

Present Truth

A magazine dedicated
to the restoration
of New Testament Christianity
in this generation

Sola Gratia Solely by Grace
Solo Christo Solely by Christ
Sola Fide Solely by Faith

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Present Truth

Present Truth is a magazine dedicated to the restoration of New Testament Christianity in this generation. It is especially committed to upholding the great Pauline and Reformation truth of *justification by faith* in this time when that truth is being threatened by humanism, Pentecostalism and ecumenism. Seeing a need for a nonsectarian magazine based upon the Reformation principle of *sola Scriptura*, the editors and sponsors have united to produce a publication which has as its standard the Bible and the Bible only as the rule of faith and practice. The purpose of this magazine is to give the gospel trumpet a certain sound (1 Cor. 14:7-9), that through words easy to be understood men may "be established in the present truth" (2 Peter 1:12). *Present Truth* is published on an irregular basis as funds and material permit.

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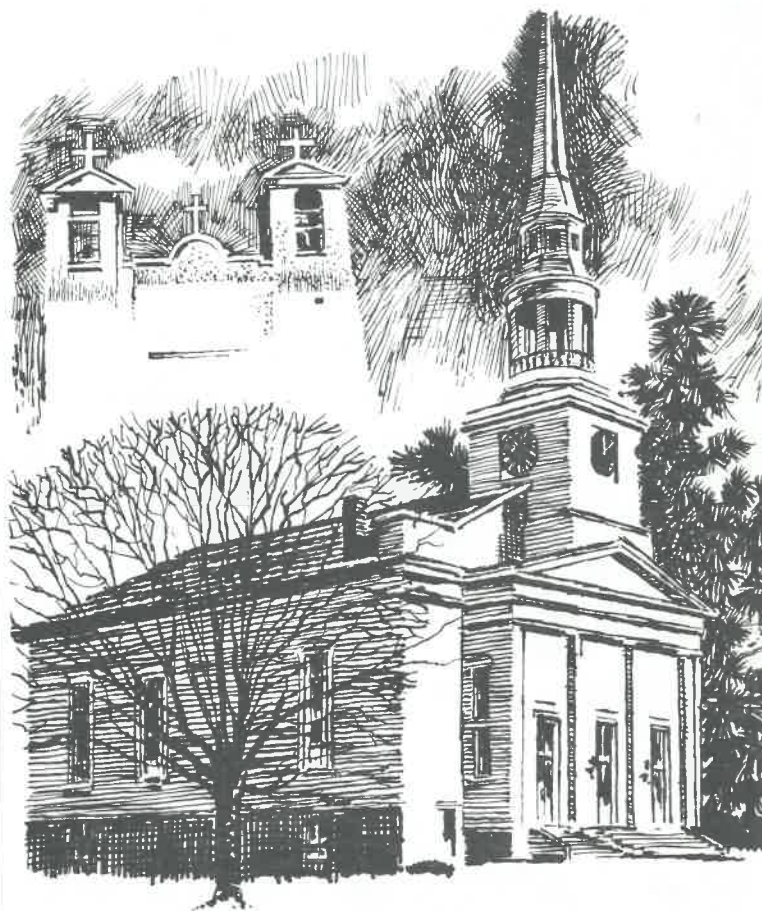
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Editorial—Pentecostal Breeding Grounds

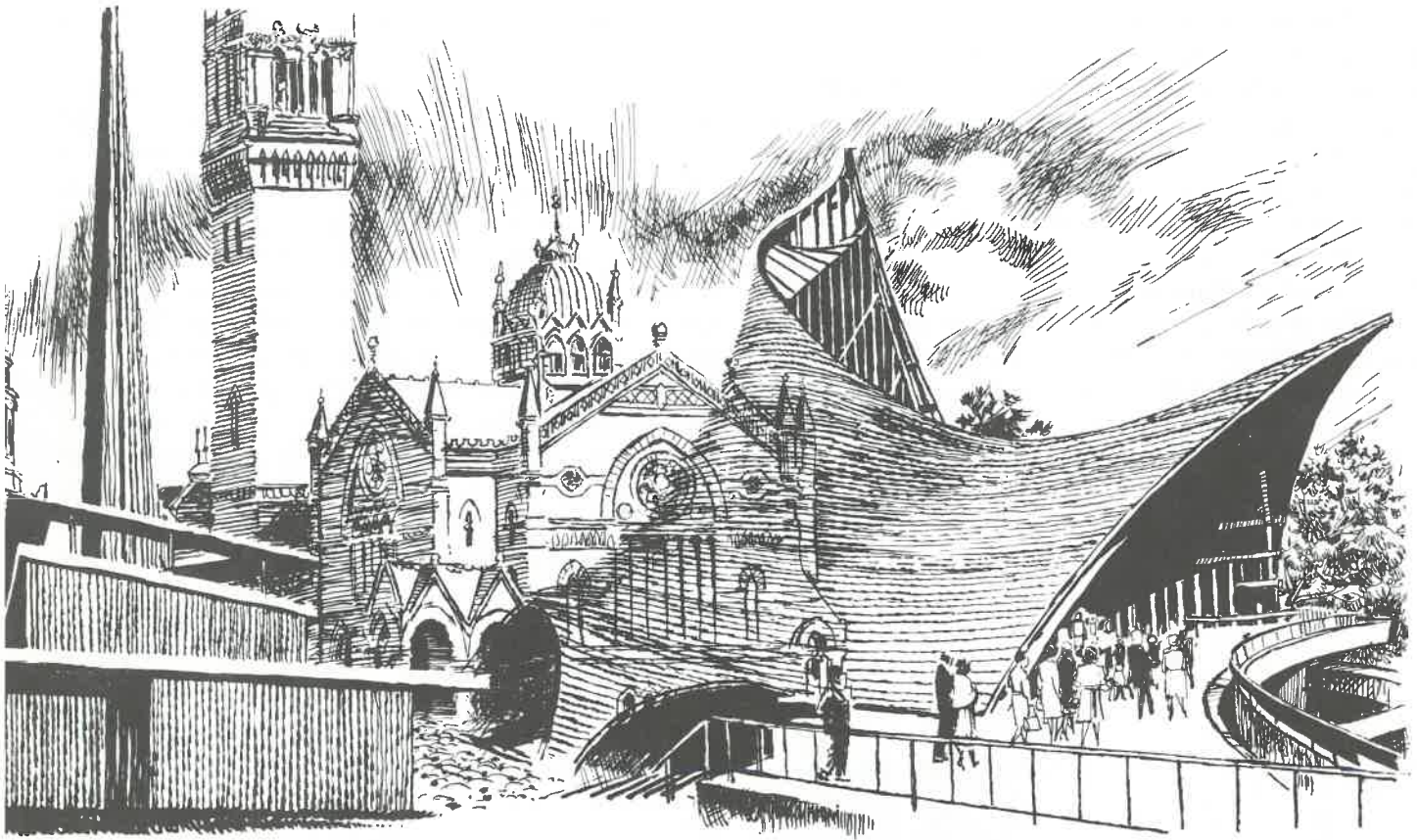


In the preceding issue of *Present Truth* ("Justification by Faith and the Charismatic Movement"), we examined the Pentecostal movement in the light of the evangel of the apostles and Reformers. Weighed in the balances of the gospel, the movement was found wanting. But we hasten to point out that we cannot wash our own hands in innocence nor even patronizingly say, "There go I but for the grace of God."

The charismatic movement has its roots in all the established churches. We may take pride in our orthodoxy and detest the pretensions of the gift of tongues, but, as Protestant bodies in general, we have operated the breeding grounds of Pentecostalism. The self-condemning truth may not be welcome. Israel could cheer Amos as long as he was rebuking the sins of Damascus, Gaza, Ashkelon, Edom or Moab (see Amos 1 and 2). But when he finally got around to saying, "Thus saith the Lord; For three transgressions of Israel, and for four . . .," they were quick to think of ways to get the humble herdsman back to Tekoa.

The Heresy of Formal Orthodoxy

Those who are fiercely loyal to orthodox Protestantism should realize that sometimes formal ortho-



doxy is the worst of all heresies. The period that followed the Reformers was known as the period of orthodoxy. While it produced some good theology, it produced a dead church and made the reaction of Pietism inevitable.

Orthodoxy tends to confound correctness of belief and saving faith. It confuses its statement of truth with the living Truth itself. Faith is directed to an orthodox body of doctrine more than to the person of Jesus Christ. Thus faith becomes intellectualized. This process happened in the early church after the apostles passed off the stage. It also happened after the generation of the Reformers.

A minister once asked a celebrated actor why people crowded the theater and stage instead of the church. He replied, "You preachers talk about real things as if they were imaginary, but we talk about imaginary things as if they were real."

Many people cannot endure the dead formality of the "good old" church. Some of them have endured religion as a child endures medicine—it is awful to take. Now there appears to be some life and vitality in the charismatic movement. Who can blame them for becoming disillusioned with churches where sleepy preachers preach to sleepy people?

In view of the threat, many ministers are adopting

the motto, "If you can't beat them, join them." So they think it expedient to bring the whole charismatic circus, with its religious rock, tongues and fantastic religious hallucinations, right into the church.

Of course, some ministers do not intend to compete with the "instant prophets" in their churches. They are determined to keep to the "good old path." Unfortunately, they may be left chasing the devil on a bicycle while he is in an airplane.

Pentecostalism may be a plague and a heresy, but is it any worse than a dead orthodoxy, where scarcely the living breath of heaven ever stirs? How can we self-righteously condemn Pentecostalism when we breed Pentecostalism?

Lack of Gospel Zeal

Enthusiasm has become a bad word in most orthodox circles. It conjures up visions of the radical evangelicals of the sixteenth century (whom Luther called "the enthusiasts"), hotheaded revivalists within the holiness movement, and emotional Pentecostals. Suppose we could listen to the first Christians proclaim the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Would it not be possible that we would charge them, as Robert Walpole charged Wesley, with a "very ugly enthusiasm"?

The editors of *Present Truth* submit that the apostle Paul did not turn the world upside down by giving dry (though correct) theological lectures. His was a living, moving message of a crucified, risen and returning Saviour. He spoke with a passion of soul as well as in the power of the Spirit. The disciples who discovered Jesus after their walk to Emmaus, did not bore the other disciples with a homily of "firstly," "secondly" and "thirdly."

We should make no apologies for declaring that the gospel is still the most exciting news ever heard among men. Jesus is the Pearl of great price; the gospel is a treasure hid in a field. Christ has taken away sin, conquered death and given us eternal life. Who can sincerely declare this without enthusiasm?

Let it be remembered that Laodicea, the last Apocalyptic church, is condemned, not for heresy, but for having no fire in her soul. She is neither cold

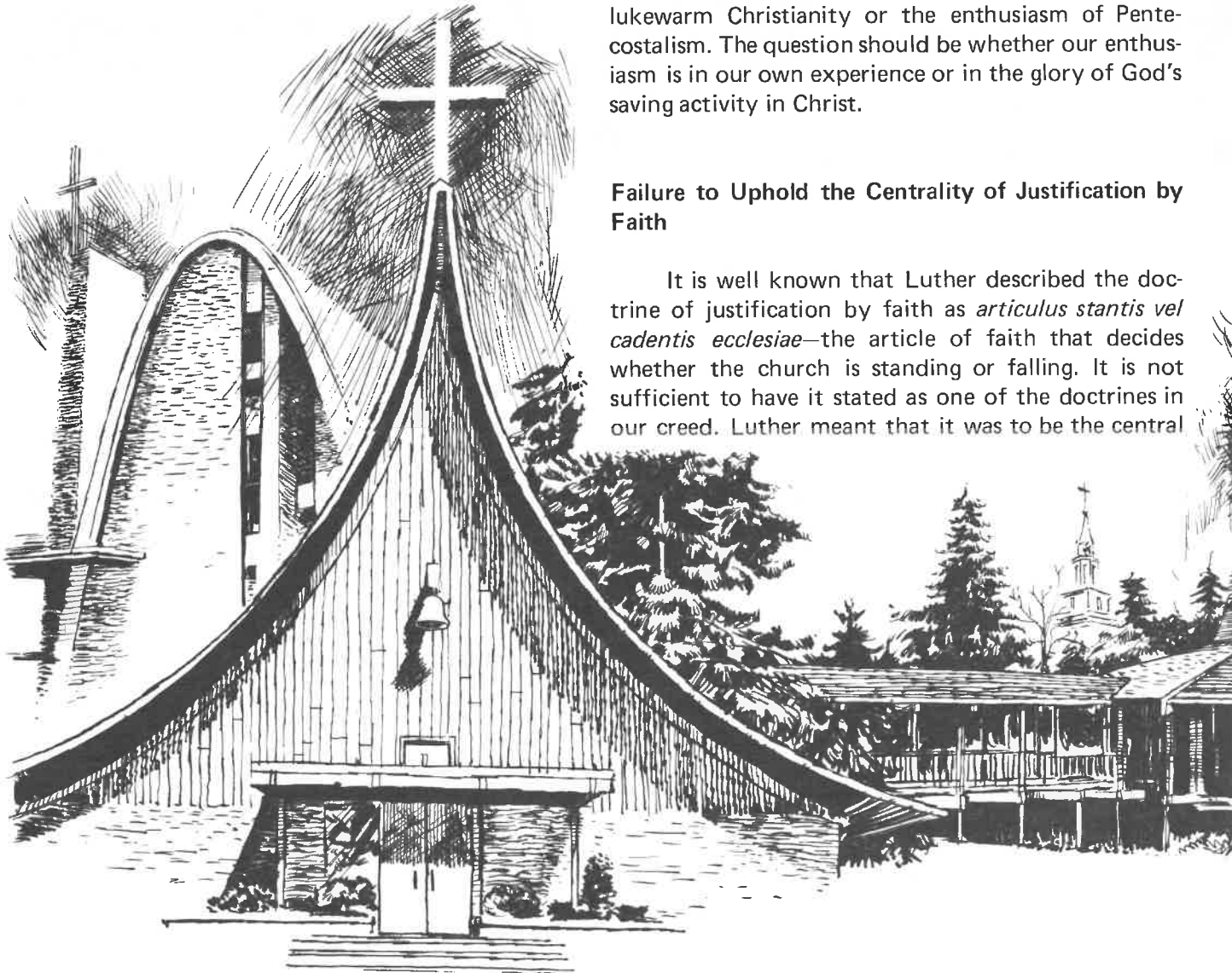
nor hot, and the divine Lover is nauseated. He reproves her for lack of zeal (Rev. 3:19).

The healthy enthusiasm that Christ calls for in His last message to His church is not to be confused with Pentecostal enthusiasm. Pentecostals rave about what they suppose the Spirit is doing in their lives. To use the words of one publication, "The Jesus kids are very excited about what the Holy Spirit is doing in their lives." This sort of enthusiasm is unhealthy because it is so subjective, introspective, and uplifting to the ego. (Pride is never so high as when it has a startling religious experience to relate.) Now it cannot be denied that the apostles were enthusiastic. But their enthusiasm was in something **objective**. Theirs was the good news of what God had done for them in Christ. "And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus." Acts 4:33.

The gospel is still tidings of great joy for all people (Luke 2:10). The alternatives should not be lukewarm Christianity or the enthusiasm of Pentecostalism. The question should be whether our enthusiasm is in our own experience or in the glory of God's saving activity in Christ.

Failure to Uphold the Centrality of Justification by Faith

It is well known that Luther described the doctrine of justification by faith as *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae*—the article of faith that decides whether the church is standing or falling. It is not sufficient to have it stated as one of the doctrines in our creed. Luther meant that it was to be the central



truth that swallowed up every other. Many will profess to believe in justification by faith. They may sound quite correct; but for them it is only the initial step in the Christian life. It ceases to be the center; for other things, like Christian experience, sanctification or the Spirit-filled life, subordinate justification in their thinking, writing and preaching.

The New Catholic Encyclopedia points out that Protestantism today still teaches justification by faith but that its place and emphasis are generally a far cry from the place and emphasis given it by the Reformers. How true! American Protestantism, generally speaking, has forgotten the real theology of justification. The emphasis is so orientated toward experience that most Protestants do not know the difference between the outside work of God's justifying verdict upon the fallen sinner and the inward change of the new birth wrought by the Holy Spirit.

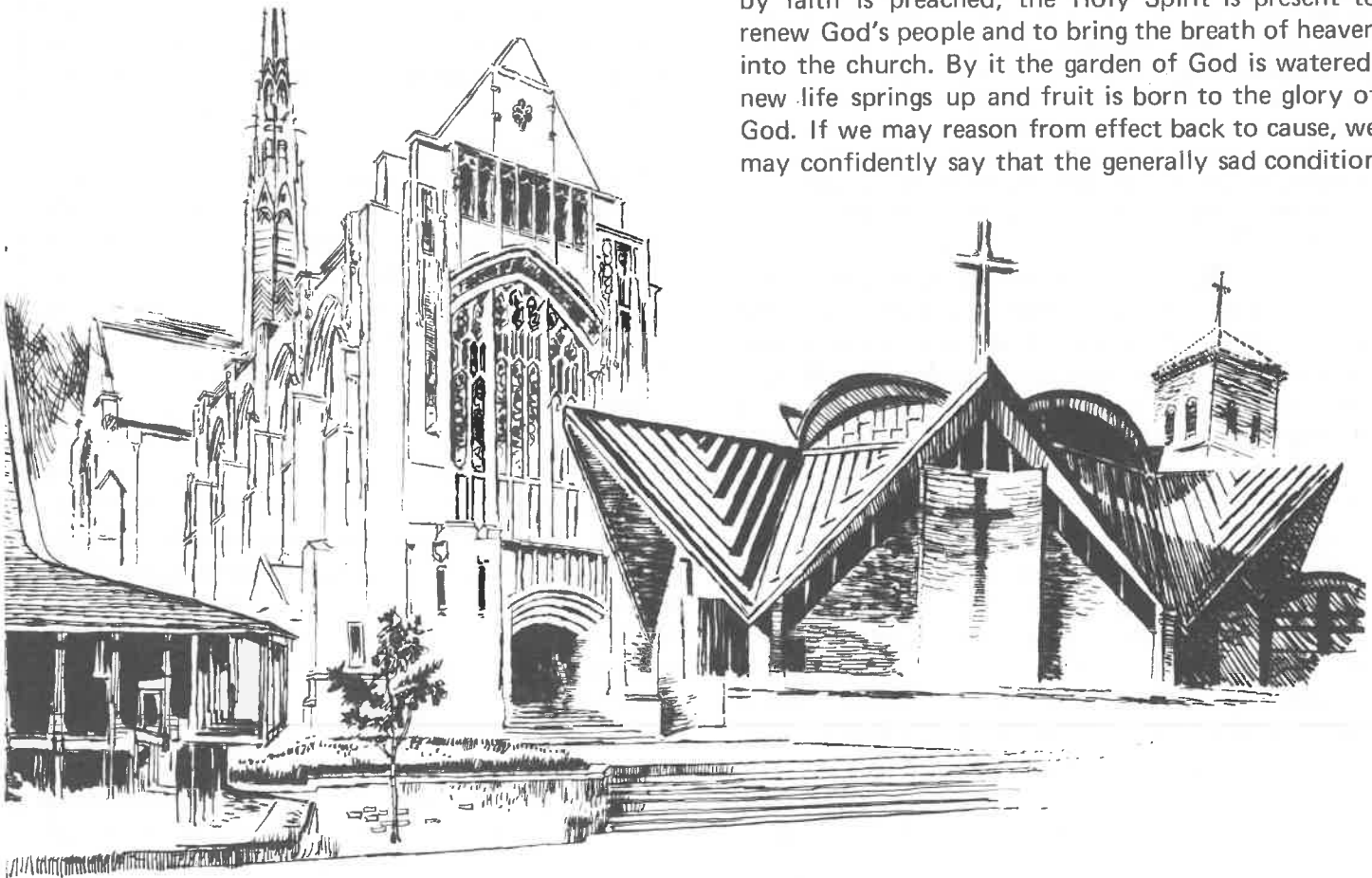
The primacy and centrality of justification by an extrinsic (outside) righteousness up in heaven is almost like a new language to many today. Some have so concentrated on the inward experience of being born again (trying to find their eternal security in the

inward experience of the new birth) that they have almost no theology of justification. Others often get hung up on the definition which relegates justification "for the sins of the past." Aside from the fact that this definition is based on a mistranslation of Romans 3:25, it tends to subordinate justification to what is supposed to be the "higher experience" of sanctification. Hence justification is relegated to the past and fails to be an abiding, central truth.

J.I. Packer has well said in his introduction to a reprint of Buchanan's thesis on justification:

"If we may judge by the size of its literary output, there has never been an age of such feverish theological activity as the past hundred years; yet amid all its multifarious theological concerns it did not produce a single book of any size on the doctrine of justification. If all we knew of the church during the past century was that it had neglected the subject of justification in this way, we should already be in a position to conclude that this has been a century of religious apostasy and decline."—J.I. Packer, Introduction to *The Doctrine of Justification*, by James Buchanan (reprinted by The Banner of Truth Trust, 1961), p. 2.

Wherever and whenever the truth of justification by faith is preached, the Holy Spirit is present to renew God's people and to bring the breath of heaven into the church. By it the garden of God is watered, new life springs up and fruit is born to the glory of God. If we may reason from effect back to cause, we may confidently say that the generally sad condition



of Protestantism is the result of a neglect of the truth of justification. And for this we are being punished with the plague of Pentecostalism.

Revivalist-Holiness Mentality

Some may be thinking, "Let us meet the issue of Pentecostalism by having a revival in our church." Aside from the vanity of men thinking that they can have a revival in their church any time they choose (as if they can call in the Holy Spirit like an obedient servant¹), it should be observed that Pentecostalism is the end result of a revivalist mentality that has grown up in Protestant America for more than one hundred years. Says Vinson Synan in his recently published book, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement in the United States*:

"The pentecostal movement arose as a split in the holiness movement and can be viewed as the logical outcome of the holiness crusade which had vexed American Protestantism for forty years . . ." —(Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971), p. 115.

"Basically, the pentecostal movement is an heir of the frontier, enthusiastic type of religion that has been indigenous to the American religious experience. It is probably the only large group in the United States that continues to exhibit the fervor and enthusiasm so common during the Great Awakening, the Kentucky revivals, and the Methodist camp meetings. It also is an attempt to perpetuate the doctrine of perfectionism which dominated Protestantism during the nineteenth century, as well as the tradition of revivalism that loomed so large in the last century and the early part of the twentieth century." —*Ibid.*, p. 223.

In the "good old" frontier days, people received their religion with great color and excitement. The essence of "good" preaching was to produce a great emotional response from the congregation. Whether the preaching was for the first blessing of conversion or the "second blessing" of full sanctification, the overwhelming emphasis tended toward the attainment of an experience that could be seen, heard or felt. The emphasis was on an empirical experience rather than on the righteousness which is of faith, on a subjective happening rather than on the objective gospel. As Catholic scholar Louis Bouyer points out in *The Spirit and Forms of Protestantism*, the revivals generally are the antithesis of the Reformation message of justification by an imputed righteousness; in fact, as he further points out, they are tending to bring the Protestant movement into basic harmony with the Catholic Church. Pentecostalism

¹In the U.S.A. it is common to see such astounding messages on church notice boards as "Revival here next week."

merely carries on the tradition of American revivalism, offering people the ultimate of what many revivals have promised—a tangible, empirical and exciting religious happening. Revivalism, as generally carried on, breeds Pentecostalism, even though the revivalist may violently oppose "tongues."

The same thing may be said about the holiness movement. Both Protestant and Catholic historians recognize that the modern Pentecostal movement grew out of the holiness movement which swept American Protestantism in the nineteenth century. "Holiness" groups still exist; "holiness" theology and "holiness" books are still being circulated by the millions today. The propagators of the "holiness" emphasis may be opposed to Pentecostals, but the fact is that, in their fundamental emphasis, their theology is the same. They may differ in the form that the "second blessing" may take, but the religious philosophy is the same.

"Holiness" theology is characterized by its supreme emphasis on Christian experience—"the Spirit-filled life," "the victorious life," etc. God's work in man supplants the gospel of God's work for man. Justification is not the center of its message. Sanctification or the Spirit-filled life or "Christ in you," etc., supplants the centrality of justification. Often it takes the form of advocating a definite "second blessing," something which is supposed to be much better and greater than justification. The emphasis is orientated to man and to his experience. It is overwhelmingly introspective and subjective. It sets people to earnestly watching their spiritual temperature and constantly taking their spiritual pulse. It has made its thousands of spiritual hypochondriacs. And their witness is occupied with the "Christ" in them and the feelings of sanctity or exploits of holiness he causes them to experience. People who set out on this course can never be quite sure when they have this special second blessing. Here Pentecostalism comes in to provide a tangible answer. It proposes that the "second blessing" may be known by the physically observable phenomenon of "speaking in tongues." As long as revivalists and youth crusaders orientate people toward their own experience, they will further the Pentecostal movement even though they cry out ever so loudly against it.

Finally, we say that, unless we participate in a genuine awakening and recovery of the central truth of the Reformation, we will have no resources before today's onslaught of religious subjectivism. And if we betray the secret of Protestantism's strength to the Delilah of ecumenism, we shall be shorn and humiliated in the coming test of strength.

The False Gospel According to the Holiness Movement

Protestant, Catholic and Pentecostal historians all recognize that the modern charismatic movement has its roots in the holiness movement. Pentecostalism is the logical and inevitable extension of "holiness" theology. For this reason, *Present Truth* will devote this issue to an appraisal of the "holiness" doctrine.

We will quote at length from two "holiness" books which are still being circulated in the United States. Just as there are many types of Pentecostalism, so there are many types of "holiness" doctrine. But all "holiness" teaching is clearly distinguished by one characteristic: rather than allowing holiness of life to appear in its true order as the fruit of preaching the gospel, the attainment to holiness of life is the "holiness" gospel.

The first presentation, by John Morgan, proposes such a state of holiness of life as a condition for being justified that it is certain no sinner could ever attain to justification by following out the condition. Morgan's teaching is a far cry from St. Paul's message that God justifies the ungodly who believe (Rom. 4:5).

The second presentation, by C.W. Ruth, proposes that the attainment of the "second blessing" (which is supposed to eradicate inbred sin) is a condition of retaining the blessing of justification. It is certain that no believer could retain his justification upon the condition set forth by this "holiness" author.

Neither author has anything to say about God's saving act in Christ. God's redeeming work outside of the poor sinner is not that to which his hope is directed, but it is made to rest on the work of grace inside of himself. This doctrine is the old Romanism dressed up in a few Protestant revivalist trappings.

Quotations from *Holiness Acceptable to God*, by John Morgan¹

John Morgan was a lifelong friend of Charles G. Finney and textual advisor at Oberlin College. Finney held Morgan's presentation in such high regard that he included it in the original edition of his Systematic Theology, volume 2. This presentation represents the

¹Republished 1967 by Bethany Fellowship, Inc., Minneapolis, Minn. Excerpts are quoted from pp. 7-51.

theological viewpoint of one of America's most renowned revivalists. As well as teaching that the believer's perfect obedience to the law is a condition of justification, the Finney school took issue with the Reformers' doctrine that all good works of the saints, being defiled with human imperfection, cannot satisfy the claims of God's law. We wonder whether the Finney school was aware that their arguments were substantially the same as the arguments used by the Roman Catholics who opposed Luther and Calvin.

Says John Morgan:

"'Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the High God?' This has in all ages been the solemn and anxious inquiry of earnest souls. It is the question of one who has sinned—the question, however, of hope and not of despair; the question of one who conceives that perhaps the High and Holy One may be acceptably approached. But the inquiry presupposes that whatever God may have done, may be doing, or is ready to do for his salvation, the inquirer has a personal responsibility which he must meet, that there are conditions which he must fulfill. What shall I do to inherit eternal life? The question recognizes the moral agency of the inquirer and the necessity of its appropriate exercise.

"It is admitted by all, except utter antinomians, that some degree of holiness or conformity to the divine law is indispensable to acceptance with God.² No one, we think, would refuse to unite with the venerable Westminster Confession in the statement that 'repentance, by which a sinner so grieves for and hates his sins as to turn from them all to God, purposing and endeavoring to walk with Him in all the ways of His commandments, is of such necessity to all sinners, that none may expect pardon without it.'

"Still, the majority of the church would doubtless, with the Larger Westminster Catechism, maintain that the 'best works' of God's accepted saints, 'are imperfect and defiled in the sight of God.' The celebrated Dr. Beecher in his recent letter on Perfection exhibits the theory which he has embraced on the

²The Pauline and Reformation doctrine declares that absolute conformity to the divine law is necessary for acceptance with God. Morgan utterly fails to show that God has provided this in the obedience of Christ. Faith brings to God the perfect obedience of Jesus, and this obedience is placed to the sinner's account. —Editor

subject. We will quote a few of his questions and answers.

“Question 1. What takes place in regeneration?

“Answer. The reconciliation of an enemy to God; submission to his will; love to God more than to all creatures and all things. In its commencement, this love is feeble compared with ‘all the heart, mind, soul and strength,’ according to the moral law; and to qualify for heaven, must be progressively augmented through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.

“Question 2. How can the help of Christ be obtained, to secure our growth in grace?

“Answer. By renouncing all reliance upon our own strength and merits, and relying entirely on the sufficiency and willingness of Christ to help us, sought by filial supplication, and the diligent use of the appointed means of grace; striving, as the Puritan writers say, as if all depended on ourselves, and looking to Christ as if all depended on him.

“Question 3. What will be the effect of such a prayerful reliance upon Christ, in the diligent use of the means of grace?

“Answer. Not perfection; for faith can be no more perfect than the love which animates it; and not including love with all the heart, and mind, and soul, and strength is always an implication of defect needing an advocate and pardon. The child who cannot go a step alone may as well exult in the claim of perfect manhood, as those who can do nothing without Christ, in the claim of perfection. But the result will be that they will grow in grace till they die, going from strength to strength, till they all appear in Zion before God.

“The doctrine of these extracts clearly is not simply that the love of a new-born saint is feeble compared with that of an advanced Christian but that it is less than the moral law requires, and therefore sinfully defective. These extracts also teach that ‘the most prayerful reliance on Christ and the most diligent use of the means of grace’ ever practiced in this life never produce an obedience which does not itself, because of sinful defect, need pardon.

“In these views Dr. Beecher coincides with the representation of the Westminster Confession, that ‘they who in their obedience attain to the greatest height which is possible in this life . . . fall short in much which in duty they are bound to do.’

“We propose to seek a scriptural answer to the inquiry: **Is any degree of holiness acceptable to God, which, for the time being, falls short of full obedience to the divine law?** We put the question into the most general form, intending it to apply to both the accepted holiness of the new-born soul and the holiness of the most mature Christian.”

“ . . . we proceed more directly to the question whether full obedience to its [the law’s] requisitions is a condition of acceptance with God. Those who believe that ‘the best works of justified persons are defiled in the sight of God’ cannot believe that full obedience to the divine law is a present condition of the divine favor.”

“ . . . nothing can be plainer than this that such passages as Micah 6:8 speak of a condition on which **sinner**s may approach God acceptably. A serious inquirer is introduced as asking, ‘Wherewith shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with tens of thousands of rivers of oil! Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?’ Can anything be more manifest than this, that these are the questions of a sinner?

“Let us hear again the answer of the inspired prophet: ‘He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?’ He presents to him the whole compass of duty, and encourages him with no hint that he may come before the Lord and bow himself before the High God with a partial performance of this duty.”

“The Bible declares of saints that they have actually rendered full obedience. It is said of Caleb (Num. 14:24), ‘My servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him and **hath followed me fully**, him will I bring into the land that he hath trodden upon and to his children, because he hath wholly followed the Lord’ (Deut. 1:36).

“Of Joshua and Caleb (Num. 32:12), it is said: ‘They have wholly followed the Lord.’ The same language is employed with respect to David (I Kings 11:6). God sentences the Israelites in the wilderness: ‘Surely none of the men that came up out of Egypt from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac and unto Jacob; because **they have not wholly followed me**’ (Num. 32:11). Solomon is sentenced (I Kings 11:11; compare verse 11) to lose his kingdom because ‘he went not **after the Lord fully** as did David his father,’ and thus failed ‘to keep the Lord’s covenant.’

“The original Hebrew phrase in all these places is the same, though translated into somewhat different English. Gesenius, surpassed by no one in Hebrew lexicography, explains the phrase to mean ‘to **yield God full obedience**.’ Leopold in his lexicon renders it ‘*integra obedientia Jovam sequi*,’ that is, to **follow**

Jehovah with entire obedience.

"In reference to David, God says to Jeroboam, 'Thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in mine eyes' (I Kings 14:8). It is recorded of Jehoshaphat (II Chron. 22:9) that 'he sought the Lord with all his heart.' Of Josiah the inspired record is, 'And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses, neither after him arose there any like him' (II Kings 23:25)..."

"Bible saints professed this entire obedience. Thus Caleb says to Joshua, 'My brethren that went up with me, made the heart of the people melt; but I wholly followed the Lord my God' (Josh. 14:8). 'I beseech thee, O Lord,' says Hezekiah (II Kings 20:3), 'remember how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart.' It is remarkable that the lexicographers Gesenius, Leopold, and Gibbs, in explaining the word *shalem*, give both the general signification, **perfect, entire, consummate**, and in reference to the relation of men to God make it signify **at peace or on good terms with Him**.

"In Psalm 119:10, 58, 145, the Psalmist professes, 'With my whole heart have I sought thee; O let me not wander from thy commandments. . . . I entreated thy favor with my whole heart; be merciful unto me according to thy word. . . . I cried with my whole heart; hear me; I will keep thy statutes.' It may be thought that historians or poets in describing the characters or conduct of others would resort to the language of hyperbole; but do the modest, humble saints employ hyperbolical expressions in telling of their own conduct and exercises? Do they magnify their own earnestness and faithfulness—or use the words of simple truth? Two remarks we will make on the passages from the Psalmist: (a) He founds on his wholehearted seeking and prayers a covenant claim to be heard, to be made a subject of mercy and grace. (b) His belief of his own wholeheartedness did not make him self-confident or presumptuous. 'O let me not wander from thy commandments' is anything but the language of a self-confident spirit."

"We request our readers to consider attentively such passages as declare: . . . (a) that we cannot serve God and Mammon; (b) that we must hate our nearest friends and forsake all that we have in order to be Christ's disciples; (c) that we must sell all that we have in order to buy the field with the treasure hid in it, or to obtain the pearl of great price; (d) that the violator of one commandment is guilty of all; (e) that the accepted Christian is free from sin, dead and buried

to sin—that he is risen to righteousness; (f) that to him who is in Christ Jesus old things are passed away and all things become new. Let these passages be examined with their context, and it will be seen that they entirely harmonize with the numerous texts quoted from the Old Testament.

"On Matthew 5:24 we quote from the Commentary of Calvin, one of the ablest and most spiritual of expositors, and on the whole decidedly our own favorite. The extracts are instructive, both as showing the force with which such passages strike pious minds, in theory opposed to their teachings, and as giving a specimen of the best shifts by which they try to dispose of their natural import. 'Christ denies that it can be that any one should obey God and his flesh at the same time. . . . Since God everywhere commends sincerity, while a double heart is abominable, all those are deceived who think he will be contented with half of their heart. All, indeed, confess with the mouth, that God is not truly worshipped except with entire affection, but they deny it in reality, while they study to reconcile things contrary to each other. I will not cease, says the ambitious man, to serve God, although I apply a good part of my mind to the chase of honors. . . .

" 'It is true, indeed, that believers themselves never are so entirely given to obedience to God but what they are drawn from it by the vicious desires of the flesh. But because they groan under this miserable bondage, and are displeased with themselves, and do not serve the flesh otherwise than unwilling and reluctant (*inviti et reluctantes*)—they are not said to serve two masters, because their purposes and efforts are approved by the Lord, just as if they rendered him an entire obedience. But here the hypocrisy of those persons is exposed, who flatter themselves in vices, as if they could conjoin light with darkness.'

"We ask, where in the whole compass of the Bible are saints said to be thus distinguishable from sinners? Where are they said to sin 'unwillingly and reluctantly'—while none of the ungodly are reluctant about it? We know of no texts which can under any pretense be cited to sustain such a view, except the contested passages in Romans 7 and Galatians 5—with respect to the first of which we cannot but concur with Tholuck in the remark that 'if the least attention is paid to the connection of this section of chapter 7 with that which precedes and that which follows, it is not possible to explain it of any other than a person standing under the law.' "

"The great Edwards is not always consistent with himself, nor are his professed disciples. Thus they all insist that no one can be a good Christian who does

not intend or aim at sinless perfection, or, as the Westminster Confession has it, 'purpose and endeavor to walk with God in all the ways of his commandments.' Yet they also insist that it is dangerous error, if not heresy, to believe that anyone ever really fully obeys God. All Christians have the will for it but never do it. 'If there be a full compliance of will,' says Edwards, 'the person has done his duty; and if other things do not prove to be connected with his volition, that is not owing to him.' "

"It would appear that in the apostle's [Paul's] view we must be conformed to the law in order to please God. And how shall he 'who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and who cannot look upon sin,' be pleased with less than full conformity to it?

" . . . The whole argument of Paul, in the 6th, 7th and 8th chapters of Romans, proceeds on the supposition that the entire subjugation of sin is indispensable to justification."

"We are well aware of the interpretation of Romans 7:7-25 still current among Calvinistic writers in England and America. It is an interpretation which, beginning with Augustine, spread through his great influence extensively in the church, and gained still further vogue by the adoption and sanction of the reformers Calvin and Luther. But until Augustine broached it, so far as history informs us, the church knew nothing of it. By the whole early church, learned and unlearned, the passage was referred to as the experience of a sinner under the law. Notwithstanding the venerable authority of the reformers and the high esteem in which they are held by evangelical men the world over, the whole body of pious German commentators, several of the most distinguished in Scotland and England, and Professors Stuart and Robinson in America have been compelled by the apostle's argument, in spite of theological bias, to return to the ancient interpretation.

"With the exception of the Methodist commentators, we see not how these learned men can be plausibly charged with adopting their views from theological prejudice, inasmuch as they all, so far as we know, held or hold the doctrine of the constant moral imperfection of Christians. Hence Professor Hodge of Princeton in his able work on Romans, while tenaciously cleaving to the current view among Calvinists, says: 'There is nothing in this opinion which implies the denial or disregard of any of the fundamental principles of evangelical religion.' "

"The doctrine with which we are at present concerned is not that of the simplicity of moral actions, nor that of the constant sinlessness of such as have been converted, but simply this, that nothing short of

present entire conformity to the divine law is accepted of God. Now, we admit, that if it could be made out that the Scriptures represent the saints as constantly sinful, that would be fatal to our view, though then we should be at a loss to interpret the numerous texts we have cited so as to make them harmonize with the texts adduced against us."

Quotations from *Entire Sanctification*, by C. W. Ruth³

C.W. Ruth takes a different approach than John Morgan. Whereas Morgan advocates the attainment of a certain degree of holiness as a necessary condition to obtain justification, Ruth takes a position that is more widely held—he advocates the attainment of a certain degree of holiness as a necessary condition to retain justification.

Says C.W. Ruth:

" . . . sanctification is an experience subsequent to regeneration, conditioned upon entire consecration and faith, the privilege of every believer, to be experienced and enjoyed in this life. That by the baptism with the Holy Ghost inbred sin is destroyed and the heart perfected in love. The people holding this theory are the only people who, personally, have any experience or testimony to sanctification. These believe that sin has never gone so deep into the soul, but that the blood of Jesus can go deeper. 'That where sin abounded grace did much more abound.' Jesus believed sanctification a divine act, for He prayed the Father to sanctify the disciples, John 17:17. Indeed, the Trinity enters into our sanctification. God the Father wills our sanctification, I Thess. 4:3. In order to provide our sanctification Jesus suffered without the gate, Heb. 13:12. And the Holy Ghost witnesses to our sanctification, Heb. 10:14, 15. It is said of Bible saints, they were 'sanctified by God the Father,' Jude 1:1; also that Jesus sanctifies, Eph. 5:25-27; and of the offering up of the Gentiles it was said they were 'sanctified by the Holy Ghost,' Rom. 15:16. In Acts 26:18 we find that sanctification is obtained by faith. Seeing it is a work that God must do for us, we need not wait for growth, death or purgatory, but may by faith enter this blessed experience the instant the consecration is entire and complete. While there is a gradual approach to the experience from the human side, the divine work is instantaneous. Hallelujah!"

³Published by Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City, Mo. First printing 1937. Excerpts are quoted from pp. 14-99.

"Distinctions Between Justification and Sanctification."⁴

"(The terms Justification and Sanctification are not used in a technical or critical sense, but rather in a general sense as referring to experience.)"

"In Justification there is life.

"In Sanctification there is life more abundant.

"In Justification there is love.

"In Sanctification there is perfect love which casteth out fear.

"In Justification the 'old man' is repressed.

"In Sanctification the 'old man' is destroyed.

"In Justification there is 'peace with God.'

"In Sanctification there is 'the peace of God.'

"Justification destroys the 'shoots' of sin.

"Sanctification destroys the 'roots' of sin.

"Justification gives us a right to heaven.

"Sanctification gives the fitness for heaven.

"In Justification we 'put on the new man.'

"In Sanctification we 'put off the old man with his deeds.'

"In Justification there is joy—intermittent joy.

"In Sanctification there is fullness of joy—abiding joy.

"Justification includes pardon, which is a judicial act.

"Sanctification includes a cleansing, which is a priestly function.

"Justification is obtained by surrender, repentance and faith.

"Sanctification is obtained by obedience, consecration and faith.

"Justification delivers from guilt and condemnation.

"Sanctification delivers from unholy tempers and abnormal appetites.

"In Justification the Holy Spirit is with the believer.

"In Sanctification the Holy Spirit is in the believer (John 14:17).

⁴ The reader will observe the very definite subordination of justification to sanctification given by this author. This is the earmark of all holiness doctrine. —Editor

"Justification comprehends adoption; making us children of God.

"Sanctification comprehends anointing, making us kings and priests unto God.

"Justification is illustrated by the rescue of the sinking man from the water.

"Sanctification is getting the water out of the lungs of the drowning man.

"Justification is conditioned on confession of sin (I John 1:9).

"Sanctification is conditioned on walking 'in the light as he is in the light' (I John 1:7).

"Justification has to do with sin as an act—sins committed.

"Sanctification has to do with sin as a principle—the sin nature we inherited.

"Justification comes by the birth of the Spirit—when the repentant sinner is born again.

"Sanctification comes by the baptism with the Spirit—when the believer has a personal pentecost.

"Justification restores to us the favor of God which we had lost through our own disobedience.

"Sanctification restores to us holiness or the moral likeness of God, which we had lost through Adam's disobedience.

"Justification is the impartation of a spiritual nature, bringing us into possession of eternal life.

"Sanctification is the crucifixion and destruction of our carnal nature, making us dead indeed unto sin.

"Justification separates us from the world, so we are no longer of the world.

"Sanctification takes the world out of us; worldly desires and ambitions.

"Justification makes us free—free from outward sin and condemnation.

"Sanctification makes 'free indeed.' Gives the 'deed' to our freedom with all the mortgages paid off. Freedom from fear, and doubt, and pride, etc.

"In Justification we are united to Christ as the branch to the vine.

"In Sanctification we receive the purging promised to the living, fruitful vine, that we may 'bring forth more fruit' (John 15:2).

"In Justification the experience is a 'well of water' (John 4:14). A well is for personal use.

"In Sanctification there is a fullness of blessing so that out of our inward parts 'shall flow rivers of living water' (John 6:38, 39). A river cannot be confined to personal use, but will bless and fructify wherever it flows."

"Sanctification is the 'second blessing' exactly in the same sense that justification is the first blessing. Justification is the first blessing that changes our moral condition and our personal relation toward God. In justification we are changed from the attitude and relation of enemies and rebels toward God into that of obedient children. It certainly is a blessing—but it is more, it is a grace that transforms and transposes into a permanent state and experience. Until this experience, all other blessings left the individual in the same moral condition they had found him. So, after a person is fully justified, he may receive not only many temporal, but many spiritual blessings—prayermeeting and campmeeting blessings—which will greatly refresh, and help, and encourage, and yet they will not eradicate inbred sin, and make him holy; if he was given to fear or impatience or doubt, or any other carnal manifestations, those same conditions will continue to exist after the 'hundreds of blessings' have come and gone.

"Exactly as justification is the first blessing that effects a permanent inward change, so sanctification is the 'second blessing,' hence, 'properly so called.' While justification comprehends pardon, regeneration and adoption, making us children of God, sanctification comprehends the full eradication of the carnal mind, the inbred sin, and the baptism and anointing with the Holy Ghost, making us kings and priests unto God. Whereas justification delivers us from sins committed, sin as an act, sanctification delivers us from the sin-nature inherited—sin as a principle; justification delivers us from guilt and condemnation while sanctification delivers us from unholy appetites; the first gives us the birth of the Spirit; the second, the baptism with the Spirit. Just as certainly as justification marks a distinct epoch and crisis in the life of those receiving it, just so certainly sanctification marks a second epoch, a second crisis, a second experience, and therefore is a 'second blessing, properly so called.' "

"The facts of 'original sin' are admitted by all evangelical denominations. There is scarcely a denomination that does not make some reference to the subject of original sin in its creed, in some form or other, and so, clearly distinguishes between it—the sin-nature inherited—and sin as an act committed.

That all men are born into this world with this 'Adamic taint,' this 'infection of nature,' this 'inbred sin'; or, as it is termed in the Scriptures, the 'carnal mind,' 'our old man,' 'the body of sin,' 'sin that dwelleth in me,' 'the sin which doth so easily beset,' etc., is generally recognized and conceded.

"Nor is there any controversy touching the fact that this thing—termed 'original sin'—cannot enter heaven, and therefore must be eradicated from the soul before there is perfect fitness for a holy heaven. The points of controversy are concerning the time and method for the accomplishment of this deliverance; the Calvinistic, Zinzendorfian, Keswickian theory being that this full deliverance cannot be fully realized until death; hence the only hope for the Christian in this life is to obtain grace to repress, subdue, regulate, control and overcome this evil within until death shall set us free. The Arminian, Wesleyan and present-day second-blessing, holiness-movement theory is, that subsequent to regeneration, by a complete consecration and faith, there may be an instantaneous cleansing and eradication of all sin from the heart of the believer by the baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire."

"Some have supposed that this inbred sin was removed in regeneration, but this is contrary to the experience of all Christians in all ages, and is contrary to the teachings of the Bible. While the Apostle Paul could say of the Corinthians, 'I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ,' and called them 'babes in Christ,' he also declared, 'ye are yet carnal' (Cor. 3:3), which proves most conclusively that the carnal mind was not eradicated at the time of their conversion.

"Others seem to think that by some mysterious process of growth the soul may advance until in some inexplicable manner, just about the time death might ensue, it would develop into a state of perfect holiness, and so have deliverance from the evil within. Just how, or by what law, the growth of a child would remove uncleanness, or the growth of the vegetable in the garden would at the same time grow out or destroy the weeds in the garden, is not explained. However, in the advancement of this theory there is the recognition of the sin-nature remaining in the heart after regeneration. Though the deliverance from it were only fully realized and accomplished at the time of death, it would nevertheless be a second or subsequent experience to regeneration.

"Paul seemed to anticipate the repression theory in Rom. 6:1, 2, when he exclaimed: 'What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?' He then continues by declaring

that the divine method for inbred sin—'our old man,' or, 'the body of sin'—is crucifixion and destruction. 'Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed.' 'Crucified' and 'destroyed' surely do not mean repressed.

"There is nothing that can eradicate sin from the heart but the blood of Jesus. If the blood is efficacious to cleanse from inbred sin when the person is dying, surely it has the same efficacy prior to death. Thank God for the promise, '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.'

"Sanctification and the Baptism with the Holy Ghost.

"Whoever is sanctified wholly has the baptism with the Holy Ghost; whoever has the baptism with the Holy Ghost is sanctified wholly. It is the baptism with the Holy Ghost that sanctifies wholly. These terms simply represent different phases of the same experience, and are used as synonyms. When the consecration of the believer is entire and complete, the 'old man,' or inbred sin is crucified and eradicated by the baptism with the Holy Ghost. The negative side of sanctification, which is the destruction and removal of inbred sin, is as certainly effected by the Holy Ghost as is the positive side of sanctification, which is the divine infilling and the enduement of power. Multitudes are praying for power and so insist on having the positive side of sanctification without consenting to have the negative work of cleansing accomplished in them. All such seeking is in vain. The work of subtracting inbred sin from the heart must precede addition or the enduement of power. Purity is power."

"The difference of the craving and longing of a justified soul and that of a sanctified soul may be illustrated by the person having a craving or appetite for apple dumplings, or some special dish,—he may sit up to a table laden with good things, and eat all he may wish; but that one dish he was especially craving is not on the table; although he has had a full meal, he is still craving something not contained in that meal. Thus it is with the justified soul; he may be blessed even to the shouting point, and still crave something not contained in that blessing. But when he is sanctified wholly he gets the apple dumplings, or the very thing he was craving. That special longing having been satisfied, having received not only all he wanted, but the very thing his nature craved—his hungering and thirsting are just as though he had apple dumplings for every meal. Thus it is with the sanctified soul. He is

not wanting or desiring something other than what he has, although at the next meal time he will relish some more of the same kind. Because justification does not and cannot satisfy the longing of the heart for holiness, they try so-called 'innocent' and 'no-harm' amusements, etc., and backslide. Whereas, if they were properly instructed, and would seek entire sanctification they would find what their heart is craving, and hence have entire satisfaction."

"The common experience of Christians is that while carnality is yet in the heart, 'the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.' Because of this inward conflict and struggle, they frequently suffer defeat, and realize that they do things they did not mean to do, and leave undone the things they meant to do, and so have an up and down life of sinning and repenting. The bedside of multitudes is transformed into a mourner's bench, where they are obliged to go every night before they retire and weep and repent over their failures during the day. Under certain temptations and provocations the carnality in their hearts had gained the ascendancy and had betrayed them into wrong feelings and tempers, and so defeated them. After they had spent some time at their 'mourner's bench,' and wept and prayed, they again felt that the pardoning grace and smile of God was in their hearts, and resolved to do better the next day, only to find that the same disturber of the peace and source of trouble was still in their hearts. But after they were sanctified wholly, and the carnal nature destroyed and eradicated from their hearts, they ceased doing things they should not do, and leaving undone things they should do, and found they had in their hearts the grace and power to perform all the will of God, which made them 'more than conquerors,' and put the real swing of victory into their souls. So instead of going to the 'mourner's bench' before retiring at night, they simply climbed up into the choir-loft and got out their 'cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery and dulcimer, and all kinds of music,' and sang and shouted their glad doxologies of praise to God for the 'keeping power' and the glorious victories of another day. Just as certain as the foundation preserves the building, just so certainly the building preserves the foundation; and just so surely does the experience of sanctification preserve or enable one to maintain the experience of justification. Blessed be God!"

The True Gospel According to Martin Luther

Editorial Note: In order that the reader may see the stark contrast between the message that gave birth to the Protestant Reformation and the "holiness" doctrine (see preceding article), we shall here reproduce some of Luther's comments¹ on Galatians 5. Let none imagine that his message merely represents another mode of expressing the gospel. It is a different doctrine altogether. Not only is the ground of receiving and retaining justification altogether different in Luther's theology, but his whole philosophy of the Christian life is as different from the "holiness" concept as night is from day.

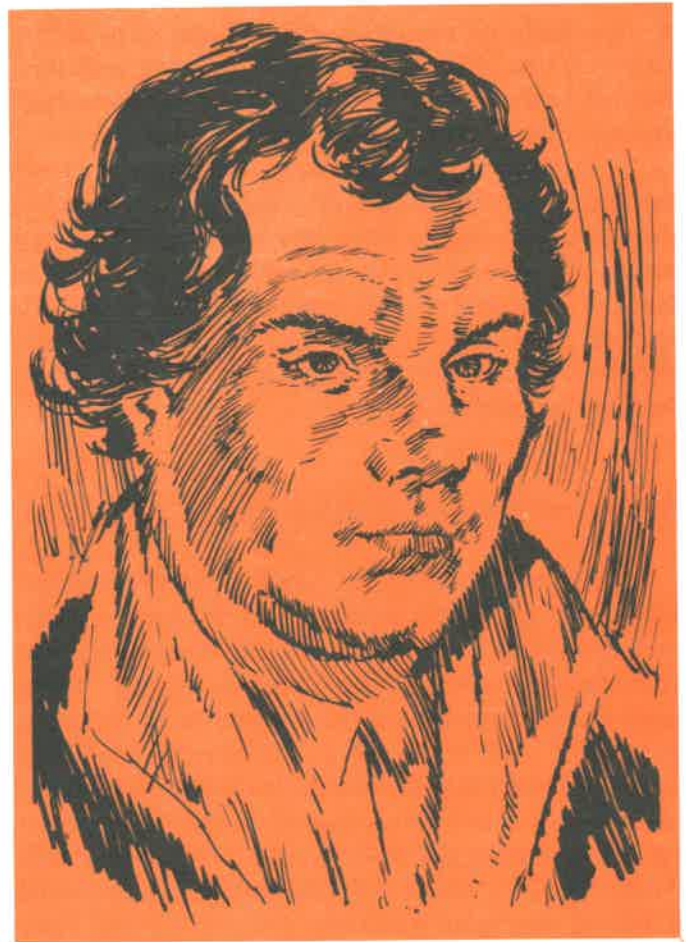
"For We Through the Spirit by Faith Wait for the Hope of Righteousness [Gal. 5:5]"

"We wait through the Spirit by faith for righteousness with hope and desire; that is to say, we are righteous, howbeit our righteousness is not yet revealed, but hangeth yet in hope (Rom. viii. 24). For as long as we live here, sin remaineth in our flesh; there is also a law in our flesh and members, rebelling against the law of our mind, and leading us captives unto the service of sin (Rom. vii. 13). Now when these affections of the flesh do rage and reign, and we on the other side do through the spirit wrestle against the same, then is there a place for hope. Indeed we have begun to be justified through faith: whereby also we have received the first fruits of the Spirit, and the mortification of the flesh is also begun in us; but we be not yet perfectly righteous."

"For my righteousness is not yet perfect, it cannot yet be felt: yet I do not despair; for faith sheweth unto me Christ in whom I trust, and when I have laid hold of him by faith, I wrestle against the fiery darts of the devil, and I take a good heart through hope against the feeling of sin, assuring myself that I have a perfect righteousness prepared for me in heaven."

"Wherefore when the law accuseth and sin

¹Quoted from Martin Luther, *A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians* (London: James Clarke & Co. Ltd.), pp. 457-508.



terrifieth thee, and thou feelest nothing but the wrath and judgment of God, despair not for all that, but take unto thee the armour of God, the shield of faith, the helmet of hope, and the sword of the Spirit (Eph. vi 16 ff.), and try how good and how valiant a warrior thou art. Lay hold of Christ by faith, who is the Lord of the law and sin, and of all things else which accompany them. Believing in him thou art justified: which thing reason and the feeling of thine own heart when thou art tempted, do not tell thee, but the Word of God. Moreover, in the midst of these conflicts and terrors which often return and exercise thee, wait thou patiently through hope for righteousness, which thou hast now by faith, although it be yet but begun and imperfect, until it be revealed perfect and eternal in the time appointed.

"But thou wilt say: I feel not myself to have any righteousness, or at the least, I feel it but very little. Thou must not feel, but believe that thou hast righteousness. And except thou believe that thou art righteous, thou dost great injury unto Christ, who hath cleansed thee by the washing of water through the Word; who also died upon the cross, condemned sin and killed death, that through him thou mightest

obtain righteousness and everlasting life. These things thou canst not deny (except thou wilt openly shew thyself to be wicked and blasphemous against God, and utterly to despise God and all his promises, Christ and all his benefits), and so consequently thou canst not deny but that thou art righteous."

"There is nothing more dear or precious in all the world, to the true children of God, than this doctrine. For they that understand this doctrine, do know that whereof all the world is ignorant, namely, that sin, death and all other miseries, afflictions and calamities, as well corporal as spiritual, do turn to the benefit and profit of the elect. Moreover, they know that God is then most dear unto them, when he seemeth to be farthest off, and that he is then a most merciful and loving Saviour, when he seemeth to be most angry, to afflict and to destroy. Also they know that they have an everlasting righteousness, which they wait for through hope, as a certain and sure possession laid up for them in heaven, even when they feel the horrible terrors of sin and death; moreover, that they are then lords of all things, when they are most destitute of all things, according to that saying: 'Having nothing, and yet possessing all things' (2 Cor. vi. 10). This, saith the Scripture, is to conceive comfort through hope. But this cunning is not learned without great and often temptations."

"True it is that we ought to fulfil the law and to be justified through the fulfilling thereof: but sin hindereth us. Indeed the law prescribeth and commandeth that we should love God with all our heart, &c., and that we should love our neighbour as ourselves; but it followeth not: This is written, therefore it is done; the law commandeth love, therefore we love. There is not one man to be found upon the whole earth, which so loveth God and his neighbour as the law requireth. But in the life to come, where we shall be thoroughly cleansed from all vices and sins, and shall be made as pure and as clear as the sun; we shall love perfectly and shall be righteous through perfect love. But in this life that purity is hindered by the flesh; for as long as we live, sin remaineth in our flesh; by reason whereof, the corrupt love of ourselves is so mighty that it far surmounteth the love of God and of our neighbour. In the meantime notwithstanding, that we may be righteous in this life also, we have Christ the mercy-seat and throne of grace, and because we believe in him, sin is not imputed unto us. Faith therefore is our righteousness in this life. But in the life to come, when we shall be thoroughly cleansed and delivered from all sins and concupiscences, we shall have no more need of faith and hope, but we shall then love perfectly."

"If we were pure from all sin, and were inflamed with perfect love both towards God and our neighbour, then should we indeed be righteous and holy through love, and God could require no more of us. This is not done in this present life, but is deferred until the life to come. Indeed we receive here the gift and first fruits of the Spirit, so that we begin to love, howbeit very slenderly. But, if we loved God truly and perfectly as the law of God requireth, which saith: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,' &c., then should we be as well contented with poverty as with wealth, with pain as with pleasure, and with death as with life; yea, he that could love God truly and perfectly, should not long continue in this life, but should straightway be swallowed up by this charity."

"For the Flesh Lusteth Against the Spirit, and the Spirit Against the Flesh [Gal. 5:17]

"When Paul saith that the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, he admonisheth us that we shall feel the concupiscence of the flesh, that is to say, not only carnal lust, but also pride, wrath, heaviness, impatience, incredulity, and such-like. Notwithstanding he would have us so to feel them, that we consent not unto them, nor accomplish them: that is, that we neither think, speak, nor do those things which the flesh provoketh us unto. As, if it move us to anger, yet we should be angry in such wise as we are taught in the fourth Psalm, that we sin not. As if Paul would thus say: I know that the flesh will provoke you unto wrath, envy, doubting, incredulity, and such-like: but resist it by the Spirit, that ye sin not. But if ye forsake the guiding of the Spirit, and follow the flesh, ye shall fulfil the lust of the flesh, and ye shall die, as Paul saith in the eighth to the Romans. So this saying of the Apostle is to be understood, not of fleshly lusts only, but of the whole kingdom of sin.

"And These Are Contrary One to the Other, So that Ye Cannot Do the Things that Ye Would"

"These two captains or leaders (saith he), the flesh and the spirit, are one against another in your body, so that ye cannot do what ye would. And this place witnesseth plainly that Paul writeth these things to the saints, that is, to the Church believing in Christ, baptized, justified, renewed, and having full forgiveness of sins. Yet notwithstanding he saith that she hath flesh rebelling against the spirit. After the same

manner he speaketh of himself in the seventh to the Romans: 'I (saith he) am carnal and sold under sin;' and again: 'I see another law in my members rebelling against the law of my mind,' &c.; also: 'O wretched man that I am,' &c.

"Here, not only the schoolmen, but also some of the old fathers are much troubled, seeking how they may excuse Paul. For it seemeth unto them absurd and unseemly to say, that that elect vessel of Christ should have sin. But we credit Paul's own words, wherein he plainly confesseth that he is sold under sin, that he is led captive of sin, that he hath a law in his members rebelling against him, and that in the flesh he serveth the law of sin. Here again they answer, that the Apostle speaketh in the person of the ungodly. But the ungodly do not complain of the rebellion of their flesh, of any battle or conflict, or of the captivity and bondage of sin: for sin mightily reigneth in them. This is therefore the very complaint of Paul and of all the saints. Wherefore they have done very wickedly which have excused Paul and other saints to have no sin. For by this persuasion (which proceedeth of ignorance of the doctrine of faith) they have robbed the Church of a singular consolation: they have abolished the forgiveness of sins, and made Christ of none effect."

"But this must be our ground and anchor-hold, that Christ is our only perfect righteousness. If we have nothing whereunto we may trust, yet these three things (as Paul saith) faith, hope and love do remain. Therefore we must always believe and always hope; we must always take hold of Christ as the head and fountain of our righteousness. He that believeth in him shall not be ashamed. Moreover, we must labour to be outwardly righteous also: that is to say, not to consent to the flesh, which always enticeth us to some evil; but to resist it by the spirit. We must not be overcome with impatience for the unthankfulness and contempt of the people, which abuseth the Christian liberty; but through the Spirit we must overcome this and all other temptations. Look then how much we strive against the flesh by the spirit, so much are we outwardly righteous. Albeit this righteousness doth not commend us before God.

"Let no man therefore despair if he feel the flesh oftentimes to stir up new battles against the spirit, or if he cannot by and by subdue the flesh, and make it obedient unto the spirit. I also do wish myself to have a more valiant and constant heart, which might be able, not only boldly to contemn the threatenings of tyrants, the heresies, offences and tumults which the fantastical spirits stir up; but also might by and by shake off the vexations and anguish of

spirit, and briefly, might not fear the sharpness of death, but receive and embrace it as a most friendly guest. But I find another law in my members, rebelling against the law of my mind, &c. Some other do wrestle with inferior temptations, as poverty, reproach, impatience and such-like.

"Let no man marvel therefore or be dismayed, when he feeleth in his body this battle of the flesh against the spirit: but let him pluck up his heart and comfort himself with these words of Paul: 'The flesh lusteth against the spirit,' &c., and: 'These are contrary one to another, so that ye do not those things that ye would.' For by these sentences he comforteth them that be tempted. As if he should say: It is impossible for you to follow the guiding of the Spirit in all things without any feeling or hindrance of the flesh; nay, the flesh will resist: and so resist and hinder you that ye cannot do those things that gladly ye would. Here, it shall be enough if ye resist the flesh and fulfil not the lust thereof: that is to say, if ye follow the spirit and not the flesh, which easily is overthrown by impatience, coveteth to revenge, biteth, grudgeth, hateth God, is angry with him, despaireth, &c. Therefore when a man feeleth this battle of the flesh, let him not be discouraged therewith, but let him resist in the Spirit, and say: I am a sinner, and I feel sin in me, for I have not yet put off the flesh, in which sin dwelleth so long as it liveth; but I will obey the spirit and not the flesh: that is, I will by faith and hope lay hold upon Christ, and by his word I will raise up myself, and being so raised up, I will not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

"It is very profitable for the godly to know this, and to bear it well in mind; for it wonderfully comforteth them when they are tempted. When I was a monk I thought by and by that I was utterly cast away, if at any time I felt the concupiscence of the flesh: that is to say, if I felt any evil motion, fleshly lust, wrath, hatred, or envy against any brother. I assayed many ways, I went to confession daily, &c., but it profited me not; for the concupiscence of my flesh did always return, so that I could not rest, but was continually vexed with these thoughts: This or that sin thou hast committed; thou art infected with envy, with impatience, and such other sins; therefore thou art entered into this holy order in vain, and all thy good works are unprofitable. If then I had rightly understood these sentences of Paul: 'The flesh lusteth contrary to the spirit, and the spirit contrary to the flesh,' &c. and 'these two are one against another, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would do,' I should not have so miserably tormented myself, but should have thought and said to myself, as now com-

monly I do: Martin, thou shalt not utterly be without sin, for thou hast yet flesh; thou shalt therefore feel the battle thereof, according to that saying of Paul: 'The flesh resisteth the spirit.' Despair not therefore, but resist it strongly, and fulfil not the lust thereof. Thus doing thou art not under the law.

"I remember that Staupitius was wont to say: 'I have vowed unto God above a thousand times, that I would become a better man; but I never performed that which I vowed. Hereafter I will make no such vow: for I have now learned by experience, that I am not able to perform it. Unless therefore God be favourable and merciful unto me for Christ's sake, and grant unto me a blessed and a happy hour when I shall depart out of this miserable life, I shall not be able with all my vows and all my good deeds, to stand before him.' This was not only a true, but also a godly and a holy desperation: and this must they all confess both with mouth and heart, which will be saved. For the godly trust not to their own righteousness, but say with David: 'Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall none that liveth be justified' (Ps. cxliii. 2), and: 'If thou O Lord shouldst straightly mark iniquities, O Lord who shall stand?' (Ps. cxxx. 3). They look unto Christ their reconciler, who gave his life for their sins. Moreover, they know that the remnant of sin which is in their flesh, is not laid to their charge, but freely pardoned. Notwithstanding in the meanwhile they fight in the Spirit against the flesh, lest they should fulfil the lust thereof. And although they feel the flesh to rage and rebel against the spirit, and themselves also do fall sometimes into sin through infirmity, yet are they not discouraged, nor think therefore that their state and kind of life, and the works which are done according to their calling, displease God: but they raise up themselves by faith.

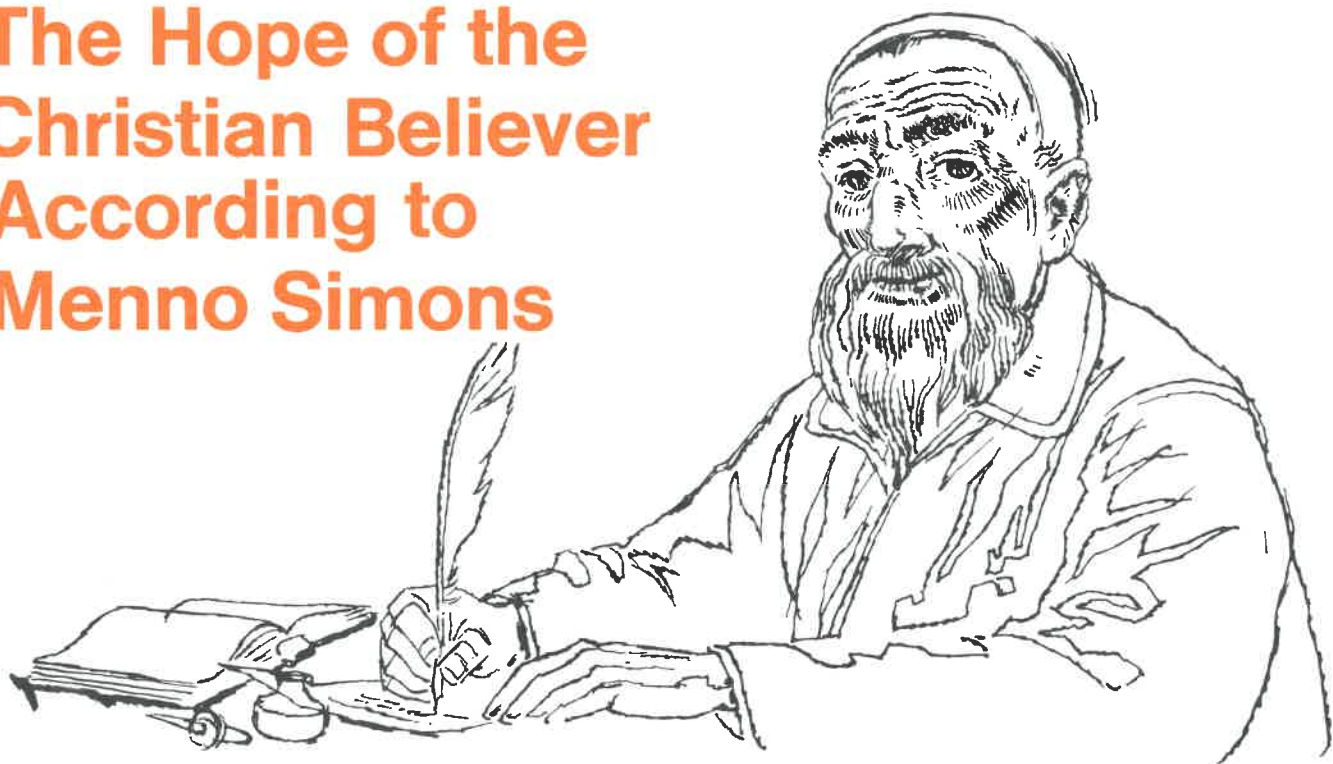
"The faithful therefore receive great consolation by this doctrine of Paul, in that they know themselves to have partly the flesh, and partly the spirit, but yet so notwithstanding that the spirit ruleth and the flesh is subdued, that righteousness reigneth and sin serveth. He that knoweth not this doctrine, and thinketh that the faithful ought to be without all fault, and yet seeth the contrary in himself, must needs at the length be swallowed up by the spirit of heaviness, and fall into desperation. But whoso knoweth this doctrine well and useth it rightly, to him the things that are evil turn unto good. For when the flesh provoketh him to sin, by occasion thereof he is stirred up and forced to seek forgiveness of sins by Christ, and to embrace the righteousness of faith, which else he would not so greatly esteem, nor seek for the same with so great

desire. Therefore it profiteth us very much to feel sometimes the wickedness of our nature and corruption of our flesh, that even by this means we may be waked and stirred up to faith and to call upon Christ. And by this occasion a Christian cometh a mighty workman and a wonderful creator, which of heaviness can make joy, of terror comfort, of sin righteousness, and of death life, when he by this means repressing and bridling the flesh, maketh it subject to the Spirit.

"Wherefore let not them which feel the concupiscence of the flesh, despair of their salvation. Let them feel it and all the force thereof, so that they consent not to it. Let the passions of lust, wrath and such other vices shake them, so that they do not overthrow them. Let sin assail them, so that they do not accomplish it. Yea the more godly a man is, the more doth he feel that battle. And hereof come those lamentable complaints of the saints in the Psalms and in all the holy Scripture. Of this battle the hermits, the monks, and the schoolmen, and all that seek righteousness and salvation by works, know nothing at all."

"This I say for the comfort of the godly. For they only feel indeed that they have and do commit sins, that is to say, they feel they do not love God so fervently as they should do; that they do not trust him so heartily as they would, but rather they oftentimes doubt whether God have a care of them or no; they are impatient, and are angry with God in adversity. Hereof (as I have said) proceed the sorrowful complaints of the saints in the Scriptures, and especially in the Psalms. And Paul himself complaineth that he is 'sold under sin' (Rom. vii. 14); and here he saith that the flesh resisteth and rebelleth against the spirit. But because they mortify the deeds of the flesh by the spirit (as he saith in another place; and also in the end of this chapter: 'They crucify the flesh with the desires and lusts thereof'), therefore these sins do not hurt them nor condemn them. But if they obey the flesh in fulfilling the lusts thereof, then do they lose faith and the Holy Ghost. And if they do not abhor their sin and return unto Christ (who hath given the keys to his Church, to receive and raise up those that be fallen, that so they may recover faith and the Holy Ghost), they die in their sins. Wherefore we speak not of them which dream that they have faith, and yet continue still in their sins. These men have their judgment already: They that live after the flesh shall die (Rom. viii. 13), also: 'The works of the flesh are manifest, which are, adultery, fornication, &c., whereof I tell you before, as also I have told you that they which do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God.' "

The Hope of the Christian Believer According to Menno Simons



Editorial Note: Menno Simons was a contemporary of the Reformers, although he was not a part of the Reformation mainstream. The best Protestant historians, however, concede that he stood close to Luther on his concept of justification by faith.

We here reproduce Menno's touching and inspiring "Letter of Consolation to a Sick Saint."¹ It rings absolutely true to the gospel in that it places the believer's hope and security outside of his own experience.

Letter of Consolation²

"My elect and beloved sister in Christ Jesus; much mercy, grace, and peace be to you, most beloved sister whom I have ever sincerely loved in Christ.

¹Verduin, Leonard and John Christian Wenger, *The Complete Writings of Menno Simons, c. 1496-1561* (Scottsdale, Penn.: Herald Press, 1956), pp. 1052-1054.

²One of the most beautiful letters of Menno was addressed to the wife of Rein Edes. In the Dutch original her name is given as Griet, and K. Vos states (*Menno Simons*, 1914, 290) that she was Menno's sister-in-law. The occasion for the letter was the information which came to Menno that she was troubled by the depravity within her; she longed for greater holiness, and was disturbed at her inability to attain it. Menno attempts to comfort and strengthen her, reminding her that all the saints of history had the same struggles and the same longings, and directing her to the perfect merits and righteousness of Jesus Christ. In the *Opera Omnia Theologica* of 1681 the letter is printed, fol. 434, and in the *Complete Works* of 1871, Part II, 401, 402. Vos assigns the letter to about the year 1557.

"From your dear husband's letter I understand that during all the winter you have been a sick and afflicted child, which I very much regret to hear. But we pray daily: Holy Father, Thy will be done. By this we transfer our will into that of the Father to deal with us as is pleasing in His blessed sight. Therefore bear your assigned affliction with a resigned heart. For all this is His fatherly will for your own good, and that you may turn with your inmost being from all transitory things and direct yourself to the eternal and living God. Be comforted in Christ Jesus, for after the winter comes the summer, and after death comes life. O sister, rejoice that you are a true daughter of your beloved Father. Soon the inheritance of His glorious promise will be due. But a little while, says the Word of the Lord, and He who is coming shall come and His reward will be with Him. May the Almighty, merciful God and Lord before whom you have bent your knees to His honor, and whom according to your weakness you have sought, grant you a strong and patient heart, a bearable pain, a joyous recovery, a gracious restoration, or a godly departure through Christ Jesus whom we daily expect with you, my beloved sister and child in Christ Jesus.

"Secondly, I understand that your conscience is troubled because you have not and do not now walk in such perfection as the Scriptures hold before us. I write the following to my faithful sister as a brother-

ly consolation from the true Word and eternal truth of the Lord. The Scripture, says Paul, has concluded all under sin. There is no man on earth, says Solomon, who does righteously and sinneth not. At another place: A just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again. Moses says: The Lord, the merciful God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, before whom there is none without sin. O dear sister, notice, he says, none are without sin before God. And David says: Lord, enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified. And we read, If they sin against thee (for there is no man that sinneth not). We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness is as filthy rags. Christ also said, There is none good but one, that is God. The evil which I would not, that I do. In many things we all offend. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

"Since it is plain from all these Scriptures that we must all confess ourselves to be sinners, as we are in fact; and since no one under heaven has perfectly fulfilled the righteousness required of God but Christ Jesus alone; therefore none can approach God, obtain grace, and be saved, except by the perfect righteousness, atonement, and intercession of Jesus Christ, however godly, righteous, holy, and unblamable he may be. We must all acknowledge, whoever we are, that we are sinners in thought, word, and deed. Yes, if we did not have before us the righteous Christ Jesus, no prophet nor apostle could be saved.

"Therefore be of good cheer and comforted in the Lord. You can expect no greater righteousness in yourself than all the chosen of God had in them from the beginning. In and by yourself you are a poor sinner, and by the eternal righteousness banished, accursed, and condemned to eternal death. But in and through Christ you are justified and pleasing unto God, and adopted by Him in eternal grace as a daughter and child. In this all saints have comforted themselves, have trusted in Christ, have ever esteemed their own righteousness as unclean, weak, and imperfect, have with contrite hearts approached the throne of grace in the name of Christ and with firm faith prayed the Father: O Father, forgive us our transgressions as we forgive those who transgress against us. Matt. 6.

"It is a very precious word which Paul speaks, When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. Yea, when we were yet ungodly, and thereby He manifests His love toward us. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled

to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. Rom. 5:6, 10. Behold, my chosen beloved child and sister in the Lord, this I write from the very sure foundation of eternal truth.

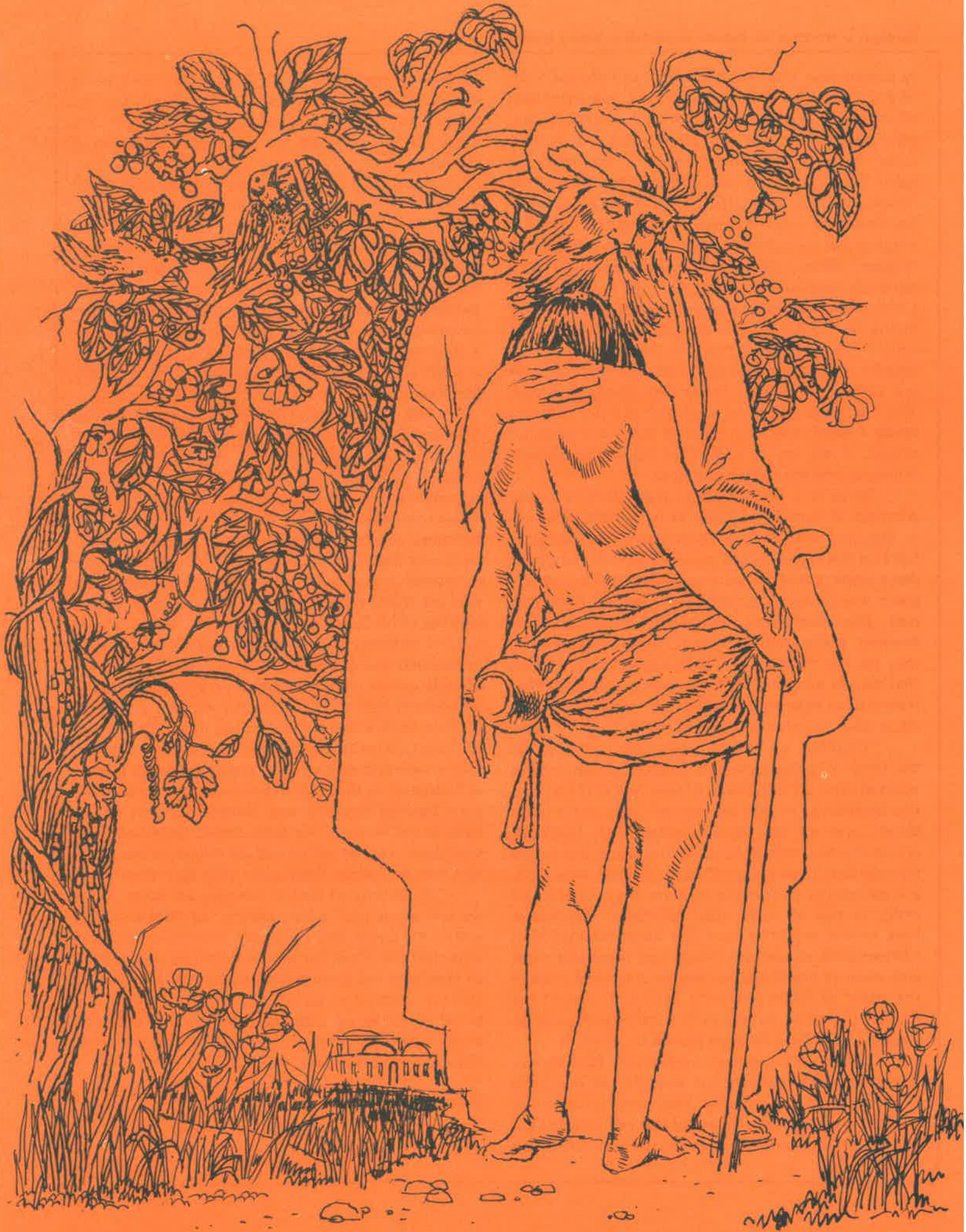
"I pray and desire that you will betake yourself wholly both as to what is inward and what is outward unto Christ Jesus and His merits, believing and confessing that His precious blood alone is your cleansing; His righteousness your piety; His death your life; and His resurrection your justification; for He is the forgiveness of all your sins; His bloody wounds are your reconciliation; and His victorious strength is the staff and consolation of your weakness, as we have formerly according to our small gift often shown you from the Scriptures.

"Yes, dearest child and sister, seeing that you find and feel such a spirit in yourself desirous of following that which is good, and abhorring that which is evil, even though the remnant of sin is not entirely dead in you, as was also the case in all the saints who lamented from the beginning, as was said, therefore you may rest assured that you are a child of God, and that you will inherit the kingdom of grace in eternal joy with all the saints. Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. I John 4:13.

"I sincerely pray that you may by faith rightly understand this basis of comfort, strengthening, and consolation of your distressed conscience and soul, and remain firm unto the end. I commend you, most beloved child and sister, to the faithful, merciful, and gracious God in Christ Jesus, now and forever. Let Him do with you and with all of us according to His blessed will, whether in the flesh to remain a little longer with your beloved husband and children; or out of the flesh to the honor of His name and to the salvation of your soul. You go before and we follow, or we go before and you follow. Separation must sometime come.

"In the city of God, in the new Jerusalem, there we will await each other, before the throne of God and of the Lamb, sing Hallelujah, and praise His name in perfect joy. Your husband and children I commend to Him who has given them to you, and He will take care of them. The saving power of the most holy blood of Christ be with my most beloved child and sister, now and forever, Amen. Your brother who sincerely loves you in Christ."

Menno Simons



The Imputed Righteousness of Christ

Hayden King

Editorial Note: "Holiness" theology fails to appreciate the primacy, supremacy and all-sufficiency of imputed righteousness. Instead of allowing this **passive** righteousness to be the glory of the Christian faith, "holiness" teaching subordinates it to what is supposed to be the higher virtue of the infused righteousness of Christ, or the **active** Christian righteousness of the believer. The following brief article by a Christian layman, especially the tabulated summary, gives a very clear focus to the true foundation of the believer's hope.

Q. Is it necessary to have imparted (infused) righteousness in order to insure our acceptance with God?

A. No, it is not necessary, for our acceptance is not grounded on any quality in us but on the worthiness and glory of the Son of God. The gospel of God is "concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord" and His divine virtues, not us or our virtues. Forgiveness and acceptance are not offered us because we deserve them but because we need them. In other words, like any orphan, we are taken in because of our need, not our worth. The blood of Christ is the seal of the new covenant promise, which promise, together with the oath, contains the immutable word of God, providing strong consolation and an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, to the believer (Heb. 6:17-19). To doubt our acceptance is simply to disbelieve the oath and promise, and make God doubly a liar (see I John 5:10-12). "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest **by the blood of Jesus . . .** let us draw near with a true heart in **full assurance of faith . . .**" Heb. 10:19, 22. Here is the certainty of our acceptance—the blood of Christ.

Q. Do you mean our acceptance is sure with God without any sanctification in us?

A. Our acceptance is based on the sanctification accomplished by the will of God. "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." "For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Heb. 10:10, 14. Everything which attached to us as children of Adam has been abolished. Our sins have been purged and put away (Heb. 1:3; 9:26). Eternal redemption has been obtained for us (Heb. 9:12). And all this is according to the good pleasure of the will of God, to the praise of the glory of His grace (Eph. 1:5-8). It is God's pleasure to have a people cleansed of all sin, able to approach Him without the slightest hesitation or doubt. He desires to have a people whom He can regard according to His own estimate of the value of the one perfect offering of Christ—that is, a people upon whom He can look with the greatest of pleasure. And He has achieved such a people by the efficacy of the blood of Christ.

Q. Does this mean that, in the full knowledge of our own utter sinfulness, we can come to God with a clear conscience, trusting only in the blood of Christ for our complete acceptance?

A. Yes, absolutely. The blood of Christ is the only ground of our hope. "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did . . ."

Heb. 7:19. What is this which is made perfect by the better hope, by the one perfect offering? “. . . which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, **as pertaining to the conscience . . .**” Heb. 9:9. “For the law . . . can never with those sacrifices . . . make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had **no more conscience of sins.**” Heb. 10:1, 2.

Let us note these two vital points: (1) The offerings and sacrifices under the law could not bring the worshipers perfection. But the offering of the body of Christ **did perfect** the believers. (2) The perfection which they have through the one offering of Christ is **perfection of the conscience**; that is, they have “**no more conscience of sins.**” This does not mean no more consciousness of their sins. It means that worshipers have such assurance of being separated from their sins and set apart for God by the blood of Christ, that they can approach Him with all the liberty of the angel Gabriel, who dwells in the presence of God. How can this be? Because, by the death of Christ, sins have been purged so completely that in the sight of God not a taint of defilement, not a stain, of guilt, rests upon His people.

Viewed from God’s side, they are “holy and without blame before Him in love.” As seen by God through the sacrifice of His Son, they are completely divested of everything which naturally attached to them as Adam’s fallen children. So great is the efficacy of the blood of Christ! Not a thing remains to separate His sanctified people from Himself.

When this glorious truth is brought home to the consciences of believers, it gives them such liberty that they can approach God **just as if they had never sinned**. Believers identify themselves with the offering of Christ and not with their sins, their shortcomings, their failures. They do not regard their sins lightly, but they appreciate the great sacrifice made for them. They see in that sacrifice the complete end of all their estrangement from God and the bringing in of complete reconciliation with Him. Every question of sin is settled. They are not by any means perfect as pertaining to their own state. **But they are perfected in their conscience**. There is no doubt as to their full and absolute acceptance with God, no matter how they appear in their own eyes.

Q. If the question of sin is settled so simply on the basis of the sacrifice of Christ, what need is there for inward sanctification?

A. A great need, but not to make us acceptable or pleasing to God. Rather, inward sanctification is to cleanse and purify our hearts and enlarge our spiritual vision so that God will become more acceptable and more pleasing to us. Then we will enjoy fellowship with Him more and do better service for Him. But this experience is only for those who are free in conscience and spirit because of the certainty of their acceptance. It is not for those who are seeking to better themselves in order to become more pleasing to God. Those who do this simply demonstrate that they are not pleased with God and His ways.

Q. Does not this teaching produce careless believers, ungodly professors?

A. No. There is no such thing as a careless or ungodly believer. All the ungodly are unbelievers. The effect of the grace of God brought home to the conscience of the believer, is to humble him in repentance for the sins which have crucified the Saviour. The knowledge of forgiveness of sin always leads to godly living (see Titus 2:11, 12; Ps. 32:1, 6; 130:4).

Q. How would you define “grace”?

A. Grace is that peculiar disposition in the heart of God to favor those who deserve only condemnation. Adam’s fall gave God the opportunity to demonstrate just how abounding in grace He is. Angels do not receive such favor. Sinners deserve nothing; yet there is nothing God will not do for them. Calvary proves that. God will go to any length to heap favors on sinners; and the worse they are, the more He favors them. He offers them the highest place in heaven, the nearest position to the throne. The parable of the prodigal son reveals the grace of the Father. He looks for us **while we are in our filthy rags**. He puts the robe of righteousness on us **after embracing us**. He does not clean us up first so that He can embrace us with more relish. He wants us to know that our rightful place is in His presence—in His bosom. If we can accept this place by faith, we will experience it in fact.

Summary

Christ

Believer

Q. Why did Jesus, who did no sin, receive the penalty for sin—death?

A. Because our sins were accounted to Him.

Q. Why do believing sinners, who have done no righteousness, receive the reward of righteousness—eternal life?

A. Because Christ's righteousness is accounted to us.

Q. Does this mean that He was actually sinful in Himself?

A. No. He was treated as if He were actually sinful.

Q. Does this mean that we are actually righteous in ourselves?

A. No. We are treated as if we were actually righteous in ourselves.

Q. Were the sins that were placed on Him real sins, or was this whole drama merely an act?

A. The sins on Him were real. The weight of them caused Him great anguish and crushed out His life.

Q. Is the righteousness that is placed upon us real righteousness, or is this transaction merely an act?

A. The righteousness placed upon us is real. It is "even the righteousness of God," bringing joy to us as we pass from death into life.

Q. When sin was imputed to Jesus, how did this affect His standing with God?

A. It caused God to reject Him, to withdraw His presence from Him, for God cannot dwell with sinners.

Q. When righteousness is imputed to us, how does this affect our standing with God?

A. It causes God to draw us into His presence, for He loves to have fellowship with the righteous.

Q. Would it have been necessary for Jesus to have some sin in Him to merit such utter rejection by God?

A. No. It was sufficient that our sins only be imputed to Him.

Q. Would it be necessary for us to have some righteousness in us to merit such complete acceptance by God?

A. No. It is sufficient that the righteousness of Christ only be imputed to us.

Q. Then, in the sight of God, was imputed sin equal to innate sin as far as Christ's standing with God was concerned?

A. Yes, and even more so, for the sins of the whole world were imputed to Him.

Q. Then, in the sight of God, is imputed righteousness equal to innate righteousness as far as our standing with God is concerned?

A. Yes, and even more so, for the righteousness of the Godhead is imputed to us.

A Discussion of Holiness Theology

A Summary of an Interview with Geoffrey J. Paxton

Editorial Note: Geoffrey J. Paxton is the principal of the Queensland Bible Institute, which is an interdenominational, evangelical Bible-training college in Brisbane, Australia. For a number of years he has specialized in the study of the Reformation issues.



Editor: Mr. Paxton, do you consider that a wrong theology of holiness and sanctification “breeds” Pentecostalism?

Paxton: Yes, I do! The modern Pentecostal movement sprang out of a nineteenth-century American phenomenon known as the holiness movement. Its emphasis on what sanctification is and how it is achieved was a radical departure from Reformation theology.

This pseudo-holiness theology is rampant in the Protestant churches today, especially among good, conservative and earnest Christians. Although they may be opposed to the tongues movement, their theology is basically Pentecostal and they are unwittingly promoting Pentecostalism.

Editor: What are the chief characteristics of this false holiness theology?

Paxton: All good theology makes a distinction between justification and sanctification, but a common error is to divorce sanctification from justification. Sanctification is then viewed as a separate act of itself beyond (or above) the blessing of justification. This sort of sanctification may be viewed in the following ways:

(1) Justification is seen as God's work whereas sanctification is seen as our responsibility. Of course, few would articulate it as bluntly as this, but popular books on "victorious living" advocate special "preconditions," "secrets" and "keys" in which we must exercise ourselves if "God's best" is to become ours. This philosophy of activism may also be called Christian pietism.

(2) Sanctification is seen as completely the work of God. In this approach little or no stress is placed upon the activity of the believer. In fact we are told that such effort can be a hindrance to true sanctity. Here we are told to "Let go and let God." Here the blessed state is "utter yieldedness to Him," "complete abandonment," "allowing Him to live His life through us." This is quietism.

(3) Sanctification is seen in static categories. The emphasis is placed upon the **quantity** of faith, love, etc., in the believer. Sanctification is seen in terms of "qualities of being" which the believer possesses. Hence the gaze of the believer is on himself, inward and not outward, downward and not upward, self-centered and not Christ-centered. Hence we may call this emphasis "internalism" in contrast to "externalism." One only has to examine many of the popular hymn books to see this believer-oriented mentality.

(4) It is not surprising, then, in the light of these things, that much popular teaching on sanctification is implicitly (if not outright explicitly) perfectionistic. People are told that the higher life of sanctification is obtainable if only they measure up to two perfectionistic conditions: absolute surrender, and freedom from all known sin.

Absolute Surrender: Jesus in Gethsemane and on the cross exhibited the only absolute surrender ever seen in this world. In the light of His absolute surrender and our own radical sinfulness of nature, we must flee from any confidence in even our acts of consecration and hide ourselves in the absolute surrender of our Substitute. The way of "holiness" teaching is to get the blessing based on our "absolute surrender" (which is an impossibility). The way of the gospel is to receive God's benefits based on Christ's absolute surrender on our behalf. The former is to advocate perfectionism. The latter is the Bible truth of righteousness by faith.

Freedom from All Known Sin: Certainly a son of God does not set himself to practice evil (1 John 3:9), but who could say he is free from all known sin (unless he is utterly blind to the spirituality of the law and the radical fault of his nature)? The universal testimony of the prophets and apostles is that they knew they fell short of God's glory and they were conscious of imperfection in their best endeavors and holiest duties. The man who went down from the Temple acceptable to God was not the one who could find nothing amiss but the one who said, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Editor: In what respects does such teaching differ from the Reformation understanding?

Paxton: The Reformers did not separate sanctification from justification in such a way as to make them unrelated and quite apart from each other. The idea of justification as the work of God and sanctification as the work of man finds no support in Reformation teaching. Professor Berkouwer reproduces the emphasis of the Reformers when he says, "We may never speak of sanctification as if we are entering—having gone through the gate of justification—upon a new, independent field of operation . . ."—G. C. Berkouwer, *Faith and Sanctification*, p. 42. In contrast to the pietism, quietism, internalism and perfectionism of "holiness" teachers, we may say:

(1) The Reformers were not pietistic. They did not stress the action of the Christian to the diminution of the grace of God. Faith was stressed in relation to sanctification as well as to justification. The initiative of the sovereign God was not lost sight of amid the constant exhortations to godliness. The imperative "ought" was not used to diminish the great indicative "is" of redemptive mercy and grace. Faith in God alone is the sponsor of good works as far as Luther was concerned.

(2) While the Reformers did not so play up the action of the believer as to play down the gracious initiative of God, neither did they stress the initiative of divine grace so as to exclude the response of the believer. The Reformers were not quietistic. According to Luther, faith precedes good works, and works follow faith. The Reformers did not teach faith which is removed from the concrete realities of daily existence. Rather, saving faith sponsors a life of devout acts. Both Luther and Calvin stressed the necessity for the believer to "work out" his salvation as well as stressing "For it is God which worketh . . ." (Phil. 2:12, 13). In so far as they stressed "For it is God which worketh . . .," they excluded pietism; and in stressing "work out your own salvation," they excluded quietism.

(3) The Reformers were not internalistic in their thinking. To say this is not to say that either Luther or Calvin denied any internal work. However, the Reformers stressed the objective realities of salvation, the righteousness of Christ and the promise of God. Certainly the gaze of the believer was to be constantly fixed on the sovereign God, who has revealed Himself finally in the Word. In fact, this is the very nature of saving faith; it focuses itself upon God and His mercy.

(4) The Reformers did not tolerate perfectionism in any form this side of heaven. Perfectionism is the premature seizure of the glory that will be. Often in the churches, one hears of the defeat depicted (supposedly) in Romans 7 and the need for the victory revealed in Romans 8. This approach is highly suspect from two points: it has grave exegetical difficulties, and it fails to perceive precisely what Romans 8 is really saying.

The believer of Romans 8 is one who is called to **suffer** here and now (vs. 17, 18) and to realize that there is glory still to be revealed (v. 18). Such a believer is said to groan and travail. He has the first fruits of the Spirit (v. 23). Rather than having the "all" here and now, the believer is waiting (v. 23) because he is saved only in hope (v. 24). Whereas today we are being told of the demonstration of fulness of an experience in the Spirit, Paul tells us that we do not see such fulness at all (v. 24). In fact, our hope is the basis of our endurance (vs. 24, 25). To teach fulness of an experience in the Spirit here is to rob the believer of his hope. Could the emphasis upon the "here and now" be responsible for the great lack of interest in the Lord's return and the great "there and then"?

Editor: Are you against holiness?

Paxton: Certainly not. I am against false views of holiness which, in actual fact, inhibit if not prohibit true holiness. Holiness is being concerned about God's holiness, not our own. Of course, once we are concerned about God's holiness and once our attention is focused on such, we will image God, we will highlight what He eternally is by the way we live.

"Holiness" which is seen as something the believer achieves by dint of effort, or even by refusing to have anything to do with effort (!), is not the holiness of which the Bible speaks. Such "holiness," with which a great many Christians are concerned, reflects an egoistic desire to "be something" or (and this I think is more often the case) to go through life untroubled and unscathed by its pressures and complexities! Hence self-interest and introspection often characterize such holiness-seekers. Merit-mentality is never far away either.

Editor: How does the common view of "holiness" inhibit real holiness?

Paxton: Firstly, it inhibits real holiness in so far as it provides a substitute for the real thing. And such substitutes are not good enough.

Secondly, the common emphasis upon holiness concentrates very heavily upon the faith of the believer. We are constantly being urged to believe more, to have stronger faith, to be more yielded, etc. This emphasis is most probably based upon the presupposition that faith is the product of human subjectivity. Now, in actuality, faith is not a product of human subjectivity. The way **not** to increase faith is to focus on faith. Faith is deepened by the highlighting of the great Object of faith—His person and work. Faith not only takes its **value** from its Object, but it is deepened by greater involvement with its Object, not itself.

Thirdly, the dominant approach to "holiness" wishes to eradicate the tension between the "already" and the "not yet" of the Biblical perspective.

I have often heard it said that only unbelief on the believer's part stops him from enjoying God's "all." "All that God has to give us is available only if . . ." is a common assertion. Such teaching is a flagrant contradiction of the New Testament. This is no more clearly demonstrated than in the way Paul designates the Holy Spirit.

Paul designates the Spirit as first fruits (*aparche*) in Romans 8:23. Such emphasizes the beginning-character of the gift of the Spirit and focuses attention also (that is, in addition to, or alongside of, the present reality of the Spirit) on the expectation of the final, full harvest. Paul also refers to the Spirit as a pledge (*arrabon*) in Ephesians 1:14, etc. Referring to the Spirit as a pledge refers to the veracity of the promise of ultimate fullness and the validity of the Christian's expectation.

Hence, to speak of the Spirit in terms which obscure the "not yet" dimension is to distort the perspective of the New Testament. The way the "not yet" is obscured is by an unwarranted overemphasis upon the "already," the present gift of the Spirit, which is a glorious reality.

There is nothing which will disturb the true Biblical teaching upon holiness more than giving this **penultimate** age ultimate significance. We are not permitted to bring the ultimate "then" into the penultimate "now." This age is seen properly when it is seen in the light of the end, not when it is viewed as the end. In my opinion, this is one of the most urgently-needed emphases in the churches today.

Finally, real holiness is inhibited because of a failure to handle the Word of God correctly. Substitutes, faith-centeredness and false perspectives are only possible so long as we continue to refuse a proper approach to the Bible. Faulty handling of the Word must result in sub-Christian living. In many respects, there is no attention paid to laws of interpretation and the need of careful and informed exegesis. Chaos has and will continue to result while these tragic matters continue.

Holiness— the False and the True

The Testimony of H.A. Ironside

Editorial Note: H.A. Ironside's book, *Holiness: the False and the True*, was first published in 1912. We are here reproducing the main portions of the autobiographic section.¹ The 142-page book is obtainable from Loizeaux Brothers, Neptune, New Jersey. While we may not subscribe to all that Dr. Ironside has written, we can appreciate his objective thrust on holiness and learn from his insight into the danger of introspective experientialism.

"My Conversion to God

"It is my desire, in dependence on the Lord, to write a faithful record, so far as memory now serves me, of some of God's dealings with my soul and my strivings after the experience of holiness, during the first six years of my Christian life, ere I knew the blessedness of finding all in Christ. This will make it necessary at times, I have little doubt, to 'speak as a fool'—even as the apostle Paul did: but as I reflect on

the need for such a record, I think I can say with him, 'Ye have compelled me.'

"If I may be privileged to thereby save others from the unhappy experiences I passed through in those early years, I shall feel abundantly repaid for the effort it will take to thus put these heart-experiences before my readers."

" . . . when the knowledge of salvation was mine, I went at the first opportunity, the night after my conversion, to an 'Army' street-meeting, and there spoke for the first time, in the open air, of the grace of God so newly revealed to my soul."

" . . . in my new-found joy I had no conception that I still carried about with me a nature as sinful and vile as existed in the breast of the greatest evildoer in the world. I knew something of Christ and His love; I knew little or nothing of myself and the deceitfulness of my own heart.

"As nearly as I can now recollect, I was in the enjoyment of the knowledge of God's salvation about a month when, in some dispute with my brother, who was younger than I, my temper suddenly escaped

¹Quoted from H.A. Ironside, *Holiness: the False and the True* (Neptune, N.J.: Loizeaux Brothers, 1912), pp. 7-40.

control, and in an angry passion I struck and felled him to the ground. Horror immediately filled my soul. I needed not his sarcastic taunt, 'Well, you are a nice Christian! You'd better go down to the Army and tell what a saint you've become!' to send me to my room in anguish of heart to confess my sin to God in shame and bitter sorrow, as afterwards frankly to my brother, who generously forgave me."

"Holiness: the Great Desideratum"

"From this time on mine was an 'up-and-down experience,' to use a term often heard in 'testimony meetings.' I longed for perfect victory over the lusts and desires of the flesh. Yet I seemed to have more trouble with evil thoughts and unholy propensities than I had ever known before. For a long time I kept these conflicts hidden, and known only to God and to myself. But after some eight to ten months, I became interested in what were called 'holiness meetings,' held weekly in the 'Army' hall, and also in a mission I sometimes attended. At these gatherings an experience was spoken of which I felt was just what I needed. It was designated by various terms: 'The Second Blessing'; 'Sanctification'; 'Perfect Love'; 'Higher Life'; 'Cleansing from Inbred Sin'; and by other expressions.

"Substantially, the teaching was this: When converted, God graciously forgives all sins committed up to the time when one repents. But the believer is then placed in a lifelong probation, during which he may at any time forfeit his justification and peace with God if he falls into sin from which he does not at once repent. In order, therefore, to maintain himself in a saved condition, he needs a further work of grace called sanctification. This work has to do with sin the root, as justification had to do with sins the fruit.

"The steps leading up to this second blessing are, firstly, conviction as to the need of holiness (just as in the beginning there was conviction of the need of salvation); secondly, a full surrender to God, or the laying of every hope, prospect and possession on the altar of consecration; thirdly, to claim in faith the incoming of the Holy Spirit as a refining fire to burn out all inbred sin, thus destroying *in toto* every lust and passion, leaving the soul perfect in love and as pure as unfallen Adam. This wonderful blessing received, great watchfulness is required lest, as the serpent beguiled Eve, he deceive the sanctified soul, and thus introduce again the same kind of an evil principle which called for such drastic action before.

"Such was the teaching; and coupled with it were heartfelt testimonies of experiences so remarkable that I could not doubt their genuineness, nor that what others seemed to enjoy was likewise for me if I would fulfil the conditions.

"One aged lady told how for forty years she had been kept from sin in thought, word, and deed. Her heart, she declared, was no longer 'deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked,' but was as holy as the courts of heaven, since the blood of Christ had washed away the last remains of inbred sin. Others spoke in a similar way, though their experiences were much briefer. Bad tempers had been rooted out when a full surrender was made. Evil propensities and unholy appetites had been instantly destroyed when holiness was claimed by faith. Eagerly I began to seek this precious boon of holiness in the flesh. Earnestly I prayed for this Adamic sinlessness. I asked God to reveal to me every unholy thing, that I might truly surrender all to Him. I gave up friends, pursuits, pleasures—everything I could think of that might hinder the incoming of the Holy Ghost and the consequent blessing. I was a veritable 'book-worm,' an intense love for literature possessing me from childhood; but in my ignorant desire I put away all books of pleasurable or instructive character, and promised God to read only the Bible and holiness writings if He would only give me 'the blessing.' I did not, however, obtain what I sought, though I prayed zealously for weeks.



“At last, one Saturday night (I was now away from home, living with a friend a member of the ‘Army’), I determined to go out into the country and wait on God, not returning till I had received the blessing of perfect love. I took a train at eleven o’clock, and went to a lonely station twelve miles from Los Angeles. There I alighted, and, leaving the highway, descended into an empty *arroyo*, or water-course. Falling on my knees beneath a sycamore tree, I prayed in an agony for hours, beseeching God to show me anything that hindered my reception of the blessing. Various matters of too private and sacred a nature to be here related came to my mind. I struggled against conviction, but finally ended by crying, ‘Lord, I give up **all**—every thing, every person, every enjoyment, that would hinder my living alone for Thee. Now give me, I pray Thee, the blessing!’

“As I look back, I believe I was fully surrendered to the will of God at that moment, so far as I understood it. But my brain and nerves were unstrung by the long midnight vigil and the intense anxiety of previous months, 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. I cried out in confidence, ‘Lord, I believe Thou dost come in. Thou dost cleanse and purify me from all sin. I claim it now. The work is done. I am sanctified by Thy blood. Thou dost make me holy. I believe; I believe!’ I was unspeakably happy. I felt that all my struggles were ended.

“With a heart filled with praise, I rose from the ground and began to sing aloud. Consulting my watch, I saw it was about half-past three in the morning. I felt I must hasten to town so as to be in time for the seven o’clock prayer-meeting, there to testify to my experience. Fatigued as I was by being up all night, yet so light was my heart I scarcely noticed the long miles back, but hastened to the city, arriving just as the meeting was beginning, buoyed up by my new-found experience. All were rejoiced as I told what great things I believed God had done for me. Every meeting that day added to my gladness. I was literally intoxicated with joyous emotions.

“My troubles were all ended now. The wilderness was past, and I was in Canaan, feeding on the old corn of the land. Nevermore should I be troubled by inward drawings toward sin. My heart was pure. I had reached the desirable state of full sanctification. With no foe within, I could direct all my energies toward vanquishing the enemies without.

“This was what I thought. Alas, how little did I know myself; much less the mind of God!

“Sunshine and Clouds

“For some weeks after the eventful experience before described, I lived in a dreamily-happy state, rejoicing in my fancied sinlessness. One great idea had possession of my mind; and whether at work or in my leisure hours, I thought of little else than the wonderful event which had taken place. But gradually I began to ‘come back to earth,’ as it were. I was now employed in a photographic studio, where I associated with people of various tastes and habits, some of whom ridiculed, some tolerated, and others sympathized with, my radical views on things religious. Night after night I attended the meetings, speaking on the street and indoors, and I soon noticed (and doubtless others did too) that a change came over my ‘testimonies.’ Before, I had always held up Christ, and pointed the lost to Him. Now, almost imperceptibly, my own experience became my theme, and I held up **myself** as a striking example of consecration and holiness! This was the prevailing characteristic of the brief addresses made by most of the ‘advanced’ Christians in our company. The youngest in grace magnified Christ. The ‘sanctified’ magnified themselves. A favorite song will make this more manifest than any words of mine. It is still widely used in Army meetings, and finds a place in their Song- or Hymn-books. I give only one verse as a specimen:

“Some people I know don’t live holy;
They battle with unconquered sin,
Not daring to consecrate fully,
Or they full salvation would win.

With malice they have constant trouble,
From doubting they long to be free;
With most things about them they grumble;
Praise God, this is not so with ME!”

“Will the reader believe me when I say that I sang this wretched doggerel without a thought of the sinful pride to which it was giving expression? I considered it my duty to continually direct attention to ‘my experience of full salvation,’ as it was called. ‘If you don’t testify to it, you will lose the blessing,’ was accepted as an axiom among us.

“As time went on, I began to be again conscious of inward desires toward evil—of thoughts that were unholy. I was nonplused. Going to a leading teacher for help, he said, ‘These are but temptations. Temptation is not sin. You only sin if you yield to the evil suggestion.’ This gave me peace for a time. I found it was the general way of excusing such evident movings of a fallen nature, which was supposed to have been

eliminated. But gradually I sank to a lower and lower plane, permitting things I would once have shunned; and I even observed that all about me did the same. The first ecstatic experiences seldom lasted long. The ecstasy departed, and the 'sanctified' were in very little different from their brethren who were supposed to be 'only justified.' We did not commit overt acts of evil: therefore we were sinless. Lust was not sin unless yielded to: so it was easy to go on testifying that all was right."

"My thoughts of sin, as well as of holiness, were very unformed and imperfect. Therefore it was easy, generally speaking, to think that I was living without the one, and manifesting the other. When doubts assailed, I treated them as temptations of the devil. If I became unmistakably conscious that I had actually sinned, I persuaded myself that at least it was not wilful, but rather a mistake of the mind than an intentional error of the heart. Then I went to God in confession, and prayed to be cleansed from secret faults."

"[Owing to a later low state of spiritual experience,] I was tormented with the thought that I had backslidden, and might be lost eternally after all my former happy experiences of the Lord's goodness. Twice I slipped out of the building when all were in bed, and made my way to a lonely spot where I spent the night in prayer, beseeching God not to take His Holy Spirit from me, but to again cleanse me fully from all inbred sin. Each time I 'claimed it by faith,' and was brighter for a few weeks; but I inevitably again fell into doubt and gloom, and was conscious of sinning both in thought and in word, and sometimes in unholy actions, which brought terrible remorse."

"Again I spent the night in prayer . . . [and believed] that the work of full inward cleansing was indeed consummated, and that I was now, if never before, actually rid of all carnality.

"How readily one yields himself to self-deception in a matter of this kind! From this time on I became a more earnest advocate of the second blessing than ever; and I remember that often I prayed God to give my dear mother the blessing He had given me, and to make her as holy as her son had become. And that pious mother had known Christ before I was born, and knew her own heart too well to talk of sinlessness, though living a devoted, Christlike life!

" . . . [I was] generally confident that I was living out the doctrine of perfect love to God and man, and thereby making my own final salvation more secure. And yet, as I now look back, what grave failures I can detect—what an unsubdued will—what light-

ness and frivolity—what lack of subjection to the word of God—what self-satisfaction and complacency! Alas, 'man at his best estate is altogether vanity.' "

" . . . [a later experience] showed me . . . that the carnal mind was still a part of my being."

"In vain I searched my heart to see if I had made a full surrender, and tried to give up every known thing that seemed in any sense evil or doubtful. Sometimes, for a month at a time, or even longer, I could persuade myself that at last I had indeed again received the blessing. But invariably a few weeks would bring before me once more that which **proved** that it was in my particular case all a delusion.

"I did not dare open my heart to my assistants in the work, or to the 'soldiers' who were under my guidance. To do so I felt would be to lose all influence with them and to be looked upon as a backslider. So, alone and in secret, I fought my battles and never went into a holiness meeting without persuading myself that now at least, I was fully surrendered and therefore must have the blessing of sanctification. Sometimes I called it entire consecration and felt easier. It did not seem to be claiming too much. I had no conception at the time of the hypocrisy of all this.

"What made my distress more poignant was the knowledge that I was not the only sufferer. Another, one very dear to me, shared my doubts and anxieties from the same cause. For that other it eventually meant utter shipwreck of faith; and one of the loveliest souls



I ever knew was lost in the mazes of spiritualism. God grant it may not be forever, but that mercy may be found of the Lord in that day!

“And now I began to see what a string of derelicts this holiness teaching left in its train. I could count scores of persons who had gone into utter infidelity because of it. They always gave the same reason: ‘I tried it all. I found it a failure. So I concluded the Bible teaching was all a delusion, and religion was a mere matter of the emotions.’ Many more (and I knew several such intimately) lapsed into insanity after floundering in the morass of this emotional religion for years—and people said that studying the Bible had driven them crazy. How little they knew that it was lack of Bible knowledge that was accountable for their wretched mental state—an absolutely unscriptural use of isolated passages of Scripture!”

“The language of my troubled soul, after all those years of preaching to others, was, ‘O that I knew where I might find Him!’ Finding Him not, I saw only the blackness of despair before me; but yet I knew too well His love and care to be completely cast down.

“The Struggle Ended”

“But at last it began to be clear to me that the holiness doctrine had a most baneful influence upon the movement. People who professed conversion (whether real or not the day will declare) struggled for months, even years, to reach a state of sinlessness which never was reached; and at last they gave up in despair and sank back in many instances to the dead level of the world around them.

“I saw that it was the same with all the holiness denominations, and the various ‘Bands,’ ‘Missions,’ and other movements, that were continually breaking off from them. The standard set was the unattainable. The result was, sooner or later, utter discouragement, cunningly-concealed hypocrisy, or an unconscious lowering of the standard to suit the experience reached. For myself I had been ensnared by the last expedient for a long time. How much of the second there was I do not dare to say. But eventually I fell a victim to the first. And I can now see that it was a mercy I did so.”

“At last I found myself becoming cold and cynical. Doubts as to everything assailed me like a legion of demons, and I became almost afraid to let my mind dwell on these things. For refuge I turned to secular literature, and sent for my books, which some years before I had foresworn on condition that God

would give me the ‘second blessing.’ How little I realized the Jacob-spirit in all this! God seemed to have failed; so I took up my books once more, and tried to find solace in the beauties of essays and poetry, or the problems of history and science. 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.

“This was the legitimate result of the teaching I had been under. I reasoned that the Bible promised entire relief from indwelling sin to all who were wholly surrendered to the will of God. That I had thus surrendered seemed to me certain. Why then had I not been fully delivered from the carnal mind? It seemed to me that I had met every condition, and that God, on His part, had failed to perform what He had promised. I know it is wretched to write all this: but I see no other way to help others who are in the same state that I was in for that awful month.

“Deliverance came at last . . .”

“Little by little, the light began to dawn. We [the author and an acquaintance] saw that we had been looking within for holiness, instead of without. We realized that the same grace that had saved us at first alone could carry us on. Dimly we apprehended that all for us must be in Christ, or we were without a ray of hope.

“Many questions perplexed and troubled us. Much that we had believed we soon saw to be utterly opposed to the word of God. Much more we could not understand, so completely warped had our minds become through the training of years . . . The great truth was getting a grip of me that holiness, perfect love, sanctification, and every other blessing, were mine **in Christ** from the moment I had believed, and mine forevermore, because all of pure grace. I had been looking at the wrong man—all was in another Man, and in that Man for me! But it took weeks to see this.”

“And I have been learning all along my pilgrim journey that the more my heart is taken up with Christ, the more do I enjoy practical deliverance from sin’s power, and the more do I realize what it is to have the love of God shed abroad in that heart by the Holy Spirit given to me, as the earnest of the glory to come. I have found liberty and joy since being thus freed from bondage that I never thought it possible for a soul to know on earth, while I have a confidence in presenting this precious truth for the acceptance of others that contrasts with the uncertainty of the past.

“ . . . I desire . . . to sum up . . . my impressions

of the Holiness movement.

“Observations on the Holiness Movement

“Since turning aside from the perfectionist societies, I have often been asked if I find as high a standard maintained among Christians generally who do not profess to have the ‘second blessing’ as I have seen among those who do. My answer is that after carefully, and I trust without prejudice, considering both, I have found a far higher standard maintained by believers who intelligently reject the eradication theory than among those who accept it. Quiet, unassuming Christians, who know their Bibles and their own hearts too well to permit their lips to talk of sinlessness and perfection in the flesh, nevertheless are characterized by intense devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ, love for the word of God, and holiness of life and walk. But these blessed fruits spring, not from self-occupation, but from occupation with Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.

“The great professing body who are scarcely clear or pronounced as to anything, I do not here take into account. I refer rather to those among the

various denominations, and those outside of all such companies, who confess Christ boldly and seek to be a testimony for Him in the world. Compared with these, I repeat, a far lower standard of Christian living is found among the so-called holiness people.

“The reasons are not far to seek; for in the first place the profession of holiness induces a subtle spiritual pride that is often the veriest pharisaism, and frequently leads to the most manifest self-confidence. And secondly, the next thing to saying I live without sin, is to say that nothing that I do is sin. Consequently, the teaching of holiness in the flesh tends to harden the conscience and to cause the one who professes it to lower the standard to his own poor experience. Any who move much among those in this profession will soon begin to realize how greatly prevalent are the conditions I have described. Holiness professors are frequently cutting, censorious, uncharitable and harsh in their judgment of others. Exaggerations, amounting to downright dishonesty, are unconsciously encouraged by and often indulged in in their ‘testimony’ meetings. The rank and file are no freer from vulgarisms, slangy expressions, and levity in conversation than ordinary persons who make no such profession; while many of the preachers are largely



given to sensational and amusing sermons that are anything but serious and edifying. And all this, mark you, without sinning!

“The apostle Paul emphasizes ‘envy, strife and divisions’ as evidences of carnality, and designates them as the works of the flesh. Where have divisions, with all their accompanying evils, been more manifest than among the rival holiness organizations, some of which roundly denounce all connected with the others as ‘backsliders,’ and ‘on the road to hell’? I have heard such denunciations on many occasions . . . I have observed that debt and its twin brother, worry, are as common among such professors as among others. In fact, the sinfulness of worrying rarely seems to be apprehended by them. Holiness advocates have all the little unpleasant ways that are so trying in many of us: they are no more free from penuriousness, tattling, evil-speaking, selfishness, and kindred weaknesses, than their neighbors.

“And as to downright wickedness and uncleanness, I regret to have to record that sins of a positively immoral character are, I fear, far more frequently met with in holiness churches and missions . . . than the outsider would think possible. I know whereof I speak; and only a desire to save others from the bitter disappointments I had to meet leads me to write as I do. Among Christians generally there are failures that shock and wound the sensibilities of many, occurring from time to time, through a lack of watching unto prayer. But surely, among the holiness people, such failures, if they ever occur, do so at very rare intervals! Would that I could say so. Alas, it is far otherwise! The path of the holiness movement . . . is strewn with thousands of such moral and spiritual breakdowns.”

“On the other hand, I gladly concede that both in the ranks of the religious-military society of which I was once a member, and in other holiness organizations, there are many, very many, pious, devoted men and women whose zeal for God and self-abnegation are lovely to witness, and will surely be rewarded in ‘that day.’ But let no one be blinded by this to suppose it is the holiness doctrine that has made them such. The refutation of this is the simple fact that the great majority of martyrs, missionaries and servants of Christ who in all the Christian centuries have ‘loved not their lives unto the death,’ never dreamed of making such a claim for themselves, but daily owned their sinfulness by nature and constant need of the advocacy of Christ.

“The testimonies of many who were at one time prominent in other organizations where holiness in the flesh is preached and professed fully agree with mine

as to the large percentage of ‘backslidings’ from virtue and personal purity.

“Superstition and fanaticism of the grossest character find a hotbed among ‘holiness’ advocates. Witness the present disgusting ‘Tongues Movement,’ with all its attendant delusions and insanities. An unhealthy craving for new and thrilling religious sensations, and emotional meetings of a most exciting

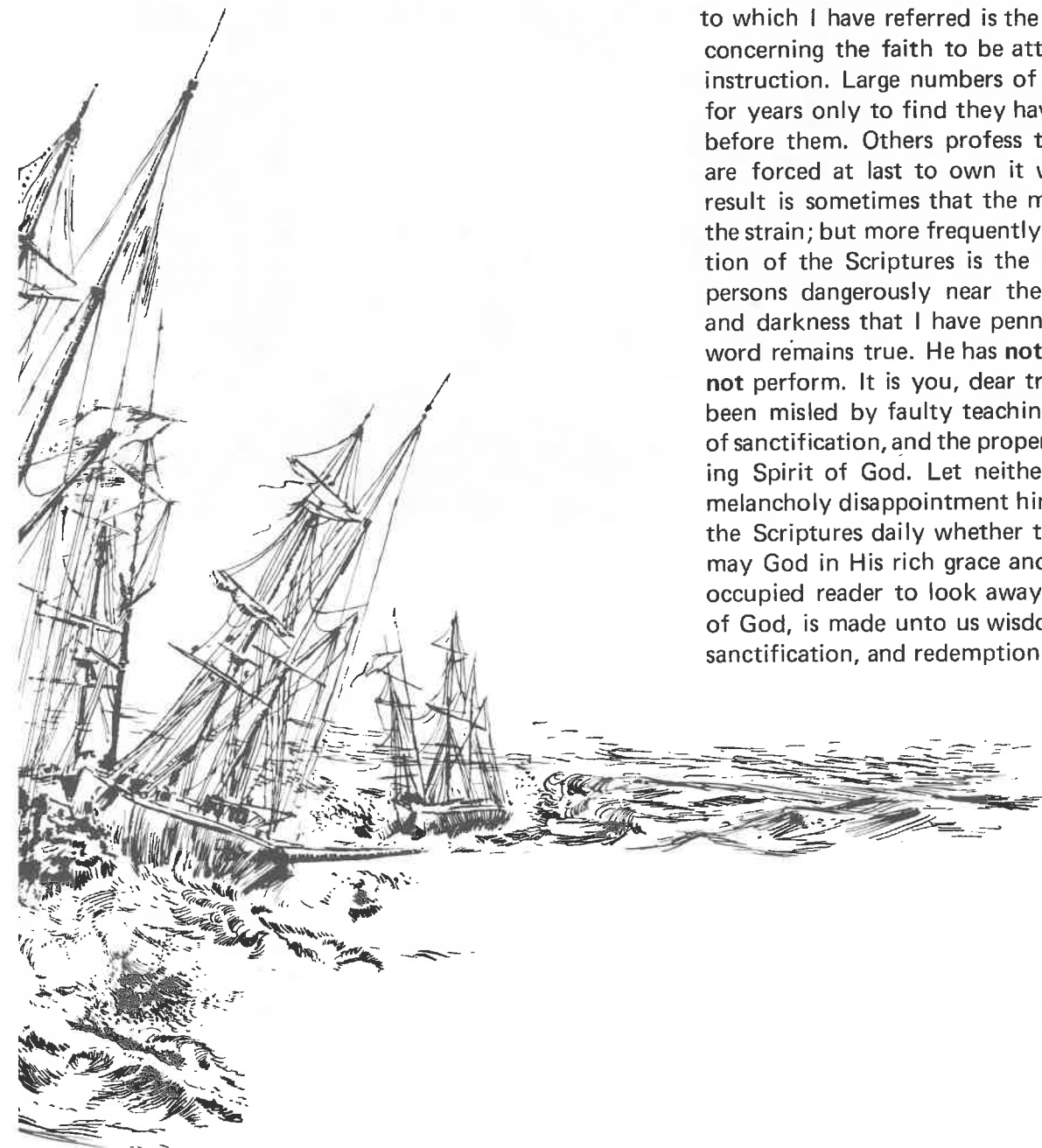


character, readily account for these things. Because settled peace is unknown, and final salvation is supposed to depend on progress in the soul, people get to depend so much upon 'blessings,' and 'new baptisms of the Spirit,' as they call these experiences, that they readily fall a prey to the most absurd delusions. In the last few years hundreds of holiness meetings all over the world have been literally turned into pandemon-

iums where exhibitions worthy of a madhouse or of a collection of howling dervishes are held night after night. No wonder a heavy toll of lunacy and infidelity is the frequent result.

"Now I am well aware that many holiness teachers repudiate all connection with these fanatics; but they do not seem to see that it is their doctrines that are the direct cause of the disgusting fruits I have been enumerating. Let a full Christ be preached, a finished work be proclaimed, the truth of the indwelling Spirit be scripturally taught, and all these excrescences disappear.

"Perhaps the saddest thing about the movement to which I have referred is the long list of shipwrecks concerning the faith to be attributed to its unsound instruction. Large numbers of persons seek 'holiness' for years only to find they have had the unattainable before them. Others profess to have received it, but are forced at last to own it was all a mistake. The result is sometimes that the mind gives way beneath the strain; but more frequently unbelief in the inspiration of the Scriptures is the logical result. It is for persons dangerously near these shoals of infidelity and darkness that I have penned these papers. God's word remains true. He has **not** promised what He will **not** perform. It is you, dear troubled one, who have been misled by faulty teaching as to the true nature of sanctification, and the proper effects of the indwelling Spirit of God. Let neither gloomy unbelief nor melancholy disappointment hinder your . . . searching the Scriptures daily whether these things be so. And may God in His rich grace and mercy give every self-occupied reader to look away to Christ alone, 'who, of God, is made unto us wisdom: even righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.' "



The Kingdom of Grace and the Kingdom of Glory

Robert D. Brinsmead



“ . . . Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” Heb. 9:28.

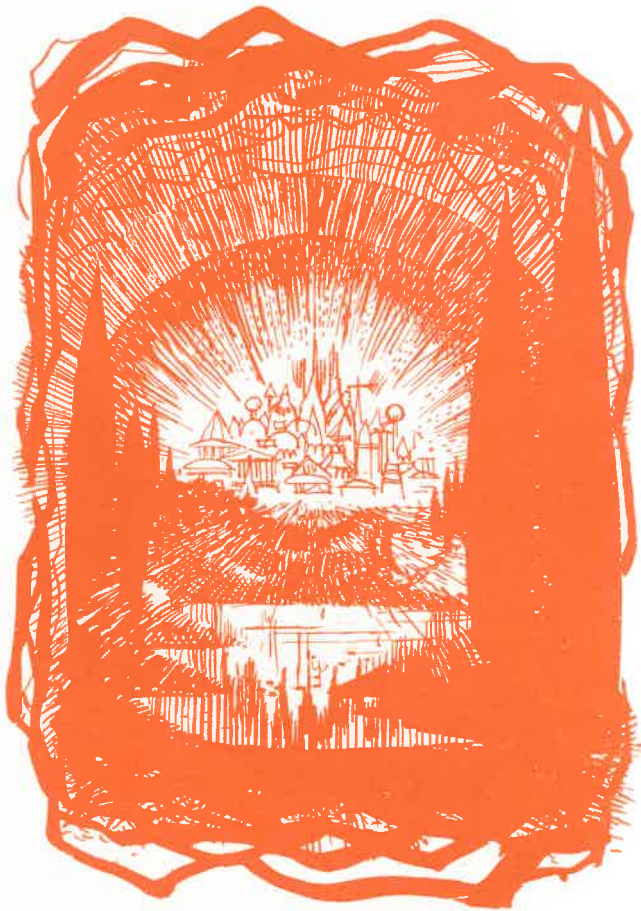
The Christian message surrounds two great events: the first and second comings of Jesus Christ. As there are two distinct advents, so there are two distinct kingdoms brought to view in the gospel: the kingdom of grace and the kingdom of glory.

When Christ began preaching, “The kingdom of God is at hand” (Mark 1:15), He was not referring to the future immortal kingdom. He was referring to the kingdom of grace, which was to be established by His own bitter suffering and death, although it had existed by purpose from eternity, and by promise since the fall of man (Rom. 16:25, R.S.V.; Gen. 3:15).

Says the writer to the Hebrews, “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we

may obtain mercy, and find grace . . .” Heb. 4:16. The throne of grace represents the kingdom of grace, for the existence of a throne implies the existence of a kingdom. When Christ returned to heaven, we are told that He sat down on the throne (Heb. 1:3; 8:1, 2). He did not sit down on the throne of glory; He sat down on His throne of grace—His priestly throne of mediatorial office. Says the prophet, “. . . He . . . shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne . . .” Zech. 6:13.

The kingdom of glory still exists by promise; it will not be set up until the second advent of Christ. Says the Lord Himself, “When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all nations . . .” Matt. 25:31, 32.



Confusing the Two Kingdoms

At the time of Christ's first advent, the Jewish people were looking for a Messiah to sit on David's throne. When they heard John the Baptist proclaim, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," they were filled with visions of the glory of a literal kingdom. Even John the Baptist and Jesus' disciples had no true idea of the purpose of Christ's first advent or the nature of the kingdom He was about to set up. They could not at first clearly distinguish between the kingdom of grace and the kingdom of glory.

The same confusion still exists in the minds of many who profess the Christian faith. When people say that Christ's second coming is His coming into the hearts of His people, they are utterly confounding the kingdom of grace and the kingdom of glory. When believers start looking for complete spiritual fulfill-

ment or a second blessing of empirical perfection here and now, they are trying to bring some elements of the kingdom of glory over into the kingdom of grace—the "not yet" into the "now."

The Kingdom of Grace

A kingdom is usually established by warfare and conquest. The kingdom of grace is no exception. It has been established by Christ's conflict with, and conquest of, the kingdom of death and the devil. "... having drawn the sting of all the powers ranged against us, He exposed them, shattered, empty and defeated, in His final glorious triumphant act!" Col. 2:15, Phillips. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil..." Heb. 2:14.

Who enter the kingdom of grace? Sinners—sinners of all sorts! For grace means favor or mercy to those who are sinful, lost and undeserving. The holy angels do not need or receive grace, and it is not their privilege to enter this kingdom. This kingdom is for the lame, the halt and the blind.

From His throne of grace, Christ pleads before Justice that sinners might be admitted into this kingdom. In themselves they have no right to enter. They deserve only death and destruction. But Christ makes intercession for the transgressors (Isa. 53:12). He has made satisfaction for their sin and satisfied Justice on their behalf. Between God and the sinner, nothing remains but mercy—infinite mercy. *Grace* means to be accepted in spite of being unacceptable. It is to be fully known and fully forgiven. Those who try to make themselves worthy or more qualified to enter do in fact dig ditches before the door of the kingdom which they can never get across.

Yet we must not get the idea that grace will tow a man to heaven against his consent. None enter but those who believe. Not that faith is self-generated by the sinner (for grace, and grace only, inspires and creates faith), but faith is the sinner saying "Yes" to God's invitation to enter the fold of justification and acceptance.

If only sinners may enter the kingdom of grace, who, then, inhabit this kingdom? And the answer is **sinners!** If they were not sinners, it would not be a kingdom of grace. Those within the kingdom eat, drink and breathe grace. And grace is only for sinners. Says the apostle Paul, "... for all have sinned, and continue

to come¹ short of the glory of God . . . ” Rom. 3:23. Here we have a definition of sin. It is to fall short of the glory of God. (And in the Hebrew and Greek languages, the word for *sin* generally means to fall short or to miss the mark.) Not only have **all** fallen short of the glory of God, but **all** continue to fall short of the glory of God. Therefore all the saints on earth are still sinners and will remain sinners in themselves as long as they fall short of the glory of God. And just so long do they need grace.

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Rom. 5:1, 2.

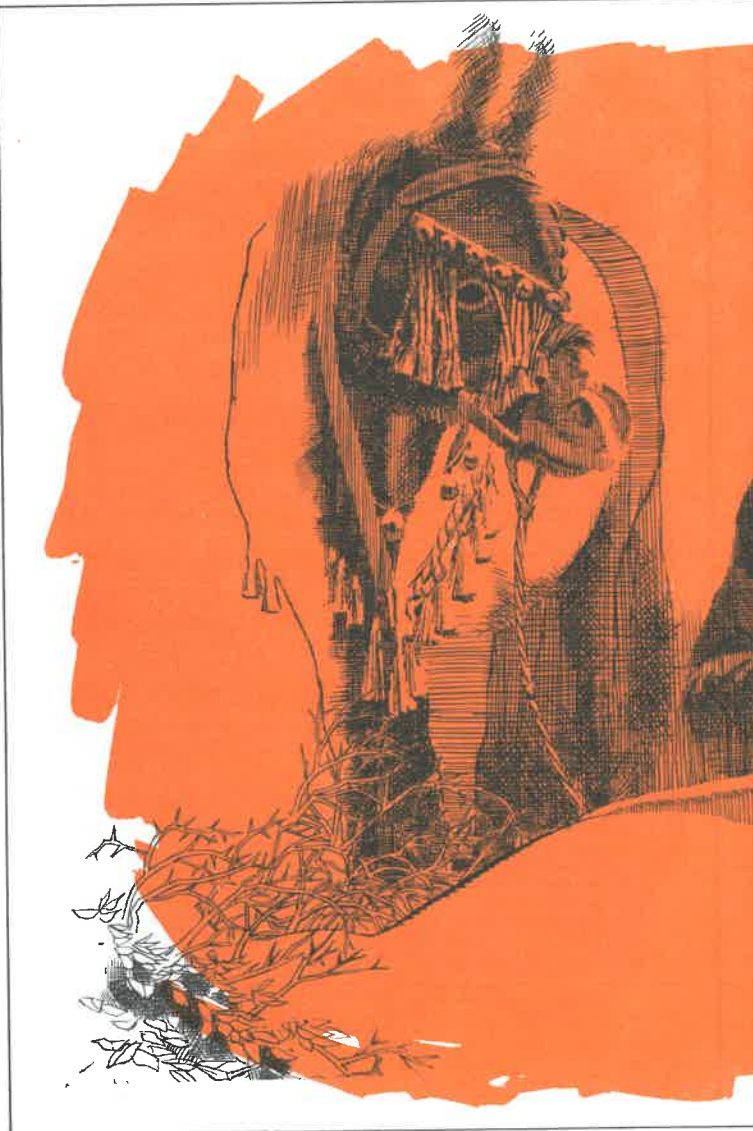
The justified (that is, those within the kingdom of grace) rejoice in hope of the glory of God. They wait, groan and long for their full restoration as sons of God. With Paul they say:

“ . . . and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us . . . For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” Rom. 8:17, 18, 22-25.

Now these facts plainly appear: God’s people will be glorified together when their bodies are changed at the second coming of Christ. They have not yet attained to this glory, but they patiently wait for it in hope. Meanwhile they fall short of the glory of God, and in this they are still sinners and confess themselves to be sinners—otherwise they are liars (1 John 1:8). And as long as they wait for this glory to be revealed in them, they need grace. Grace must reign till glory, even as Paul declares, “ . . . even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” Rom. 5:21.

Grace is free (although not cheap); yet it is hard for the proud heart of man to humbly accept the gift that contains the expensive outlay of heaven’s treasure. And if sinners can be brought to see their need of grace, there is still within them a tendency to want to dispense with it as soon as possible. They want to

¹The verb is in the present continuous tense in the Greek.



“pay their own way.” As Luther warns in his commentary on Romans, they are sometimes in too great a haste to become pure and sinless saints. The Reformer likened the situation of the rescued sinner to the man who was rescued by the good Samaritan. The good Samaritan, Christ, pours wine and oil into the wounds of the sinner and takes him to the inn for further cure. He asks the innkeeper to take care of the man, with a promise to repay the keeper’s efforts upon his return. The sick man has begun to recover, but nothing would harm him so much as to imagine that he is entirely well. So, as Luther said, the church is an inn or an infirmary for the sick or the convalescing. It is the fold of grace, wherein the inmates are the objects of Christ’s special solicitude and care. As long as they keep counting themselves as sinners and imploring God’s mercy, God keeps counting that they are righteous. When the fanatical spirits in Germany tried to get above the truth of justification by faith, Luther exclaimed: “May God in His mercy preserve me from



a church in which there are none but saints. I wish to be in fellowship with the humble, the feeble, the sick, who know and feel their sins, and who sigh and cry continually to God from the bottom of their hearts to obtain His consolation and support."

The truth of being continually justified by grace (Rom. 3:24 [note the present continuous tense]) is for the comfort and consolation of the saints. It is not a soft pillow for hypocrites to put their heads on, nor an invitation to the presumptuous to carouse on the mercy of God. In case some antinomian spirit may pervert the truth into encouragement to sin with an easy conscience, we also say this: He who thinks he can continue to trample on God's law that grace may abound (Rom. 6:1; 1 John 3:9) is a thief and robber who tries to get into the fold of grace by a way other than the door (John 10:1). Those who live by grace know what it has cost God and Christ to get it for them. They delight in God's law after the inward man, and they mourn only because they fall so far

short of its requirements (Rom. 7:22-25). They would rather die than commit a known sin; yet they know that their best acts are unworthy before God.

The law of God has not been set aside by the death of Jesus, but only its penalty and condemnation to those in the kingdom of grace. It still has its function to magnify sin to the believer so that he will ever be conscious that grace must continue to "much more abound" (Rom. 5:20).

The Kingdom of Glory

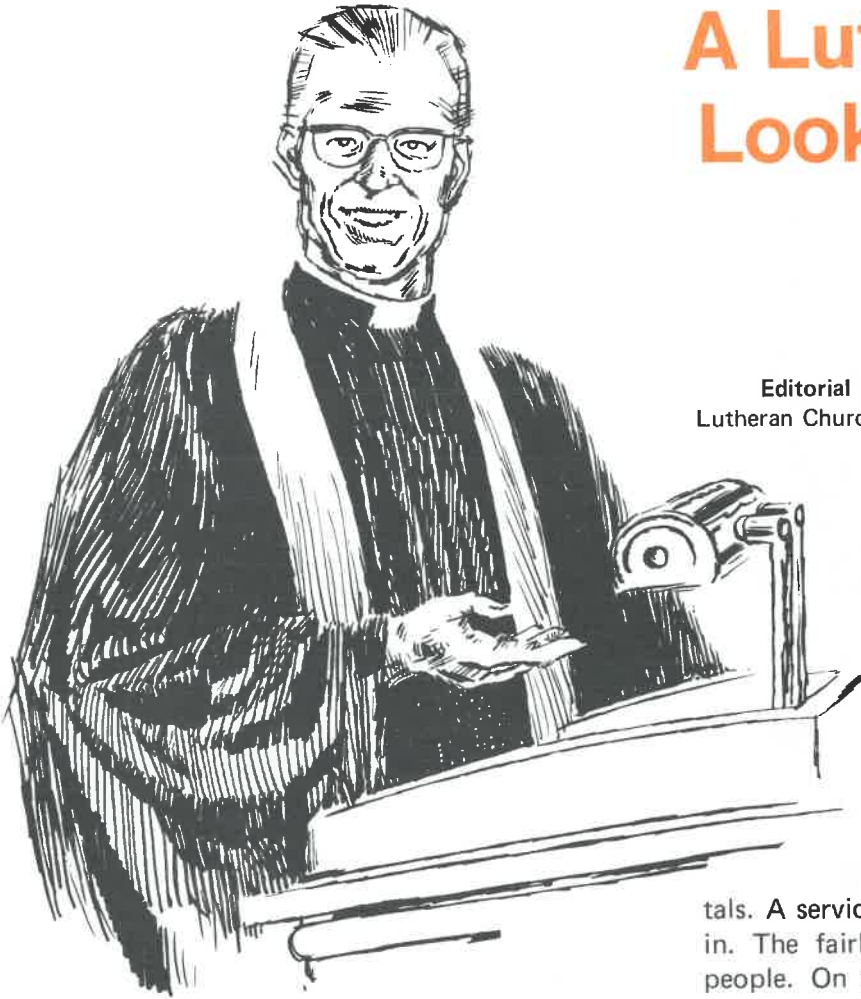
While sinners enter the kingdom of grace, only sinless beings can enter the kingdom of glory. Says the apostle, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." 1 Cor. 15:50.

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 15:51-57.

Little is said in the Bible about this future, immortal state. ". . . it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him . . ." 1 John 3:2. As Luther has said, we know as little about the next life as a baby in the womb knows about the life he is about to enter. But every believer knows this: In the gift of the Holy Spirit, God has given him a foretaste, the first fruits, the down payment of the powers of the world to come (Heb. 6:4, 5; Rom. 8:23; Eph. 1:14). He knows that life is not, and cannot be, fulfilled within the historical process. Just as a great change—the new birth—took place when he entered the kingdom of grace, so another great change must take place before he enters the kingdom of glory. This final change takes place at the resurrection, at the coming of Christ. This is the only genuine and valid second blessing taught in the New Testament. The truth of justification by faith (the kingdom of grace) gives meaning and hope to the doctrine of the second coming of Jesus (the kingdom of glory).

A Lutheran Pastor Looks at Tongues

A Sermon by William H. Albach



Editorial Note: William H. Albach is pastor of the Hope Lutheran Church in Greenacres, Washington. Scriptural quotations are from the Revised Standard Version.

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be uninformed." I Cor. 12:1.

The practice of so-called "unknown tongues" is not only on the increase in Christendom, but it has been moving up from the circles of the one-time unsophisticated Pentecostals into Lutheran, Episcopalian, Catholic and other circles. The twentieth-century movement is infiltrating everywhere and bringing with it confusion, doubt, strife and discord. Much of Christendom sits by, at a loss as to what to do about the movement, hoping with Gamaliel (Acts 5:38, 39) that it is not of God and that it will therefore fail. That, in my estimation, is not the solution. What is needed is a diligent effort to inform Christians on the matter so that they will be able to meet it with knowledge and understanding.

More than thirty years ago, while I was still a student in the seminary, I was spending a holiday in Chicago. Finding myself bored one evening, I went for a walk, looking for excitement. I found it less than two blocks from where I was staying—in a former Jewish synagogue being used by a group of Pentecos-

als. A service was in progress, and curiosity drew me in. The fairly large auditorium held a scattering of people. On the stage sat the clergyman. I took my position as an observer in the balcony. There was no order to the service. The preacher would preach or pray in a monotonous, high-pitched tone of voice. Someone would start singing a catchy gospel hymn and be joined by the rest of the congregation. There were clapping of hands and stamping of feet. Noisy periods were interspersed with long moments of absolute silence. I had sat through perhaps thirty minutes of this when, out of a period of silence, a woman rose and began to speak with unintelligible sounds. That was my introduction to the gift of tongues. Though I was only a very young man at the time, it was apparent to me that the entire service had been geared to overwhelm the emotions and that what I had witnessed was not a gift of the Spirit of God but emotional intoxication or hysteria.

John L. Sherrill, in his book, *They Speak With Other Tongues*, reports his investigation of the tongues movement. As a newspaper writer, he conducted a very thorough and seemingly unbiased investigation of the movement. He describes his first experience with a Pentecostal service, and, except for the fact that his experience took place in New York, I could have been

persuaded that he had attended the same service that I had. Later experience with Pentecostals and other revivalistic groups, however, has satisfied me that they all use the same techniques, playing on the emotions until the emotionally weak or responsive give way to manifestations of emotional intoxication or hysteria. I do not mean to be disrespectful of Christian womanhood or of womanhood in general when I say that evidence of this is to be found also in the fact that women take a leading role in this movement and are more readily responsive to the technique than men. Women are simply more inclined to be emotional than are men.

The twentieth-century tongues movement had its start at the very beginning of the century when, in the year 1900, a young Methodist minister, Charles F. Parham, felt that there was something wrong with his spiritual life and set out to find a solution to his spiritual problem. He gathered together a commune of some forty "Bible students"—men, women and children—in an abandoned mansion in Topeka, Kansas. He knew the direction that their studies would have to take, and eventually the group came to the conclusion that they needed the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" manifested in the gift of tongues. On New Year's Eve, 1900, the group met together and prayed from dawn to dark for the gift of tongues, but in vain. Finally a young woman recalled that in the book of Acts, in two instances (Sherrill says "often"), the gift of tongues followed the laying on of hands. According to Sherrill, she asked Parham to lay his hands on her while praying for the gift, and while he did so she immediately began to speak in an unknown tongue.

In every instance that Sherrill reports in detail of people receiving the gift, there are details that are common to them all: (1) the person is dissatisfied with his spiritual life; (2) his quest for spiritual satisfaction leads him to the book of Acts; (3) he becomes convinced that the solution to his problem is the baptism of the Spirit manifested in the gift of tongues; (4) he prays for hours on end for the gift; (5) he speaks in ecstatic utterances unintelligible even to himself. Much more can be said about this, but let us simply note the common denominators in other terms: the gift seems more readily available to those who are spiritually disturbed, emotionally troubled, physically and emotionally exhausted, especially responsive to suggestion, auto-suggestion or self-hypnosis. Let us note also that invariably they themselves diagnose their own spiritual illness, prescribe what is needed for their cure, and storm the throne of God

with prayer until He gives in and gives them what they insist they must have.

Does the Holy Spirit really give these people the ability to speak in unknown tongues? We cannot deny that the Spirit gave that gift to the disciples on the first Christian Pentecost, causing them to speak in tongues unknown to themselves but intelligible to the foreigners gathered in the city of Jerusalem. We cannot deny that it is possible for the Spirit to give that same gift today. But I have neither read nor heard of any convincing proof that the Spirit does today give the gift of tongues. Oh yes, I have heard and read many strange stories of people relating their own experiences, or of people relating second hand the experiences that others claimed to have had. John Sherrill, for example, relates the case of a man who received the gift, rushed out into the street and spoke in an unknown tongue to a stranger. The stranger responded in an unknown tongue—unknown to the man with the gift—and eventually asked the tongues-speaker how he could speak such perfect Polish if he himself could not understand it. And another story is told of a man who receives the gift, speaks to a girl in a park in the unknown tongue, and is informed that he is speaking archaic Arabic. But invariably the two or three witnesses, by whose testimony the truth of the stories might be established, are not available; the identity of the Polish man or the girl in the park are not made known. Sherrill's efforts to have taped tongues-speaking played back to language scholars revealed no known language on many hours of tape.

The Original Pentecost

The one incident of tongues-speaking in the Scriptures which is documented in detail is that of the disciples on the first Christian Pentecost. They testified of Jesus Christ our Saviour in known languages so that foreign-language people in the city might know the wonderful works of God in Jesus for the world's salvation. Today the gift of tongues is not spoken of as a means of communicating the gospel to those who cannot understand our own language, but as a special gift of God to give the speaker spiritual and emotional assurance that he has received the gift of the Spirit—a purely subjective, emotional experience. The Pentecostals, at least in their early history, insisted that the gift of tongues, when used publicly, be matched with the gift of interpretation—that someone receive the special gift of being able to interpret that which was said in the unknown tongue. Sherrill notes that this

happens in his investigations, but at the same time he notes that there is no relation between the amount of speaking that is done by the speaker and the amount of speaking done by the interpreter in the interpretation. He also notes, incidentally, that the interpretation is invariably couched in the words and phraseology of the King James Version of the Bible.

The tongues-speakers point out that the gift of tongues is **often, frequently** spoken of in the Bible, especially in the book of Acts. As far as the book of Acts is concerned, it is not mentioned **often**. In addition to the story of the first Christian Pentecost, it is specifically mentioned twice: (1) In the story of the conversion of Cornelius and his family at Caesarea, we are told that the gift of the Spirit had been poured out upon the household of Cornelius; and those who had come with Peter were amazed, for, according to Acts 10:46, “. . . they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God.” (2) When Paul came to Ephesus, he found disciples who knew nothing of the Holy Spirit, having been baptized only in John’s baptism. Paul told them of Jesus, and then we are told in Acts 19:5, 6: “On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.” We note in both of these passages the implication that the tongues spoken were not ecstatic utterances but, as on the first Christian Pentecost, were known languages; for we are told that those who spoke in the one instance glorified God, and in the other instance “prophesied.”

The Corinthian Problem

For light on the tongues movement, we must turn to the most detailed statement in the Bible on the subject: 1 Corinthians 12, 13 and 14. This section is much quoted by the Pentecostals in support of the movement; yet, oddly enough, it was not written in support of the gift of tongues but, rather, to put the gift of tongues, as then employed, in the proper place and perspective. Paul was writing to a troubled congregation, answering a letter in which questions had been asked about some of their problems, among which was this on the gift of tongues. Quite apparently, then as today, the gift of tongues had become a very divisive element in the Corinthian church. Those who had it not only felt, but also gave indication that they thought themselves superior to those who did not have the gift. Then, as today, there was strife, dissension and apparent lovelessness in dealing with

the problem—lovelessness on both sides, but especially disturbing as it was revealed by those who supposedly had received the Holy Spirit into their hearts and lives. It is in introducing this answer to a specific question on the subject that Paul writes, “Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be uninformed.” And now let us just touch the highlights of the section.

Who has received the Holy Spirit? Paul says, “. . . no one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except by the Holy Spirit” (12:3). In other words, everyone who believes on Jesus as Lord and Saviour can be sure that he has been baptized with the Spirit. He does not need some special manifestation of the Spirit’s presence in his life. This is one of the sad things of the Pentecostal movement. It not only promotes a Christian community divided into two classes (those who have the gift and those who do not), but it also raises doubts in the minds of many of those who do not have the gift as to whether they are truly Christian.

Paul then points out that there is a variety of the gifts of the Spirit, all given by the same Spirit (12:4-11) and given for the common good (12:7). He enumerates these gifts of the Spirit as (1) the utterance of wisdom, (2) the utterance of knowledge, (3) faith, (4) gifts of healing, (5) the working of miracles, (6) prophecy, (7) the ability to distinguish between spirits, (8) tongues and (9) the interpretation of tongues. Note that of the nine gifts, tongues and related interpretation are listed last and least of all. I cannot believe that this is an accidental listing on Paul’s part, for later in the chapter (12:28-30) Paul gives the list in another way: “. . . God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, then healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?” In short, I sense that Paul tactfully tries to minimize the gift of tongues among all the gifts that the Spirit gives. He condemns, as it were, by the use of faint praise.

In the next section of 1 Corinthians 12, Paul uses his illustration of the church as the body of Christ, in which each member, with the particular gifts given by the Spirit, contributes to the well-being of the whole body. Usually treated out of context merely as a description of the members of the church working together in Christ, in context this reveals something of the problem that the Corinthians were experiencing and the problem experienced in modern congrega-

tions when the tongues movement has entered in. In summary of the section, Paul says, in effect, that it is the purpose of the eye to see, the ear to hear, the tongue to speak, etc. If all members of the body were to have the same function, then the body itself could not function. The eye cannot therefore despise the foot because it cannot see, nor dare the tongue lord it over the nose because it cannot speak. God wisely made the body, Paul says, "that there may be no discord in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another" (12:25). Yet we find in the tongues movement a tendency on the part of the Pentecostal element to look down upon those who do not have the gift as incomplete Christians, to think themselves superior to all others and their gift the most important gift in the body of Christ. This attitude, perhaps more than anything else in the tongues movement, accounts for the emotional opposition to, and rejection of, the movement by those who do not have the gift. Paul does not have that high regard for the gift of tongues. After enumerating the gifts of the Spirit for the second time, with the gift of tongues at the end of the list, he concludes the chapter: "But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way" (12:31).

With that, Paul embarks on his wonderful chapter on love—love so apparently lacking in the situation in Corinth—one of the three greatest of God's gifts (faith, hope and love), and the greatest of the three. Here we must comment that we cannot but pray that all Christians might be disturbed about their spiritual condition and seek improvement of the same. Here we cannot help but comment that the cure can be known—and it is not the gift of tongues, but it is love. Here we cannot help but comment: let not the spiritually disturbed prescribe to God the gift of tongues as the cure, but seek from God the increase of love for God and for fellow man by the indwelling power of the Spirit of God.

Edifying the Church

It is in 1 Corinthians 14 that Paul makes his most telling statements on the subject of the gift of tongues. "Make love your aim, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy" (v. 1)—not that you may have the gift of tongues but that you may prophesy—that you may have the ability to teach, exhort, admonish, comfort and build up one another in your Christian faith and love. "For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God; for no one understands him, but he utters mysteries

in the Spirit. On the other hand, he who prophesies speaks to men for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation. He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. He who prophesies is greater than he who speaks in tongues, unless some one interprets, so that the church may be edified" (vs. 2-5). The Pentecostals here find encouragement for speaking in tongues but ignore the fact that Paul calls the gift of prophecy greater. I here find the apostle Paul speaking, as we say, with tongue in cheek, minimizing a practice in the Corinthian congregation that is not common to the Christian church but which has been taken over in Corinth from the mystery religions of the Hellenists.

What does the gift of tongues contribute to the kingdom of Christ? Those who have the gift will tell you how wonderful it makes them feel, how it has increased the dimensions of their spiritual life. It does give them evangelistic zeal—to propagate their Pentecostal form of religion. It does lead them to search the Scriptures—to filter the Scriptures through their bias to find what they can interpret to support their pursuit of the gift of tongues. Evangelistic zeal and love for Bible study, properly directed and employed, is something we could wish to see more of among all Christians. Then they would be less prone to be swept up by every passing error and religious fad such as the tongues movement.

What does speaking in tongues contribute to the church? Paul says: "Now, brethren, if I come to you speaking in tongues, how shall I benefit you unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching? If even lifeless instruments, such as the flute or harp, do not give distinct notes, how will anyone know what is played? And if the bugle gives an indistinct sound, who will get ready for battle? So with yourselves; if you in a tongue utter speech that is not intelligible, how will anyone know what is said? For you will be speaking into the air. There are doubtless many different languages in the world, and none is without meaning; but if I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me. So with yourselves; since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church" (vs. 6-12). Further comment is hardly necessary except to note that Paul states that our goal in all that we do in the body of Christ, the church, should be directed toward building up the church—to win those who have not yet received the gospel, to build up the faith, knowledge, love and life of those who have been

brought into the fellowship of the church through the power of the Spirit in the preaching of the gospel.

Grow Up!

The next section of 1 Corinthians 14 contains words much quoted by the Pentecostals. Paul says, "I thank God that I speak in tongues more than you all . . ." (v. 18). See, Paul speaks in tongues! But Paul does not say that he speaks in ecstatic utterances as do the Pentecostals. As an educated and well-traveled man, I have no doubt that Paul could say this literally, referring to known languages of the world in which he was conversant. But let us concede that he might have spoken in tongues in the Pentecostal sense. Then hear the words in the context in which they have been written: "Therefore, he who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret. For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful. What am I to do? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind also; I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the mind also. Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how can any one in the position of an outsider say the 'Amen' to your thanksgiving when he does not know what you are saying? For you may give thanks well enough, but the other man is not edified. I thank God that I speak in tongues more than you all; nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind, in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue" (vs. 13-19).

The Pentecostals feel that they have attained spiritual maturity when they have gained the gift of tongues. This makes them superior to the spiritual babes who have not yet received the gift. How does Paul rate the gift with regard to spiritual maturity? He continues, "Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; be babes in evil, but in thinking be mature" (v. 20). That is a reprimand! He is telling the Corinthian tongues-speakers: You are being childish! Grow up! He had implied the same thing in 1 Corinthians 13:11: "When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man, I gave up childish ways."

Paul continues in explaining why the gift of tongues was given in the early church as on the first Christian Pentecost: "In the law it is written, 'By men of strange tongues and by the lips of foreigners will I speak to this people, and even then they will not listen to Me, says the Lord.' Thus tongues are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers, while prophecy is not for unbelievers but for believers. If,

therefore, the whole church assembles and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are mad? But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you" (14:21-25). The tongues-speakers use the prophecy of Isaiah 28:11 as a prophecy of tongues-speaking, but Paul does not quote the prophecy as a prophecy of speaking in tongues—which it is not. His emphasis is on the thought that all the speaking in unintelligible words will convert no one: ". . . even then they will not listen to Me . . ." As originally recorded, the words are nothing but a pronouncement of judgment upon Israel. Israel would not listen to the prophets sent by God. He would bring foreign invaders and oppressors upon her. But not even these speakers of foreign languages would persuade Israel to listen to the precepts of God.

On the first Christian Pentecost, speaking in tongues unknown to the speakers did convert 3,000 to faith in the Lord Jesus. But the tongues spoken were known to the foreigners gathered in Jerusalem, and the converting power was not in the fact that the disciples spoke in tongues unknown to themselves, but in the fact that they proclaimed the wonderful work of God through the Lord Jesus Christ for the redemption of the world from sin and eternal damnation. Speaking in unintelligible gibberish can only antagonize the unbelieving and contributes nothing to the spiritual growth of the believer. Believers are benefitted by, and unbelievers are converted by, the gift of prophecy, which proclaims Jesus Christ as the world's only hope for salvation.

As practiced in Corinth, the gift of tongues was a confused and confusing mess as those who claimed the gift apparently vied with one another to show off the gift in public. Those who claimed the "lesser" gifts were also apparently involved in striving to show them off. And so Paul continues: "What then, brethren? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn; and let one interpret. But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silence in church and speak to himself and to God. Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said. If a revelation is made to another sitting by, let the first be silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged; and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets.

For God is not a God of confusion but of peace" (vs. 26-33).

We noted earlier that women have taken a leading role in the tongues movement, that they are more easily swayed emotionally and are more readily responsive to the techniques of those who promote the gift of tongues. In every instance with which I am personally acquainted, it is the woman who has led her husband and/or household into the tongues movement and is the first to have received the gift. This was quite apparently true also in Corinth. It is in the context of the statement on tongues that Paul speaks the words that have long been used out of context to oppose woman suffrage in the church. In a less permissive society than ours, when women were little more than chattels and pawns of the male of the species, the women of Corinth apparently found in the gift of tongues an opportunity to assert themselves and to show that they could excel over the men—at least in things spiritual and religious. And Paul says in this context, "As in all the churches of the saints, the women should keep silence in the churches" (vs. 33, 34).

Concluding Remarks

The concluding words of the chapter and section include these words: "So, my brethren, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues; but all things should be done decently and



in order" (vs. 39, 40). When I read these words of Paul, ". . . do not forbid speaking in tongues . . .," I remember also the words of Gamaliel: " 'So in the present case I tell you, keep away from these men [the Christians] and let them alone; for if this plan or this undertaking is of men, it will fail; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. **You might even be found opposing God!**' " Acts 5:38, 39. I do not go along with the advice of Gamaliel to ignore the Christian movement. It was his responsibility, as a scholar and as a spiritual leader of the Jews, to help the Jews to avoid error and to uncover the truth. If he had done that in this case, he would no doubt have been led to accept the Lord Jesus as the Christ and his Saviour. But the caution he gave to the Jews that they might find themselves opposing God Himself, coupled with Paul's words telling the Corinthians not to forbid speaking in tongues, led me to careful second thoughts about taking up opposition to the tongues movement. I am satisfied in my own heart and mind that I must speak out on the subject and stand in opposition to it. I can understand Paul's advice in the Corinthian setting: immovable objection to, and prohibition of, speaking in tongues under the circumstances might only have aggravated the situation and hardened the tongues-speakers in their attitudes. To some extent I would heed the advice of Paul. Anyone who thinks he has the gift of tongues and takes Paul's advice to employ it only privately, is responsible only for himself and to himself and to God. Any who would use the supposed gift publicly and endeavor to propagate the practice among others, I would oppose and forbid to practice tongues-speaking among those over whom the Lord has given me spiritual responsibility—until it could be proven that the gift was truly a gift of God bestowed spontaneously upon the recipient by the Spirit of God.

I have yet to read or hear of a single instance that convinces me the gift is from God. I was even more convinced that it was not a gift of God in reading *Aglow with the Spirit*, by Dr. Robert Frost, one of the shining lights of the Pentecostal movement. He tells of a minister observing a woman who had come for the so-called "infilling" of the Spirit but who repeatedly expressed herself with only one little syllable that sounded like stammering. But the minister had a vision of a little stalk-like shoot which grew upward each time she uttered the syllable. Presently she found another syllable, and a branch appeared on the shoot. With each new syllable she found, there was another branch on the shoot, until the vision portrayed a beautiful, symmetrical tree. Anyone can

perform the same thing by starting with a single syllable and adding other syllables until one is able to speak fluently and at great length—unintelligibly. Further, I am reminded of the old days when the South was filled with all kinds of tiny "holiness" groups known as Holy Rollers, Holy Weepers, Holy Laughers, Holy Clappers. Whatever the particular group considered an evidence of the baptism of the Spirit or of "getting religion," that was the manifestation which would take place in their revivals. Getting religion or the Spirit would cause the Holy Rollers to roll on the floor, Holy Weepers to weep, Holy Laughers to laugh, and Holy Clappers to clap. And where speaking in tongues is considered a manifestation of the Holy Spirit, a necessary evidence that one is a full Christian, there will be speaking in tongues.

But enough of this, though I could say much more. What I have said is the fruit of independent thinking, of reading authors who are supporters of the tongues movement, and of searching the Scriptures. I pray that I have not succeeded merely in alerting you to, and setting you against, speaking in tongues. I would much rather that we would all learn from those who have gone off at a tangent in this. So many of them got started because they became concerned about their spiritual apathy, indifference and coldness—and this is a concern that we should all share, for we are certainly not aglow with the Spirit; our lives do not radiate the love, the concern, the dedication to God and our fellow man to the extent that they should. Pentecostals mistakenly seek the solution to their problem in the gift of tongues. They pray for the gift of tongues for their personal assurance of salvation. We should pray that the assurance of salvation, which we possess solely and alone through our God-given faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, will so possess us through the power of the Spirit that it will bring forth in us all the wonderful fruits of the Spirit: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Gal. 5:22, 23). Their concern is to propagandize and proselytize and infiltrate for and with their Pentecostal error. Our concern should be to propagandize and proselytize for Jesus Christ our divine Saviour and to infiltrate the entire world with the precious gospel of salvation through the atoning blood of our Lord. Amen.

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