile power continually provoking a state of civil war within the heart. Is this all that

is meant by being made "free indeed from sin"? Let us turn to the Epistle to the Romans for an answer to this question.

## The Two aspects Of "The Sin" In The Epistle To The Romans

It is important to know that the word "sin" in nearly every case in Romans 6 is prefaced in the original with the article "the." The evil principle of sin is thus personified as "the sin."

"The sin as an evil principle is viewed from two different standpoints in Romans 5 to I. A simple illustration may help to make clear this distinction between these two aspects of sin. Let us imagine a dictator of a vast empire who enforces his decrees in every part of his possessions. He is the reigning tyrant. Now in Romans 5 and 6, "the sin" is personified as a tyrant, or usurper, reigning over the whole world. The whole world of fallen humanity is regarded as the vast empire of "the sin." "The sin" is contrasted with God (chap. 6:13); "the sin" reigns unto death in opposition to grace (chap. 5:21); "the sin" as a slave master has enslaved the whole of mankind (chap. 6:20).

We will carry our illustration a step farther. We can imagine that the vast empire of the dictator is made up of very many different states or possessions and that, in each separate possession, the dictator has his own representative who enforces within each possession the dictator's decrees. Now in Romans 7:14-25, the person who is "carnal, sold under sin," is looked upon as one of the individual possessions of "the sin," the reigning tyrant of Romans 56. Romans 7 is intensely individual. The apostle speaks of "sin dwelling in him" and describes vividly how, at one time, this indwelling sin made him obey its dictates.

Putting it very briefly, we may say that in Romans 5 and 6, "the sin" is personified rather as a tyrant reigning over the world, and is regarded as distinct from, and external to, the individual sinner, but as enforcing its power and authority over him. In Romans 7:14-25, "the .. sin" is regarded more as a tyrant dwelling within and enslaving a particular individual. Now the glorious freedom from sin revealed in the scriptures involves a wonderful and blessed deliverance from sin in both these aspects. Let us consider this glorious freedom.

### 1. Sin as a tyrant, reigning over sinners

The glorious truth of Romans 6:1-11, expressed very briefly and simply is just this: When our Lord Jesus died on the cross, He died to "the sin" and, in God's mind and purpose, each believer was identified with Christ in His death to "the sin." In God's mind, therefore, when Christ died to "the sin," each believer died to "the sin" also). That happened at the cross. Likewise, when Christ rose from the dead, in God's mind and purpose, each believer rose with Christ to "walk in newness of life." This

wondrous truth of our identification with Christ in His death and resurrection is the basis on which God sets us free from sin.

The believer is now bidden to reckon himself dead indeed to "the sin" and alive unto God (verse 11). Now God does not mock us by commanding us to "reckon" something which He does not intend to make an actual fact. Praise God, when, by the Spirit, the believer reckons thus in faith, God will Himself make the reckoning a glorious reality. It means that God will so utterly and completely set the believer free from "the sin" as a tyrant, that it can have no more power or authority over him than a dictator can exert over a dead man. Now the believer "has died" (Rom. 6:7). He has died with Christ and has died to "the sin" and he that has died is freed from "the sin" (chaps. 6, 7). What claim or hold, then, has "the sin" on the believer? None at all. What right has "the sin" to provoke a continual conflict with the Spirit and the new nature within the believer? None whatever! "Sin shall not have dominion over you" emphatically declares Paul. Then the believer is free, gloriously free, if he did but know it, believe it, and act upon it Hallelujah for this "glorious freedom from sin."

What does all this mean in actual life? It means that no matter how severely we may be tempted to sin or how trying our circumstances, if we stand fast on this reckoning of faith, we need never come into bondage again to "the sin." We are, therefore, brought into that condition of freedom in relation to "the sin," that we may be enabled always to live to "please God." Hallelujah!

## 2. Sin as a tyrant indwelling the individual.

Now it is obvious that if the glorious complete deliverance from "the sin" regarded as a tyrant reigning over sinners is to be effective in individual experience, there must be a corresponding glorious and complete deliverance from "the sin" regarded as an evil power indwelling the individual. The one must follow as a corollary of the other. We will now consider whether scripture speaks in just as drastic, radical terms of deliverance from indwelling sin as it does of deliverance from sin as a reigning tyrant. Let us look at Romans 6:6, 7. In this verse the two aspects of sin that we have been considering are mentioned together.

"Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of the sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve the sin."

We will specially examine this wonderful verse. "Our old man, that is, my sinful state as a child of Adam, was nailed to the cross and put out of sight in the mind and purpose of God. God thereby expressed His utter hatred and abhorrence of sin. But this crucifixion of "our old man" at the cross was intended to accomplish a twofold definite result in the life of each individual believer. It was intended to produce an utter and

complete severance of the believer from all connection with "the sin." First, there is to be a complete deliverance from bondage to "the sin" as a reigning tyrant. This is taught by the words "that henceforth we should not serve the sin. But there is something else mentioned. This glorious freedom from "the sin as a reigning tyrant is the result of complete freedom from indwelling sin. This is taught by the words "that the body of sin might be destroyed." What is meant by this phrase? What is the "body of sin"? Some interpreters consider "the body" in this verse to be the physical body regarded as the instrument of sin. There is a measure of truth in this interpretation, but I suggest that it is not the whole truth. In two other places Paul speaks of a mystical "body" of evil and in each case this evil "body" is to be dealt with, here and now, in a radical, drastic manner that is not spoken of in connection with the physical body.

### The Three "Bodies" Of Evil

The three passages are:

1. "The body of death" from which the believer is to be delivered from. (Romans 7:24).
2. "The body of the flesh" which is to be "put off" from the believer (Colossians 2:11).
3. "The body of sin" which is to be "destroyed" (Romans 6:6).

I would suggest that an examination of the context of each of these passages in which a mystical "body" of evil is mentioned, will clearly show that the apostle is not speaking of the physical body as such. The physical body of the believer is not to be "destroyed" or "put off" nor are we to be "delivered" from it, in this life. On the contrary, the physical body is to be presented to God, "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God" (Romans 12:1). I suggest, therefore, that the three phrases quoted above refer to inward depravity or indwelling sin as a unit of evil, a totality, connected with the individual believer.

#### 1. "The Body of this Death"

In Romans 7, the apostle wishes to emphasize the utter vileness of indwelling sin and therefore likens it to a loathsome corpse tied to the believer and appropriately termed "the body of this death." But the believer can here and now be delivered and "made free" from this loathsome thing (See Roman 7:24 and 25; 8:2).

#### 2. "The Body of the Flesh"

In Colossians 2:11, indwelling depravity is termed "the body of the flesh" (R.V.), because Paul wants to show by the illustration of the rite of circumcision, how utterly drastic and complete is the divine intention and provision for the severance of this unit of evil from the believer. Circumcision involves the cutting off and removal of flesh from the person circumcised. And this is the very figure which Paul uses in Colossians 2:11, thus showing that "the circumcision of Christ" (that is, performed by Christ), is a drastic, spiritual, surgical operation involving the "putting off and away from" the believer, of this unit of evil here "the body of the flesh."

### 3. "The Body of Sin"

Romans 6:6 teaches the same divine intention and provision for the utter and complete severance of the believer from indwelling sin. In this verse indwelling sin or depravity is termed "the body of sin" because Paul wishes to show that it is a totality, a unit of evil but that God has made full provision for it to be utterly "destroyed" in this life. This word translated "destroyed" is in the aorist tense, signifying an instantaneous act of God's power, not a long drawn out process.

#### The Destruction of "The body of Sin"

Some teachers of holiness try to tone down the meaning of the word *katargeo*, translated "destroyed," to make it mean, in effect, nothing more than the repression of a continually active, indwelling, evil power. For instance, I have the printed report of an address by a well known speaker at a well known convention. He tries to explain away the full meaning of "destroyed" in Romans 6:6 by the illustration of the destruction of an army. He said:

"It does not mean that every man in the army is killed; it means that for the time being that army is rendered useless. It can be reorganized and sent forth again into battle." And he went on to say, "How easy it is for the sin that dwelleth in me to come bubbling up."

Thus according to this speaker, the utmost that God can or will do to indwelling sin is merely to disorganize or paralyze it temporarily, but He still leaves it within the heart as an "intruder" ever able, of its own account, to fight again like a reorganized army or to come "bubbling up" again by its own power like an indwelling fountain of foul water. What is all this but toning down the word "destroy" to make it mean merely "repress." Is this all that God means by "destroying" the "body of sin" in Romans 6:6? A thousand times "No." The phrase means something infinitely more drastic and radical than mere repression or counteraction. It means to be "done away" and it is thus that the Revised Version translates *katargeo* in Romans 6:6. The full force of the word can easily be seen from the following passages in which it occurs:

The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death (1 Cor. 15:26).

Having abolished in his flesh the enmity (Eph. 2:15).

She is loosed from the law of her husband (Romans 7:2).

Whether knowledge it shall vanish away (1 Cor. 13:8>.

Which veil is done away in Christ" (2 Cor. 3:14).

To bring to nought things that are (1 Cor. 1:28).

When he shall have put down all rule and all authority (1 Cor. 15:24).

Now in none of the above instances can the word *katargeo* honestly be toned down to mean merely the continual repression or counteraction of an active hostile power. And when Romans 6:6 declares that God purposes in this life to "destroy the body of sin" He does not deal with it in such an imperfect, half-hearted manner as to leave it in such a relation to the believer that it can, on its own account as it were, and apart altogether from the volition of the believer, become powerful like an active reorganized "army" or a spontaneously bubbling fountain of foul water. Such a conception really makes divine deliverance from sin a mockery. It reduces our Lord's promise that He will make us "free indeed" to a mere sham. Let us beware how we "take away" from the full meaning of God's words to make them fit in with our own preconceived ideas or wrong experience. Let us beware how we limit the Holy One of Israel.

#### The Destruction Of Death And The Devil

Sometimes the following objection is raised:

Ah, but it says in 2 Tim. 1:10 that Christ hath abolished death and yet death still claims its victims; alas! that Christ died that He might destroy the devil (Hebrews 2:14), and yet the devil is very much alive. If this is so with death and the devil is it not the same with the "body of sin"?

We reply as follows: Death and the devil were truly potentially destroyed at the cross, but they will not be fully and actually destroyed until after the Millennium. Death is the last enemy to be destroyed, actually (1 Cor. 15:26), and the devil also is "destroyed" finally at the same time when he is cast into the lake of fire. In the case of "the body of sin," however, it is quite different. Nowhere does scripture teach that its destruction is to be postponed until after the Millennium or until death. On the contrary, what was potentially done at the cross in the crucifixion of "our old man" is to be made fully and actually effective now by the complete destruction of the body of sin because the object of this destruction is

that henceforth, that is, in this present life, we should not be in any bondage whatever to "the sin.

Hence, just as on the ground of the cross of Christ the sinner may, by faith, claim complete forgiveness of all his sins now for his justification, so the fully yielding, trusting believer may also, on the ground of the cross, claim by faith the destruction of the body of sin now for his entire sanctification. But it is possible for a believer, through ignorance or unbelief, to fail to exercise this faith and thus to lose, all his life, the joy and power of this blessing of full deliverance.

### The Destruction Of the Man Of Sin

As a final and conclusive argument to prove that the destruction of the body of sin in Romans 6:6 is something infinitely more than suppression or counteraction, we refer the reader to 2 Thess. 2:8. Referring to "the man of sin," it says "whom the Lord shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." The word translated "destroy" is the same word used in Romans 6:6. Now I ask this question:

When the Lord "destroys" the man of sin will he be merely "repressed" or counteracted in the millennial kingdom? Will the Man of Sin merely be "kept under" but still be able, on his own account, to strike again like a "reorganized" army or to rise up again like "a bubbling spring"? Is this all that is meant by "destroying" the man of sin?

To all these questions we reply with a decided "No." The "destruction" of the man of sin means that he will be annulled, rendered utterly powerless or of "none effect" because he will be "cast out of the earth" and cast into the lake of fire, and not merely repressed or counteracted in the earth. The Lord Jesus Christ will then reign over the whole earth without a rival.

### Anticipating Millennial Blessing

Now what the Lord will do, in the future, to the man of sin on the earth, He will do here and now to the "man of sin" in our hearts if we fulfil the conditions of faith and surrender to Him. Praise God, He will "destroy" or "cast out" the "body of sin," so that He himself may reign without a rival. When the Lord does this for the believer He establishes His kingdom within the heart. The fullness of His indwelling presence brings "righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Thus the believer may anticipate, even now, in his inward heart experience, something of the blessedness of the righteousness, peace and joy of the coming millennial kingdom of Christ. Hallelujah! "We who believe [that is 'fully' believe] do enter [even now] into rest [that is 'full' heart rest]" (Heb. 4:3). Yes, when Christ sets free from sin indeed, He gives rest indeed. We truly find rest unto our souls (Matt. 11:29).

## The Presence And The Power Of Sin

Finally, in the light of the foregoing, we can also see that Dr. Ironside's statement that while in this world we shall never be actually free from sin's presence, but we should be free from its power, is but a half truth. This statement is very often made in discussions on holiness, but it is a "half truth" which obscures the "full truth." Of course, there is a measure of truth in it. While we are in this world, we are in a world in which sin is still present as a reigning tyrant, as set forth in Romans 5 and 6. It is quite true, therefore, in this sense, that we cannot be free from the presence of sin while we are in this world, and will never, therefore, be free from the temptations of sin. For freedom in that absolute sense we have to await our entrance into that sphere into which nothing that defileth shall ever enter. But we have, in Christ, died to "the sin" and it has therefore no right to exert any power within us at all. If therefore we obey God and reckon ourselves dead indeed to "the sin" and alive unto God, he will make us free indeed.

But when we consider sin in the other aspect, namely, as an indwelling unit of evil within the individual believer, we have seen that God has made provision in the cross of Christ whereby the "body of sin" may be "destroyed" now. The "two natures" theory that we can be free from the power of sin and yet must always have the presence of sin within our hearts as an active, hostile force which can only be suppressed or counteracted is a self-contradiction and is really no deliverance at all.

In the face of all this cumulative scripture evidence, surely it is perfectly clear that by "freedom from sin the Word of God means exactly what it says, namely, that "the body of sin" might be "done away" (R.V.), here and now, and so being set free from "the sin," that is, "the sin" itself, we have our fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life (Romans 6:22). Nothing less than this is meant by the Son making the believer "free indeed."

## The "Reign" and The "Dominion" Of Sin

In the light of all the foregoing, we can now see the extent of the deliverance expressed by the promise, "Sin shall not have dominion over you" (Romans 6:14) and the exhortation "Let not sin reign in your mortal body" (Romans 6:12). It is a false inference to teach that this exhortation means that indwelling sin "still remains in the mortal body" because, as we have seen, the cessation of the "reign" of sin, involves, in its fullest meaning, the destruction of the body of sin according to Romans 6:6.

## A Surprising Omission

Romans 6:6 is one of the strongholds of the truth of entire sanctification by faith. It is surprising, therefore, that Dr. Ironside has made no attempt whatever to deal with this strong proof text in "Holiness: The False and the True." It is never mentioned once in the whole of his book.

The full truth underlying Romans 6:6 strikes the death blow to the "Two natures and suppression of sin" theory. If, however, we look at the truth in this verse, wearing the "spectacles" of this theory, we shall be able to see the glorious truth only partially and with distorted vision. The sooner we discard these "spectacles" the better, so that we may be enabled to see more clearly than we have ever seen before, what is meant by "Scriptural Freedom from Sin."

## Chapter 8

### THE POWER OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

"The blood of Christ." These words are repellent to many, but they are exceedingly precious to the Spirit-taught believer who has "the mind of Christ." The words are pregnant with divine meaning. They speak of the exceeding preciousness and of the infinite worth of the one perfect sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. The truth of the blood of Christ constitutes the very foundation of God's revelation concerning His relationship to sinners. The truth may be considered from two aspects, namely, (1) The God-ward or objective, (2) The Man-ward or subjective.

#### The Blood of Christ -- the God-ward aspect

By the Godward or objective aspect of the truth of the blood of Christ, we mean what that blood has accomplished for God in His redemptive plan for sinners. It was only because of the blood sprinkled on the mercy seat in the tabernacle that Israel of old could be maintained in a position of favour in the sight of God. It is only because of the infinite value of that precious blood in the sight of God that He can be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus (Rom. 3:26). "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22).

Scripture also declares that Christ, by His own blood, entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption (Heb. 9:12). It is only on the ground of that precious blood, shed at the cross and sprinkled in heaven, that believers can have any position of favour at all in the presence of God or can approach Him and be accepted by Him as true worshipers (Heb. 10:19-22). This, very briefly, is the God-ward aspect of the truth of the blood of Christ. It is specially taught in the Epistle to the Hebrews and is emphasized, and rightly so, by Dr. Ironside.

#### The Blood of Christ -- the man-ward aspect

By the manward or subjective aspect of the truth of the blood of Christ, we mean what that blood accomplishes in the believer. In the Old Testament, the blood of animals was not only sprinkled upon the mercy seat in the holiest for God to see; it was also sprinkled upon persons such as the people (Exodus 24:8); Aaron and his sons (Leviticus 8:23, 24 and 30) and the leper (Leviticus 14:7 and 14). Now this actual contact of the blood with persons typifies the truth that the blood of Christ also has an inward, subjective effect upon the true believer. What then will the blood of Christ actually accomplish within the fully trusting believer? Now Dr. Ironside emphasizes one important aspect of the effect of the blood of Christ upon the believer himself, namely, the "purging of the conscience." Referring to the Epistle to the Hebrews, he says:

The great question taken up is, How can a polluted sinner with a deified conscience, procure a conscience that no longer accuses him, but now permits him unhinderedly to approach God? The blood of bulls and of goats cannot effect this. . . . That one true sacrifice effectually purges the conscience once for all, so that the intelligent believer can now rejoice in the assurance that he is forever cleansed from his guilt and defilement by the blood-sprinkling of Jesus Christ" (pp. 60-62). We heartily agree and say, "So far, so good." But now we come to the crucial question. What about indwelling sin in the believer's heart? Does the blood of Christ avail to cleanse the heart of the believer from indwelling sin? Dr. Ironside emphatically answers "No." Later on we shall give actual quotations from this book. It is just on this vital point that the two natures theory is so inconsistent and unscriptural in its teaching concerning the blood of Christ. It makes much of the God-ward aspect of the blood of Christ and rightly so, and of the purging of the conscience, but emphatically denies that the blood of Christ avails to cleanse the heart of the believer from indwelling sin. This attitude is utterly unscriptural.

#### A Purged Conscience And A Cleansed Heart

In the full scriptural meaning, a purged conscience and a heart cleansed from all sin are linked together. In this very epistle to the Hebrews we are told that the God to whom we are called to draw near, is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart, that all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do (Heb. 4:12, 13), and in the very chapter which bids the sanctified draw near to Him, we are told that the sanctified are those who have His laws in their hearts (Heb. 10:16) and who draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith (Heb. 10:22). But how can we possibly do this if all the time there is within our heart the pollution and activity of indwelling sin even though it is suppressed or counteracted, the very essence of which is unbelief of God, enmity to Him and lawlessness?

The scriptural truth of the connection between the purged conscience and the cleansed heart is beautifully expressed by Dr. Andrew Murray in "The Holiest of All" in the following words:

We know what conscience is. It tells us what we are. Conscience deals not only with past merit or guilt but specially with present integrity or falsehood. . . . The conscience is not a separate part of our heart or inner nature, and which can be in a different state from what the whole is. By no means. Just as a sensibility to bodily evil pervades the whole body, so the conscience is the sense which pervades our whole spiritual nature, and at once notices and reports what is wrong or right in our state. Hence it is when the conscience is cleansed or perfected, the heart is cleansed and perfected too. Arid so it is in the heart that the power the blood had in heaven is communicated here on earth. The blood that

brought Christ into God's presence, brings us, and our whole inner being, thereto" (p. 301).

The full-orbed, balanced teaching of Scripture is that a truly purged conscience and a heart cleansed from all sin are joined together. Herein lies the fundamental error of the whole of the two-naturist doctrine concerning the blood of Christ. The theory teaches the purging of the conscience by the blood of Christ, but denies the actual cleansing of the heart from sin. Thus what God has joined together, the two naturist puts asunder.

"Cleansing By Blood" and Sir Robert Anderson's Book

In Sir Robert Anderson's well-known book, "The Gospel and Its Ministry," there is a chapter on "Cleansing by Blood." He states that the meaning of cleansing by blood is governed by the types in Leviticus. He confines the meaning, however, to the aspect of truth set forth in one type only, namely, the sprinkling of the blood on the mercy seat on the day of atonement in Leviticus 16. In this type, however, the blood was solely "Godward"; it was sprinkled in the presence of the Lord but was not actually applied to the people themselves. The cleansing was a judicial cleansing -- "cleansing" which maintained Israel in the favour of an infinitely holy God; very precious indeed but this is not all that it meant in God's Word by "cleansing by blood."

There is another type of "cleansing by blood" in Leviticus which was not mentioned in Sir Robert Anderson's chapter. It is the cleansing of the leper in chapter 14. In this type the blood was actually applied to the leper and there were two distinct applications of blood in order to make the leper's cleansing complete. On the first occasion, the blood of a slain bird was sprinkled upon the leper and he was pronounced "clean" and allowed to come inside the camp with God's people. This was the first stage and is a beautiful type of the cleansing and impartation of spiritual life at regeneration. But that was not all. On the eighth day afterward, there was a second cleansing by blood -- a much closer application -- it was applied in detail to the ear, the thumb and the toe; then the oil was likewise applied and finally poured upon his head. Now if the oil upon the leper typified the Spirit within the believer, surely the blood upon the leper typified likewise a full and blessed cleansing within the believer. How beautifully this second, deeper application of the blood, coupled with the oil, typifies that second work of grace in entire sanctification when the blood of Christ is applied within, in all its sin-cleansing efficacy and the Holy Spirit comes in with all His sanctifying power, fully to possess the sin-cleansed heart.

The Blood Of Christ And The Apostle John

We shall now specially consider that wonderful verse in 1 John 1:7, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Many dear Christians lose a great deal of joy and blessing because, through lack of faith or defective teaching, they limit the cleansing of this verse to a judicial cleansing only. We shall demonstrate, however, that the full meaning of this verse includes not only judicial cleansing in the presence of God, but also cleansing from indwelling sin.

The Apostles Paul and John use different terms to express the same truth of freedom from sin. The Apostle Paul speaks much of the "cross" of Christ. The Apostle John never speaks of the "cross" of Christ; he speaks of "the blood" of Christ. But they are both referring to the same thing, namely, the power of the atoning work of Christ. The Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, looks upon indwelling sin as a hostile power from which we can be freed through the cross of Christ. The Apostle John regards sin as a corrupting pollution from which we can be cleansed through the blood of Christ. Thus they both teach that there is glorious freedom from sin through the power of the atoning work of Christ.

#### The Power Of The Blood Of Christ In Revelation

The Apostle John attributes our full salvation from all sin and all the eternal glories consequent upon that salvation, to "the blood of Christ." Notice how he emphasizes the precious blood in the Revelation. The very first outburst of worship in Revelation 1:5 and 6 is "Unto him that loveth us and washed us from our sins in his own blood and hath made us kings and priests unto God his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen." In chapter 5, the 24 elders worship "the Lamb," because of redemption "by thy blood." In chapter 7, the glorious company of the redeemed "have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb." Notice it says "they" have washed "their" robes. This is not imputed righteousness. Their own "robes" here, clearly means their own characters. Their faith in the cleansing blood of the Lamb had effected an inner cleansing of the heart resulting in purity and Christlike beauty of character. Thus the cleansing of "their" robes in the blood of Christ teaches us that the blood of Christ does effect a subjective, inward cleansing from all sin. Again, in chapter 12:11, John refers to saints who "overcame the devil by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony." There is overcoming power in the blood of the Lamb. In this verse, by the phrase "the blood of the Lamb" the apostle means the mighty power of the atoning work of Christ which is available for every believer in Him and is all sufficient to overcome the devil himself. Thus the blood of Christ is omnipotent in its power because it is the blood of the Son of God, who sacrificed Himself, but rose again and ascended to the Father. Scripture says, "the life is in the blood." Hence the phrase "the blood of Christ" as used by the Apostle John, speaks of a life of infinite value not only laid down in sacrifice to atone

for the guilt of sins, that is, to effect our justification, but also taken up again in resurrection power and glory to cleanse us from sin itself, that is, to effect our sanctification.

#### The Power OF The Blood Of Christ In 1 John

If we meditate on these varied aspects of the blood of Christ in these passages quoted from the revelation, we shall see clearly that by the term "the blood of Christ" the Apostle John means all the redeeming, sanctifying, cleansing, sin-destroying, devil-overcoming and omnipotent power of the atoning work of our blessed Redeemer. The chorus of that little hymn is therefore perfectly scriptural:

There is power, power, wonder working power

In the precious blood of the Lamb.

Now then, in the light of the foregoing, let us just turn to that well-known verse in 1 John 1:7, and, instead of reading "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son," let us paraphrase those words in the light of what the Apostle John means by them in the Book of Revelation. The verse will then read like this:

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the redeeming, sanctifying, cleansing, sin-destroying, devil-overcoming and omnipotent power of the atoning work of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Read the verse like that, and remembering that our Lord was manifested to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8) and that sin is the work of the devil, does it not seem sheer unbelief to doubt or deny the power of the precious blood of Christ to cleanse the heart of the fully trusting believer from all indwelling sin now -- in this present life?

We may well conclude this brief meditation on the power of the blood of Christ by seriously considering the following solemn words of Oswald Chambers in his "Biblical Psychology" (p.222):

"And the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin! Anything less than that -- I say it measuring every word -- anything less than that would be blasphemous. If God cannot cleanse us from all sin and make us "holy and without blame" in His sight, then Jesus Christ has totally misled us, and the atonement is not what it claims to be. Oh, if we would only get into the way of bringing our limitations before God and telling Him He cannot do these things, we should begin to see the awful wickedness of unbelief, and why our Lord was so vigorous against it and why the Apostle John places fearfulness and unbelief at the head of all the most awful sins (See Rev. 21:8).

## Chapter 9

### CLEANSING FROM ALL SIN

#### How The Two Natures Doctrine

#### Limits The Power Of The Blood Of Christ

We now come to deal with the most serious error in the whole of the two natures theory of sanctification. The precious truth that we have been considering in the last chapter concerning the power of the blood of Christ to cleanse from all sin is denied in the two natures theory. The theory denies absolutely the efficacy of the blood of Christ to cleanse the heart of the believer from indwelling sin. It limits the power of the blood of Christ I now quote Dr. Ironside's own comments on that glorious Verse, "H 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). Here is what he says:

"Among the general run of holiness teachers it is commented upon as though it read "If we walk up to the light God gives us as to our duty, we have fellowship with all who do the same; and having fulfilled these conditions, the blood of Jesus Christ his Son washes all inbred sin out of our hearts and makes us inwardly pure and holy, freeing us from all carnality" (p.115).

He totally rejects this idea that the blood of Christ cleanses the heart from indwelling sin. He goes on to say:

"Now if this be the meaning of the verse, it is evident that we have all a large contract to fulfil ere we can ever know this inward cleansing. We must walk in a perfect way while still imperfect, in order to become perfect! Could any proposition be much more unreasonable, not to say unscriptural?" (p.115).

On page 116 he says:

"Mark, it is no question of the blood of Christ washing out my evil nature -- eliminating "sin that dwelleth in me."

It is perfectly clear from the above extracts that Dr. Ironside denies that the blood of Christ effects any actual cleansing of the believer from indwelling sin. How, then, does he interpret 1 John 1:7, which declares that the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin? The following extracts show what he means by "cleansing" by the blood of Christ:

"It is that the atoning work of the Son of God avails to purge my deified conscience from the stain of every sin that I have ever been guilty of.

Though all the sins that men could commit had been laid justify to my single account, yet Christ's blood would cleanse me from them all." (p.116).

"Cleansing from all sin" is equivalent to "justification from all things," save for the difference in viewpoint. Justification is clearing from the charge of guilt. Cleansing is freeing the conscience from the defilement of sin (p.118).

Thus, according to Dr. Ironside, "cleansing from all sin" is limited to the effect that God's forgiveness of all our sins has upon our conscience. It is cleansing a deified conscience from the "stain" of every sin we have committed; freeing the conscience from the "defilement" of sin. Now, here we have a half truth which obscures the full truth of glorious freedom from sin. Let us consider for a moment the "half truth" in Dr. Ironside's extracts.

It is perfectly true that the sins of the sinner render him guilty before God and also defile and stain the conscience, that is, the conscience of the sinner becomes uneasy and "deified" in the presence of God. This is what Dr. Ironside means by "a deified conscience." But notice this very important point. The "defilement" that he speaks of is limited to the "defilement" of heart and conscience caused by our own actual sins. From all this accumulated inward defilement caused by our own sins he admits we may be entirely cleansed by the blood of Christ. Perfectly true! That is half the whole truth. Now what about the other half of the truth? What about the inward "defilement" of heart which, in the light of the Spirit, I discover I have inherited through the sin of Adam? In other words, what about the "defilement" of indwelling sin? -- the "sin that dwelleth in me" because of my descent from Adam. Indwelling sin means a state of heart which is lawlessness -- enmity to God. Dr. Ironside admits this. On page 123 he says, "The essence of sin is lawlessness. Sin is doing one's own will -- that is lawlessness." But is not this indwelling sin also inward defilement?

### Panting For Purity

I venture to say, without any hesitation whatever, that every believer who has been led by the Holy Spirit to see in the light that the Spirit gives, this deep inward state of heart depravity, has felt keenly the awful defilement of this indwelling sin. This is something quite different from having an uneasy conscience toward God because of a sense of guilt on account of one's own sins. No, the experience I am speaking of is felt by those who are quite clear as to the pardon of all their sins and are settled as to their "standing" before God, but when the Holy Spirit shows the believer his indwelling sin he longs for something more. It is not his "standing" before God that he is concerned about, it is his inward "state" of heart. It is not pardon he wants, it is inward purity. The Spirit convicts

him of this indwelling sin, he sees and feels its presence; he utterly abhors it; he is broken and humbled to the dust before God on account of it. He now longs, yearns and pants with all his being for one priceless blessing -- purity of heart. He cries with David, "Create in me a clean heart O God," or with Charles Wesley:

"Oh for a heart to praise my God  
A heart from sin set free;  
A heart that's sprinkled with the blood  
So freely shed for me."

He inquires, in the words of another hymn writer:

"Tell me, can I never be free  
From this terrible bondage within?  
Is there no deliverance for me,  
Must I always have sin dwell within?"

#### The Two Natures Doctrine Denies Real Cleansing

What gospel has the advocate of "the two natures and repression of sin theory" to offer to the believer, panting for inward heart purity? None at all. His answer to the longing question, "Must I always have sin dwell within?" is "Yes, undoubtedly, in this life." It is the very root and essence of the theory that sin must always indwell the believer while in this world. Any teaching to the contrary he denounces as "sinless perfection" and "holiness -- the false." The utmost that he can offer to a believer panting for heart purity is the repression of the indwelling sin. According to his theory, the defilement of the indwelling sin must always be "present" within the heart. It will always be present as a living, hostile corruption, and it will always conflict with the new nature. In the meantime, God "sees the believer in Christ, and looks at him as He looks at His Son" (p.59 of Dr. Ironside's book) . Consequently, "so far as his standing is concerned he is ever cleansed from all sin" (p.119).

It is only in this sense that Dr. Ironside holds that the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. It has to do with "our standing before God" not the state of the heart. God simply "covers" the inward depravity of heart. Dr. Ironside says "the Lord will not impute sin to the one whose evil nature and its fruit have all been covered by the atonement of Jesus Christ" (p. 112). Notice that word "covered," not "cleansed." That the blood of Christ effects any actual inward cleansing of the heart from sin is point blank denied by him. As we have seen on page 66 he utterly repudiates the very idea.

How illogical, not to say, unscriptural, is such a denial of the power of the blood of Christ? If the blood of Christ can cleanse me from all the defilement caused by the committal of my own sins, why should it not

cleanse me from the defilement of indwelling sin which I have inherited because of the sin of Adam for which I am not personally responsible at all? If the blood of Christ can effect such a marvellous change in my "standing" before God, why should it not likewise effect a marvellous change in the "state" of my heart before God? Why should it be "thought a thing incredible" that God should, in this life, cleanse the heart of the fully trusting believer from all sin? Is He unable or unwilling to do so?

### The Scriptural "All" Of Cleansing

Let us turn to the Epistle of John for an answer to the foregoing questions, and consider especially chapter 1, verses 7 and 9:

Verse 7. But 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.

Verse 9. If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Here is blessed divine cleansing indeed -- cleansing from all unrighteousness and from all sin. Could any terms be plainer or more all-embracing? Notice particularly that verse 7 does not say sins, it says sin. It is not the guilt and defilement of sins continually committed that is meant because the apostle is referring to the blessedness of one who walks in the light and such a one he says "sinneth not" (see 1 John 3:6).

Now, is not indwelling sin inherited from Adam, a particular form of "sin" and unrighteousness"? Then on what scriptural ground dare we say that when the Word of God says all sin and all unrighteousness, it does not include indwelling sin? Even if we say that in verse 7 the world should be "every" and not "all" that makes no difference. It would then read "cleanseth us from 'every' sin," that is, every kind of sin, and "indwelling" sin is a kind of sin. If the apostle had intended to exclude indwelling sin from the cleansing in verses 7 and 9, would he not have made his intention perfectly clear by stating "cleanseth us from all sin, except indwelling sin"? On the other hand, if the apostle had intended to include indwelling sin in that cleansing, could he have expressed that intention more definitely and clearly than he has done by using the short, simple, but all-embracing terms of "all sin" and "all unrighteousness." As Frances Ridley Havergal said, "All means all."

In these two alls of 1 John 1:7 and 9, the earnest seeker after purity of heart and fullness of blessing can find an impregnable rock foundation for his faith. Just as the two "ails" in Isaiah 53:6 ("All we like sheep have gone astray . . . the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all"), when appropriated by faith by the guilty sinner bring justification; so these two "alls" in 1 John 1:7 and 9, when appropriated by faith by the earnest

believer seeking holiness, bring the full blessing of entire sanctification, or in other words, scriptural freedom from sin. Yes, these two ails when applied by the Holy Spirit, lift the believer into a new realm of inward blessedness.

#### The Cleansing Of 1 John 1:9

It is beautiful to notice the distinction in the tenses in verses 7 and 9. I refer to verse 9 first. In verse 9 the words "forgive" and "cleanse" are in the aorist tense, signifying that each blessing is a critical, instantaneous blessing. The two blessings are, however, distinct. The first blessing is to forgive (instantaneously and completely) us "our sins" that has to do with our guilt; the second blessing is to cleanse (also instantaneously and completely) us "from all unrighteousness," this has to do with all the inward pollution of sin, whether our own sins or whether inherited from Adam. 1 John 5:17 says that "all unrighteousness" is sin, hence cleansing from "all unrighteousness" is equivalent to cleansing from all sin. And as the word "cleanse" means an instantaneous act, a crisis, the verse teaches that there is such a thing as a definite, critical, entrance by faith unto this blessing of complete cleansing. The "cleansing from all unrighteousness" is just as instantaneous and complete as the "forgiveness" of all our sins.

#### The Cleansing Of 1 John 1:7

Verse 7 of chapter 1 declares how the blessing of the "cleansing from all unrighteousness" in verse 9 is maintained. In verse 7 two things go together, namely, "walking in the light," and "cleansing from all sin." But, whereas in verse 9, the verbs "forgive" and "cleanse" signify a critical blessing, in verse 7, the verbs are in the present tense, and signify something that continuously goes on.

This "cleansing from all sin" does not mean, however, an imputed "once for all" cleansing or "an unchangeable position, to which defilement can never attach in God's estimation," as Dr. Ironside teaches (page 50). No, the cleansing is strictly conditional; it is "If we walk in the light . . . the blood cleanses" etc. Neither is the verse limited to the thought of cleansing from sins although it is blessedly true that the blood does effect such a cleansing. The verse has a much deeper meaning. Bishop Westcott, in his commentary, says on this verse:

The thought here is of "sin" and not of "sins," of the spring, the principle, and not of the separate manifestations.

Now to "walk in the light" means to have fellowship with God and to "abide in him." Hence, as the believer, by faith and obedience, maintains this blessed heart union with the Lord, then all the omnipotent, sin-cleansing power of the blood of Christ (see page 65) is moment by

moment applied within and the heart is kept cleansed from all indwelling sin. Thus, the blood that makes the heart clean from all sin also avails to keep the heart cleansed and freed from all sin. This is the full, glorious meaning of 1 John 1:7.

We have seen, however, that Dr. Ironside denies that 1 John 1:7 teaches inward cleansing from sin and says that if the verse means this, then "we must walk in a perfect way while still imperfect, in order to become perfect." Could there be a greater misrepresentation of the meaning of the verse than these words of his? These words show that he has overlooked a vital fact, namely, that there is a complete and instantaneous cleansing from "all unrighteousness" mentioned in verse 9, and that, clearly, the continuous cleansing of verse 7 follows, as a consequence, of the instantaneous cleansing of verse 9.

What has Dr. Ironside to say about "cleansing from all unrighteousness"? Nothing at all. In the whole of his book no reference whatever is made to this vital phrase "cleansing from all unrighteousness," in the same way that no reference is made to the other vital passage in Romans 6:6. But these two passages, which teach clearly the "destruction of the body of sin," and "cleansing from all sin and all unrighteousness," kill "the two natures and repression of sin theory."

#### The Danger Of The Two Natures Theory

I trust that one's eyes have been opened to see the danger of this unscriptural theory. The danger is this; it belittles the present efficacy of the atonement of, Christ because it denies the power of the blood of Christ to. cleanse the heart of the believer now, from all unrighteousness, in flat contradiction to 1 John 1:9. The Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil. But according to this theory, sin, the work of the devil, must remain in the believer's heart all the time he is in this world. Even the power of the blood of Christ is insufficient to cleanse the believer from this indwelling thing of the devil. The utmost that can be accomplished in this life is simply to repress it. Thus the work of the devil is made greater than the work and blood of Christ.

The two natures theory underrates and limits the power of the precious blood of Christ. And this, surely, is the most damaging criticism that could be made of any theory of sanctification. Let us beware of any theory which would tone down and underrate the full scriptural meaning of "destroying the body of sin" and "cleansing from all unrighteousness." May we be led to experience and rejoice in scriptural freedom from sin through the precious blood, because: There is power, power, sin destroying power, In the precious blood of the Lamb.



## Chapter 10

### "IF WE SAY THAT WE HAVE NO SIN"

There is one verse in 1 John 1 which we will specially consider. It is verse 8, which reads:

"If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."

How often is this one verse, stripped entirely from its context, quoted by opponents of the truth of entire sanctification, as if it finally settled the matter and proved conclusively the necessary continuance of indwelling sin in the heart of every believer. What a gross perversion of the truth is such misinterpretation. In consequence of the way in which this verse has so often been misinterpreted and misapplied, many honest seekers of the truth have been perplexed and have been hindered from seeing the truth of entire sanctification. Let us then make the meaning of this verse quite clear.

#### Gnostic Heresy

It is very important to bear in mind that when the Apostle John wrote his epistle he had specially in view certain false teachers termed "Gnostics" who had crept in amongst the believers. One class of these Gnostics taught that all matter was ineradicably evil and that consequently as long as they dwelt in a physical body they could not possibly be freed from sin; they accordingly countenanced all sorts of sinful indulgences of the body, but claimed all the time that the soul itself was pure and without sin, and denied that they needed the cleansing of the blood of Christ. This dreadful heresy struck at the very foundations of the Christian faith and of true practical holiness. Now it was to expose the dreadful error of these false teachers and to contend for the truth of the necessity of the blood of Christ for salvation and of real inward and outward holiness on the part of the believer that the apostle wrote his epistle. He says:

These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you (1 John 2:26).

Now verses 5 to 10 of the first chapter of the Epistle of John are in three couplets. In the first verse of each couplet he declares the truth; in the second verse of each couplet he thunders against the error of these false teachers who deny the truth. Thus verses 7 and 8 form one of these couplets.

Verse 7 declares the glorious truth:

"But 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."

This is the truth for the believer. Acknowledging his sinfulness by nature, yet he rejoices to know that the blood of Christ cleanses and keeps him clean from all sin. This was made plain in the preceding chapter.

Verse 8 exposes the error of the false teachers who claimed that they had no sin from which they needed cleansing, or could be cleansed, by the blood of Christ

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."

Now no true believer in Christ would ever say or claim that he "had no sin" in the special sense in which it is meant in this verse. This verse is not therefore intended to apply to repentant, humble, simple believers, who are trusting in the full cleansing power of the blood of Christ to cleanse and keep them clean from all sin. It would be utterly false to say of such believers that they deceive themselves and the truth is not in them. The very fact that they are trusting moment by moment in the cleansing power of the precious blood of Christ is proof that the truth is in them. No, this verse is intended to be a blow at the error of the false teachers who deny their need of the cleansing blood of Christ.

Lest any honest seeker after truth should still remain unconvinced and think that the foregoing interpretation is merely an attempt to evade the force of the verse, I would point out that even such a strong advocate of the "two natures and suppression of sin" theory as Dr. Ironside himself admits that 1 John 1:8 refers primarily to those who deny the truth of God concerning sin and the blood of Christ Referring to this verse. On page 116 of his book he says:

It is perhaps too much to say that verse 8 refers to holiness professors; yet such may well weigh its solemn words, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.", Primarily it describes such as ignore the great fact of sin and would dare approach God apart from the cross of Christ. They are self-deceived, and know not the truth.

"But it is surely serious enough to think of real Christians joining with these, and, while still in danger of falling, denying the presence of sin within them." (p.116).

As regards the last sentence in the above quotation, we would just say, in passing, that the truth, which we all admit, that every Christian is in danger of falling while he is in this world does not of itself prove the two

naturist theory of the necessary continuance of active indwelling sin within the heart. This is explained more fully in Chapter 13, "Maintaining God's Deliverance."

We draw special attention, however, to the words which we have placed in italics. They show that even Dr. Ironside himself sees and admits that 1 John 1:8, "refers primarily" to a special class, namely, those who deny their need of the cleansing blood of Christ. There is nothing in this verse, therefore, properly understood, that affects in the slightest the truth of "scriptural freedom from sin," through the cleansing efficacy of the precious blood of Christ.

## Chapter 11

### A THREEFOLD WITNESS TO THE CLEANSING BLOOD

We will now call three well known witnesses to testify to the mighty transforming power of the truth concerning the blood of Christ which we have just been considering. They will testify to the wonderful reality in their hearts and lives of the truth that the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin (including indwelling sin) . The three are now with Christ, but they, being dead, still speak through the glowing testimonies they left behind them.

First Witness --Commissioner S. L. Brengle of the Salvation Army.  
(Author of "Helps to Holiness" and "Heart Talks on Holiness," which have brought light and blessing to thousands) .

Extracts from "Samuel Logan Brengle, Portrait of a Prophet," by Clarence W. Hall (pp. 55-60).

Examining himself during the past several weeks, he has seen his heart to be studded with subtle bits of selfishness, proud little ingredients of the great big "I" in him. Let him tell it:

"I saw the humility of Jesus and my pride; the meekness of Jesus, and my temper; the lowliness of Jesus and my ambition; the purity of Jesus and my unclean heart; the faithfulness of Jesus and the deceitfulness of my heart. . . . I got my eyes off everybody but Jesus and myself and I came to loathe myself."

Emptied of self, he is nevertheless, not yet filled with God. Worried at the ineffectiveness of his efforts, elbows leaning hard on the study table, he gropes in spiritual darkness. And suddenly there comes up from his heart a voice speaking words that are old, but that bear a gloriously new meaning, "H we confess 'our sins, he is 'faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." . . . . to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The words break across his heart like a sky rocket. Instantly the grace and faithfulness of God dawn upon him, and, as he drops his head in his arms and murmurs confidently, "Lord, I believe that," a great sense of peace flows over his soul. in the next instant has begun the movement of a cool, refreshing breeze within him and started springs of sparkling waters bubbling up all through his being. Two mornings after his sanctification the honey-pots were spilled into his heart. He has mirrored this experience for us in the following:

"While reading some of the words of Jesus, He gave me such a blessing as I never had dreamed a man could have this side of heaven. It was an unutterable revelation. It was a heaven of love that came into my heart. My soul melted like wax before fire. . . . Every ambition for self was now

gone. The pure flame of love burned it like a blazing fire would burn a moth.

"I walked out over Boston Common before breakfast, weeping for joy, and praising God. Oh, how I loved! In that hour I knew Jesus, and I loved Him till it seemed my heart would break with love."

Concerning his sanctification, of which the "glory experience" was only an incident, he has given us this record:

"I have never doubted the experience since, any more than I could doubt that I had seen my mother. It is a living experience."

Second Witness -- Thomas Cook. Noted Evangelist and First Principal of Cliff College.

Extract from "New Testament Holiness," by Thomas Cook (another book on holiness that has been the means of great blessing) .

"My experience was full of fits and starts, changeable and uneven. I was conscious also of a mighty want; there seemed a vacuum in my nature which grace had not filled. . . . For three years this half-and-half sort of life continued, when I was so dissatisfied that I felt unless I had something better I could not go on any longer.

"At this very juncture, when I felt I must die unless I received this grace, an evangelist came to our town and proclaimed full salvation. . . . Some friends entered into rest before he left, but, greatly to my disappointment I did not. . . . A few friends who had received "full salvation" during the evangelist's visit decided to meet together week by week. It was at the first meeting where the Lord met me. After listening to their experiences I could bear no longer, but asked them to begin at once to pray that I might enter in. I fell upon my knees with the determination not to rise again until my request was granted. The passage, "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," was instantly applied to my heart, and with such power as I had never felt before. if I walked in light the full cleansing from sin was my heritage and all I had to do was to immediately claim it. I did so and cried out at the top of my voice "I claim the blessing now." My friends then began to sing:

'Tis done! Thou dost this moment save,  
With full salvation bless.

"While they sang the refining fire came down and went through my heart, searching, melting, burning, filling all its chambers with light, and hallowing my whole heart to God. Oh! the indescribable sweetness of

that moment! It was not so much ecstatic emotion I experienced as an unspeakable peace; God's love swallowed me up. Many beautiful years have passed away since then. But no words can ever express the complete satisfaction I have in Christ, the delight I find in prayer and praise, and the clear and indubitable witness of cleansing through the blood of Jesus.

Third Witness -- Miss Frances Ridley Havergal (the well known Author and Hymn Writer).

Extract from a letter written to her sister, Miss Maria V. G. Havergal ("Memorials of Frances Ridley Havergal," by Miss M. V. Havergal, pp. 103-105).

"Have we not been limiting 1 John 1:7 by practically making it refer only to "the remission of sins that are past," instead of taking the grand simplicity of "cleanseth us from all sin"? "All" is all; and as we may trust Him to cleanse from the stain of past sins, so we may trust Him to cleanse from all present defilement; yes all. If not, we take away from this most precious promise. It was that one word "cleanseth" which opened the door of a very glory of hope and joy to me. I had never seen the force of the tense before, a continual present, always a present tense, not a present which the next moment becomes a past. It goes on cleansing and I have no words to tell how my heart rejoices in it. Not a coming to be cleansed in the fountain only, but a remaining in the fountain, so that it may and can go on cleansing.

One of the intensest moments of my life was when I saw the force of that word "cleanseth." The utterly unexpected and altogether unimagined sense of its fulfilment to me, on simply believing it in its fullness, was just indescribable. I expected nothing like it short of heaven."

There is one striking thing that is common to these three testimonies. The Spirit of God applied the same truth to them all, namely, the truth of the complete inward heart cleansing from all sin by the blood of Christ according to 1 John 1:7 and 9. Miss Havergal testified that it was that one word "cleanseth" which opened for her "a door of a very glory of hope and joy." The same "door of glory" was opened to Commissioner Brengle and Thomas Cook and the glory remained all through their lives -- Commissioner Brengle for over forty years and Thomas Cook for over thirty. Both were wonderful soul winners and won thousands to the Lord. Multitudes of God's saints have also found the truth of 1 John 1:7, "a door of glory."

The Veil Of The Two Natures Doctrine

Alas, to many believers that "door" has not been opened. The two natures doctrine casts a heavy veil over the glory because it teaches that the cleansing of that verse is a judicial cleansing only and flatly denies that the blood of Christ effects any cleansing of the heart from indwelling sin. If this "veil" is upon the heart and mind of any reader of this book may the Spirit of God remove it so that the full truth of 1 John 1:7 may become a "door of very glory and joy" to the soul. Thus will the reader know, as a priceless gift from God, "scriptural freedom from sin."

## Chapter 12

### A FALLACIOUS ILLUSTRATION

We will now examine an illustration that Dr. Ironside gives of "the doctrine of the two natures." He says, "The doctrine of the two natures is frequently stated and always implied in scripture." But what precisely is meant by "the two natures"? The phrase is not used in scripture, hence it is very important to define terms. When Dr. Ironside speaks about "the two natures," he means "the old nature" (the sin nature received from Adam), and the "new nature" (the holy nature received from God in regeneration) . Now the theory asserts that these two natures exist side by side all through every believer's life and continually oppose each other. Dr. Ironside endeavours to make the doctrine of "the two natures" clear by the illustration of the grafting of a tree as follows:

#### The Grafted Tree Illustration

A man has a seedling orange tree which represents "old nature;" the seedling oranges represent sins, the fruit of the old seedling orange tree. He wishes to grow Washington navels instead. He therefore decides to graft the tree. He cuts off all branches of the seedling orange tree close to the parent stem and inserts a piece taken from a Washington navel tree. This graft represents "new" nature. The tree now brings forth, ordinarily, Washington navels, representing the new fruit of the Spirit, but it may still bring forth shoots from the old seedling orange tree, which will develop into seedlings if the pruning knife is not used.

Dr. Ironside applies the illustration as follows:

The pruning knife of self-judgment is ever needed. Otherwise the old nature will begin to manifest itself; for it is no more eradicated than is the old nature of the seedling free after having been grafted. Hence the need of ever being in subjection to the Word of God and of unsparing self-judgment.

To deny the presence of the old nature is but to invite defeat. It would be like the orchardist who refuses to believe it possible that seedlings could be produced if shoots from the old trunk were allowed to grow on unchecked. . . . For the believer it is only folly to ignore that sin dwells in me. To do so is but to be deceived and to expose myself to all manner of evil things because of my failure to recognize my need of daily dependence upon God (pp. 130, 131).

#### Fallacies Of The Grafted Tree Illustration

There is confusion of thought in the above extract. We believe as strongly as Dr. Ironside in the need on the part of every believer of

"daily dependence upon God"; "subjection to the word of God" and "self-judgment," but we do not agree that these facts prove the "two natures" theory of the necessary continuance of active indwelling sin in the heart. This inference, drawn from the illustration of a grafted tree, is false, because the illustration itself is not in accordance with scripture for the following three reasons:

1. It denies scriptural freedom from sin.

It assumes that there must of necessity be sins (the old shoots) springing spontaneously from indwelling sin (the old seedling tree) . Thus we can never be free from the fruit of indwelling sin. But this assumption is utterly contrary to the truth of Romans 6 and 1 John 1, which we have considered in Chapters 7 and 9.

2. It confuses "old nature" (indwelling sin), with human nature.

If the seedling tree represents "old" nature and its shoots must be cut off, then clearly, the seedling tree is made to represent indwelling sin. But God does not graft the new nature on to indwelling sin! God does, however, graft the new nature on to human nature, which is a very different matter. Thus John says, "His seed [that is, God's seed -- the new nature] remaineth in him" (that is, of course, in the man himself) . The illustration does not, therefore, represent the true facts of the case at all and the inferences drawn therefrom are fallacious.

3. It assumes that God mutilates indwelling sin.

In the illustration, the man cuts off the branches of the seedling tree leaving the root and stem still in the ground. Now the seedling represents "old" nature or indwelling sin, which Dr. Ironside admits is "a hateful intruder" within the believer. But where in the Word of God are we told that God does such a thing as to mutilate indwelling sin -- to cut off its branches by leaving the root and stem still in the heart? There is not a line to support such an idea. The Lord did say, however, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up" (Matt. 15: 13). That is the divine method in entire sanctification, not just cutting off the branches of the evil "plant" of indwelling sin, and leaving the root and stem still within the heart.

The truth is that in the new birth God does graft new nature" on to human nature (not indwelling sin) . In the second work of grace, God takes away "the hateful intruder" indwelling sin from the heart, but God does not take away human nature. It is important to see this distinction. Man's nature consists of spirit, soul, body, conscience, affections, appetites, will, etc. These are not sinful in themselves. They constitute "the self." "The self" is not sin. It is "the hateful intruder" -- the indwelling sin in the self, which renders the self sinful. Paul could say

"The Son of God loved me," but Christ did not love the indwelling sin in Paul because He came to destroy it. And Paul could also say "Christ liveth in me."

### A Scriptural Illustration

The illustration of the grafting of a tree can, however, be adapted to illustrate one aspect of the truth of sanctification provided we are careful to make a distinction between human nature and indwelling sin or "old nature." Let, then, the seedling tree represent human nature. Imagine that a poisonous fungus has entwined itself around the tree and has actually penetrated into the very tissues and roots. The poisonous fungus would represent indwelling sin, "the hateful intruder." The piece taken from the Washington navel tree and grafted into the seedling tree would represent "new nature" or "the seed" of 1 John 3:9. The grafting typifies regeneration. Later on the gardener cuts out the fungus and thus sets the tree free from "the hateful intruder." This act of excision typifies the second work of grace when God sets the believer "free from sin indeed."

### The New Covenant And "The Two Natures" Error

But this eliminating, destructive, work of God in relation to indwelling sin is flatly denied in "the two natures" theory. The theory is, however, utterly at variance with the provisions of the New Covenant of grace ratified in the blood of Christ. The spiritual provisions of the New Covenant, originally made with Israel as a nation and to be wonderfully fulfilled in them in the future, are to be enjoyed by believers in Christ here and now. This is clear from Man. 26:27, 28, Hebrews 8:6-13 and 10:14-18. Now the New Covenant provides for:

#### 1. The circumcision of the heart.

"The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart ... to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul." Deut. 30:6.

Obviously, this act of divine circumcision involves the "cutting off" and "taking away" of something from the heart? What is it that is thus taken away? The next quotation supplies the answer

#### 2. The taking away of the stony heart.

"And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and I will give you an heart of flesh and I will put my Spirit within you." Ezekiel 36:26.

What is this "stony heart"? Is it not the equivalent of indwelling sin? Sin deceives and hardens the heart (Heb. 3:13). God promises to take away completely this "stony heart" which obviously means that He circumcises the heart and takes away the sin which causes the hardness.

### 3. The gift of one heart and one way.

"And I will be their God; and I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever." Jeremiah 32: 39.

When God performs this spiritual "circumcision" and "takes away the stony heart," He gives us one heart, a united heart, clean and true toward Him -- God's provision for us is one heart and one way. These three glorious provisions of the new covenant of grace completely demolish the two natures theory.

#### The Factor Of Human Responsibility

We must point out, however, that the illustration of the grafting of a tree must be used with great reserve as a method of explaining the truth of entire sanctification; it does not, by itself, express the whole truth. In the sanctification of a human being a very important factor has to be taken into consideration which does not arise in the case of a fruit tree, namely, the will and responsibility of the believer himself. There is the divine and the human side to the truth. Scripture teaches that the fruit of holiness is produced only by the continual co-operation of the believer with God. This vital aspect of truth is not made clear in the illustration of a fruit tree.

If we liken sin to an infection it will, perhaps, make this aspect of truth a little clearer. Now "this infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerate" (Church of England, Article IX), but, praise God, as we have already demonstrated, there is full divine provision for a present cure of this infection of indwelling sin. There are, however, certain conditions or laws of spiritual health which must be observed by the fully sanctified believer if the divine cure is to be maintained, otherwise the believer may again become infected with sin. These conditions are dealt with in the following chapter. But if I live in the midst of an epidemic and have to take medicine regularly to prevent myself becoming infected, does that fact prove that I must already have the virus of the disease in my system? Certainly not. Neither does the fact that the fully sanctified believer must be subject to the Word of God, watch and pray and examine himself, etc., prove that he must continually have active indwelling sin within the heart. No, the fully sanctified believer carefully observes all these conditions as a preventive against his heart becoming again infected with the virus of sin. And the greater his sense of the blessing of the divine deliverance, the greater will be his watchfulness and dependence upon God in order to maintain the divinely given freedom from sin. He ever remembers those solemn words "His servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness" (Rom. 6: 16) and also, "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die" (Rom. 8: 13).

## Chapter 13

### MAINTAINING GOD'S DELIVERANCE

#### Not Sinless Perfection

It is quite possible that at this point some readers may have a difficulty. They may raise the objection, "but if we can be cleansed and freed from all sin is not that sinless perfection? Does not that mean that we can never sin again or be tempted?" The answer is emphatically "No." Scriptural freedom from sin does not mean this at all. It certainly does not mean that we never can sin again; it means that we certainly may fall again into sin, but we need not do so. No one, however, can ever reach a state of grace in this world where he can dispense with this solemn warning: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Con 10:2). Continual vigilance and prayerfulness is the price of maintaining freedom from sin.

It follows, therefore, that scriptural freedom from sin does not mean freedom from temptation to sin. The fallen angels and Adam and Eve had no sin in their hearts at first, but they were tempted to sin and fell. No one can reach a state of grace in this world in which he will not be tempted to sin and, therefore, liable to fall. But praise God, He can set us free from the indwelling sin, the traitor within the heart, that we can, by His grace and as we abide in Christ, always stand and need never fall (1 Corinthians 10:13).

We shall now deal with the important question of maintaining the blessing of God's deliverance from sin. There are many who are not clear on the question of the extent of God's deliverance from sin in this life and the maintenance of that deliverance. For instance, I have the report of an address given about two years ago to a large audience of Christians by a speaker at a well known holiness convention. He spoke on 1 John 1:7, 8, and clearly taught the continuous cleansing of the blood of Christ in verse 7. He then went on to say:

God could have delivered us once for all from sin by one sweep of sovereign grace, but that is not the will of God for you and for me.

But what about verse 9 which says that "God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse [instantaneously] us from all unrighteousness"? Is not this an instantaneous divine cleansing by sovereign grace? The speaker dwelt on the continuous cleansing of verse 7 but never once mentioned the instantaneous cleansing of verse 9. On the contrary, he denied it. We have dealt more fully with the subject of instantaneous cleansing in Chapter 14

He then went on to explain why it was that he thought God never gave this instantaneous deliverance. Here is the reason he gave:

"You would never know the exceeding sinfulness of sin that way, nor the exceeding joy of victory that way; it would be automatic. You would never know the great glory of one day receiving from Him the crown, the reward that shall be the portion of the victorious."

Thus, according to this teaching, God's purpose is that we should have a continual fight with indwelling sin in our hearts in order to qualify for a crown in glory! There is not a line of scripture to support such a strange idea. On the contrary, indwelling sin is our greatest inward hindrance to the life of holiness and victory. God purposes to set us "free indeed" from this indwelling foe so that we may concentrate all our efforts on the true Christian conflict which is in Ephesians 6: 10-18, and thus we may overcome, even as He overcame, and sit with Him in His throne (Rev. 3: 21).

It is also quite wrong to think that when God cleanses our hearts from all unrighteousness, that thereafter victory is merely "automatic." Scriptural freedom from sin does not mean a static state of sinlessness nor "automatic" victory, as if the believer was merely an automaton. It means a condition of freedom maintained moment by moment by active faith and obedience on the part of the believer. We will now endeavour to make this quite clear.

### Sovereign Grace And Human Responsibility

It is the purpose of this book to show from God's Word that full divine provision has been made to set the believer free from sin indeed. In order, therefore, to stimulate and confirm faith, we have, up to the present, emphasized mainly the truth of this divine provision. We shall, however, have a very unbalanced view of the truth if we look at one side only, namely, the Sovereign Grace aspect. There is another aspect, equally important, namely -- Human Responsibility -- which we referred to at the close of the previous chapter. These two aspects of truth run side by side like two parallel railway lines throughout the whole Word of God. They must never, therefore, be divorced one from the other if we desire to obtain a balanced view of the truth. We shall now emphasize the truth of human responsibility in connection with glorious freedom from sin. We need to see this aspect of truth if we would know how to maintain God's deliverance from sin and, in considering this aspect, we shall deal with some fallacies of the two natures theory.

A simple story from the Scriptures will illustrate the two aspects of truth. In John 5, our Lord healed the impotent man of his disease and afterward gave him a word of caution. Notice now how the two principles

of (1) Sovereign Grace, and (2) Human Responsibility, occur in our Lord's words in verse 14:

Sovereign Grace -- Behold, thou are made whole.

Human Responsibility -- Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

The Lord had, in sovereign grace, cured the impotent man. He was "made whole." But the maintenance of the cure was conditional upon his obeying Christ's words, "Sin no more." Here was the man's responsibility if he would maintain the deliverance.

Does this principle apply also to the believer and to the maintenance of deliverance from indwelling sin? It does. Let us look again at 1 John 1:7, and we shall find precisely the same parallel principle as we saw in John 5:14

1 John 1:7

Sovereign Grace -- The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth [continuously] us from all sin.

Human Responsibility -- If we walk [continuously] in the light as he is in the light.

1 John 1:9 teaches that the blood of Christ effects a perfect deliverance from indwelling sin. That is the sovereign grace aspect. 1 John 1:7 teaches how that deliverance is maintained. There is a condition to be fulfilled on the part of the believer in order to maintain the deliverance. That condition is "walking in the light," or, in other words, "faith and obedience." That is the human responsibility aspect. The cleansing of 1 John 1:7 is not, therefore, merely an imputed cleansed position -- a "standing" in the sight of God, which we secure once and forever by a single act of faith while all the time the pollution of indwelling sin remains in the heart. No, it is a continuous, moment by moment cleansing as we continue moment by moment by faith "walking in the light."

Continuous Cleansing

Why continuous cleansing? One reason is that sin may be likened to a highly infectious disease. Pasteur discovered that the air is full of invisible organisms which contaminate food and cause fermentation, putrefaction and death. Likewise the spiritual and moral atmosphere of this world in which believers dwell is sin infected. Christians are surrounded by a world of unsaved sinners in whom sin reigns. Hence they are continually in contact with sin. Moreover, evil spirits are ever present watching for opportunities to dart their thoughts of evil into our

minds. How easy, therefore, for the germs, as it were, of pride, unbelief, envy, covetousness, impurity and in fact every kind of sin, once again, to infect the heart. The blood of Christ is the divine sin antiseptic. Just as God has provided a wonderful continuous flow over the eye which protects and cleanses the extremely delicate pupil from the particles of dust in the air, so, as the Christian "walks in the light" the blood of Christ continuously cleanses that delicate spiritual organ "the heart" from the infection of sin, and all unconscious contamination. What joy and confidence toward God this truth imparts. Hallelujah!

Will a believer who is thus trusting the blood of Christ for complete cleansing, fail to recognize his need of daily dependence upon God, as Dr. Ironside suggests? (See extract quoted on page 83.) A thousand times "No!" A greater misconception could hardly be imagined. The very opposite is the case. Such a believer has seen sin in the light of the cross. He has also seen it in his own heart. He hates it. He has been humbled in the dust before God. He is trusting Christ for complete and continuous cleansing. He feels his own worthlessness and utter helplessness apart from Christ. He realizes, therefore, as never before, his need of dependence upon God in order to maintain God's deliverance.

### Walking In The Spirit

The Apostle Paul also teaches the principle of human responsibility when he says, "Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16). What is it to walk in the Spirit? It means to keep the whole life, inner and outer, in harmony with the indwelling Spirit. The Christian is responsible to do "the walking." But this obviously means that he must first be set completely free from the dominion of all sin, then he can "walk in the Spirit" and thus maintain God's deliverance.

And what does it mean, "Ye shall not fulfil the lust [or desires] of the flesh"? Obviously it does not mean that the Christian "walking in the Spirit" will not fulfil the natural and perfectly legitimate desires of human nature such as eating, drinking, sleeping, marrying, etc., etc. Evidently the apostle refers to the (evil, sinful) desires of the flesh that are enumerated in Gal. 5:19-21. The Christian "walking in the Spirit" will, on the contrary, manifest the fruit of the Spirit in Gal. 5:22, 23. Thus we are responsible to walk in the light and to walk in the Spirit in order to maintain God's deliverance.

### The "Old Man" and The "New Man"

The believer may be likened to a weaver weaving a pattern into the fabric on the loom. In his unregenerate days he used to weave according to the "old" pattern, namely, "the old man." But now he has "put off the old man and his deeds," namely, he has discarded the "old" pattern, and now he weaves his fabric (his daily life) according to a new pattern

altogether, that is, he has "put on the new man" -- according to Christ. The believer is responsible to do the weaving. This is the teaching of Colossians 3. True, if he is not watchful he may "revert to type," and weave according to the old discarded pattern, that is, the "old man." But there is no need to do so. On the contrary, the commands in Colossians 3 imply scriptural freedom from sin because the believer is commanded to be done definitely, once for all, not as a gradual process, with all sin and to weave the pattern of his life according to Christ. The believer is responsible to obey these commands of Colossians 3, which should be carefully read if he is to maintain God's deliverance from sin.

### The Price Of Freedom -- Obedience

The foregoing involves the yielding of the whole being to the Lord, or, as Oswald Chambers would express it, "renouncing my right to myself." This is the price of freedom from sin. In one word, it is obedience. It is the way of the cross.

Thus we need to know the following three things:

1. Deliverance from Sin. God does this. We must know this in power first.
2. Denial of Self. The believer must do this. It means saying, "Not my will but Thine," in everything connected with himself.
3. Discipline of Sanctification. This is a process as a result of God and the believer working together. The believer grows in grace and holiness as he learns all through life what obedience to the will of God means even through pain and suffering.

This is the price of maintaining God's deliverance. Are we paying the price?

### The Cleansing Word

In order to maintain God's deliverance, it is absolutely necessary to hold fast and maintain the truth of God as revealed in the Word of God. Only thus can we learn the will of God and walk in the light. As the Christian walks in the light and in the Spirit, he will come under the mighty sanctifying power of the truth. The Word of God is likened to water -- "the washing of water by the word" (Eph. 5:26). What a wonderful purifying, vitalizing power it exerts upon the soul when received by faith. There is blessed cleansing, therefore, by the water of the Word as well as by the blood of Christ. It is by the sanctifying power of the Spirit, the water (the Word) and the blood -- the three agree in one (1 John 5:8) -- that God's deliverance is maintained.

The Lord's promise is "If ye continue in my word... ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31, 32). And the Apostle John says, "Let that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son and in the Father" (1 John 2:24). The believer is thus responsible to "continue in the truth" and not to be moved away from it. Tremendous, subtle forces are at work today to draw the Christian away from the truth of God, but the reward of continuing in the Word is infinitely glorious, fraught with deep present and eternal blessing. The reward is the indwelling of God in the heart according to John 14:23. Thus it is that we maintain God's deliverance.

### The Throne Of Grace

It is almost unnecessary to add that the Christian who is "walking in the Spirit" and is being "sanctified by the truth" will be one who loves prayer and delights to seek the face of God. He will ever watch and pray and humbly breathe that prayer, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts." While fully acknowledging his own responsibility to abide in Christ, yet he realizes that, without Christ, he can do nothing and that he needs the same divine power moment by moment to keep him free from sin, as he needed to cleanse him in the first instance. He continually resorts, therefore, to the throne of grace in order to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. He rejoices in the fact that the Lord Jesus, as our great High Priest on the throne is there to succour him in every temptation, and that he can, therefore, draw by faith upon the mighty triumphant resurrection power of the risen Christ as a preventive against sin and thus maintain God's deliverance.

### The Body And The Mind

#### 1. The Body.

The believer is responsible for "keeping under" his body. On this point Dr. Ironside comments as follows on James 3:1 and 2:

What need of bridling the body if all tendency to sin is gone, if inbred evil is eradicated? Is it not plain, on the face of it, that the perfect man is not a sinless man, but a man who holds himself in check and is not under the power of sin that still dwells in him? (p.109).

The simple answer is that the believer who is trusting Christ for a complete cleansing of his heart from indwelling sin "keeps under" or controls his fallen physical body (1 Cor. 9), because its appetites, etc., though not sinful in themselves, may be the avenues along which sin may again defile the heart. Hence he "brings the body into subjection," not because sin is still active in his heart, but because the "keeping

under" of the body is one of the conditions of maintaining God's deliverance from sin.

2. "In many things we offend all" (James 3:2).

Commenting on the above words, Dr. Ironside says:

James, clearly, did not possess, nor did he know of any one who did possess, the second blessing of sinless perfection. He speaks by the Spirit of God, and tells us that we all offend in many things (p. 109)

Let us look at the context in which the words quoted occur:

Be not many teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment. For in many things we all stumble. If any stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also (R.V.).

The context clearly shows that by "we," James is addressing primarily, a special class, namely, self-appointed teachers of God's Word. Now we do not claim that the cleansing of the heart from indwelling sin does, in itself, impart a full knowledge of God's Word or will or insure infallible powers of judgment. How easy, therefore, for any teacher of God's Word to err and thus "stumble" in word, especially if he is not sent of God. This may have serious consequences for those who may accept the erring teacher's teaching; hence the warning of "heavier judgment" upon such teachers to whom the words "in many things we all stumble" are primarily applied.

It is utterly wrong, however, to quote only the words "in many things we offend all," cut them completely from their context and then stretch them to mean, in effect, "In many things all Christians sin and offend God." Such an interpretation would flatly contradict 1 Thess. 2:10; Hebrews 13:21; 1 John 2:10 and 3:22. James himself refutes such an interpretation for he immediately speaks of the man who "offends not in word" and says he is "a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body." Peter also tells us that if we comply with the conditions of his Second Epistle, chapter 1, "Ye shall never stumble" (verse 10). Thus Paul, Peter, James and John all agree that God's grace is sufficient for us to be "sincere and without offence till the day of Christ" (Phil. 1:10).

3. The Mind.

Scriptural freedom from sin does not mean freedom from thoughts of evil coming into the mind. There is a manifest difference between (1) an evil thought of the heart accompanied with design and purpose of will, and (2) a thought of evil coming into the mind through suggestions, association of ideas, contact with the world or through the powers of

darkness. We can be freed from the first but not from the second, otherwise we could never be tempted at all. The believer must also, therefore, guard his mind lest it also becomes the avenue through which sin may enter and again defile the heart. He must bring "into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5), in order to maintain God's deliverance from sin.

### Witness And Service

Romans 10:10 states, "With the mouth confession is made unto salvation." The believer who is in the enjoyment of God's full salvation from sin will witness to the truth in humility and grace to the glory of God. He will not rest complacently in this great blessing for his own selfish enjoyment. He would soon lose the blessing if he did. The greater his sense of God's deliverance the greater will be his desire to serve the Lord and to be a channel through which this so great salvation can flow to others. Thus it is by the Holy Ghost impelled witness of the lips and the love-inspired service of the life that the fully sanctified believer maintains the joy of God's deliverance from sin.

### If any Man Sin

The Apostle John wrote, "My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1). This verse is like the lifeboat on the mighty ocean liner. What wondrous grace to make full provision for us, if we should sin. The unceasing intercessory work of Christ as our great High Priest as set forth in the Epistle to the Hebrews is to prevent us from falling into sin. His work as our Advocate with the Father, in the first Epistle of John is to restore us, if and when we do fall into sin. If a believer should thus sadly fall, let him neither doubt nor delay, but hasten at once to the throne of grace, confess it all penitently to the Lord, and he will find it is still true that:

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).

Praise God, the precious blood of Christ ever avails to cleanse us from all sin and to keep us clean as we "walk in the light."

In the light of all the scriptural truth that we have considered thus far we may well ask is it humility or unbelief to doubt that in the atonement of Christ, God has provided a present perfect cure for indwelling sin? Is it presumption or true faith to teach that when Christ said, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed," He meant that He was an uttermost Saviour, not only from acts of sin but from indwelling sin itself?



## Chapter 14

### INSTANTANEOUS CLEANSING: A GIFT OF GOD

There are many Christians who believe in "sudden, instantaneous conversion in this life, but strongly oppose "instantaneous cleansing from indwelling sin" in this life. But to believe in the first and to deny the second is neither logical nor scriptural for there is just as much scriptural evidence for the one as the other. The very idea, however, of such an instantaneous divine cleansing or deliverance in this life seems utterly incredible to many dear Christians who have accepted without question, perhaps for years, the doctrine of the two natures. We trust, however, that the conditions mentioned in the previous chapter combined with the safeguards specified in Chapter 6 may help to clear away honest difficulties in the minds of earnest seeking Christians and help them to see and believe in the glorious truth of "scriptural freedom from sin."

#### Life And "Abundant" Life

We must be careful, however, not to confuse purity with maturity. Maturity is a matter of growth and requires time. The work of making the heart of a child of God pure and freed from indwelling sin is a matter, however, of a moment and is an act of God's sovereign grace and power. If God can implant the seed of divine life in the heart in a moment (that is, regeneration) can He not also remove, in a moment, the corrupt seed of indwelling sin from the heart and fill with the Holy Spirit and thus impart abundant life (that is, entire sanctification). There is a difference between "life" and "abundant" life. A person may have life and yet be in the hospital enfeebled and handicapped by disease; he may not have "abundant" life. Alas, how many real Christians are spiritually alive but "in hospital" as it were. The new life implanted by God in regeneration is enfeebled and handicapped by the activity of indwelling sin in the heart causing the workings of unbelief, pride, envy, jealousy, discontent, covetousness, uncleanness, etc. Now the message of scriptural freedom from sin is that there is a complete deliverance from all this evil indwelling disease of the heart. Our Lord came, not only that we might have "life" but have it "more abundantly," that is, perfect spiritual health of heart which involves freedom from the disease of sin and the fullness of an indwelling Christ through the spirit.

#### Instantaneous Cleansing

The late Rev. Evan H. Hopkins in his book "The Law of Liberty in the Spiritual Life," pointed out that our Lord's miracles of healing were "symbols of spiritual healing, illustrations of what He is now doing upon the souls of men." He goes on to say:

"These miracles were not merely manifestations of divine power. They were "signs" of spiritual truth. They were significant of something far higher than mere physical cures. Nor must we limit our interpretation of them to that of "conversion." In the majority of instances they set forth the blessings to be known and realized by those who are God's children.

Disease supposes the existence of life. What is disease but life in an abnormal or morbid condition? (p.16).

I believe that the above extract expresses the truth concerning our Lord's miracles of healing. It is beautiful to study Matthew 8 in this light. The very first miracle that our Lord performed after His delivery of the Sermon on the Mount was to heal a poor leper. The leper was utterly incurable by any human power, but by a touch and a word from Christ immediately his leprosy was cleansed (Matt. 8: 3), and in Mark 1:42 it says, "Immediately the leprosy departed from him." It was done instantly. If our Lord during His humiliation on earth was able to give, in an instant, perfect bodily health to those diseased in body, is He not in his exaltation in heaven, equally able and willing to give in an instant perfect inward soul health to those diseased by sin? Most assuredly He is. "He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him" (Heb. 7:25).

The late Dr. Daniel Steele in his book, "Milestone Papers" says:

"When we come to consider the work of purification in the believer's soul, by the power of the Holy Spirit, both in the new birth and in entire sanctification, we find that the aorist is almost uniformly used. This tense, according to the best New Testament grammarians, never indicates a continuous, habitual or repeated act, but one which is momentary, and done once for all." (p.62)

In the light of Dr. Steele's remarks we will very briefly refer to two scriptures which prove instantaneous cleansing from all sin as a gift of God's grace receivable by faith in this life.

1. We make no apology for referring again to 1 John 1:9. "If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive [aorist] us our sins and cleanse [aorist] us from all unrighteousness" Indwelling sin is clearly "unrighteousness" and, therefore, must be included in the "all unrighteousness" from which God promises to cleanse us instantaneously in this life. To doubt or deny this is surely to impugn the faithfulness of God himself.

2. "The great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from [aorist -- Weymouth translates "purchase our freedom from"] all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2: 13, 14).

Again, indwelling sin is clearly "iniquity" and must, therefore, be included in the "all iniquity" from which Christ died to set us free in this life. To doubt or deny this is surely to impugn the truth of our Lord's own words that he whom the Son makes free from sin is free indeed (really and actually so).

To the simple believer who will just accept God's own word as it stands, these two passages which speak of instantaneous cleansing from all unrighteousness and freedom from all iniquity, prove that God has provided for us in this life a perfect, instantaneous cure for indwelling sin.

### A Gift Of God

This blessed experience of "scriptural freedom from sin" is a gift of God's grace. It is therefore for every believer, and, as we are saved by grace through faith, this blessed grace of holiness is receivable by faith. Hearts are purified by faith (Acts 15: 8, 9), we are sanctified by faith (Acts 26: 18), and if, by faith, then it is not by works, that is, it is not by any effort of our own, or by growth.

If by faith, then why not now? The very fact that this blessed experience is by faith proves that it is for this present life and is, therefore, available for every believer now. The truth was expressed in a nutshell in a little pamphlet on "Holiness," by Mr. Robert Lee, of Manchester, a Keswick speaker, in which he said:

"Holiness is a gift. Holiness is just as much a gift from God as justification. Holiness is a gift to be received by faith and enjoyed."

Here then is the gospel for the believer! God's gift of grace, a heart cleansed from sin and indwelt and filled with the Holy Spirit, is the birthright of every believer and is receivable by faith now. Oh, that every believer were fully awakened to this fact and would not rest until he had received the gift of holiness by faith.

### Putting "The Cart Before The Horse"

Now all this glorious truth of instantaneous deliverance from sin through faith is utterly denied in the "two natures" doctrine. Dr. Ironside says, "It is vain to reason that there can be no true growth until holiness be first obtained by faith" (p. 140). What message then has he for the believer who is longing to experience a God-given deliverance from sin and true holiness? In a nutshell it is as follows:

"The only secret of living Christ is occupation with Christ. And it is for this God has given us such abundant fullness in His Word. . . . To "read mark, learn and inwardly digest" this divinely inspired unfolding of the

person and work of Christ is the paramount requisite for the believer, if he would glorify God in his practical ways." (pp. 134, 135)

We most heartily agree with all that Dr. Ironside says about the necessity of occupation with Christ and meditation on the Word of God. These are blessed and essential exercises for all who would be truly holy, but we venture to say that the earnest Christian who searches the Word of God and allows the Word of God to search him will soon discover his deep, deep need of full deliverance from indwelling heart sin. He will cry out, "O create in me a clean heart, O God; O fill me with thy Holy Spirit and perfect my heart in love!" In the next chapter we give details of an actual instance of this truth.

What is the greatest hindrance to a believer being "occupied with Christ"? Is it not his own indwelling sin? Our Lord said, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8), thus we need a pure heart, cleansed and freed from sin in order to be truly "occupied with Christ." How utterly futile, therefore, is "the two natures" doctrine which denies that we can ever, in this life, have a pure heart, cleansed and freed from sin. When the two-naturist prescribes the reading of the Scriptures as a remedy for bondage from indwelling sin and at the same time denies such a thing as an instantaneous cleansing or deliverance from sin by faith, he "puts the cart before the horse." It is like saying to a paralyzed cripple, "Poor cripple, don't you know that walking is a most healthful exercise. Get up then and walk and you will be healthy." We can imagine the cripple replying with indignation, "Thou foolish adviser, first cure me thoroughly of my disease, and then I will walk all right." The "two natures" doctrine "puts the cart before the horse" and reverses the order of God. The theory says, "Walk and then you will be healthy." God says, "I will first make you abundantly healthy -- holy -- and then you will walk."

In the next chapter we shall consider a most striking instance of a well-known honoured servant of the Lord who passed through a crisis for holiness. He deeply realized his need of this holiness by faith of which we have been speaking and he tried more prayer and Bible reading -- Dr. Ironside's prescription -- and yet all without avail. It was "putting the cart before the horse." It was faith that he lacked. We shall then learn how deliverance came instantaneously and what a remarkable transformation it caused in his spiritual life. His case is a wonderful illustration of the truth advocated in this book, namely, scriptural freedom from sin through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

## Chapter 15

### HUDSON TAYLOR'S CRISIS FOR HOLINESS

The question may be asked, "What is the practical value of this teaching concerning instantaneous cleansing from sin? What effect does it have upon the Christian life?" We will answer these questions by quoting the actual experience of a well known and highly honoured servant of the Lord, namely, the late Dr. J. Hudson Taylor, the founder of the China Inland Mission. The particulars of his experience are taken from "Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission," by Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor.

In the year 1869, when Hudson Taylor was aged about thirty-seven, he passed through a deep spiritual crisis for holiness. The profound importance of this crisis will be evident when it is remembered that he had by then already spent six years in China, had come home and had returned in 1866 with his first party of about twenty missionaries. Thus in 1869 he was already a recognized pioneer missionary leader. It was during this year, however, that Hudson Taylor became deeply exercised about one thing, namely, scriptural freedom from sin -- the theme of this book. The deep longings of his heart were expressed in his letters. Writing home to his parents on March 13, 1869, he said:

I cannot tell you how I am buffeted sometimes by temptation. I never knew how bad a heart I had. Yet I do know that I love God and love His work and desire to serve Him only and in all things. And I value above all things that precious Saviour in whom alone I can be accepted. Often I am tempted to think that one so full of sin cannot be a child of God at all. . . . Do pray for me. Pray that the Lord will keep me from sin, will sanctify me wholly, will use me more largely in His service (pp. 166, 167)

#### Consciousness of Defeat

In October of the same year, he wrote to his sister. The following is an extract:

My mind has been greatly exercised for six or eight months past, feeling the need personally, and for the mission of more holiness, life, power in our souls. But personal need stood first and was the greatest. I felt the ingratitude, the danger, the sin of not living near to God. I prayed, agonized, fasted, strove, made resolutions, read the Word more diligently, sought more time for retirement and meditation, but all was without effect. Every day, almost every hour, the consciousness of sin oppressed me . . . each day brought its register of sin and failure, of lack of power. To will was indeed present with me, but how to perform I found not. Then came the question -- "Is there no rescue?" Must it be

thus to the end -- constant conflict and instead of victory too often defeat? (p. 174).

Here then, in Hudson Taylor, we have an actual case of an honoured servant of the Lord fully engaged in responsible pioneer mission work, yet hungering after one thing, namely, scriptural freedom from sin. Have we experienced anything like this? If not, is it because we have not yet been awakened to God's call to holiness? Is it because our spiritual experience has been so shallow that the Spirit has not yet revealed to us our need of deliverance? Have we been merely content to be converted and have never hungered and thirsted after real heart holiness at all?

I specially draw attention to the fact that Hudson Taylor read the Word of God more diligently and prayerfully than before. He did the very thing, therefore, that Dr. Ironside prescribes as the remedy for the believer seeking deliverance and fullness, but all without avail. The "two naturist" prescription was an utter failure. Something else was needed. There was a missing link. What was it? Let us hear what Hudson Taylor himself says. He said:

#### Lacking in Faith

I felt I was a child of God. His Spirit in my heart would cry: "Abba Father" but to rise to my privileges as a child, I was utterly powerless. All the time I felt assured there was in Christ all I needed, but the practical question was how was I to get it out? . . . I knew full well that there was in the Root abundant fatness; but how to get it into my puny little branch was the question. As the light gradually dawned on me, I saw that faith was the only prerequisite, was the hand to lay hold on His fullness and make it my own. But I had not this faith. I strove for it but it would not come; tried to exercise it, but in vain. . . . Sins committed appeared but as trifles compared with the sin of unbelief which was their cause. . . . Unbelief was, I felt, the damning sin of the world -- yet I indulged in it. I prayed for faith, but it came not (pp. 174, 175).

Here then is a humble confession of lack of faith for entire sanctification in one who was a true child and honoured servant of God. The "missing link" was faith -- that faith which specially appropriates Christ in all His sanctifying, sin-liberating fullness. Does not this confession throw a flood of light on Paul's deep solicitude for the Thessalonians when he earnestly desired to see them to perfect that which was lacking in their faith to the end their hearts might be established unblamable in holiness (1 Thess. 3:10-13)? It was just this "perfecting of faith" that Hudson Taylor realized he needed. Is not this "perfecting of faith" just what so many Christians need today? Evidently then he did not profess that he "got it all at conversion" like those who oppose the truth of a second work of grace in the heart.

## The Experience of Deliverance

How did deliverance come to Hudson Taylor? It came by faith in a moment through the illuminating power of the Holy Ghost. He relates how the glory came into his soul. He says:

When my agony of soul was at its height, a sentence in a letter from dear McCarthy was used to remove the scales from my eyes and the Spirit of God revealed the truth of our oneness with Jesus as I had never known it before. McCarthy, who had been exercised by the same sense of failure, but saw the light before I did, wrote, "But how to get faith strengthened? Not by striving after faith but by resting on the Faithful One." As I read I saw it all, "If we believe not, he abideth faithful." I looked to Jesus and saw (and when I saw, oh, how joy flowed!) that He had said, "I will never leave you." Ah, there is rest I thought!

But this was not all He showed me, nor one-half. As I thought of the Vine and the Branches, what light the blessed Spirit poured direct into my soul. . . . I saw not only that Jesus would never leave me, but that I was a member of His body, of His flesh and of his bones. . . . Oh, the joy of seeing this truth. Oh, my sister, it is a wonderful thing to be really one with a risen and exalted Saviour; to be a member of Christ" (pp. 175, 176).

What a wonderful practical illustration of the truth that we have been endeavouring to set forth in this book. Here is a case of a believer entering by faith instantaneously into a new experience of liberty and joy and power in Christ. Notice three aspects of the Spirit's work, namely:

1. Eliminating -- the Spirit "removed the scales from my eyes" -- he says. What were "the scales"? Unbelief. Hudson Taylor acknowledges in the same letter that this was the root cause of his trouble. Praise God for the eliminating work of the Spirit of God! He is the Divine Circumciser. He circumcises the heart, removing the veil of unbelief (See Rom. 2:29 and 2 Corinthians 3:16, 17). In other words, He "purifies the heart."

2. Illuminating -- Having "removed the scales" of unbelief, the Holy Spirit then, in new power altogether, revealed to Hudson Taylor the truth of his union with Christ in glory, and thus enabled him to see and believe in his oneness with Christ.

3. Infilling -- The result was an inflow of the Spirit, filling Hudson Taylor with new light and joy, making real the glory of an indwelling Christ and producing perfect heart rest in the realization of union with the Lord in glory.

Now in the cases of Commissioner Brengle, Thomas Cook and Miss F. R. Havergal (see Chapter 11), the Spirit of God used the truth of the

cleansing power of the blood of Christ to lead them into fullness of blessing. In Hudson Taylor's case it was different. The Spirit applied the truth of oneness with Christ, but the results were just the same. The truth sanctifies and the Spirit of God knows just how to apply the truth to meet the needs of each individual.

### The Conflict Ended

In this testimony of Hudson Taylor we have a clear case of a definite, second, critical work of God's grace effected by the Holy Spirit in one who was a believer and had been a highly honoured pioneer missionary servant of the Lord for years. This second work of grace brought Hudson Taylor into that blessed experience of deliverance from sin and perfect heart rest for which he so deeply longed. The painful conflict between "the flesh" and the Spirit came to an end. Here are his own words. Referring to the inner conflict that went on previously, he wrote:

Sometimes there were seasons not only of peace but of joy in the Lord. But they were transitory and at best there was a sad lack of power. Oh, how good the Lord was in bringing this conflict to an end (p.175).

### The Liberating Indwelling Christ

Notice, he says, the Lord, stopped this conflict. Hallelujah! Whom the Son sets free is free indeed! What a contrast to the dismal two-natures doctrine which asserts that this conflict continually "goes on in every Christian." The union with Christ taught by Dr. Ironside in his book still leaves indwelling sin in the heart to provoke a continual conflict with the Spirit. But the scriptural union with Christ revealed by the Spirit to Hudson Taylor was a glorious, sin liberating union, a union which involved the full indwelling of Christ who stopped the inward conflict and thus made free from sin indeed. This is the glorious experience of union which Christ set forth in Romans 7: 1-6, in which the believer is completely divorced from the "old husband" (the law and indwelling sin) and fully united to Christ, the new Husband. The two-naturist doctrine has no place, however, for such a blessed, sin-liberating union with the indwelling Christ. But the secret of knowing scriptural freedom from sin is to know what Hudson Taylor discovered, namely, the glory of this mystery -- Christ in you the hope of glory (Col. 1:27).

Hudson Taylor found that this God-given revelation of union with the indwelling Christ involving "scriptural freedom from sin," proved the portal to newness of spiritual life and power. In the same letter he continued:

Now Christ lives in me and "the life that I now live in the flesh" I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I now believe I am dead to sin. God reckons me so, and tells me to reckon

myself so. He knows best. All my past experience may have shown that it was not so; but I dare not say it is not now, when He says it is. . . . Christ dwelling in the heart by faith (that is, His Word of Promise credited) is power indeed, is life indeed. AND CHRIST AND SIN WILL NOT DWELL TOGETHER (p.177).

Mark the words in caps. They destroy the whole two-naturist theory.

### The Joy of Deliverance

Soon after this revelation of the Spirit to Hudson Taylor, a friend met him.

"When I went to welcome him," recalled Mr. Judd, "he was so full of joy that he scarcely knew how to speak to me. . . . Walking up and down the room with his hands behind him, he exclaimed:

"'Oh, Mr. Judd, God has made me a new man! God has made me a new man!' (p.172).

"He was a joyous man now," added Mr. Judd, "a bright, happy Christian. Whenever he spoke in meeting, after that a new power seemed to flow from him" (p.173).

### The Test of Faith

The reality of this delivering work of grace in Hudson Taylor was evidenced not only by greater power in service but also by power in the midst of deep sorrow and affliction. A few months afterward his children had to leave for England in charge of a friend. Then another son was born, but died within a week. Then just over a week after the death of this child, his wife died also, age only thirty-three, and Hudson Taylor was left alone in China, bereft of wife and children. And what did the indwelling Christ mean to Hudson Taylor in that time of loneliness? Hear what he says:

How lonesome were the weary hours when confined to my room. . . . Then it was I understood why the Lord had made that passage so real to me, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." How quickly He always came and satisfied my sorrowing heart. So much so that I often wondered whether it were possible that my loved one, who has been taken, could be enjoying more of His presence than I was in my lonely chamber (p. 200).

These are some of the practical results of the God-given experience of "scriptural freedom from sin."

### A Call To All Christians

Thus, in Hudson Taylor's testimony, we have a proof of the reality of "scriptural freedom from sin" and of the glory of union with Christ -- we in Christ and Christ in us. The last words I propose to quote of Hudson Taylor on this matter are these:

Nor should we look upon this experience, these truths, as for the few. They are the birthright of every child of God, and no one can dispense with them without dishonour to our Lord (p. 177).

Hudson Taylor's testimony is a call to every Christian. If an honoured servant of the Lord such as Hudson Taylor realized his need of scriptural freedom from sin and entered into such a new and blessed experience of Christ when he realized that whom the Son makes free is free indeed, is there any Christian on earth who can afford to neglect so great salvation? Dear reader, are you rejoicing in the fact that the Son has truly made you "free indeed"?

## Chapter 16

### "THE FLESH," "SIN" AND "COUNTERACTION"

There are many earnest Christians who fail to appreciate fully all that our Lord meant by being set free from sin indeed, because of a misapprehension of Paul's teaching concerning "the flesh" (sarx). It will be helpful therefore if we give special attention to the subject of "the flesh." Let us commence by considering the statement in Galatians 5: 16, 17:

Walk by the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh (v.16).

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the thing that ye would (verse 17, R.V.).

How often are the words "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit" completely isolated from their context and quoted to prove the two-naturist theory, that a continual conflict with indwelling sin "goes on" in every Christian. If we detach passages from their context in this manner we can make the Bible prove almost anything that we please. If this passage really proves the two-naturist theory, then how can we reconcile such an interpretation with the truth of glorious freedom from sin as taught in Romans 6, and 1 John 1? These are questions which at once arise when we try to interpret Galatians 5: 16, 17. I believe that this passage is a difficulty to many earnest seekers of the truth. Let us see first of all what Dr. Ironside says about it. He says:

The doctrine of the two natures is frequently stated and always implied in Scripture. If not grasped, the mind must ever be in confusion as to the reasons for the conflict which every believer knows within himself, sooner or later. (1) This conflict is definitely declared to go on in every Christian in Gal. 5:16 and 19-17. The flesh here is not the body of the believer but the carnal nature. It was so designated by the Lord himself when He said to Nicodemus, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit." (2) The two natures are there, a' in Galatians placed in 'harp contrast. The flesh is ever opposed to the Spirit. The new nature is born of the Spirit and controlled by the Spirit; hence it is described according to its character. Agreement between the two there can never be; (3) Nevertheless there is no instruction as to how the flesh may be eliminated. The Christian is simply told to walk in the Spirit: and if he does he will not be found fulfilling the desires of the flesh. This is the "man who sinneth not" (pp. 125, 126).

Galatians 5:16 and 17 is the stronghold of the teacher of the "two natures" theory. It is upon this passage that Dr. Ironside bases his teaching that a continual conflict between the two natures "goes on in

every Christian." I suggest, however, that the teaching in the extract quoted above is erroneous, for the following three reasons:

1. It confuses "the flesh" with indwelling sin. (Statement (3) in extract.)
2. It confuses "new nature" and the Holy Spirit. (Statement (2) in extract.)
3. It makes no distinction between the spiritual Christian and the carnal Christian. (Statement (1) in extract.)

We will deal with errors 1 and 2 in this chapter and error 3 in the following chapter.

### "The Flesh" And Indwelling Sin

Dr. Ironside says that in the Galatians Epistle "there is no instruction as to how the flesh may be eliminated." This makes no difference however, to the truth of scriptural freedom from sin, because we do not contend for the elimination of "the flesh" in the full sense in which that term is generally used in the New Testament. On no point in connection with the subject of sanctification is it so important to define clearly the meaning of terms as it is when referring to "the flesh," (*sarx*), because the term is used in various shades of meaning, and it is vital in every case to study carefully the context. Clearly, in Galatians 5:16-21 the term "the flesh" does not mean merely our physical body of flesh and blood. Dr. Ironside's remark indicates, however, that he is using the term "flesh" as if it were synonymous with "indwelling sin." But this is not correct either. The terms "the flesh" and "the sin," though very closely related, are distinct, and, unless we see this distinction we shall get into hopeless confusion of thought. Many earnest Christians are confused in their minds and lack the deep joy of experimental deliverance from sin because they do not understand fully the distinction between "the flesh" and "indwelling sin." Let us try therefore, to make this distinction clear.

The late Mr. A. Paget Wilkes has a very illuminating comment on this distinction in his valuable treatise on "Sanctification." He says:

Many people have supposed and indeed taught that the "flesh" in its ethical sense as employed by St. Paul is identical with "the sin that dwelleth in me." This has led to endless contusion of thought and misunderstanding, causing divisions where there need have been none. Let us assume for a moment the term "flesh" employed by St. Paul is synonymous with the term "indwelling sin" and substitute the latter wherever the word "flesh" occurs. (Quoting Rom. 7:18, Gal. 3:3 and Rom. 8:3, Mr. Wilkes goes on to say, "It is not too much to say that wherever the word 'flesh' occurs to substitute as an equivalent the phrase 'indwelling sin' would make the apostle talk nonsense.")

Thayer, the great lexicographer, describes it thus, "'The flesh" in its ethical sense denotes mere human nature, the earthly nature of man apart from divine influence!...

Now our "human nature" -- our reason and all other faculties included -- are God-made and God-given, and cannot therefore in themselves be sinful. "The flesh" seems to include our natural appetites, our heredity, our temperament, our environment and upbringing, all God-given and God-appointed. They are the avenues of temptation and are sinful only when and because they are indwelt and poisoned and dominated by indwelling sin.

Mr. Wilkes quotes Phil. 3: 3-6 and says, "Now none of these things were sinful; they were merely part of the natural man and his upbringing and yet St. Paul designates them as 'the flesh'" (pp. 26, 27).

What Is "The Sin" In The Flesh?

The clue to a scriptural understanding of the distinction between "the flesh," *sarx*, and "the sin," *hamartia*, is contained in Romans 8:3. "God... condemned sin in the flesh." Clearly "sin" is not the same as "the flesh." Sin is a something in the flesh. Dr. Ironside said that sin is like "a hateful intruder." Quite true; like a burglar in the house, but clearly the house is not the same as the burglar: or we may refer to a dictator in his country; the two are closely connected but are clearly distinct.

The later illustration will help us to see the scriptural relationship between "the sin" and "the flesh." Sin is like the dictator; the flesh is like the country of the dictator. Just as we refer to the "country of the dictator" and the "dictator in the country" so Romans 8:3 refers to "the flesh of sin" and "sin in the flesh." It is the sin in the flesh that produces evil desires. "Sin worked out in me every (evil) desire," says Paul in Romans 7:8. Sin, working in the flesh, causes that evil condition of mind termed "the mind of the flesh," which is at enmity to God. Sin is also the cause of "the evil desires and wills of the flesh" (Eph. 2:3), and "the evil works of the flesh" (Gal. 5:19).

What Is "The Flesh"?

When then is "the flesh" in the Pauline sense of the word in the Galatians Epistle? It is simply human nature in its fallen condition regarded as apart from divine grace. It was in this sense that our Lord used the term "the flesh" when he said "that which is born of the flesh is flesh." Thus "the flesh" includes spirit, soul, body, reason, affections, appetites, but there is "a hateful intruder" within -- the sin in the flesh -- and this "sin" exercises its sway over the whole man. When therefore "the flesh" is spoken of in the evil sense as in Galatians 5:17 and 19, it means human nature, as a whole, regarded as apart from divine grace and, as such,

the seat of sin and the sphere in which sin exerts its power in antagonism to God. Hence when Paul says, "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit," he states what is characteristic of "the flesh" regarded as the instrument of sin, and therefore in a condition of opposition to the Holy Spirit. He does not speak of "indwelling sin" in the Galatians Epistle as he does in the Epistle to the Romans. In Galatians he looks at the truth from another point of view. He speaks of the work of "the flesh," because the fruit of the indwelling sin is manifested and worked out through "the flesh."

### The Casting Out Of Hagar And Ishmael

It is clear, therefore, that the reason why there is no instruction in the Epistle to the Galatians for "the elimination of the flesh" is that the term "the flesh," in its full meaning, includes our human nature, and God does not, of course, "eliminate" human nature. This fact makes no difference, however, to the teaching of other scriptures which speak of being "cleansed," "freed" and "delivered" from indwelling sin, the "hateful intruder" as Dr. Ironside terms it, in our "flesh" or human nature. The Epistle to the Galatians does, however, specially refer to the casting out of Hagar and Ishmael and quotes the words of Genesis 21:10, "Cast out the bondwoman and her son." Ishmael was contrary to Isaac and persecuted him. There was no peace in the home as long as Ishmael was present to provoke Isaac, but when Ishmael was cast out Isaac was left in peace in the home. There is a divine principle in this story. It teaches us that it is not God's will that our hearts should be the home of two opposing natures, "Ishmael and Isaac," as is taught by the "two natures" theory. No, the divine purpose is that the old Adamic opposing nature, "the Ishmael," should be "cast out," thus leaving the new nature, "the Isaac," in undisturbed, restful possession of the home, namely, the heart. And it is also profoundly significant that our Lord evidently refers to this casting out of Ishmael when He says, "If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:33-36). Paul also applies the same lesson of the casting out of Ishmael and says, "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free" (Gal. 5:1).

Dr. Ironside refers to "the vain effort to eradicate sin from the flesh." Obviously we cannot do any such thing by our effort. It is an act of God. Who cast out Ishmael? Not Isaac himself, but Abraham, his father, at the express command of God. Now Paul says, "We brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." Isaac is a type, therefore, of Christians, and the peace and liberty which he enjoyed when the opposing Ishmael was cast out of the home is a picture of the inward peace and liberty we, too, may enjoy when we trust our heavenly Father to east out our opposing "Ishmael" from our hearts.

The Epistle to the Galatians does not teach, therefore, the theory of the necessary continuance of two opposing natures in every believer. On the contrary, it teaches the very opposite.

### The Condemnation Of Sin In The Flesh

On page 88, Dr. Ironside says, "God hath 'condemned sin in the flesh' not rooted sin out of the flesh." But the condemnation of sin in the flesh by God obviously means that God has condemned or sentenced the sin to destruction (See Romans 6:6). Sin in the flesh is like a condemned criminal. But when is the sentence to be executed and the sin destroyed? Dr. Ironside says not until the Lord's coming "when he shall change these vile bodies and make them like his own glorious body" (p. 129). But this is confusing things that differ. It is quite true that we wait for our Lord's return for the redemption of our mortal physical body but the condemned criminal, "the sin," is not something in our physical body, but "a hateful intruder" in "the heart," scripturally speaking (See page 36). Now compare Romans 6:6 with Romans 8:3, and surely it is as clear as noonday that the purpose of God in condemning or sentencing the indwelling criminal "the sin," is that the sentence should be executed here and now, because "the body of sin is to be destroyed," so that henceforth we should not be in bondage to sin. God will "destroy" the condemned criminal, "the sin," when we trust Him to do the work.

Speaking of Romans 8:3, Bishop Handley Moule says:

"'Sentenced sin in the flesh.' He ordered it to execution. He killed its claim and its power for all who are in Christ. And this, 'in the flesh' making man's earthly conditions the scene of sin's defeat, for our everlasting encouragement in our 'life in the flesh.'" The Epistle to the Romans (p.211).

To this we say, Hallelujah!

"Counteraction" or "Destruction"

When the believer is thus set free by divine power from the sin in the flesh, he comes under the sway of another power altogether, namely, the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. But, no matter how godly a believer may be he will humbly acknowledge that he could not for one moment be holy apart from the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Why? Because he "has no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. 3:3), that is, in what he is in himself, apart from divine grace. He realizes that if the Holy Spirit withdrew His presence and power then, alas, he would once again come under bondage to sin. Because of this, some Christian teachers say that the Holy Spirit "counteracts" indwelling sin. Let us examine briefly the theory of counteraction.

I recently made a very interesting discovery. I discovered that the late Rev. Evan H. Hopkins, who teaches "Counteraction" in his book, "The Law of Liberty in the Spiritual Life," and the late Thomas Cook, who teaches "Destruction" and "Eradication" in his book, "New Testament Holiness," both make use of precisely the same illustration to explain their respective viewpoints. They both use the illustration of a light brought into a dark room. I place their statements side by side.

### Counteraction

Let the darkness represent sin, and the light holiness. What the lighted candle is to the dark room, Christ is to the heart of the believer. . . . when a light is introduced into a dark chamber the darkness instantly disappears, but the tendency to darkness remains; and the room can be maintained in a condition of illumination only by the continual counteraction of that tendency. . . .

Here then we have, not a state, but a maintained condition. -- (Rev. E. Hopkins in "Law of Liberty" (page 22).)

### Destruction

Let the darkness represent sin, and the light holiness. What the light is to the dark room the Holy Spirit is to the heart of the believer. when He fills the heart with the light of His own indwelling presence all sin is excluded, but that condition is maintained only so long as the Holy Spirit continues fully to possess the heart. . . .

We teach, therefore, not a state of purity, but a maintained condition of purity.-- (Thomas Cook in "New Testament Holiness" (page 50).)

Now observe, both teachers agree that the freedom of the room from the darkness is conditional upon the maintenance of the light within the room. But here is the vital point: if the light represents the Holy Spirit and darkness represents indwelling sin, then, as Thomas Cook points out, as long as the light is filling the room (the heart) then "all sin is excluded." If only those dear Christians who speak so much about "counteraction" would fully acknowledge this fact it would do away with a great deal of misunderstanding.

"Darkness" fails, however, fully to represent indwelling sin, because darkness is merely the absence of light; it is not a hostile, active power like indwelling sin. Counteraction means "contrary action"; it means one force acting in opposition to another force. Hence the teaching that the Spirit merely counteracts indwelling sin implies that indwelling sin remains within the heart as an active, hostile power, but is overcome by the contrary action of the Spirit. But this conception is utterly contrary to all the scriptures we have already considered that teach "destruction,"

"cleansing" and "freedom" from sin. "Counteraction" is an unscriptural term; scripture never speaks of the "counteraction" of indwelling sin. The blood of Christ does not counteract sin; it cleanses from sin.

The extent of the freedom from indwelling sin signified by the words "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2), is governed by Romans 6:6, which teaches the "destruction" of sin, not its "counteraction." The freedom provided for us on the cross is made real within us by the Holy Spirit. It is impossible to substitute "counteracted" for "destroyed" in Romans 6:6, or in any other passage in which *katargeo* appears. It would be absurd to say "The last enemy that shall be counteracted is death" (1 Cor. 15:26). Scriptural freedom from sin is not the "counteraction" of indwelling sin; it is the "destruction," "cleansing" and "freedom" from indwelling sin.

### The "New Nature" and the Holy Spirit

We will now consider the second point mentioned on page 108, namely, that Dr. Ironside's exposition of Galatians 5:17 confuses the new nature and the Holy Spirit. He says that the conflict between "the flesh" and the Spirit in Galatians 5:17 is a conflict between the two natures in the believer, namely, the "old nature" and "the new nature." The verse says nothing, however, about "the two natures." It speaks of "the flesh" and "the Spirit." On this point I would quote from that well-known work, "The Law of Liberty in the Spiritual Life," by Rev. Evan H. Hopkins. Referring to Galatians 5:17, he says:

There are multitudes of Christians who read the words as if we have here described the struggle between the two natures, flesh and spirit. Let us once and forever dismiss that thought from our minds in connection with this text. This is not the teaching of the passage. The apostle by the term "spirit" here does not refer to the human spirit . . . nor does he here speak of the new nature "that which is born of the Spirit." As Alford observes on this text, Spirit here is "not man's spiritual part; it is (as in verse 5) the Holy Spirit of God" (p.109).

The words *to pneumatos* refer to the Holy Spirit himself, not merely to the "new nature" of the believer. The Holy Spirit is a Divine Person dwelling within, but distinct from the believer, whereas the "new nature," as Dr. Ironside uses the term, is a work of the Holy Spirit, and may be regarded as constituting a part of the believer himself. The meaning of the word *pneuma* in the Epistle to the Galatians is governed by its very first reference, "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law?" (Gal. 3:2). Clearly, it is the Holy Spirit as a Divine Person that is meant, as also in Galatians 5:16-26. The conflict in Galatians 5:17 is not therefore, a conflict between "the flesh" and "the new nature" of the believer. No, it is a conflict between "the flesh" and the Holy Spirit himself. This is a very different matter. Vital consequences follow from this distinction. Why?

Because when the believer is brought to that point of willingness to yield wholly to the blessed Spirit, then the Spirit of God, as the Sanctified, can apply to the sin in the flesh, the full destructive power of the cross of Christ (Rom. 6:6), and the cleansing power of the blood of Christ (1 John 1:7). This is a vital point which the "two naturist" either utterly denies or completely overlooks when he talks about "the flesh." But when the Holy Spirit thus applies the full power of the cross and the blood, then the state of inward conflict of Galatians 5:17, as a painful experience, ceases, and this means glorious freedom from sin, for where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. Hallelujah!

## Chapter 17

### THE FLESH LUSTING AGAINST THE SPIRIT

We will now deal with the "two naturist" theory that Galatians 5:16, 17 teaches that a conflict with indwelling sin "goes on" in every Christian without any exception. Is this correct? Once again I would give an extract from Rev. Evan H. Hopkins' "Law of Liberty in the Spiritual Life." Referring to Gal. 5:17, 18, he says:

The two principles are diametrically opposed. But, as Lange observes, "the contest is by no means to be conceived as an interminable one. [For a practical illustration of the ceasing of this conflict see page 108.] The context shows that, on the contrary, there is expected of the Christian a complete surrendering of himself, in order to be actuated by the one principle, the Spirit, and a refusal to give way to the lust of the flesh" (p.111).

#### Carnal and Spiritual Christians

The theory that the conflict of Galatians 5:16-18 goes on in every Christian is based upon a fundamental error. It makes no distinction whatever between the spiritual Christian and the carnal Christian. This is a fatal omission. If we attempt, as Dr. Ironside does, to interpret this passage without recognizing this distinction and thus make it teach that a state of inward civil war "goes on" in all Christians indiscriminately, we shall misunderstand the passage completely. How utterly confusing to earnest seekers of holiness is such a misinterpretation. If the "two naturist" theory is the correct interpretation, well might Oswald Chambers write strongly in "The Shadow of an Agony" p.111):

The Holy Spirit in a Christian wars against the old heredity; the new heredity and the old war one against another. Is that all God can do for me? Destroy unity in my life, make me a divided personality, and make me sick with conviction of sin? If that is all God can do, I would rather be an atheist; but if it is only a stage toward the borderland of mastery, that is a different matter.

Scripture does, however, make a clear distinction between the two kinds of believers. Paul says to the Corinthians, "I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ ... For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying and strife and division, are ye not carnal?" (1 Cor. 3:1 and 3). What is the difference between the spiritual and the carnal believer? The spiritual believer is one who is filled with, and controlled by, the Holy Spirit. The carnal believer is one who has the Spirit but is not entirely yielded to the Spirit, and hence is not filled with, nor controlled by, the Spirit. Paul is an example of the spiritual believer; the Galatians are examples of carnal

believers. The Galatians manifested precisely the same symptoms as the carnal Corinthians, namely, envy, strife and vain glory, etc. (See Galatians 5:15 and 26.) Let us then look at the conflict of Galatians 5:17, in the light of (1) Paul's experience, and (2) the Galatians' experience.

## 1. THE SPIRITUAL BELIEVER AND GALATIANS 5:17.

According to Dr. Ironside's teaching of the two natures, there was a continual conflict going on in the Apostle Paul against the Spirit -- a state of inward civil war -- "the flesh lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh." Let us see what Paul says himself about his own experience. In chapter 5, verse 24, he says, "They that are of Christ have crucified the flesh with the affections and desires." In one sense we may say that, potentially, this is true of every Christian, but what does it mean as a real definite experience? What did it mean to the Apostle Paul? Notice the words -- "they that are of Christ." What is the force of the words "of Christ"? They mean full and complete union with Christ. In John 6:46 it is said of the Lord Jesus that He is "of God." What wonderful intimate union between Father and Son is expressed by that phrase "of God." Similarly, what wonderful intimate union between the Lord Jesus and the believer is expressed by the words "they that are of Christ." Such a blessed union can be a reality only as the believer is completely yielded to and led by the Holy Spirit.

### a. The crucifixion of "the flesh."

Now if we are led by the Spirit he will lead us to the cross -- to crucify the flesh. What does it mean to crucify? It is an expression by the crucifier of his utter abhorrence of that which is crucified. That which is crucified is regarded as worthless and fit only for a shameful, contemptible death. This is the attitude that the Spirit will lead a believer to adopt in relation to "the flesh." Looking upon "the flesh," that is, what he is in his fallen condition and apart altogether from divine grace, he sees in the Spirit's light, that "the flesh" is the sphere and instrument -- of indwelling sin and, in effect, he says, "Thou worthless 'flesh' with all your affections and desires, the home of indwelling sin, I nail you to the cross. I do not now own or recognize you." It is the keen desire of the Spirit to bring the believer to this attitude to "the flesh," and when the believer is brought to this point he no longer antagonizes the Spirit, but is brought into harmony with the Spirit's desire and the state of conflict with the Spirit ceases. When the believer thus "crucifies the flesh" and yields wholly to the Spirit, he is brought into such a condition of yieldedness to God that the Spirit can then apply the full power of the cross and of the blood to the sin in the flesh. God will then make real in the believer the glorious freedom from sin provided in Romans 6:6, namely, "that the body of sin might be destroyed ['done away,' Revised Version], that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Notice the beautiful connection between Gal. 5:24 and Romans 6:6:

The crucifixion of the flesh (Galatians 5:24). The believer "crucifies the flesh." It is a definite attitude of heart and will on the part of the believer.

The destruction of the body of sin (Romans 6:6). God himself destroys the body of sin. It is a definite act of God. We cannot "do away" with the sin; that is God's own work.

Thus Romans 6:6 and Galatians 5:24 are complementary. Romans 6:6 is God's work; Galatians 5:24 is the believer's work.

b. An Indwelling Christ.

Now when these two scriptures are known in the power of the Holy Spirit -- not as a mere doctrine -- the believer passes from the carnal state to the spiritual state and knows scriptural freedom from sin and the glory of an indwelling Christ. This was Paul's experience and he testified to the Galatians:

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

Now no Christian could honestly testify like that unless he were truly filled and controlled by the Holy Spirit. For Paul truthfully to say, "not I, but Christ liveth in me," means that he had been brought into a state of blessed harmony with the Holy Spirit. Yet according to the theory of the two natures taught by Dr. Ironside, we are expected to believe that when Paul wrote that glowing testimony in Galatians 2:20, there was a conflict going on within him, there was a continual fight against the Spirit -- the flesh was lusting against the Spirit and the spirit against the flesh all the time.

Paul himself, however, never said a word about such a conflict going on within him when he wrote Galatians 2:20. And where does Paul say in any of his other epistles that there was a continual conflict with indwelling sin going on within him? Nowhere at all. It will not do to refer to Romans 7:14-24 because Dr. Ironside admits that conflict is an experience of one "under the law" (See page 124), whereas the apostle was "under grace." The Epistle to the Philippians and Second Epistle to the Corinthians contain the most intimate details of the apostle's deepest inner experiences, yet nowhere does he ever even hint that such a state of civil war was going on within him.

And neither do any of the other writers of the New Testament speak of such a conflict going on within them. If the two natures doctrine were

true it would have been quite impossible for the Apostle John to write his precious first epistle testifying to inward purity (3:3); perfect love (2:5) and the uncondemned heart (3:21). No -- it is impossible to reconcile Paul's testimony in Galatians 2:20 with the two natures theory of a continual conflict going on in every Christian. We conclude, therefore, that the conflict of Gal. 5:17 is not one that goes on in a spiritual believer who can testify like Paul did in Galatians 2:20. Let us see then, in what Christians this conflict does go on.

## 2. The Carnal Believer and Galatians 5:17.

Could the Galatians honestly testify like the Apostle Paul, "I am crucified with Christ . . . not I, but Christ liveth in me"? Impossible! They were not spiritual, but carnal (fleshly), like the Corinthians. They had been truly converted and had the Spirit (chapter 3:3), but they had not continued in the truth. Paul said, "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?" (5:7). Again he says, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?" (3:1). They were in a state of disobedience to the truth. They were "removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel" (1:6). Clearly there was something radically wrong with the Galatians. What was it? They had been deceived by false teachers and, instead of relying solely on Christ and the Spirit for holiness through faith they had turned from this way of faith and grace and were relying upon themselves, that is, "the flesh," apart from the Spirit, to secure holiness by observing the ordinances of the Jewish law. Hence the apostle says, "Ye desire to be under the law" (4:21), and, therefore, "Ye are fallen from grace" (5:4). Now their "desire" to be under the law, that is, the "desire of the flesh" was diametrically opposed to the "desire" of the Spirit, because "If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law" (chapter 5:18). Hence there was a conflict going on in the Galatians between their own desires (the desires of "the flesh") and the "desires of the Spirit." They were not, therefore, entirely under the control of the Spirit and the result was that they were what Paul terms "carnal," that is, "fleshly." They were "biting and devouring one another; desiring vain glory and provoking and envying one another," although they were very "religious."

Thus in Galatians 5:17 Paul is like a physician diagnosing a disease in a patient; he reveals to the Galatians their diseased spiritual condition, "the flesh lusting against the Spirit" and vice versa. It is utterly wrong, however, to think that Paul was suffering from the same disease, or that every Christian must be in the same diseased spiritual condition. The statement concerning the conflict of "the flesh" and the Spirit in Galatians 5:17 is not intended to describe a state of civil war which actually goes on in spiritual Christians like the Apostle Paul. It does describe, however, the conflict which "goes on" in backslidden and "carnal" Christians like the Galatians and, in fact, all believers who have

the Spirit but are not entirely yielded to the Spirit and have not yet, therefore, entered into the full blessing of entire sanctification by faith. But Paul not only diagnosed the disease; he prescribed the remedy.

#### Our Charter of Freedom

Let us look again at Galatians 5:15-17 and note how it contains the Christian's secret and charter of scriptural freedom from sin. Let us read the passage carefully as follows:

"Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (why not?). "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh -- for these are contrary the one to the other, . . . that ['in order that'] ye may not do the things that ye would" (that is, otherwise would do). (Gal. 5:16, 17, R.V.)

Paul states what is characteristic of "the flesh" (here regarded as the sphere in which sin works) and "the Spirit," as opposite principles. The fact that the two are "contrary the one to the other" is made the very basis of our ultimate freedom and deliverance. Because "the flesh" and "the Spirit" are utterly opposed, then if we come completely under the control of the one we are freed completely from the control of the other. Paul says, "Walk by the Spirit," that is, come under the entire control of the Spirit and then "ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." This is a glorious promise of deliverance. And then, as we have already seen, when the Spirit is thus free to apply the full power of the cross and the blood of Christ to the sin in the flesh, the inward heart opposition ceases, the believer comes fully "under grace" and is set free from sin indeed.

When the believer is thus entirely sanctified he then has to learn to maintain all the ransomed sin-freed powers of his human natural spirit, soul, body, appetites, mind, affection, etc. -- in harmony with the indwelling Holy Spirit. This, of course, is a life-long process and is what Paul describes as "Walking by," or in, "the Spirit." The believer then enters by faith into Paul's experience of entire sanctification when he testified "I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20, R.V.).

#### A Warning

A solemn word of warning is necessary. We must never forget the principle of human responsibility. Paul says, "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25). The believer is responsible to do the "walking." What this means we have dealt with in the chapter on "Maintaining God's Deliverance." If the believer fails to observe those conditions he will revert to these "old type" and walk again "after the flesh." But thank God there is no need to revert to the old type at all.

Being set free from sin indeed, he can now, by looking continually to the Lord, walk "after the Spirit" and not "after the flesh."

#### Conflict of Romans 7 and Galatians 5:17

We conclude this chapter by drawing attention to a statement by Dr. Ironside in which he gives away his whole case and absolutely destroys his own contention that the conflict of Galatians 5:17 is one which "goes on in every Christian" (p.125). On the very next page (126), he states that the conflict of Galatians 5:17 is the same as the conflict of Romans 7. He says:

The nature of the conflict (that is, Gal. 5:17) is fully described in a typical case -- probably the apostle's own at one time -- in Romans 7.... The man therein depicted is undoubtedly a child of God, though many have questioned it.

Notice the words in italics. Thus Dr. Ironside admits that the conflict of Romans 7 and Galatians 5:17 was a past and not a present experience in the case of the Apostle Paul. But if this conflict did not "go on" in the heart of the Apostle Paul it need not "go on" in our hearts either. Thus Dr. Ironside has really given his whole case away.

There is, however, a distinction between the conflict of Romans 7 and Galatians 5:17, which Dr. Ironside has overlooked. In Romans 7:14-24 the Holy Spirit is not mentioned at all; in Galatians 5:17, the conflict is specifically against the Spirit. In Romans 7 as Dr. Ironside says, we have one who is "quickened by the Spirit of God but seeking holiness in himself, and is still under law -- as a means of promoting piety" (p.118). In other words, we have a soul not "under grace" but "under law," seeking holiness apart from the Spirit. In Galatians 5, however, we have true believers with the Spirit but seeking holiness contrary to the way of the Spirit, hence the conflict with the Spirit. They are "fallen from grace." There is one great characteristic, however, which is common to both Romans 7 and Galatians 5. In both cases, the individuals concerned are seeking holiness "under the law" and are not, therefore, "under grace," hence the conflict. The conflicts of both Romans 7 and Galatians 5 are not intended, therefore, to represent conflicts which should "go on" indiscriminately in "every Christian" because when a believer comes fully "under grace," that is, is fully yielded to the Spirit, then the conflicts cease, as Dr. Ironside admits in the case of the Apostle Paul. This is scriptural freedom from sin indeed!

#### Stand Fast in Christ's Freedom

There is nothing in the Apostle Paul's teaching concerning "the flesh" which conflicts in any way with the truth of scriptural freedom from sin as set forth in this book. The whole message of the Epistle to the

Galatians is one of freedom from every form of bondage whether it be bondage to law, sin or "the flesh." "For freedom did Christ set us free" (Gal. 5:1, R.V.) is its ringing, triumphant declaration. This is a freedom which, when fully realized by faith, brings the glory of an indwelling, living Christ within the heart (Gal. 2:20). This is freedom indeed! Every inward fetter of sin is broken by the sin-freeing triumphant Son of God. The sin-freed believer is then set free to believe God with all blessed confidence (faith); free to "abound in hope" (hope); free to love (love); free to serve; free to do and suffer the will of God; free to fight in the true Christian conflict, namely, Ephesians 6:10-18; free to overcome; free to run the race of faith faithfully to the end and then receive the crown and a throne of glory at the last Hallelujah for "Scriptural Freedom from Sin." Oh, may we ever remember, "For freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage" (R.V.).

## Chapter 18

### SANCTIFICATION -- DOES IT EVER MEAN PURIFICATION?

Dr. Ironside has a great deal to say about "Sanctification"; in fact of the one hundred pages in his book on the doctrine of holiness, he devotes nearly one-half to a consideration of sanctification, its meaning and application to the believer. What is sanctification, and what does it mean to "sanctify" a believer? The vital question is, "Does it ever involve an inward purifying or freeing of the believer from sin?" Let us see first of all what Dr. Ironside has to say on this question. In his chapter "Sanctification: Its Meaning," he quotes twelve passages from the Old and New Testaments in which "sanctify" or "sanctification" occur and he says:

After carefully hearing these twelve witnesses, I ask my readers, Can you possibly gather from these varied uses of the word "sanctification" any hint of a change of nature in the believer, or an elimination of evil implied therein? I feel certain that every candid mind must confess the word evidently has a different meaning, and I design briefly to point out what that meaning is. Freed from all theological accretions, the naked verb "to sanctify" means to set apart and the noun "sanctification" means literally separation. This simple key will unlock every verse we have been considering and bring all into harmony where discord seemed complete (pp. 47, 48).

The above quotation gives the gist of Dr. Ironside's chapter on "Sanctification: Its Meaning." His teaching is quite clear. He teaches that "sanctification" means "separation," and that "to sanctify" means "to set apart." He denies that it ever means or involves "purification." But is this denial scriptural? Let us see.

#### 1. The aspect of separation.

First of all, it is quite true that "sanctify" in the Scriptures -- the Old Testament especially -- is used primarily in the sense of "set apart" and is often used in that sense without involving any actual change in the nature of the object "sanctified" as, for instance, when inanimate objects are thus "sanctified" such as Mount Sinai in Exodus 19:23 and the various articles of furniture in the tabernacle -- Exodus 40:10, 11. And so, when Dr. Ironside asks, "Was any change effected in the composition of the mountain?" and "Are we to suppose any change took place in the nature of these vessels, or was there any evil element rooted out of them?" we reply, of course not -- no holiness teacher ever thought that there was. To "sanctify" inanimate objects like a mountain or furniture is a very different thing, however, from sanctifying persons possessing a moral and spiritual nature and having responsibility to God. Again, it is quite true, that the word 'sanctify' is used in varied ways in Scripture."

He quotes scripture to show that persons can "sanctify" themselves to do iniquity (Isaiah 66:17); that unbelievers are sometimes "sanctified" (1 Cor. 7:14); and that the Lord Jesus "sanctified" Himself (John 17:19). Here then are instances in which the word "sanctify" is applied to persons without involving any inward purifying or elimination of evil. Quite true. All this is fully admitted. Further, it is quite true also that there is a sense in which all true believers in Christ are "sanctified." Dr. Ironside truly and beautifully points out that the sanctifying work of the Spirit of God in the soul may be said to commence when the Spirit of God "broods" over the sinner, just as the Spirit "brooded" over the dark waters in Genesis 1, and awakens and quickens the soul to believe in Christ (p.53). Hence the Christians of Corinth, many of whom were carnal, are addressed as "the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus." All this, too, is fully admitted.

Now we come to the crux of the whole matter. Dr. Ironside attempts to disprove that "sanctify" ever involves "to purify" by quoting twelve passages from Scripture in which he says, "sanctify" cannot involve "purify" and he shows that the word "sanctification" has "varied uses" (p.47). But this argument from the "varied uses" of the term "sanctify" and "sanctification" is like a two-edged sword. It can be applied just as effectively against Dr. Ironside's position as it is by Dr. Ironside against the truth of entire sanctification by faith. For obviously if the terms "sanctify" and "sanctification" admit of "varied uses" as Dr. Ironside himself says they do, then the crucial question arises, Are there any instances in Scripture in which these terms involve "purifying"? If there is only one such scripture, then the whole of his argument concerning the meaning of sanctification is overthrown. We shall quote several such scriptures.

## 2. The aspect of purification.

First of all I draw attention to a striking passage in the Old Testament which clearly shows that "to sanctify" means to cleanse or purify. Dr. Ironside has completely overlooked this significant passage. It is contained in 2 Chronicles 29. When Hezekiah came to the throne he found that the house of God had been shut up owing to the idolatrous reign of his predecessor. The house of God had been neglected and evidently filthiness and rubbish had been allowed to accumulate within it. Hezekiah determined to restore the house to its proper place as the house of God. He accordingly commanded the Levites, saying, "Sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the Lord God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place" (verse 5). Here then is an instance in which a house is "sanctified," and this involves purifying it first, because there was filthiness in it. The filthiness within it had to be taken out. Now the story goes on to explain fully how the Levites "sanctified" the house. It says in verse 15 that they came "to cleanse"

the house. Verse 16 goes on to state exactly how the house was "cleansed." It says:

"And the priests went into the Inner part of the house of the Lord, to cleanse it, and brought out all the uncleanness that they found in the temple of the Lord. . . . And the Levites took it, to carry it out abroad into the brook Kidron."

Now the next verse is most illuminating. It goes on to state exactly how long it took to cleanse the house, but here is the striking thing to notice. The verse uses the words "sanctify" to define this work of "cleansing." The verse reads:

"Now they began on the first day of the first month to sanctify, and on the eighth day of the month came they to the porch of the Lord; so they sanctified the house of the Lord in eight days; and in the sixteenth day of the first month they made an end."

Finally, when the priests and Levites reported to Hezekiah that they had "sanctified" the house of the Lord as he had commanded them, they said, "We have cleansed all the house of the Lord, and the altar of burnt offering, with all the vessels thereof. . . . Moreover all the vessels which King Ahaz . . . did cast away . . . have we prepared and sanctified."

Is it not as clear as noonday from these passages in 2 Chronicles 29 that the "sanctifying" of the house of the Lord meant its "cleansing from all its filthiness"? All the uncleanness that was within it had to be brought out and put right away. Is not this then a clear instance where "sanctify" means to purify? This very striking instance completely demolishes Dr. Ironside's contention that "sanctify" never involves any inward cleansing.

A very important principle underlies this example of "sanctifying" in 2 Chronicles 29. When Dr. Ironside quotes instances of inanimate objects being "sanctified" without any cleansing being involved, he is stating only a half truth. He overlooks the vital other half of the truth which 2 Chronicles 29 furnishes. This chapter clearly teaches that even inanimate objects, if they are unclean and filthy, must first be cleansed from all their filthiness in order to be "sanctified" for God's use. And if this is so in the case of inanimate objects, how much more so is it in the case of moral agents? Let us see whether this principle of cleansing from uncleanness applies also in the sanctifying of individuals.

Let us turn to Numbers 8:5-22, which deals with the sanctifying, or setting apart to God of the Levites (see verses 15 to 18). Notice what that sanctification of the Levites involved. The Lord's instructions were most emphatic. They had first to be "cleansed," "purified," and "washed." Four times is the word "cleansed" used. Here then is another very

definite case in which sanctification involved purification. This instance, too, is omitted by Dr. Ironside.

"Sanctifying The Lord -- What Does It Mean?"

We will now deal with the following extract from Dr. Ironside's book. On page 46 he denies that sanctification implies any inward cleansing. He says:

Believers are called upon to sanctify God! "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts" (1 Peter 3: 15). How are we to understand an exhortation like this if sanctification implies an inward cleansing or making holy what was before unclean and evil? Is it not manifest that such a definition would lead to the wildest vagaries and the grossest absurdities?

What does it mean to "sanctify" the Lord as God in our hearts? Surely this means that the Lord is to be honoured and magnified in our lives by reigning within the heart without a rival. Obviously it does not mean that the believer is to purify the Lord! No teacher of holiness would teach such a "gross absurdity." But does it not mean that the Lord is to purify the believer? That is a very different thing. When Dr. Ironside wrote the paragraph quoted above, I wonder whether he had forgotten Ezekiel 36:23-29. In that chapter we get full instruction as to what it meant by the Lord being "sanctified" in His people. The Lord says that He "will be sanctified" in Israel before the eyes of the heathen. But what does this "sanctifying of the Lord in Israel" imply as far as Israel is concerned? It involves first complete inward heart cleansing from all sin. "From all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. . I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh. . I will put my Spirit within you.... Ye shall be my people and I will be your God."

This passage in Ezekiel 36 illustrates the same principle that we saw in 2 Chronicles 29 and Numbers 8:5-22. In Chronicles 29 a house which had filthiness within it was "sanctified." Did that mean that the house was simply "set apart" for God just as it was? No. The filthiness within the house had to be taken right out of it. Similarly in Numbers 8 the Levites were "sanctified." Did this mean that they were set apart just as they were? By no means. Most emphatic instructions were given by the Lord that they were to be cleansed first. Likewise, in Ezekiel 36, persons -- responsible moral agents -- who have spiritual filthiness within them are to be sanctified because the Lord's name is to be sanctified in them. Does that mean that they will simply be "set apart" for God just as they are? No. All the spiritual filthiness is to be taken out of them. "From all your filthiness... I will cleanse you. I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh."

From these passages in the Old Testament we learn a very important truth in connection with sanctification, namely, then when persons or

objects in a defiled condition are to be set apart for the use of God, their sanctification, in its fullest, deepest meaning, involves their purification from all uncleanness. "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord" (Isaiah 52: 11), is a divine principle.

Thus, Dr. Ironside's attempt to prove that the teaching of the Scriptures concerning sanctification never involves purification, fails completely.

## Chapter 19

### SANCTIFIED "TRULY"

We have considered certain passages in the Old Testament in which "sanctify" involves purification. We will now turn to the New Testament. In John 17:19 our Lord says, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified in truth [truly sanctified]" (R.V.).

The thought in verse 19 is different from that in verse 17. In verse 17 our Lord prays that His own might be sanctified by means of the truth, namely, the Father's word. In verse 19 it is not "the" truth as in the Authorized Version. The article is omitted and the phrase is "sanctified in truth," that is, "truly," "really," as in John 4:24, "worship in spirit and in truth," that is, in reality and absolute sincerity. Hence, to be sanctified "truly," "really," as our Lord intends in John 17:19, is to be no mere imputed sanctification but an actual true, real, through and through inward sanctification that will satisfy the heart of the Lord himself.

In John 17:19 we get a beautiful instance of the two aspects of the term "sanctify," first as applied to our Lord himself and then to believers. Our Lord "sanctified" Himself by setting Himself apart to suffer, shed His blood, and die on the cross in order to rise again, ascend to glory and become our great High Priest, and from the throne, He baptized His people with the Holy Ghost and with fire. All for what purpose? In order that we might be "truly" sanctified -- sanctified "indeed." Oh, blessed Sanctifier! He sanctified Himself by laying down His life (John 10:17) -- (the blood shed aspect), and by taking it again (the blood sprinkled in heaven aspect). Just think what it cost Him thus to sanctify Himself! And in John 17 -- that Holy of Holies -- we are permitted to hear our blessed Lord address the Father and express what was in His heart and mind. His deep, deep desire was that His own should be "truly" sanctified.

Of course in a sense they were already "clean" through the word which the Lord had spoken to them (John 15:3) and also "sanctified," because the Lord could say of them "they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17:14). But in praying that they might be sanctified "truly," He was praying that they might enter into a deeper and more blessed cleansing and sanctifying than they had yet experienced. He meant that they should be brought into blessed, wonderful heart union with Himself and the Father. "I in them and thou in me that they may be made perfect in one" (see verses 21 and 23). And now notice an important point. Twice, namely, in verses 21 and 23, our Lord declares that the object He has in view in His own being thus sanctified "truly" or "indeed," is "that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Now is not this a similar purpose to that which is recorded in Ezekiel 36, namely, to "sanctify" the Lord in His disciples before the eyes of the world? In Ezekiel 36 the Lord is to be sanctified in Israel before the eyes

of the heathen; in John 17:21-23 the Lord is to be sanctified in the Church before the eyes of the world. But, as we have already seen, in Ezekiel 36, the sanctification spoken of involved the complete inward heart cleansing from sin of His people. Dare we really think then, that when in John 17 our Lord specially prays that His own may be sanctified "truly," He can possibly mean something spiritually less and inferior than is set forth in Ezekiel 36:25-27? When Hezekiah sanctified "truly" the house of God, in 2 Chron. 29, he most carefully went into the inner part of the house and brought out all the uncleanness that was found in the temple. Dare we suggest that our Lord had a lower standard for the sanctifying of His living spiritual temples, than Hezekiah had for the sanctifying of a material temple? If not, then we must surely admit that when our Lord prayed that His disciples might be sanctified "true," he meant that their hearts should be inwardly cleansed from all the filthiness of sin in order that their union with the Father and Himself might become a glorious, blessed reality.

Someone may raise an objection and say, "But all this will not be fulfilled until the millennium when the Church is glorified with Christ." I reply, Our Lord's prayer in John 17:21-23 will undoubtedly receive a glorious fulfilment during the millennial age and in subsequent ages, but did not our Lord intend that the prayer should have a fulfilment long before then? Most assuredly. That prayer began to be answered on the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier, purified the hearts of the believers (Acts 15:8, 9) and came and took up His abode within them, making them all truly one with the Father and the Son. The disciples were then "truly sanctified." Are we "truly sanctified" in the same sense?

## Chapter 20

### SANCTIFIED "WHOLLY"

The second passage in the New Testament which we will consider is 1 Thess. 5:23-34, which is as follows:

Abstain from all appearance of evil. 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. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

What has Dr. Ironside to say on this wonderful passage, particularly as to being "sanctified wholly"? Commenting on this verse he merely says:

There is no room for doubt as to the final result. Sanctification is God's work: and I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever (Eccl. 3:14). "He who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6) (p.57).

#### "Sanctified Wholly" -- A Present Blessing

Thus all that Dr. Ironside sees in being "sanctified wholly" in this verse is the final result of the process of sanctification at the coming of the Lord. But this is only half the truth. Let us beware lest a half truth obscure the blessedness of the full truth. Notice particularly Paul does not say (1) your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless, and (2) the God of peace sanctify you wholly at the coming of our Lord. This would mean that we could not be "sanctified wholly" until the coming of the Lord. But Paul does not say that. No, Paul mentions, (1) "The God of peace sanctify you wholly," and then (2) he refers to the preservation in that condition of entire sanctification until the coming of the Lord. Thus to be "sanctified wholly" is a blessing for this present life and we may be "preserved" in that blessing through divine grace unto the Lord's coming. What does it mean to be "sanctified wholly"? We will consider specially the force of two words in 1 Thessalonians 5:23. The Revised Version reads as follows:

"And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly: and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The two words to which I would call special attention are the words translated "entire" and "wholly." What is the force of these words?

#### The Meaning of "Entire"

I propose to take the liberty to quote from the combined work of two scholarly Brethren expositors, namely, Mr. C. F. Hogg and Mr. W. E. Vine, M.A., in their valuable exposition of the Epistle to the Thessalonians. On page 210, referring to the word translated "entire," they say it means: "To be complete and sound in every part."

The corresponding noun occurs in Acts 3:16 "perfect soundness" (cp. Isaiah 1:6).

Notice the illustration in Acts 3:16 of "entire." It is the case of the lame man who was healed at the Beautiful Gate of the temple. It says that.. his faith in the name of Christ had given him this "perfect soundness" -- in other words, he was completely healed and perfectly sound. What a vivid contrast to the picture of the sinner in Isaiah 1:6, which says, "from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it." Now in the "perfect soundness" of the healed man in Acts 3:16, we get a picture of the blessed state of "soundness in every part" in which God promises to "preserve" the fully trusting believer until the coming of the Lord. But here is the vital question. How can we possibly be preserved in "perfect soundness" in spirit, soul and body, unless we are first made perfectly sound? How then can we first be made perfectly sound? The answer is in the first part of the verse. God himself will do it! Hallelujah! He alone can do it and He will do it. "The God of peace himself sanctify you wholly."

#### The Meaning of "Wholly"

Now what is the full meaning of the word "wholly"? We will again let our two expositions speak. They say: Wholly; holoteles, lit., "whole" -- "complete," such colloquial expressions as "through and through," "all round," suitably represent it. Thus not an increasing degree of sanctification is intended, but, as the succeeding words explain, that the sanctification of each believer might extend to the whole man in every part.

In the light of these expositions of the Word "entire" and "wholly," let us read 1 Thess; 5:23 again, 'by paraphrasing these two words so that we may see their full force in the verse. The verse would then read somewhat as follows:

And the God of peace Himself sanctify you "through and through" and "all round". so that your sanctification "extends to the whole man in every part"; and may your spirit, soul and body be preserved "complete and sound in every part," without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you who also will do it.

Hallelujah! What a glorious present cleansing from all sin is expressed in these wonderful words.

This one verse kills the two natures theory, for it is impossible to reconcile the verse in its full and glorious meaning with the theory that a conflict with indwelling sin must go on in every believer all through life.

Obviously, if the believer is to be preserved by God, "complete and sound in every part," he must first be sanctified through and through" by God in order that he may be preserved in that condition; and to be sanctified "through and through" must mean just what John taught when he said that God was faithful and just to "cleanse us from all unrighteousness." And the word "sanctify" is in the same tense as "cleanse" in 1 John 1:9, that is; it refers to an instantaneous act. Thus, the "sanctifying wholly" of 1 Thess. 5:23 is an act of divine grace which involves the cleansing of the heart from all sin and is received by faith on the part of the believer. And He who thus cleanses by divine grace and power, also preserves by the same divine grace and power unto the coming of the Lord. "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it" (1 Thess. 5:24). But do we really believe He can and will do this for us?

#### The Call to Entire Sanctification

In praying for the Thessalonians that they might be "sanctified wholly" the apostle was simply following his Lord and Master who prayed that His disciples might be "sanctified truly." To be "sanctified truly" and "sanctified wholly" are identical spiritual experiences. That true believers might enter through faith into this blessed experience of being sanctified "truly" and "wholly," was the burden of the most earnest prayers of our Lord himself and the Apostle Paul. It was for this that our Lord suffered and shed His precious blood. "Jesus, also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Heb. 13:12). Our Lord longs with divine love that every true believer should be entirely sanctified. "Christ also loved the church and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word" (Eph. 5:26, R.V.).

What a tremendously vital matter of importance then for every believer is this question of being sanctified "truly" and "wholly." Ought not every believer to be deeply exercised to find out exactly what is meant by these words that the Holy Ghost uses and honestly to ask himself whether he is assured that these prayers of our Lord and the Apostle Paul are being fulfilled in his own case. This is no mere fad and fancy of holiness "cranks." Far from it. It is God the Father himself who hath called us unto holiness. The Lord Jesus Christ who is God the Son, shed His blood to make holiness possible for us. The Holy Spirit waits to apply the blood of Christ within and make us holy. "He therefore that despiseth [this call to entire sanctification], despiseth not man, but God" (1 Thess. 4:8). But what a rich spiritual reward will be the portion of every believer who will heed the Father's call to holiness and seek, in His presence and

by the Spirit, to enter by faith into, and enjoy, the God-given experience of being sanctified "truly" and sanctified "wholly" by the God of peace.

### Following After Sanctification

We conclude this chapter by referring to Hebrews 12:14, which says, "Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord" (R.V.). Dr. Ironside comments on this verse and says:

This one passage rightly understood, cuts up by the roots the entire perfectionist theory. . . . We do not follow that to which we have attained. . . . And who has attained to holiness in the full sense? (p.77).

We reply, Hebrews 12:14, rightly understood, perfectly harmonizes with the scriptural truth concerning being "sanctified truly" and "sanctified wholly" in this present life. Hebrews 12:1-14 likens the life of holiness to a race as in Philippians 3:12-15. Just as in Phil. 3 there are those termed "perfect" (verse 15) who are bidden to follow after and attain "final" perfection, so, likewise, in Hebrews 12 the "sanctified" are exhorted to run the race of holiness (verses 1, and 2), and thus follow after and attain that final sanctification which fits them to see the Lord. We need first, to be sanctified "truly" and "wholly" if we intend to run the race effectively "with patience" and thus "follow after" the sanctification of Hebrews 12:14.

## Chapter 21

### STANDING AND STATE

We have seen that Dr. Ironside rejects the idea that purification of the heart from sin in this life is involved in the entire sanctification of the believer. What does he substitute in its place? He substitutes what he terms "positional" sanctification or "our standing," which is very different from our actual "state." What is this "positional" sanctification or "standing"? He expresses it in a nutshell as follows:

It has to do with the new place in God's eternal favour occupied by every believer -- an unchanging and unchangeable position, to which defilement can never attach, in God's estimation (p. 50).

Thus, according to the two natures theory, a believer can never have a pure heart actually freed from sin in this life, that is, as far as his actual "state" is concerned, but, instead, he has "an imputed position" or a "standing" of purity in Christ in God's sight. In a nutshell, this is the theory of imputed holiness. Dr. Ironside endeavours to support this theory of imputed holiness from a passage in the First Epistle of John. Referring to the words, "As he is, so are we in this world," in 1 John 4: 17, he comments as follows:

"As He Is" In John's Epistle

This is not our state. No believer has ever been wholly like the Lord Jesus in a practical way. . . . But as to our standing (our new position) we are reckoned by God to be "as he is."

Thus, Dr. Ironside teaches that the phrase "as he is" refers merely to an imputed position in the sight of God, and not, in any sense, to the state or inward condition of the believer. But he has omitted to quote three other references to "as he is" in the same epistle. In chapter 3, verse 3, John says, "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure." Again, in verse 7, John says, "He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous." Now, in these two verses, is it not as clear as noonday that John is referring to an actual state or condition of the believer himself?

It would be utterly false to say that these verses mean imputed purity or imputed righteousness, or in other words purity and righteousness in: "standing" or "position" while in state the believer is actually impure and unrighteous. One more reference to "as he is" in John's Epistle. "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" (chapter 1, verse 7). What about "as he is" in this verse? Is this "standing" or "state"? "Walk" obviously refers to our actual spiritual state

or condition. It would be absurd to talk about an imputed "walk," or walking in imputed "light" or having imputed "fellowship." No, the walk and the fellowship are connected with the actual spiritual state or condition of the fully sanctified believer. But note the glory of the light in which we can dwell. It is "as he is" in the light. Hallelujah!

This pregnant little phrase, "as he is," occurs four times in the First Epistle of John. We have seen in three instances that the phrase clearly refers to the believer's state, not an imputed "standing" or "position." Why then should the reference in chapter 4 be something quite different? The words, "as he is so are we in this world," are not limited to a mere imputed "position" in the sight of God, while our state is actually something entirely different. God looks at us as we are in our hearts and it is there that He can make us pure, as He is pure, and fill us with His love. In Chapter 24 I have dealt with the subject of God's love within the believer. Just as we may say "as is the water in the ocean, so is the water in this little thimble," so the Apostle John says "as he is so are we in this world."

### The Error of Imputed Holiness

We can now see the measure of truth and error in the teaching of "positional sanctification" when it is coupled with the two natures theory of holiness. It is blessedly true that believers in the Lord Jesus Christ stand in a new position of favour in the sight of God; that they are "accepted in the Beloved," that they owe this position not to any merits of their own but to the one perfect sacrifice of Christ; that Christ is their great High Priest at the right hand of God, and, as such, bears their names and represents them before the Father. All this is blessedly true. But when these admittedly precious truths of what Christ is for us are carried to an extreme at the expense of other equally precious truths concerning what Christ can be in us, and it is denied that the believer can be made actually holy in heart in this life then we become scripturally unbalanced and fall into serious error. This is just what happens in the "two natures" theory. It makes such a deep divorce between what is termed our "standing" in Christ and our actual "state," that an entirely false view is given of true scriptural holiness.

Thus Dr. Ironside teaches that this "position" of imputed holiness is reckoned by God to "all Christians whatever their actual state, be they carnal or spiritual" (pp. 48, 49). "They are reckoned by God to be as He is" (p.59). Although they may be actually in a carnal condition, that is, they may be manifesting envy, strife, vainglory, etc., yet "God looks at them as He looks at His Son" (p.59).

Now no amount of theorizing about "standing" and "state" will alter the fact that God does look at us as we actually are in our hearts. "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do"

(Heb. 4:13). He searches the heart. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he," is as true of the New Testament believer as it was of the Old. The fact that we are believers in Christ and that Christ is our representative before God makes no difference to the fact that if there is pride, envy, unbelief and uncleanness in our hearts, even if it is suppressed, God sees us exactly as we actually are, namely, as proud, envious, unbelieving and unclean Christians -- "carnal" Christians. To imagine that if there is pride, envy, unbelief and uncleanness in our hearts, yet, because we are Christians, God sees us "in Christ" and reckons us to be as humble, loving, believing and pure "as he is," is to imagine that the God of absolute truth thinks something about us which is false and, in effect, makes Christ the minister of sin. May we all be delivered from such "Holiness the false."

### Imputed Righteousness and Imparted Holiness

Let us now consider the truth regarding "standing" and "state." First of all we must distinguish between the true doctrine of imputed righteousness and the false theory of imputed holiness. The doctrine of the two natures confuses these two things.

#### 1. Imputed Righteousness.

It is blessedly true, according to Romans 3 and 4; that God imputes righteousness to the guilty sinner who realizes he has no righteousness of his own and who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ. Obviously righteousness must be imputed because the sinner who has broken God's holy law cannot amend the past. Even God himself cannot alter the past. If therefore, a sinner is to stand righteous before God, and uncondemned against all the claims of God's broken holy law then, in the very nature of the case; God must impute righteousness to him. This God can righteously do on the basis of the cross of Christ because the Lord Jesus Christ in His life perfectly fulfilled the law and, as a spotless Victim on the cross, He redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us. This is the teaching of Romans 3:21-31 and Gal. 3:13. Thus Christ is "made unto us righteousness" (1 Cor. 1:30), but only, of course, to those who believe in Him (Rom. 3:22). It is very important to note that Romans 4:5 clearly declares that it is the believer's faith (that is, his faith in Christ) that is "counted for righteousness." Thus, even the "imputed righteousness" of Romans 3 and 4 is not something that is counted by God to an individual irrespective of his state of heart. God must see true faith within.

#### 2. Imparted Holiness.

But God's purpose in imputing righteousness to the believing sinner is to make him actually a holy believer. Now although God himself cannot alter the sinner's past, He can alter the believer's heart. God does not,

therefore, merely impute holiness to the believer -- no, He purposes to impart it. Romans 5: 19 says, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous?" Just as truly as by Adam's sin we were all made actual sinners, not merely by imputation, so by the obedience of Christ, God purposes to make us actually righteous, not merely by imputation. And just as by our union with Adam the corruption and sin nature of Adam was actually transmitted to us all, so God has united us to Christ in glory in order that, just as the very life and nature of the vine is actually imparted to the branches, not imputed to it, so Christ himself may be our very indwelling life and holiness. Thus Christ is made unto us sanctification.

God hates to see pride, envy, unbelief, uncleanness or any other form of sin whatever in the hearts of His people, whether suppressed or not. He calls His people to be holy as He is holy (1 Peter 1: 15). This one verse completely demolishes the two natures theory. He has made full provision whereby we may be cleansed from all unrighteousness (and this involves the cleansing or freeing of the heart from indwelling sin), sanctified "truly" and "wholly" and know the blessedness of Christ in us, the hope of glory here on earth, not merely imputed to us up in heaven. It is utterly wrong, therefore, for a believer to make the blessed doctrine of imputed righteousness an excuse for neglecting or refusing to seek the entire cleansing of the heart from indwelling sin through faith in the precious blood of Christ. Such an attitude is perilously near saying "let us continue in sin that grace may abound."

The theory that God merely reckons us to be holy but never actually makes us holy within our hearts in this life is "Holiness the false." The heart of God our Father is not satisfied to look up at Christ in heaven and see us in Him; He desires to look down here on earth and see Christ in us. This is holiness the true.

Holiness -- The True

We may express in a nutshell the scriptural truth concerning our standing and state as follows:

Our Standing -- The believer in Christ, as a sinner saved by grace, stands in the favour of God solely on the ground of the merits of the one perfect sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. The believer is "in Christ" and is "accepted in the beloved" (Eph. 1: 6) and Christ, as the believer's High Priest in heaven represents him before the Father (Hebrews 9: 24).

Our State -- God purposes that the believer should "be holy and without blame before him in love" (Eph. 1: 4); and "be holy" as He is holy (1 Peter 1: 15). He has therefore made full provision for the believer to be "freed from sin" (Rom. 6: 12); "cleansed from all unrighteousness" (1

John 1:9), so that Christ might "dwell and live" in the believer by faith (Gal. 2:20 and Eph. 3:17), and so that God might see Christ in the believer on earth.

We could not do better, in closing this chapter on "Standing and State" than quote the following pregnant words from page 136 of Dr. Andrew Murray's "The Holiest of All":

When God set forth His only begotten Son as the only possible way of access to Himself, it meant that He can delight in or have fellowship with nothing in which the likeness of His Son is not to be seen. We can have no farther entrance into God's favour or good pleasure than He can see Christ in us.

If we are tempted to settle down into a low level of holiness by the false, soothing, two-naturist doctrine that we must always have indwelling sin in our hearts as long as we are in this world but it does not matter what our actual state is, whether carnal or spiritual, yet God sees us in Christ and reckons us "as Christ," may we be aroused to seek true holiness by that weighty sentence from Dr. Andrew Murray, "We can have no farther entrance into God's favour or good pleasure than He can see Christ in us."

## Chapter 22

### "NONFORFEITABLE" SANCTIFICATION

#### A Solemn Warning

We will conclude our examination of Dr. Ironside's teaching on "Sanctification" by referring to an important aspect of the subject which he says is taught in the Epistle to the Hebrews. In the following extract Dr. Ironside teaches that this imputed sanctification is nonforfeitable. He says:

The sanctified are declared to be perfected forever. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14). Who among the perfectionists can explain this satisfactorily? Nothing is commoner among the teachers of this school than the doctrine of the possibility of the ultimate falling away and final loss of those who have been justified, sanctified and have enjoyed the most marvellous experiences; yet here the sanctified are said to be forever perfected -- consequently shall never be lost nor ever lose that sanctification which they have once been the objects of (p.47).

#### Eternal Security

Before examining the above extract I wish to say that I am as whole-hearted and convinced a believer as anyone in the eternal security of the Lord's "sheep." They certainly shall never perish (John 10:28). They are kept by the power of God through faith (1 Peter 1:5). That is the sovereign grace aspect of truth. But who are the Lord's "sheep"? They are those who, through God's grace, have faith in Christ and hear (continuously) His voice and follow (continuously) Him (John 10:27). That involves human responsibility. Scripture always balances these two aspects of truth. The two truths of God's sovereign grace and human responsibility run side by side like two parallel railway lines through the Word of God. It is vital to recognize this fact if we would have a balanced view of divine revelation. Notice these parallel truths in the following table.

#### The Balance of Parallel Truths

##### Human Will and Responsibility -- God's Sovereign Grace

[These comparisons are not side-by-side, but with those references to "God's Sovereign Grace" above those references to "Human Will and Responsibility."]

##### Eternal Life

[God's Sovereign Grace]: -- "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

[God's Sovereign Grace]: -- "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son" (1 John 5:11).

[Human Will and Responsibility]: -- "God will render to every man according to his deeds. To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life" (Romans 2:6, 7).

[Human Will and Responsibility]: -- "Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father" (1 John 2:24).

#### Final Presentation

[God's Sovereign Grace]: -- "Now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight" (Colossians 1:22).

[Human Will and Responsibility]: -- "If we continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel" (Colossians 1:23).

#### Entire Sanctification

[God's Sovereign Grace]: -- "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth [continuously] us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

[Human Will and Responsibility]: -- "If we walk [continuously] in the light as he is in the light" (1 John 1:7).

We must never divorce these two aspects of divine truth. If we draw conclusions by over-emphasizing one aspect without balancing it with the other we shall fall into error. Dr. Ironside attempts to prove from the Epistle to the Hebrews the theory of an imputed non-forfeitable sanctification, absolutely secured to the individual the moment he believes in Christ. But the epistle does not teach this. This epistle which strongly emphasizes the perfection of the one sacrifice of Christ (sovereign grace) is very careful to balance that truth by emphasizing equally the profoundly solemn truth of human responsibility which involves the possibility of the individual believer suffering solemn and "final loss."

If we study the Epistle to the Hebrews we shall soon discover that it is not merely "the perfectionist" who teaches the possibility of those suffering solemn loss who have once enjoyed "marvellous experiences"

of God. It is the teaching of this very Epistle to the Hebrews. It contains some of the most solemn warnings in the whole Word of God of the danger and possibility of real believers suffering serious "final loss." Who amongst "two-naturists" can explain these warnings satisfactorily? In order to make these warnings fit in with the theory of "nonforfeitable" sanctification, our "two naturist" friends strive hard to make them all apply to mere unregenerate "professors." That there are false professors and true believers we fully admit, but we cannot honestly "explain away" all the solemn warnings of the Hebrews Epistle by the easy-going expedient of applying them to mere "false professors."

### Israel's Loss of Canaan

The Epistle to the Hebrews specially emphasizes the solemn case of Israel who had truly enjoyed most marvellous experiences, had been sheltered by the blood of the Passover lamb, redeemed by the mighty power of God from Egypt and had been promised the land of Canaan (Exodus 6:8). If any people ever had "positional sanctification" in the sight of God it was Israel when they sang the song of triumph after crossing the Red Sea. Yet these very sanctified people, through their subsequent unbelief, forfeited their inheritance in Canaan and were overthrown in the wilderness. Only Joshua and Caleb of that generation of Israel actually inherited Canaan. Now in Heb. 3 and 4 and 1 Corinthians 10, Israel's loss of Canaan is made the basis by the Holy Spirit of most solemn warnings to true believers of the possibility of their suffering corresponding final loss. If we deny this we might as well put 1 Corinthians 10 and the Epistle to the Hebrews, especially chapters 3 and 4, in the waste-paper basket. In 1 Corinthians 10, Paul reminds the Corinthians that the Israelites were "overthrown in the wilderness" and warns them that these things "happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition" (v. 11). Then this clearly indicates that it is possible for those who were true believers to be "overthrown in the wilderness" spiritually and to suffer "final loss." How does the two-naturist reconcile this solemn fact with the theory of a "nonforfeitable" sanctification?

Similar solemn warnings are addressed in Hebrews to "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling," who had taken "joyfully the spoiling of your goods knowing . . . that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance" (Heb. 3:1 and Heb. 10:34). These are real believers and not mere false professors. Yet these are the very ones who are exhorted, "Cast not away your confidence which hath great recompense of reward" (Heb. 10:35). Obviously this verse implies the possibility of such real believers "casting away their confidence" and thus finally forfeiting their "reward of the inheritance" (Col. 3:24). Again, we must leave it to the "two naturist" to explain what "final loss" is involved in such forfeiture and how he reconciles it with the theory of "nonforfeitable" sanctification.

## A Fatal Flaw

In Dr. Ironside's teaching about this "nonforfeitable sanctification," he does not explain precisely what it is that is absolutely secured to the believer by such imputed "nonforfeitable" sanctification. (Clearly according to his own statement it is something in addition to salvation from hell because he says, "They shall never be lost, nor ever lose that sanctification," etc., but he does not tell us precisely what it is, in addition to salvation from hell, that is absolutely nonforfeitable. This is the fatal flaw in the whole theory. But whatever may be meant precisely by this "nonforfeitable position," the teaching of Hebrews 3 and 4 and 1 Corinthians 10 is perfectly clear. The loss by the Israelites of their inheritance in the land of Canaan is used by the Holy Spirit as the basis of most solemn warnings to true believers. This fact proves that it is possible for those who were once true believers to suffer a loss of a position of blessedness in the realm of grace and glory corresponding to the loss by the Israelites of their inheritance in the land of Canaan. How does Dr. Ironside face this solemn fact which really demolishes the "nonforfeitable" sanctification theory? He tries to explain it all away by attempting to prove that these Israelites were not "real" -- they never had any true faith in God at all, and that, therefore, they are types not of true believers but of mere unregenerate professors. But to assert that not one of all the Israelites who subsequently lost Canaan ever had a spark of real faith in God at all at the commencement is pure unfounded assumption. Even Dr. Ironside apparently realizes he is on "very thin ice on this vital point because he very guardedly says:

Many were doubtless in the blood-sprinkled houses that solemn night, when the destroying angel passed through to smite the unsheltered firstborn, who had no real faith in God. . . . But the wilderness was the place of testing and soon proved who were real and who were not (p.64).

We will grant all this, but the vital point is this: were there any at all who had a measure of true faith in God but who subsequently lost Canaan? If so, then the two naturist theory of a once-possession absolutely nonforfeitable sanctification collapses. What does Scripture say on this vital point?

Scripture declares that the Passover was kept by faith (Heb. 11:28); and that by faith they passed through the Red Sea (Heb. 11:29). In the face of this scripture how can we possibly contend that none of the Israelites were "real" at the commencement? Scripture also states that the people feared the Lord and believed the Lord (Exodus 14:31), when they sang the song of triumph unto the Lord in Exodus 15, and that they drank of that spiritual Rock that was Christ (1 Cor. 10:14). Were all the Israelites "unreal" and therefore hypocrites, when they sang to the Lord the song of triumph in Exodus 15? It is pure unfounded assumption to say so.

Whatever faith they had, however, was, alas, mixed with the evil heart of unbelief as their subsequent conduct clearly indicates. The Israelites across the Red Sea are not intended, therefore, to typify mere unregenerate professors or hypocrites. They represent "carnal" believers. They had faith to cross the Red Sea but they had not faith to cross the Jordan. They had a real title to Canaan -- a "positional" sanctification -- but they lost their inheritance in the land. Why? Not because they were never "real" or had no "real" title, or never had any faith in God at all at the commencement; no, it was because they were "carnal" and did not continue in faith and subsequently departed from God, gave way to unbelief and disobedience at Kadesh-barnea and so were disinherited. Thus we read those awfully solemn words:

"The Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not" (Jude 5).

Now, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "holy brethren" solemnly warned of a similar danger. These brethren who are "partakers of the heavenly calling" must obviously be the "objects of that sanctification" of which Dr. Ironside speaks. Yet these very "sanctified" brethren are warned: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you, an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God" (Heb. 3:12). This solemn warning is utterly meaningless if these "holy brethren" could never possibly lose that sanctification which they have once been objects of. If we bow to the full force of the teaching of Hebrews 3 and 4 and 1 Corinthians 10 we must abandon the theory of "nonforfeitable" sanctification. These scriptures kill the theory.

The serious error of this "nonforfeitable" sanctification theory is that it complacently applies to unregenerate "professors," solemn warnings which the Holy Ghost definitely applies to true believers.

It is clear from the foregoing that the Epistle to the Hebrews does not teach the theory of an absolutely "nonforfeitable" sanctification. We will now place side by side with Hebrews 10:14 which Dr. Ironside quotes, two other verses from the epistle which he does not quote, thus:

Sovereign Grace -- "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (10:14).

Human Responsibility -- "Christ is the author of eternal salvation unto all them that [continuously] obey him" (5:9). "We are made partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end" (3:14).

Praise God for the one perfect sacrifice of Christ and all that it has accomplished. But who, according to the Epistle to the Hebrews, are "the sanctified" who are "perfected for ever"? Clearly, they are those, and

only those, who are obeying (continuous tense) Christ and who are holding the beginning of their confidence steadfast to the end. Dr. Ironside's attempt to prove the theory of absolute individual nonforfeitable sanctification from Heb. 10: 14 fails because he has drawn an unwarrantable inference from one verse setting forth the sovereign grace aspect of truth without balancing it with the parallel truth of human responsibility.

### A Solemn Warning

The "two-naturist" doctrine that no matter what a believer's state may be, whether carnal or spiritual, yet if he has at one time believed in Christ, not only can he never be lost but, in addition, he can "never lose that sanctification of which he has once been the object," is not only unscriptural it is positively dangerous. It tends to lull the carnal believer into a subtle false sense of security and makes of none effect the solemn warnings of Hebrews 3 and 4 and 1 Corinthians 10. A theory which results in such consequences is fundamentally wrong and dangerous

Canaan stands for the life of deliverance from sin, inward heart rest and continuous victory by faith. If a believer neglects or rejects God's call to this blessed "Canaan" life, he is in danger of repeating spiritually the tragedy of Kadesh-barnea and being "overthrown in the wilderness." This is the plain teaching of Hebrews 3 and 4, and no amount of theory about "nonforfeitable" sanctification can alter this solemn fact. It is a delusion and presumption for anyone to think that he possesses a "nonforfeitable" sanctification because at some time in the past he once exercised faith in Christ. The only scriptural ground for believing that we do now stand in the full favour of God, is that we are now hearing Christ, are now believing, obeying and following Him and are now giving all diligence to make our calling and election sure (2 Peter 1:10). It is only if we do these things that we shall never fall and never forfeit the full position of final blessedness that God has prepared for them that love Him. All such patient, persevering believers can rest assured that "all things work together for good to them that love God," but never let us forget this vital fact that the test whether we scripturally "love God" is that "we keep his commandments" (1 John 5:3).

### The Scriptural Balance of the Truth of Entire Sanctification

There is nothing in the foregoing, however, which need disturb in the slightest, the faith and confidence in the keeping power of God of the penitent, humble believer who is sincerely trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ and walking up to all the light he possesses. The scripturally instructed believer in the truth of entire sanctification can rejoice, just as much as the two-naturist, in all the glorious truth that flows from the revelation of the sovereign grace of God -- His promises, keeping power and purpose concerning the Church, etc. He is not, however, "tied" to

the rigid theory of imputed "nonforfeitable" sanctification and he is free, therefore, to bow, without reserve, to the full force of all the solemn warnings of God's Word without trying to twist them and explain them away to make them fit in with this particular theory.

The doctrine of entire sanctification by faith maintains the even balance of truth as between God's sovereign grace on the one hand and human responsibility on the other. The believer in entire sanctification by faith acknowledges, therefore, like the Apostle Paul, that, as an individual, it is possible for him to suffer solemn final loss. Paul knew all about God's grace and the Church, yet he says:

"I keep under my body and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected" (1 Cor. 9:27, R.V.).

To be rejected for the crown obviously means, even at the very lowest estimate, to lose the throne in glory that accompanies the crown. The "crown is no mere decoration. The crown implies a throne and to be rejected for the crown is to lose the throne. Is not this very solemn "final loss"? If it were possible for Paul to lose the crown and throne in glory, the very position for which Christ had apprehended him (Phil. 3:12-14), it is clear that this imputed "nonforfeitable" sanctification does not, in itself, secure for the individual believer such a crown and a throne in glory, the moment he believes in Christ. It was not until the very end of his life that Paul said, "I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness" (2 Timothy 4:8).

Just as the train proceeds along two parallel railway lines, so the believer needs the full force of the promises of God along the line of sovereign grace and also the full force of all the solemn warnings along the line of human responsibility. The doctrine of entire sanctification by faith is firmly and evenly balanced upon these two parallel principles in the Word of God. The doctrine is therefore perfectly sound, scriptural and impregnable.

## Chapter 23

### THE GLORIOUS BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

No study of the truth that makes "free indeed" would be complete if we omitted to honour fully the Person and work of the blessed Holy Spirit. As Dr. Ironside devotes a chapter to the "Baptism with the Holy Spirit and of Fire" we will do the same.

#### 1. The Sanctifying Spirit.

On page 96 Dr. Ironside makes the following denial concerning the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit:

He was not to come for the cleansing or freeing of the disciples from sin.

Then what did Paul mean when he exclaimed triumphantly "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2)? And what did Peter mean in Acts 15:8, 9 when he declared:

"God gave [instantaneously] them the Holy Ghost even as he did unto .... purifying [instantaneously] their hearts by faith."

If hearts are purified by faith what are they cleansed from if not sin? These two vital passages are not quoted at all in Dr. Ironside's chapter, but they most definitely affirm what he totally denies.

He goes on to say:

The, the Spirit would indwell them to control them for Christ and empower them for holiness of life and for authoritative testimony.

Here is the inconsistency of the "two naturist" doctrine. It teaches the work of the Spirit for power but denies it for purity. But how can we truly be "empowered for holiness of life" unless we are first made holy in heart? Did not our Lord say, "Cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also" (Matt. 23:26)?

Peter's experience is a striking instance of the Spirit's work of first purifying the heart and then empowering for "authoritative testimony." When he went out and wept bitterly after denying his Lord, surely he then made the discovery, in a way he had never realized before, of the awfulness of the sin that dwelt within him. Was not the anguish of his soul expressed by Paul's words, "The good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do. . . .O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?" (Rom. 7:19 and 24). And what made him so bold and fearless after Pentecost? Was it not because, through the glorious

baptism with the Holy Ghost, he knew that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus had set him free from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2). It is the mighty baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire that takes away sin and carnal fear from the heart and empowers for testimony. We must have inward purity if we would have outward power. No wonder Peter specially emphasized in Acts 15:8, 9 the "purifying of the heart" aspect of the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

Again Dr. Ironside says:

The Saviour's work on the cross cleanses from all sin.

True, the Lord's work on the cross is undoubtedly the divine basis of all our salvation, but all that our Lord did for us on the cross to cleanse us from sin is made real in us only by the Holy Spirit. He is the Sanctifier (Romans 15:16; 2 Thess. 2:13; and 1 Peter 1:2), and all that we have unfolded in previous chapters concerning the setting free from sin (Chapter 7), the cleansing of the precious blood of Christ (Chapter 9); the covenant of grace (Chapter 12) and being sanctified "truly" and "wholly" (Chapters 19 and 20) are all made effective within us by the blessed Holy Spirit. If we deny this then we rob the gospel of its glory.

The two natures doctrine not only denies the power of the blood of Christ to cleanse from indwelling sin, but, as we have seen, it also denies that the Holy Spirit effects any cleansing or freeing of the believer from sin either. Let us beware of a theory that robs us of the glory of the truth that makes free indeed.

## 2. The Fire of the Holy Ghost.

Dr. Ironside teaches that the words "and with fire" in the phrase "baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire" (Matt. 3:11), have nothing whatever to do with the believer or with the baptism with the Spirit. He teaches that there are two distinct baptisms; the baptism with the Spirit upon believers and the baptism of the fire of judgment upon unbelievers. He states that John said in effect, "You shall all be baptized by the coming One either by the Holy Spirit or in fire." But John did not say this in verse 11. In verse 11 John refers to the commencement of the present dispensation of the Spirit, and says, "He [that is, Christ] shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." The fire in verse 11 is the holy fire of blessing and is associated with the Spirit. In verse 12, however, John refers to the close of the present dispensation, when Christ will separate the wheat from the chaff and the latter will be burnt up with unquenchable fire. This fire is the fire of judgment

Dr. R. A. Torrey's comment on Matt. 3:11 is as follows:

The second "with" in this passage is in italics. It is not found in the Greek. There are not two different baptisms spoken of, the one with the Holy Ghost and one with fire, but one baptism with the holy wind and fire. ("The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit" (p.171).

At the same time, Matt. 3:12 is a beautiful prophetic picture in symbol of Pentecost. The burning up of the chaff (carnality) and the thorough purging of His floor (His own believers) symbolizes the purifying aspect of Pentecost. The gathering of the wheat together, speaks of the baptizing of the purified believers into one body. The "garner" is Christ. The Spirit-purified and filled believers were brought into wondrous union with Christ in glory and their life was hid with Christ in God. The Lord could then make "bread" out of His "gathered wheat," that is, He could then make His people the medium through which His life was imparted to perishing sinners. It is the Lord making us "bread" to others?

Just as the symbol of water is associated with the birth of the Spirit (John 3:5), so the symbol of fire is associated with the baptism with the Spirit at Pentecost. "Cloven tongues like as of fire sat upon each of them" (Acts 2:3). Nothing purifies like fire; the baptism with the Spirit purified the hearts of the believers (Acts 15:8, 9). Fire burns and glows; so does divine love. The baptism with the Spirit fills the believers with the Spirit and with divine love (Acts 2:4; 4:32, 33). How absolutely appropriate and scriptural therefore to link the words "and fire" with the promise "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost."

But Dr. Ironside rejects the "kindling, flaming, burning, glowing fire" as applicable to the baptism with the Holy Ghost. His chapter is so "cold"! He denies that there is such a work of grace as "the Spirit coming upon and within the justified man, like a flame of fire, to burn out all evil and impart divine energy." Consequently he rejects as unscriptural that glowing verse of Wesley:

"Refining fire go through my heart." He quotes this verse in full with obvious disapproval and suggests it is only unsound "perfectionists" who sing this verse (p. 92). But every word in that lovely verse in the hymn, "My God, I know, I feel Thee mine," is perfectly scriptural. Let us quote it with scriptural references:

"Refining fire go through my heart"

(Matt. 3:11; Acts 15:8, -9; and Malachi 3:3).

"Illuminate my soul"

(Luke 11:36; 2 Corinthians 4:6; and Eph. 1:16-18).

"Scatter thy life through every part"

(John 10:10; Acts 2:4; Gal. 2:20; and Phil. 1:21).

"And sanctify the whole"

(1 Thess. 5:23; Phil. 1:10, 11; and Hebrews 13:20, 21).

Praise God we shall continue to sing with joy the whole of Charles Wesley's glorious hymn, "My God, I know, I feel Thee mine. Let us watch that we are not robbed of the glowing fire of that hymn and the rest of the unique hymns of Wesley on entire sanctification, by the "cold" two-natures doctrine which has no place for "the fire" of the Holy Ghost!

### 3. The Birth of the Spirit and the Baptism with the Spirit.

The whole object of Dr. Ironside's book is to endeavour to prove that teaching concerning a definite "second blessing" or "second work of grace" subsequent to the new birth is "Holiness the false." We will now examine his teaching concerning the Holy Spirit and we will specially consider the birth of the Spirit and the "baptism" or "gift" of the Spirit -- the two latter terms are used interchangeably (Acts 11:16 and 17).

Dr. R. A. Torrey truly says in his book on the Holy Spirit:

The baptism with the Holy Spirit is an operation of the Holy Spirit distinct from, and additional to, His regenerating work (p. 174).

The difference, briefly, is as follows: The birth of the Spirit is the critical entrance into spiritual life of a soul previously spiritually dead and every such regenerate soul in one sense "has the Spirit" (John 3:5-8; Eph. 2:5; and Rom. 8:9). The "baptism" or "gift" of the Spirit is the critical entrance into fullness of spiritual life of a soul already spiritually alive. This baptism involves in its full scriptural meaning (1) the purifying of the believer's heart from sin; (2) the infilling of the Spirit, and (3) the empowerment for effective witness (Acts 15:8, 9; 2:4; and 1:8). This is what the baptism with the Spirit meant "as it was at the beginning," namely, at Pentecost Thus the birth of the Spirit is the first work of grace; the baptism with the Spirit is the second work of grace. The associated symbol of the birth of the Spirit is water (John 3:5); the symbol of the baptism with the Spirit is fire (Matt. 3:11 and Acts 2:3). Now this distinction Dr. Ironside definitely denies. He teaches only one critical work of grace in the believer and contends that all that is meant by the baptism with the Spirit is received by everyone the moment he first believes and is born of the Spirit. We "get it all" at conversion. This is the root error of the "two-naturist" doctrine concerning the Holy Spirit and the believer. It is contrary to Scripture and Christian experience.

Our Lord emphatically declared that the world could not receive the Spirit as He would be given at Pentecost when the disciples would be baptized

with the Holy Ghost (John 14:17). This conclusively proves, therefore, that a person must first be "not of the world," that is, must be born of the Spirit before he can be baptized with the Spirit. Now turn to the Acts of the Apostles and what do we find? In every case in which the "baptism" or "gift" of the Spirit is recorded, the recipients were already converted to God and, therefore, quickened or born of the Spirit. They received the "baptism" or "gift" of the Spirit as a subsequent gift of God. We will briefly mention them:

1. The 120 believers (Acts 2) -- Clearly these were all converted; all believers in the Lord Jesus.
2. The Samaritans (Acts 8:16) -- They were all baptized believers in Christ.
3. The Apostle Paul (Acts 9:17) -- He was converted on the way to Damascus. He received the infilling of the Spirit three days afterward.
4. Cornelius and the Gentiles (Acts 10) -- These were not ignorant, unconverted heathen. Dr. Ironside admits this. He says, "Cornelius (already a pious man, undoubtedly quickened by the Spirit)" (p.97).
5. The Ephesians (Acts 19) -- These were not ignorant, unconverted heathen either. Paul addressed them from the very first as "believers."

The "transitional period" theory examined.

Dr. Ironside attempts to maintain his doctrine, however, by the theory of "a transitional period." He says:

In the early chapters of Acts we have a number of special manifestations of the Spirit owing to the orderly formation of that mystical body. [Then, referring to the case of the Ephesians in Acts 19:1-7, he continues] Upon the imposition of Paul's hands they received the Comforter. They, too, are added to the body and the transitional state had come to an end. Thereafter, no mention is ever made of an interval between conversion and the reception of the Spirit (p. 99).

The theory of a "transitional period" is untrue for the following reasons:

1. There is not a single recorded instance in the Acts after chapter 19, of a conversion or of the reception of the Spirit. There is not one line of scripture evidence therefore to support the theory that after that chapter God altered His method and thereafter always bestowed the baptism or gift of the Spirit at the same moment as the new birth.
2. The epistles to Galatia, Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth and Ephesus were written by Paul to these churches which had been founded by him

during this twenty years alleged "transitional period" when, as even Dr. Ironside admits, there was an interval between conversion and the reception of the Spirit. The teaching of these epistles applies to us today; so also does the distinction between the new birth and the "gift" or "baptism" with the Spirit which was in force when those churches were founded. The epistles have their roots in the Acts and must always be read in the light of the Acts.

The theory that Acts 19 marks the end of a so-called "transitional period" is without any scriptural support. The question that Paul asked the Ephesian believers is just as applicable now as it was then, namely, "Received ye the Holy Spirit when ye believed?" Even a leading teacher of the early Brethren -- Mr. William Kelly -- fully recognized this fact. In his "Lectures on the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit," he says:

So far is it from being true that a man receives the gift of the Holy Spirit the moment he believes, that it may be well doubted whether there ever was such a case since the world began. . . . The reason is quite simple, too. The gift of the Holy Ghost is grounded on the fact that we are sons by faith of Christ; believers resting on redemption in Him'. Plainly, therefore, it supposes that the Spirit of God has regenerated us (pp. 161, 162).

#### Baptized into One Body at Pentecost

The foregoing teaching is quite consistent with Paul's statement "by one Spirit were we all baptized into one body" (1 Corinthians 12:13). Paul is here teaching the truth of the essential unity of all believers in Christ under the symbol of "the body." But, as Dr. Elder Cumming truly says in his work, "Through the Eternal Spirit":

There is a manifest distinction between the spirit baptizing men into Christ and Christ baptizing men with the Holy Ghost (p. 86).

We do not look at the carnal Corinthians or the backslidden Galatians as samples of what is meant by the fulfilment of the glorious promise, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." No, we adopt our Lord's principle (see Matt. 19:8), and go right back, as it was, "at the beginning," when it was first fulfilled, namely, at Pentecost, and the "gift" of the Spirit was first bestowed, fresh, full and glorious, direct from Christ the Baptizer. That glorious baptism transformed all the believers into spiritual, loving, triumphant, effective witnesses-bearing saints. This is what God means by the baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Let us beware of lowering His standard. Every believer needs this baptism in order to function as a healthy member of the body of Christ.

#### The Challenge of Pentecost

Dr. Ironside says, "There was never another Pentecost recognized in the Church," and he denies, therefore, such a blessing as a "personal Pentecost" after conversion. This is very misleading. It is true of course that the Holy Ghost was first "sent" by the Lord at Pentecost, and that, having thus "come," He abides in the Church and so, in that unique dispensational sense, Pentecost is not repeated. Just, however, as the Lord Jesus was sent once into the world and yet each sinner must individually receive Christ by faith for himself; so, also, although the Holy Spirit was sent at Pentecost and abides, yet each believer must individually receive the "gift" or "baptism" with the Spirit by faith for himself. In this sense, therefore, it is quite correct to speak of "a personal Pentecost." Let us take heed that we are not misled by the "two naturist" denial of such a glorious blessing.

Have we received what God means by the baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire? If we profess that we have, then are we keeping the holy fire burning within our hearts? This is the challenge of Pentecost to every Christian today.

## Chapter 24

### TREASURE IN EARTHEN VESSELS

#### An Indwelling God and Perfect Love

The truth of the glorious baptism with the Holy Spirit brings us to the climax of our study of the truth that makes free indeed. The glorious baptism must not, however, be regarded as a finality. It marks rather the entrance into the fullness of blessing in Christ which progresses from glory to glory. In a nutshell, it is the glory of an Indwelling God and Perfect Love. The blessing of scriptural freedom from sin leads to this supreme inward glory. Just as the balloon when freed from the ropes that secure it to the ground, soars immediately upward into the air, so the heart of the believer, when set blessedly free from sin, immediately finds its home in God himself. And even more wonderful still; God himself is "at home" in the believer's heart. What marvellous divine condescension indeed! Yet nothing less than this can satisfy the hunger of the believer, fully awakened and deeply longing for holiness. The "two naturist" theory of a mere imputed position of holiness can never satisfy God or the believer.

#### A Blessing for This Life

The glory of an Indwelling God and Perfect Love is a present blessing. The Apostle John describes it when he says, "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him" (1 John 4:16). He refers, in his First Epistle, to "perfect love" and being "made perfect in love." There are five such references in the First Epistle. Do not let us be afraid or ashamed of that word "perfect." It does not mean final or absolute perfection. There is always room for growth. It simply means that the whole heart is cleansed from sin and, up to the measure of its capacity, is filled with the love of God. A little cup can be cleansed from all filthiness and placed in the ocean. The cup is in the ocean and the ocean flows into the cup filling it to its utmost capacity. Thus a believer's heart can, by faith, be cleansed from all sin so that he dwells in God like the cup in the ocean and God dwells in him like the ocean in the cup. Of course, the cup cannot contain the ocean, neither can the believer contain God, but God, through the Spirit, can come in and fill the believer's cleansed heart to the utmost of its capacity. This is the glorious holiness teaching of the First Epistle of the Apostle John. No wonder he says that he writes that our joy may be full (chapter 1, verse 4).

#### The "Two-Naturist" Denial of Perfect Love

The "two naturist" doctrine denies, however, that this glorious blessing of "Perfect Love" is something in the believer. This is the last error of the

theory which we shall examine. In 1 John 4:17 and 18 there are three references to "perfect love" as follows, "Herein is our love made perfect" -- "perfect love casteth out fear" and "he that feareth is not made perfect in love." On page 90 of his book, Dr. Ironside paraphrases these passages in such a way as to make them mean that "perfect love" is not something to be developed within the believer himself, but is merely his "apprehension" of the perfect love of God toward us as seen in the cross of Christ He concludes by saying:

Is it not plain that there is no hint of that perfect love being developed in me and thus my reaching a state of perfection in the flesh?

We will now show that the denial expressed in the words in italics in the above quotation is contrary to the Word of God.

1. John 17:26 -- The clue to what the Apostle John means by "being made perfect in love" is contained in this verse. Our Lord says, "I have declared unto them thy name and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them and I in them." Ellicott's Commentary has this beautiful note on this verse:

It means that the disciples may so know the nature of God that this love may be in them, dwelling in them as the principle of their life.

2. 1 John 3:1 -- "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us," literally "given to us." Rev. Evan H. Hopkins, in "Law of Liberty," etc., quotes Dr. Westcott on this verse as follows:

The love is not simply exhibited toward believers but imparted to them. The divine love is as it were, infused into them, so that it is their own and becomes in them the source of a divine life.

3. 1 John 2:5 -- "Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected."

4. 1 John 4:1 -- "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."

5. "God . . . condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:3, 4). "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:10).

Taking these five passages together, could there be a more complete refutation of the "two naturist" denial that "perfect love is to be developed" in the believer. These passages teach that God himself will dwell in the heart of the fully yielded believer and give His love to the believer to love with. What a profound mystery and yet what a glorious reality! This truth of an Indwelling God and Perfect Love is a further

confirmation of the interpretation we have given on page 139 of the passage, "As he is so are we in this world." An Indwelling God and Perfect Love -- the two go together, for as God is love, then where God dwells, there must love dwell also. Deny the one and we must of necessity deny the other. If, therefore, we deny that perfect love is to be developed in the believer, we, in effect, deny the glorious truth of an indwelling God as taught in John's first Epistle. This is the consequence of the "two naturist" error.

Of course, this sovereign grace aspect of truth must be balanced by the aspect of human responsibility. God gives us His love to love with but we are responsible to work out in our daily lives what He works in. (See Phil. 2: 12, 13.) And the result of thus working out the divine love will be the love of life of 1 Corinthians 13, and what is this but the Christ life.

As to "perfection in the flesh," if we always remember the safeguards mentioned in Chapter 6 and the conditions in Chapter 13 we shall not fall into the error of unscriptural exaggeration. If, however, we reject all teaching on sanctification because it sounds like "perfection in the flesh," then we might as well cut the First Epistle of John out of the Bible. If to be "cleansed from all unrighteousness" and to have "the love of God perfected in us" is "perfection in the flesh" then the Apostle John was "a perfectionist."

Let us not stumble at an unscriptural phrase like "perfection in the flesh," but rather glory in the fact that we can have "treasure in earthen vessels" (2 Corinthians 4: 7). True, the earthen vessel, our humanity, is fallen, frail and mortal and in it "we groan" (2 Cor. 5: 2). Nevertheless, this earthen vessel may contain glorious treasure, "Christ in us the hope of glory." The very light and life of Christ can be "manifest in our mortal flesh" (verse 11). Thus our "mortal flesh," once the home and medium for the manifestation of indwelling sin and would be still, if left to itself, becomes the home and the medium for the manifestation of the indwelling Christ. What a glorious transformation. Is this "perfection in the flesh"? Then the Apostle Paul was also "a perfectionist." The Second Epistle to the Corinthians is an illustration of the practical development of an "indwelling Christ" and "perfect love" in the case of the Apostle Paul. Praise God, what the grace of God accomplished in the Apostle Paul it can accomplish in us also if we will only believe.

## Chapter 25

### HOLINESS -- SCRIPTURAL AND UNSCRIPTURAL

We have now concluded our defence of the precious truth of entire sanctification by faith. On the line of sovereign grace, we have shown that there is divine provision for full freedom and cleansing from indwelling sin in this life. On the line of human responsibility, we have specified the conditions for the reception and maintenance of God's deliverance from sin and have given full weight to the solemn warnings of the possibility of final loss. The doctrine of the entire sanctification by faith is firmly and evenly balanced upon the two principles of God's sovereign grace and human responsibility which run like two parallel railway lines throughout the Word of God. The doctrine is, therefore, perfectly sound, scriptural and impregnable.

The crucial test of any theory of sanctification is this: Is it evenly balanced upon the two principles of God's sovereign grace and human responsibility? We have brought the doctrine of the two natures under the searchlight of the Word of God. It fails to stand the test. On the line of God's sovereign grace, it under-rates or denies the full truth of God concerning the Divine provision for full cleansing and freedom from indwelling sin in this life. On the line of human responsibility, it evades or tries to "explain away" some of the most solemn warnings to believers in God's Word by making them apply merely to unregenerate "professors." The theory of the two natures is, therefore, unsound and unscriptural.

The root error of the two natures doctrine is its teaching that the blood of Christ effects only a judicial cleansing from sin and its denial that the blood of Christ effects an actual inward cleansing from sin. The theory rejects the truth that through the blood of Christ we may be cleansed from all unrighteousness in this life. It limits the power of the precious blood of Christ. From this fundamental error flow the other errors we have dealt with. The theory cannot be reconciled with the full force of the words "destroyed," and "deliver," "cleanse," "set free," "free indeed" used by the Holy Ghost in connection with full salvation from indwelling sin.

In the following parallel columns, we briefly summarize the truths and errors concerning holiness dealt with in this book. [These will not be presented in this digital edition in parallel columns, but one above another.]

[HU] = Holiness Unscriptural

Errors of the "Two Nature" Doctrine

[HS] = Holiness Scriptural

## The Truth of Entire Sanctification

### 1. Indwelling Sin

[HU] -- Sin must remain in the heart of every believer all through life provoking a conflict against the Spirit which "goes on in every Christian" (Refuted in Chapters 7, 9, 14 and 16 to 20).

[HS] -- The conflict of Rom. 7 and Gal. 5:17 goes on within those who are not fully "under grace." Scripture nowhere teaches that it must go on within the fully yielded Spirit-filled believer. Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians and John's First Epistle contain full details of the apostles' spiritual experiences, but there is no suggestion whatever that a conflict with indwelling sin was going on in the apostles.

### 2. The Blood of Christ

[HU] -- Denies that the blood of Christ cleanses the heart of the believer from sin (Refuted in Chapters 8 and 9).

[HS] -- "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). God does in this life "destroy the body of sin" (Rom. 6:6); "Circumcises the heart" (Deut. 30:6); "takes away the stony heart" (Ezek. 36:26); "sets free from sin" (Rom. 6:22); and "sets free from all iniquity" (Titus 2:14).

### 3. The Holy Spirit

[HU] -- a. Denies the distinction between the birth of the Spirit and the baptism with the Spirit (Refuted in Chapter 23).

[HU] -- b. Denies that the Holy Spirit came to cleanse or free believers from sin (Refuted in Chapter 23).

[HS] -- a. The baptism with the Spirit is received by those already quickened by the Spirit (Acts of the Apostles).

[HS] -- b. Through the baptism with the Spirit the hearts of those already quickened by the Spirit were purified (Acts 15:8, 9). The "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2).

### 4. Instantaneous Cleansing

[HU] -- Denies the instantaneous cleansing of the heart from sin (Refuted in Chapter 14).

[HS] -- We are sanctified by faith (Acts 26: 18); therefore instantaneously (Acts 15: 8, 9) and (1 John 1:9).

## 5. Sanctification

[HU] -- Denies that scriptural sanctification ever involves purification of the believer from sin (Refuted in Chapter 18).

[HS] -- To be sanctified "truly" and "wholly" according to John 17:19 and 1 Thess. 5:23, involves the freeing and purifying of the believer from all iniquity. (See Titus 2:14.)

## 6. Imparted Holiness

[HU] -- a. The blood of Christ cleanses the believer from all sin only in the sense that it maintains him in a nonforfeitable undefiled "position" in Christ in the sight of God which cleansed "position" is imputed by God to the believer, although the active pollution of indwelling sin still remains in his heart (Refuted in Chapter 21).

[HU] -- b. God "reckons" every believer, whether carnal or spiritual, to be "as Christ" (that is, without sin) although all the time sin is actually within e V e r y believer conflicting against the Spirit (Refuted in Chapter 21).

[HS] -- a. God imputes righteousness to the sinner who believes in Christ (Rom. 4:23-25), but purposes to impart holiness to the fully trusting believer. (Romans 5:19; Eph. 1:4; 1 Peter 1:15, 16; and 2 Peter 1:2-4).

[HS] -- b. God sees us as we actually are in our hearts. He is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the hearts and all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do (Heb. 4:12, 13).

## 7. Perfect Love

[HU] -- Denies that perfect love is to be developed in the believer as this would be "perfection in the flesh" (Refuted in Chapter 24).

[HS] -- An indwelling God and perfect love cannot be dissociated (1 John 4:12-16). The righteousness of the law is to be fulfilled in us (Rom. 8:4), and love is the fulfilling of the law (Rom. 13:10).

## 8. Final Loss

[HU] -- Denies that the solemn warnings of the Epistle to the Hebrews apply to true believers and makes them apply to unregenerate "professors" (Refuted in Chapter 22).

[HS] -- The loss of their Canaan inheritance by the Israelites who had been saved by God from Egypt, is made the basis by the Holy Ghost in 1 Cor. 10 and the Epistle to the Hebrews of solemn warnings to "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling." We must, therefore, give diligence to make our calling and election sure (2 Peter 1: 10).

Result of the Unscriptural Theory: -- There is no real deliverance from sin in the theory. The theory makes much of the perfection of the work of Christ for the believer, but rejects the perfection of His work in the believer, so far as indwelling sin is concerned. It thus makes Christ an imperfect Deliverer from indwelling sin in this life and thus robs our Lord of His glory as a Saviour able to save to the uttermost from Sin.

Result of the Truth -- The Lord Jesus Christ is a perfect Saviour from sin. He did a perfect work for the believer on the cross, He is doing a perfect work in heaven as the believer's Great High Priest, Representative and intercessor. He also does a perfect work within the believer so far as indwelling sin is concerned if the believer fully believes. Thus, if the Son makes us free from sin we shall be free indeed (that is, actually and really so) (John 8:36).

Freed and Filled Indeed

May the Lord grant that all Christians who read these pages may see the error of the "two-naturist" doctrine of sanctification, may know the truth that makes free indeed and may have fulfilled in them that marvellous prayer of the Apostle Paul, not for imputed but for imparted holiness, when he prayed that we might be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ might dwell in our hearts by faith, that we being rooted and grounded in love might 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 we might be filled unto all the fullness of God (Eph. 3: 16-19). Thus may we know what it is to be freed and filled indeed. And, in order to demonstrate that all this is gloriously possible now and, also, in order to encourage our faith, we will close by quoting Paul's wonderful Doxology, which is a fitting conclusion to this book:

"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 throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."