

50 Articles of War

GEORGE SCOTT RAILTON

HOLINESS: AN ADDRESS AT THE CONFERENCE

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I WANT to speak tonight as briefly as is consistent with the discharge of my duty in relation to this topic, seeing that I am surrounded by brethren whose varied experiences may really be of more practical service to you than any statement I can make.

It seems to me that there is a large amount of uncertainty abroad amongst us on this subject. Many of our people seem to live in what may be called an *indefinite land*; they are all uncertainty and fear. If you ask the question, Have you got a clean heart? has the Lord made, and does He keep you holy? you can get no distinct answer either one way or the other.

Now this is largely the result of misapprehension. People don't know what is intended by a clean heart, or how it is to be got, and how it is to be kept; hence on the one hand it is not sought, or being, as I believe it is in many cases, obtained, people enter into the enjoyment of the blessing; but being in so great ignorance of where they are and how they got there are easily beguiled into unbelief, and so lose it; they are ignorant of the devices of Satan, and so give him an advantage over them.

Now to-night I want, if possible, to state plainly what at least our views are on this theme. In doing so, I may premise that I have no new truth to set forth; the doctrine is as old as the book. May the Holy Spirit enable me to develop and explain it!

Holiness to the Lord is to us a fundamental truth; it stands to the forefront of our doctrines. We write it on our banners. It is in no shape or form an open debatable question as to whether God can sanctify wholly, whether Jesus does save His people *from* their sins. In the Evangelist who did not hold and proclaim the ability of Jesus Christ to save His people to the uttermost from sin and from sinning I should consider out of place amongst us. But—



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WHAT ARE WE TO UNDERSTAND BY HOLINESS?

Here perhaps the surest way of making ourselves understood will be to begin with the opposite.

1. THAT ALL UNSAVED MEN ARE TOTALLY UNHOLY. We all know that we are born into the world and grow up in it with a sinful nature. At any rate, all of us hold that when man reaches the age of accountability grace finds him with a heart *completely* and *thoroughly depraved*. Deprived of grace, without God, and under the power and domination of his selfish and sinful appetites. This condition is *thorough—entire*. In his flesh there dwelleth no good thing. We need not quote Scripture; we know that its testimony, no less than our experience and observation, describes and demonstrate the fact that man in his natural state is totally gone away from God, and that from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot he is all wounds and bruises and purifying sores.

2. I WANT TO REMARK THAT HOLINESS, IN ITS BROAD SIGNIFICATION, MEANS SEPARATION FROM ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS AND CONSECRATION TO GOD. Nay, it means that the soul is brought into a state in which it has both the liberty and the ability to serve God as He desires, and that it constantly does so.

3. I REMARK THAT THIS DELIVERANCE CAN BE, AND THAT IN THE EARLY STAGES OF THE EXPERIENCE OF MOST CHRISTIANS IT IS, ONLY PARTIAL. That is, while the soul is delivered from the domination and power of sin, and is no longer the slave of sin, still there are the remains of the carnal mind and roots of bitterness left in the heart, which, springing up, trouble the soul and often lead it into sin, and which, if not continually fought against and kept under, grow up, attain their old power, and bring the soul again into bondage.

Nevertheless, in this state, the soul, when faithful, has peace with God, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, power for usefulness, and the witness of the Spirit, which create in the soul that blessed sense of assurance and certainty with regard to salvation which together go to constitute an inward heaven. All this is perfectly compatible with the conscious existence of sin in the soul.

4. THIS DELIVERANCE FROM SIN MAY BE ENTIRE.



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Not only can Agag be taken captive, but hewn in pieces. Sin can not only be held in bondage but destroyed.

There are three broad and well-defined relations in which a man can stand towards sin.

He can be (1) UNDER SIN, (2) OVER SIN, (3) WITHOUT SIN.

1. HE CAN BE UNDER SIN. Every man we have seen begins here. He is not only guilty and exposed to that penalty of everlasting damnation which God has in infinite wisdom and benevolence attached to the transgression of the law, and which constitutes the great axis on which the universe whirls, but he is UNDER ITS POWER. He is its SLAVE. Even when enlightened to see its cruel and ruinous character, and yearning for deliverance, he is powerless to free himself from its iron grip. He is a slave to the tyrant. *He is under sin.* But

2. HE CAN BE OVER SIN. It may be that the pride, envy, anger, malice, lust, and all or whatsoever other evils ruled him with a rod of iron before may be there. Bruised and broken and faint they may be, but still they exist; but the Master has taken them from the throne of the soul and given the saint power over them. He is now no longer under sin but under grace. They—that is, the old habits and tempers and tendencies and inclinations—can still make their presence felt; they can whisper and suggest and claim and rise up, but they are no longer the master; the Philistines are still there, the old proprietors of the land, but they are put under harrows and saws and instruments of iron and held in bondage. *The soul in this state has POWER OVER SIN.*

But there is another state, and that is—

3. WITHOUT SIN. In which the promise of the Holy Ghost in Ezekiel is fulfilled when He says, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you," &c.

Not in this experience this engagement is fulfilled, and Paul's prayer for the Thessalonians, and through them for all saints, is answered. The God of peace sanctifies wholly, and the whole body, soul, and spirit is preserved blameless.



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Now I am free to confess that about this state there may be difficulties and perplexities. I simply insist that it is described in the Bible, and that the descriptions of the Bible have been verified by the experience of thousands of saints. It means a clean heart, being cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit—sanctified wholly, being made perfect in every good work, and God working in the soul all the good pleasure of his will.

It implies—

1. Full deliverance from all known sin.
2. The consecration of every power and possession to God and His work.
3. Constant and uniform obedience to all the requirements of God.

Now don't let us get into confusion by mistaking each other. We don't say

Without imperfection both physical and mental. We still suffer as the consequence of the fall from disease, and are liable to mistakes and errors, although I am not going to limit in this respect the power and willingness of the Holy Ghost to guide into truth and keep from error. There are some wonderful promises in the Bible holding out some mighty possibilities in this direction. Who will prove the full extent of the master's engagement to become unto us wisdom, and who will seek and enjoy to the uttermost that anointing of the Holy Ghost which is to teach us all things?

Not without temptation. If the inside enemies have been cast out there are those without, and they will become in consequence all the more fierce and furious and cunning too, I may say in their attempts to regain possession.

Nor without the *possibility of falling.* That is, of falling from the state. The angels of heaven who kept not their first estate, and Adam, who unquestionably was sinless in Paradise, fell, and this side the celestial city it is questionable whether any condition can be reached from which we may not fall.

Nor is it merely *without deliberate sin.* There seems to me no state of saintship when a man can *deliberately* sin without losing the favor of God and having to repent and go back to the fountain to regain it. He that is born of God doth not commit sin.



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No! It is not without temptation, or trouble, or affliction, or error. It is still a condition of conflict and suffering, and danger, but *without sin*. "Love is the fulfilling of the law," and with a heart full of love to God and everybody else, the soul has no consciousness of sin.

Now there is the blessing of holiness, as I understand it, to be taught in the scriptures, and I now want to ask you what you ought to do with it; and to this question I reply.

1. GET IT. It must strike every Christian as a pearl of great price. In every renewed soul there is an eye that can admire *purity*, and an appetite that hungers and thirsts after righteousness, and an instinct that unceasingly yearns to be like the king's much admired daughter, all glorious within. You will never rightly understand it till you have it. Like all other problems in religious experience it must be felt to be understood. *Get it*.

Get it; but how? To this question I reply by asking two others, and the first is—

What is it that you want to be made clean and happy and holy? You answer your heart and life, your body, soul, and spirit, and all the activities that flow from them. Good and true! Then your first work is to bring all that you want thus sanctified to God. In other words, you must separate yourselves from all known or even doubtful sin, and present all for this very purpose before God. You can trust yourself here. Do you want to be a holy man? Holy in *thought, feeling, conversation, business, holy always, Sabbath and week days, holy together*. Come along them, my brother, bring your *brain, your heart, your tongue, your business, your family, your all* to God. It is no use crying to God to cleanse you wholly while keeping something back. For a full salvation you must bring an undivided heart.

Reservation is the secret of the weakness prevalent among God's children, and the cause of three-fourth of the failures in the higher walk of the divine life. It is astonishing to find what temporary, worthless idols are cherished and clung to by those who are really powerfully convinced on this subject. Let us make a clean sweep, and offer all. And then, my brethren, and then, my sisters, the Lord will say of you, "They have brought Me what I desire, what I have asked for, what I gave My Son's life-blood to buy, what I prize more than the sun and the



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stars and the world, they have brought me their *hearts*. Now make haste, let us sprinkle them with blood to make them whiter than snow, and let us beautify and adorn and ennoble and dwell in them for ever.”

And then, my brother, *who is to accomplish this revolution in your soul*, and finish the new creation already begun? Who is going to make you holy? Your new evangelist, whom, you have been informed, enjoys and preaches the blessing? This holiness meeting we are in for just now? This strong will of yours? That book you are going to read? No, not these things all put together, and, I will add, your faith, and the book of books into the bargain. Let me ask, who saved you? The living God, and He is going to sanctify you. If ever done, He will do it. He will do it all. What follows? Why simply this, that when you have brought yourself to God you have nothing more to do but simply to trust Him. Roll yourself on His promise, plunge in the fountain, honor the blood, but, oh! do it now.

Some of you are old and grey headed, and you have been hearing and reading and talking about this blessing a long long time, but you are little or no further along, and my brethren, you won't be until you trust the living God, and then it will be done at once.

Oh, how hard we are upon poor sinners that won't have pardon, and, oh! how hard the angels are upon saints that won't have purity. All that is wanted is the presentation of yourself to God, and the simple trust that He does this moment fully save you. This is easy, and it is hard, my brethren, just because it is so easy. If He had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? Away to Jesus then, and let Him do the work, and do it now.

To you, my brethren, as leaders of the Israel of God, I need not say how all important the realization and enjoyment of holiness is.

1. IT IS A CONDITION OF HAPPINESS. I think we may say, without fear of contradiction, that a man's happiness depends upon his RIGHTNESS. You are in the train, and suddenly it pulls up, far from any station, in the middle of some tunnel. Your wife gets nervous, you put your head out of the window, you can see nothing; but here comes the guard, you ask the reason, and he replies, "All right." You close the window, and recompose yourself for the continuance of your nap. But had there been some doubt as to something being wrong, a



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break-down in the engine, or a train on before, or one coming just after, you would have been naturally afraid, and your comfort would have been gone until that fear of something wrong had been removed. No man can be happy while there is a fear in him that something is wrong.

Now here I stand for a few moments on the railroad of existence, with three great interests, each of which infinitely concerns me.

There is THE PAST. The dark, sinful, imperfect past, with all its memories crowding in upon me. How do I stand with relation to it?

There is THE FUTURE, with its intricate and untrodden maze, its unexplored and unknown sorrow and joys, with the cold river of death and the great white throne just beyond, and close by that throne there are the open gates of heaven and hell. How do I stand in relation to the future?

Then there is THE PRESENT clustering with cares and anxieties, and burdens and duties, rising out of personal, family, and worldly relationship. Now, my brethren, you are every one of you face to face with such a past, such a future, and such a present, have you realized such a trust in the living God as brings into your heart the springing happiness which flows from a sense of *rightness* and consequent *safety* in these relations. It is not "Can you say" but "Do you *feel*" that the past is under the blood, that the future is in the hands of a loving Providence who cannot, will not, err, and that you really have nothing to do but to live the present moment to and for God? Oh, my brethren, none but *holy* men and women have reached this state to be saved from fear and anxiety about past, present and future THOUGHTFULLY SAVED, and yet deep and abiding happiness is impossible without this.

2. FURTHER HOLINESS IS INDISPENSABLE TO YOUR COMPLETEST USEFULNESS.

My brethren and sisters, you know the way of life and the blessedness of religion. You can tell something of the love of God and the joys of the redeemed. You can pray, and sing, and lead out to battle the armies of our Israel. What else is wanting to complete your qualifications for doing the greatest possible amount of good, but that you shall be able to say to your people that which I publish as attainable of personal peace and joy and communion with God. I enjoy myself.



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I am saved, saved inside and out! Saved to the uttermost! Saved now and saved every day! Moreover, my brethren, there is something above and beyond the mighty influence which flows from and must ever accompany such a testimony as that I have named, and that is the mighty power that accompanies the life itself. A sanctified life means a gentle tender spirit, it means a fearless undaunted zeal, it means the accompanying manifestation of the Holy Ghost. It is the prelude and condition and assurance of the enduement of power; and, my brethren, the realization of the blessing is

3. THE CONDITION OF THE PERPETUAL INDWELLING OF GOD. You often sing "Abide with me"; and you want Him not for a transient hour, but as an abiding guest. He is so far already the beloved of your soul that His presence makes your paradise, and where He is is heaven. My brethren, if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we shall have fellowship with Him, and He himself has said, "If any Man will keep my words, My Father will love him, and We will come unto him and make our abode with him." With Him you have all things and abound, all things for present and future for yourselves and your families and your people. The full equipment and qualification and guarantee of success in the great work of pulling down the kingdom of Satan, and establishing and extending the kingdom of God.

Brethren, be ye holy, but be holy now.