

A portrait of an elderly man with a white beard and glasses, wearing a suit and tie. He is holding a small object in his hands.

The

S. L. Burngle

Collection

The Way of Holiness

Chapter 2 – Why Should We Be Holy?

We should be holy because God wants us to be holy. He commands it. He says, 'As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation: because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy.' God is in earnest about this. It is God's will, and it cannot be evaded. Just as a man wants his watch to keep perfect time, his gun to fire true, wants his friends to be steadfast, his children to be obedient, his wife to be faithful, so God wants us to be holy.

To many, however, the command seems harsh. They have been accustomed to commands accompanied by curses or kicks, or blows. But we must not forget that 'God is love,' and His commands are not harsh, but kind. They come from the fullness of an infinitely loving and all-wise heart. They are meant for our good. If a railway train could think or talk, it might argue that running on two rails over the same road year after year was very commonplace. But if it insisted on larger liberty, and so jumped the track, it would certainly ruin itself. So the man who wants freedom, and refuses to obey God's commands to be holy, destroys himself. The train was made to run on the tracks, and so we were made to live according to God's commandment, to be holy, and only in that way can we gain everlasting good.

Oh, how tender are His words! Listen. 'And now, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord, and His statutes for thy good?' (Deut. x. 12, 13.)

For thy good! for thy good! Do you not see it, my brother, my sister? It is 'for thy good.' There is nothing harsh, nothing selfish in our dear Lord's command. It is 'thy good' He is seeking. Bless His name! 'God is love.'

We should be holy, because Jesus died to make us holy. He gave Himself to stripes, and spitting,



The
S. L. Burngle

Collection

and cruel mockings, and the crown of thorns, and death on the cross for this purpose. He wants a holy people. For this He prayed. 'Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth.' (John xvii. 17.) For this He died. 'Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.' (Titus ii. 14.) 'He loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish.' Let us not disappoint Him. Let not His precious blood be spent in vain.

We should be holy, in order that we may be useful.

Who have been the mightiest men of God of all the ages? They have been holy men; men with clean hearts on fire with love to God and man; unselfish men; humble men, who forgot themselves in their love and toil for others; faithful men, whose lives were 'hid with Christ in God.' Moses, the meekest of men; Paul, who would gladly pour out his life a sacrifice for the people; Luther and Fox, and St. Francis and Wesley, and the General and Mrs. Booth, and ten thousand times ten thousand other men and women, who were 'great in the sight of the Lord.' These are the ones whom God has used.

So long as there are any roots of sin in the heart, the Holy Spirit cannot have all His way in us, and so our usefulness is hindered, but when our hearts are clean, the Holy Spirit dwells within, and then we have power for service. Then we can work for God and do good, in spite of all our ignorance and weakness. Hallelujah!

A plain, humble young Irishman heard about the blessing of a clean heart, and went alone, and fell on his knees before the Lord, and cried to Him for it. A man happened to overhear him, and wrote about it, saying, 'I shall never forget his petition. "O God, I plead with Thee for this blessing!" Then, as if God was showing him what was in the way, he said, "My Father, I will give up every known sin, only I plead with Thee for power." And then, as if his individual sins were passing before him, he said again and again, "I will give them up; I will give them up."

A black and white portrait of a man with a long white beard and glasses, wearing a suit and tie. He is holding a small object in his hands.

The

S. L. Burngle

Collection

'Then without any emotion he rose from his knees, turned his face heavenward, and simply said, "And now, I claim the blessing." For the first time he now became aware of my presence, and with a shining face reached out his hand to clasp mine. You could feel the presence of the Spirit as he said, "I have received Him; I have received Him!"'

'And I believe he had. for in the next few months he led more than sixty men into the Kingdom of God. His whole life was transformed.'

To be holy and useful is possible for each one of us, and it is far better than to be great and famous. To save a soul is better than to command an army, to win a battle, to rule an empire, or to sit upon a throne.

Again. we should be holy that we may be safe. Sin in the heart is more dangerous than gunpowder in the cellar. Before Peter got the blessing of a clean heart and the baptism of the Holy Spirit, he yielded to the sinful nature within, and cursed and swore, and denied Jesus. Before David got this experience, he too fell into awful sin, and nearly lost his soul.

Remember that holiness is nothing more nor less than perfect love, for God and man, in a clean heart. If we love God with all our hearts we shall gladly keep all His commandments, and do all His will as He makes it known to us. And if we love our fellow-men as we love ourselves, we shall not knowingly do any wrong to them. So we see that this holy love is the surest possible safeguard against all kinds of sin, either against God or man, and we cannot count ourselves safe unless we have it. Without it, Peter and David fell; but with it, Joseph and Daniel resisted the temptations of kings' courts, and the three Hebrew children and the fire-baptized Stephen and Paul gladly faced death rather than deny their Lord.

Finally, we should be holy, because we are most solemnly assured that without holiness 'no man shall see the Lord' (Heb. xii. 14), and God has made all things ready, so that we may have the blessing if we will thus leaving those who refuse or trifle and fail without excuse.

A black and white portrait of an elderly man with a long white beard and glasses, wearing a suit and tie. He is holding a small object in his hands.

The

S. L. Bemngale

Collection

I bless Him that years ago, He wakened me to the infinite importance of this matter, sent holy people to testify to and explain the experience, enabled me to consecrate my whole being to Him, and seek Him with all my heart, and He gave me the blessing,

Will you have it, my Comrade? If so receive Jesus as your Sanctifier just now.

My idols I cast at Thy feet, My all I return Thee who gave; This moment the work is complete,
For Thou art almighty to save.

O Saviour, I dare to believe, Thy blood for my cleansing I see; And, asking in faith, I receive
Salvation, full, present, and free.