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Forabur

HOLINESS OF HEART, FACT OR ~~FABRICATION~~

"For now being made free from sin, and become the servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."
(Romans 6:22)

There can only be two conceptions of the doctrine of heart purity and salvation from all sin in this earthly life. It is either an idealistic dream to tantalize the faltering, fumbling, sinning Christian that he can only behold in the distance, or it is a divine challenge calling men out of their sinful selves into a proper relationship with God. It is a tantalizing treatise from the pen of ignorant and unlearned men, or it is the inspired word of God that shows men the right way from this world to that better land. It is a ridiculous demand from the over-zealous Apostles, or it is a sane, sensible, reasonable theory brought through by the most brilliant minds of the first century. My conception is that it is God's criterion by which sonship is judged, and it is my business to accept the challenge and live by it as my reasonable service.

I recognize that a theory may be a beautiful thing on paper, an attractive thing in the laboratory, and yet be a miserable failure when put to the test. Thus, upon the same premise that the scientist puts his theory in the test tube, I want to put the theory of holy living in the test tube of experience and in the laboratory of God's Word.

To begin with, I suggest the question: "Has anyone ever lived a holy life? Has any man ever walked through this sinful world with an untarnished life? Has any man ever reached the standards of moral purity in earthly practice?"

It was said of Enoch, that he walked with God, pleased God, and God translated him. Job was perfect and upright, feared God and hated evil. The tests and temptations of Job did not turn him from God but with all of his trials, he did not even sin with his lips. The life of Joseph is one of uncompromising fidelity to moral chastity and purity of heart

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from beginning to the end.

Leaving the examples of every holy Patrioch as unworthy of mention, let us take the perfect life of Jesus on this earth. It was not just an experiment; it was God's proof case of the ages. In Him, God took the son of a woman and proved that a man could walk among men, suffer the privations of life, endure the firey trials of Satan, and come to the end of his life perfect in the sight of God. Someone will say, "Oh, He was the Son of God." But said the scripture, "He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

Just as the first Adam led all of his posterity into sin, Jesus, the second Adam, led all of His children out of sin. Just as the sons of Adam the first inherited the sin nature by birth that leads them into sin, so the sons of Jesus Christ, the second Adam, inherit the nature of righteousness by the new birth and the experience of heart purity. It is the simple teachings and demands of the Bible that we are to live as Christ lived in the world. If we are identified with our first Father, Adam, by his sin, we are identified with our second Adam, Jesus Christ, by His righteousness. It was the purity and sinlessness of Jesus Christ that was accepted in the sight of God; and it is only when we partake of this sinlessness and righteousness in our own nature that God will accept us as a joint heir with Jesus Christ. God looks upon us as an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ. But only when we have stood upon the same basis of holiness made possible by Jesus Christ. Here is the basis: "For He who santifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethern. Thus, we have here an experience of grace that unifies one with Jesus Christ on the basis of holiness of heart.

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And again: "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." We have here the process of that oneness. Paul goes so far as to say; "I am crucified with Christ." He is not indefinite and evasive; he is dogmatic.

This startling statement says that there is a personal crucifixion that every man must have before he can be entirely identified with Christ. I do not mean that he must go back across two thousand years to Golgotha and be nailed to a Roman cross and there die as the two thieves died with Jesus. We cannot do that literally, but we must embrace the spirit of the cross. We must die to self as He died. We must be crucified to the world; die to sin. Paul said: "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world." And again, "Reckon ye yourselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God." Again: "Christ liveth in me." Christ will not, cannot, and does not live in a sinner's heart. Hence, if Christ is living in you, you must not sin. I know that you cannot live without sin yourself. But if you will let Christ live in you, He will keep you from sinning.

"Therefore, we are buried with Him by baptism unto death. That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father--even so we also should walk in newness of life." Three times in the sixth chapter of Romans alone in the statement, "being made free from sin." Yes, thank God you can be free from sin and live that joyful life of freedom from all sin, as a practical experience of holiness of heart that brings with it the counterpart of peace that passeth all understanding and the joy unspeakable and full of glory.