

Chapter 7 – PURITY, GOD'S GIFT

2 Corinthians 4:7 – *But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*

My Dear Comrades, – I now come to one of the most important parts of this very interesting subject. "How can a Pure Heart be obtained?" I think I hear you say, "It is good, very precious, very desirable; oh, how I wish the treasure was mine! But how can I get it?"

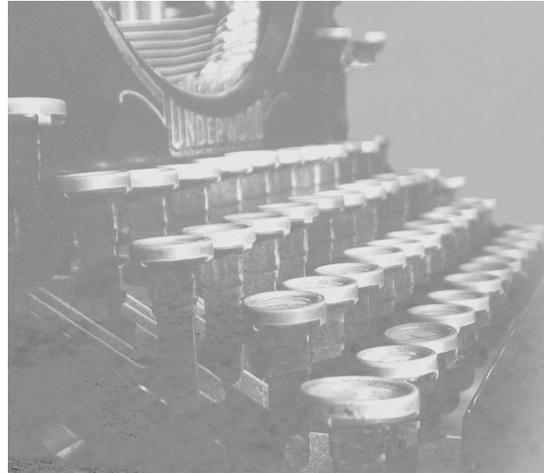
Now, here I think it will be profitable for us to have a look back over the road we have traveled together while considering this blessed experience. And first of all, you will remember that I tried to show you what Holiness was. I begged you not to set it too high, as continued rapture or an every-hour hallelujah feeling. Then, I cautioned you against setting it too low – that is, regarding it as being consistent with anything like the commission of actual sin. Then I showed you how valuable the Blessing would be to you, because it meant peace and usefulness, and the continued smile of God. Then I went on to explain that it was a possible experience, maintaining that, no matter whether rich or poor, young or old, married or single, God could cleanse you from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, and enable you to be perfect in Holiness before Him all the days of your life. I come now to answer what I hope is the cry of many hearts, "How can I find this Pearl of Great Price?"

Now you ask – "What must I do to be Pure?" and in reply I say that there is certainly something to be done, and something that you will have to do yourselves. To understand what that something is, you must keep well before your minds the fact that there are two forces or powers that have to unite in the Purification of the Heart.

The first is the Divine – that is, God.

The second is the human – that is, man, which means yourself.

God and man are partners in the transaction. This is nothing new; it is the same in the



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PURITY OF HEART

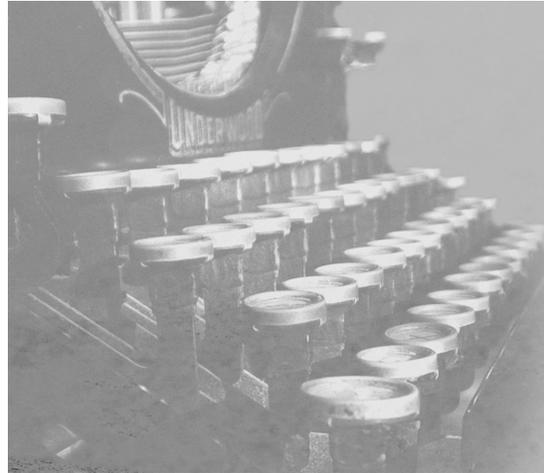
affairs of your every-day life. You use the natural abilities God has given you to buy and sell, and plow and plant: and, as the result, God gives you food and raiment. This was the case when you were converted; you repented and believed, and God saved your soul. It will be the same when you are sanctified. The great work of cleansing your heart, and keeping it clean, will be performed by God Himself; but there will be some conditions which you will have to fulfill on your part.

From first to last it is "God that saves." Fix your mind well on that truth. If ever you have a Pure Heart, it will come from God's own Hand. When Jonah arrived definitely at the belief that Salvation was of the Lord, and trusted Him for it, his deliverance was nigh; for we read that immediately the Lord spoke unto the fish, and it vomited him on to the dry land.

Only God can take out of your heart the bad temper, pride, malice, revenge, love of the world, and all the other evil things that have taken possession of it, and fill it with holy love and peace. To God you must look – to God you must go. This is the work of the Holy Ghost; He is the Purifying Fire; He is the Cleansing Flame; He only can sprinkle you with the water that purges the dross and takes away the sin; He only can make and keep you clean. What a blessing it is you have a God who is not only so mighty, but so willing to save!

"Yourself you cannot save,
Yourself you cannot keep;
But strength in Him, you surely have,
Whose eyelids never sleep."

But then, as I have said, there is something to be done on your side, and the chief part of that something is the exercise of Faith. The Apostles, met in council at Jerusalem, affirmed that God purifies the heart by Faith. That is to say, where the soul comes to God, and offers itself to Him for the doing of all His sacred Will, and believes that, for the sake of Jesus Christ, He does then and there cleanse it from all sin, that moment the Spirit answers to the Faith, the work of Purity is done and the soul can sing:



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"He tells me when, and where, and how,
Just at His footstool as I bow;
The Blood of Jesus cleanses now,
This moment I believe."

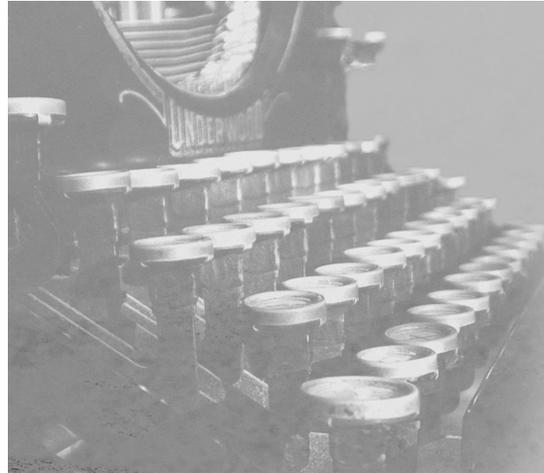
You will see, then, that—

1. This Purification is not effected by any human power. No priest or Officer can by his own force cleanse your heart. We can help one another by our example, by our testimony, by our exhortations, by our advice. There is not a Soldier here who, if he will yield himself up to God, and trust Him for full deliverance, will not at once receive power to bless and save those around him as never before. But no Comrade has the power to reach in to the heart of a Comrade, and cleanse it from the evil it finds there; that is the work of Jesus Christ alone. He can touch you this very moment with His loving blood-stained Hand, and say, "I will, be thou clean," and the work will be done. You will not get a Pure Heart from your fellow-creatures; if ever the treasure is yours, you will get it from God, and you will get it by Faith.

2. Purification will not be effected by any ceremonials, meetings, kneeling at the mercy-seat singing of songs, or the like, apart from this Spirit of God. These forms and observances can wonderfully help you. Oh, what a marvelous influence goes out from soul to soul, when Comrades kneel together, and join heart and hand to seek God's sanctifying grace! But such gatherings will be a curse, rather than a blessing, unless they carry you on to that simple Faith in God Himself which claims and receives the sanctifying power.

3. Purification of the heart my Comrades, is not by knowledge. It is true, you must know something about the treasure you seek. For instance, you must know what Purity means; that it is possible to you, and that God will give it to you when you trust Him for it. But you may know all this, and a thousand times more, and be no nearer its realization, if that is all.

The Israelites knew that Canaan was just over Jordan. They were quite sure of it. They



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could see the hills and dales of the country they had sought so long; but they were not in possession of the land, and died without ever setting their weary feet in it.

What a number of my dear Soldiers love to read, and hear, and talk, and sing about Holiness. They are never tired of the subject. They know all about it, but stop short of the Faith which alone can bring them into its enjoyment.

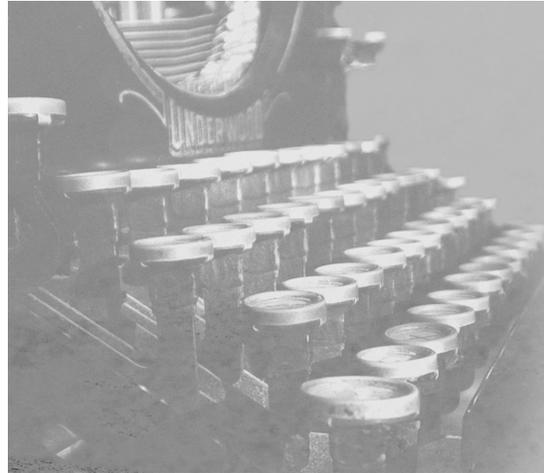
4. The Purifying of the heart is not by repentance. Some people are always mourning over the sins of their hearts and the inconsistencies of their lives. Oh, how they hate their coldness and pride, and worldliness and bad temper, and the other evil things that still cling to their heart and make them trouble. Oh, how ashamed they are of the feebleness of their love for Christ, the littleness of their zeal for His Kingdom, and the lukewarmness of their concern for souls. They are constantly giving up their evil ways and promising to do better. But this repenting and renouncing does not help them, because they do not go on to that definite act of Faith that brings deliverance from the evils over which they mourn.

5. The Purification of your hearts, my Comrades, will not come by your personal consecration to the service of God, if you simply stop there. What you want is, not only the readiness to do the Will of God, but the Power to do it.

This Purification is, as the Apostle says, "by Faith." It is by Faith that the soul presses on beyond desire and knowledge, and repentance and consecration, and says, "The blessing is mine." This is the last round in the Salvation Ladder. You may have to climb up by all, or only some of the steps I have named; but you must reach this step, or you cannot enter the Temple of Holiness. You say "I desire," "I repent," "I consecrate." Good, very good, excellent; but can you, will you, not take the last step, and say "I believe that He purifies me now"?

Yours affectionately,

William Booth



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"Answer that gracious end in me
For which Thy precious life was given,
Redeem from all iniquity,
Restore, and make me meet for heaven;
Unless Thou purge my every stain,
Thy suffering and my faith are vain.
"Didst Thou not in the flesh appear
Sin to condemn, and man to save?
That perfect love might cast out fear?
That I Thy mind in me might have?
In Holiness show forth Thy praise,
And serve Thee all my spotless days?
"Didst Thou not die that I might live
No longer to myself, but Thee?
Might body, soul, and spirit give
To Him who gave Himself for me?
Come then, my Master, and my God,
Take the dear purchase of Thy Blood."