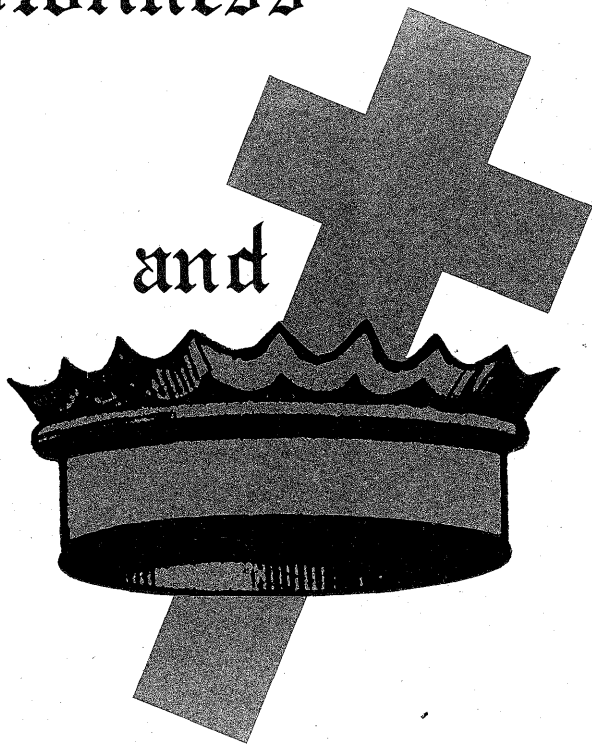


Holiness

and



Christ's Return!

- Ray Brubaker

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Why Emphasize Holiness?

The FLAME magazine, published in England, for the past forty years has sought to proclaim two vital themes of Bible Holiness and the Second Coming of Christ. Quoting this journal: "It is the burning Hope of Christ's return that incites the Christian to a life of holiness--for 'every man who has this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.'" (1 Jn.3:3)

Is this not a good reason why we should emphasize the need of holiness in view of Christ's Return?

David Rutledge, prophetic writer, observes: "Such a Christian, who is looking for a near return of the Lord Jesus, is neither likely to be found amongst the worldly-minded nor is inconsistent with his Christian profession."

Rutledge goes on to explain the purifying process as the Spirit of God uses the theme of Christ's Coming to bring sanctification to the saints. He notes: "Those who have made an earnest study of the prophetic Scriptures concerning the Second Advent and the establishment of the Messiah's Kingdom here on earth have, without exception, found that they have reaped, as the result, the blessed experience of a purifying and hallowing influence upon their life and work."

Thus it is hoped that by our diligent searching of the Scriptures we will discover the life our Lord is calling us to live in pursuit of that holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

Dr. Stephen Olford, whom we consider the spiritual giant among preachers today, constantly emphasizes the need of "holiness" among believers. He is not preaching some strange doctrine, but is simply emphasizing the life of obedience to the revealed will of God as taught in the Scriptures.

Failure to emphasize "holiness" in view of our Lord's return is one of the great mistakes of our time. As D.M.Panton, British writer, observes: "The divorce between the teaching of Consecration and the heralding of Christ's Return is a painful and dangerous development of the moment."

In this hour of lukewarmness, should we not be "hot" in our Christian witness and profession? Are we on fire for God? If not, do we not need the baptism of fire spoken of by John that will prepare us for the coming of our Lord? May we ever be reminded that the Laodiceans were spued out--unprepared--when their day of reckoning had come.

Christ is coming with eyes of fire. He is aware of all that is in our hearts that is not pleasing to Him. Yet, His purpose is that He might present us to Himself "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Eph. 5:27)

Is that not sufficient reason why we should emphasize "holiness"? For our Lord's desire is that we be "holy and without blemish."

Panton warns of those who cannot see this truth, saying: "Too many are assuming that preparation for Christ's coming is solely a matter of past experience and not at all a matter of walk, so that for all the saved, no matter how unChristlike a life they live, it will be pure, unmixed, inevitable joy--an instant miraculous deliverance so wrapped up in the gift of salvation that it covers even the most unconsecrated, unholy child of God. Thus there is and can be, so long as this teaching is believed, no demand for any sanctity beyond salvation, and the tremendous thunders of the fast-approaching tribulation leave myriads of Christians unawake. The issue is a grave one, for our Lord's outburst from heaven to catch His bride away is either a comforting opiate for disobedient disciples, or else it is one of the most rousing of all truths--it cannot be both."

Dr. A. J. Gordon comments on God's purpose expressed to those at Thessalonica in view of Christ's coming. For we read: "To the end that he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." I Thess. 3:13.

Again, is it not clearly taught in the Word of God that this is the calling given the believer? As Gordon says: "Not simply blameless but faultless, seems to be the condition here foretold, since it is unblameable in the sphere and element of holiness."

Now some note that Christ's death on the cross provided a perfect salvation wherein we are made holy and that nothing we can do will make us any more acceptable at His coming. As one has expressed it: "His righteousness being imputed to us, we need none of our own; that seeing there was so much righteousness and holiness in Him, there is no need for more in us.." In fact, for a believer to seek to perfect holiness in himself is regarded as works which are unacceptable to God.

While we agree that holiness is the work of God in the life of the believer and that He worketh in us both to will and do of his good pleasure, yet we are reminded that there is something for us to do. We are told: "...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." (See Phil. 2:12-13)

My friends, we are to ever strive to be ready for Christ's Coming, and readiness involves a turning from known sin to

follow the Word of God in obedience to all of the revealed will of God.

As we read in I John 3:3, "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

Did you hear it?

A radio preacher commented on this verse saying that we are made pure as we by faith accept the forgiveness offered by Christ when He died on the cross.

While this is true, we are reminded in I Peter 1:22 that we are purified by obedience. As we obey the Word of God which is as a mirror to reflect the spots and blemishes in our lives, we are purified. Writes Peter: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit..."

How are we purified? Peter says: "by obeying the Word of God as prompted by the Holy Spirit."

What does the Spirit of God show you in your life that should not be there? And should we not seek to rid ourselves of all that displeases God and offends man?

Dr. John R. Rice points out that while we may ridicule those who claim to have attained sinless perfection, yet, he writes: "Shame upon us. While we scoff at their doctrine we might well be more concerned to hunger after God as many of them do."

Says Dr. Rice: "I know that correct doctrine is important, but I feel sure that in God's sight heart hunger and contrite hearts, longing to be exactly what God would have them be, are much more important."

Is it not proper to raise the standard of holiness? And although we may fall far short of that standard, should we not press on to reach it?

The Apostle Paul confessed that he was not perfect, that he had not as yet arrived. And yet he did say: "But this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:13-14)

Should this not be our bold objective--to press on for the prize of living a life holy unto God?

While many comments might be given of those who espoused the doctrine of holiness, and taught it from the Word of God, may we quote from the writings of General William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, who boldly preached "entire sanctification" for the believer.

Here's what Booth writes:

"From what I have read in the Bible, and by the light God has given me by His Holy Spirit in my own heart, I now see and believe that it is possible for me to be delivered from all inward and outward sin, and that I can be made holy in this life."

Quoting 2 Cor. 7:1, Booth declared: "I believe that I can be cleansed from 'all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.'"

Is that possible?

Booth goes on to explain: "I do not expect to be delivered from temptation or sorrow, from suffering or from the possibility of falling into sin in this world; but I do believe that God can work such a change in my appetites and disposition and give me such a measure of His Holy Spirit as will enable me to live without committing sin."

Booth points to the victory won at the cross as great enough to accomplish this bold objective. He says: "For now I see that the purpose for which Jesus Christ was born into the world, and for which He lived and died and rose again, was to destroy the works of the devil out of my heart and life."

Thus, he concludes: "I believe that in the Bible this blessing of Holiness is offered to me, and urged upon my acceptance by the Holy Spirit, and that God is now waiting to cleanse me from all impurity of heart and mind."

In his writings, Booth stresses the need of making a full consecration to God. He urges the sincere believer to say from his heart: "By God's help I fully and freely consecrate myself, here and now, to the service of my Lord. I give Him my body, that it may henceforth become His dwellingplace. I give Him my hands, feet, eyes, ears, tongue and everything else connected with my body, together with all its appetites and powers, for Him to keep and employ as He sees fit."

Have we made this consecration? Does not Romans 12:1-2 suggest this? For Paul writes: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God...etc."

General Booth went on to declare: "I give Him my mind, with all its faculties of memory, judgment and imagination, that He may cleanse it and preserve it blameless to the day of His coming." Surely this could mean being careful what books we read, what television programs we watch, and what thoughts we think if our mind is dedicated only to Jesus Christ.

That's not all. He continues: "I give Him my heart, with its capacities for affection, worship, hope and faith, that He may purify and fill it with love." I give Him my goods, and promise to regard them as belonging to Him and to His kingdom, solemnly engaging to use them in such a way as He will approve."

When the Lord gets our wallet and our checkbook, He just about has everything.

"In short," declares Booth, "I give Him my life, and promise to regard myself henceforth as belonging as much to

Him in the place where I now live as I expect I shall do when I come to live with Him in heaven."

Finally, William Booth seeks to lead the interested seeker after Holiness to place simple faith in the promises of God.

"And now, O Lord, believing that Thou desirest me to be holy, that Jesus Christ by His death has purchased for me this deliverance from all evil, and that Thou hast promised to make me holy when I seek for the blessing with all my heart; having renounced every evil way and presented myself a living sacrifice according to Thy wish, I believe that Thou dost hear and now accept and purify my offering.

"I this moment lay myself on the sure foundation which Jesus Christ has laid, even His own blessed broken body--a sacrifice which by its infinite merit covers all the sins of my past life, and sanctifies the imperfect offering which I make and, regardless of fears and feelings, I believe Thou dost, for Christ's sake, receive this offering, and that the Blood of Jesus does this moment cleanse me from all sin.

"Glory be to the Father, glory be to the Son, and glory be to the Holy Ghost! I am fully the Lord's and He is fully mine!"

Could you agree with and sign such a declaration?

Because the lives of many believers are filled with pride, vanity, bad temper, malice, bitterness, revengefulness, lust, sloth, love for the pleasures and treasures of the world, selfishness, envy, etc., Booth believed it to be necessary to make this simple declaration and seal it by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, that Christ may be all and in all.

The GRIT magazine often contains gems of truth including messages by various ministers. A guest preacher, the Rev. O. Afton Linger, wrote an article entitled: "ALL-OUT CHRISTIANS!" He says: "The rays of the sun are powerful, but even more so when they are concentrated through a magnifying glass!" So he notes, "The life of God in Christ is also powerful but is likewise more dynamic when strengthened by dedication in an all-out Christian life."

Can you say "Amen"?

A perfect example of this kind of dedication is seen in the life of D. L. Moody, well-known evangelist of the past century. Moody attended an early morning prayer meeting while in Dublin and heard Henry Varley say: "The world has yet to see what God can do with and for and through and in a man who is fully and wholly consecrated to Him." Moody, hearing that challenge, said: "I will be that man!" Years later, he told Varley in England, "Oh, brother! Those words were the words of the Lord through your lips to my soul." For that challenge had set Moody to be a flaming zealous witness throughout the world.

Why is there so little preaching on "holiness"?

From personal observation this is one of the most needed Scriptural doctrines and yet one of the least preached even in evangelical circles.

Did not the Lord say, "Be ye holy, for I am holy"? Then this message should be emphasized.

Perhaps the reason it is not preached is because few claim to have the experience of sanctification, and if someone doesn't have it, they can't preach it.

Yet the Scriptures are full of the "holiness" message. In fact, we are told to "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. 12:14)

Aren't we looking for our Lord's soon return? Then, according to this verse, we must have the proper credentials to be admitted into His presence, and according to the Word of God we are to strive for that sanctification, without which no one shall see Him.

What is holiness?

Dr. Harry A. Ironsides, former pastor of Moody Church in Chicago, relates his activities in the Salvation Army where the holiness emphasis was greatly stressed. He testified: "I sought the experience of holiness but what I had seen in others professing holiness was something of a holy-mess. Thus, I soon was to conclude that the experience for which I was seeking I already had."

Believing that God is still looking for men and women who are wholly yielded to Him and pledged to a life of holiness, we extend the challenge found in I Peter 1:15-16, "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation (behaviour--manner of life), because it's eternally written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

And in view of the coming of the Lord, shall we not heed the injunction to "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. 12:14)

Indeed, be ye therefore also ready for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.

The Call To Holiness

I see where a leading evangelical journal is critical of ministers and writers who use Communism as a springboard for their operations, declaring: "It seems that almost any appeal is justified on the basis that it is the only answer to Communism."

Referring to ministers, the article goes on to say: "They may start with the Word of God and expound it, but apparently this is not sufficient; so Communism is brought in as the real clincher. Communism has been used as a reason for church separation. It has been used to spur missionary action. It has been used to call young people to consecration. We have been urged to evangelize and to produce literature to stop Communism. Only revival will spare America from Communism, they say. Where will it end? Even a life of sanctification and holiness is now demanded because it is the answer to Communism." (SS TIMES 9/30/61)

Perhaps this magazine is justified in its criticism. The editor goes on to say that Communism is not the reason why God's people ought to be holy or separated, or why they should give to missions, or why young people should be obedient to the Lord. The Apostle Paul does not argue from this basis. He does not call believers to be clean vessels, to give liberally, or to present their bodies as living sacrifices because this would save their skins economically or politically or spare them from persecution. The only justification for urging believers to be holy and to be yielded is that it is the will of God: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification," says Paul. (I Thess. 4:3) "The holiness of God demands that His people be holy and undefiled."

Well, I'm sure we should all be able to say a hearty "Amen." The call of the church militant should not be merely to oppose Communism but also to war against worldliness, lukewarmness, and formalism which likewise threaten fundamental Christianity.

The rallying cry of the church should be this call to holy living. There isn't any truth in the Word of God more positive, more definite than this, that God is holy and that He expects His people to be holy.

It was Isaiah who saw the Lord exalted, high and lifted up, and heard the seraphims as they cried to one another, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts." (Isa. 6:3)

It was this same Jehovah who commanded Israel, saying: "Ye shall be holy; for I the Lord your God am holy." (Lev. 19:1-2)

In the New Testament, the Apostle Peter repeats this commandment, declaring: "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy." (I Pet. 1:15-16)

So important is it to heed this divine command that Peter says later that it would be better never to have known the way of righteousness, than, after having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. (II Pet. 2:21)

I wonder how many today profess to be Christians and yet they have never surrendered their lives to Jesus Christ. They have received Christ as Saviour but have never yielded to Christ their time, their talents, and all they possess.

Paul, writing in Romans 12:1-2, says: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service..."

Tell me, is it reasonable or unreasonable to expect that after a person becomes a Christian they live for Christ and exemplify His love and purity in their lives? And yet, how many Christians do you know who are overcome by petty lusts, and binding habits, fleshly passions, love for this world and material possessions, and who have never consecrated all to Christ!

Beloved, the call of God is to holiness.

In I Thess. 4:7 we read: "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." Perhaps there is a danger of getting all excited about fighting Communism abroad when we fail to see the need of fighting sin within!

Whether we want to realize it or not, these are perilous times. Wars and rumors of wars shall continue until Jesus comes as the Prince of Peace. And godless ideologies will prevail, culminating in the world government of Antichrist.

I am not saying that we are not to oppose these ideologies. You who listen to this broadcast know that we stand in opposition to all of these forces of unrighteousness. For we believe that "righteousness exalteth a nation."

On the other hand, I'm afraid many are becoming side-tracked in one way or another. I'm afraid many today are fighting Communism instead of fighting sin. I'm afraid many today are preaching liberty of country when they should be emphasizing liberty of conscience. Instead of rallying Christians with the patriotic cry of freedom, there needs to be preached the message that sets men free.

Again I'm afraid that in opposing Communism, Modernism, and all other isms, many are led in attacking the individual rather than the ideology. And where there should be love in our hearts even for our enemies, there is bitterness. Where there should be compassion for the souls of these men, there is hate.

Beloved, hear me. As much as it is our right to hate Communism, we are to love the Communists. Although we are to be loyal, patriotic Americans, there should be within the heart of every Christian a heartfelt emotion of pity for these deluded, misguided young people, even here in America, who parade behind the banner of the hammer and sickle.

Recall with me an occasion wherein our Lord was set to go into a village of Samaria when he was forbidden by the Samaritans to come. Two of our Lord's closest disciples, Peter and John, turned to Jesus and said: "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them..." But Jesus rebuked these disciples, saying: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives but to save them."

I'm afraid that in the midst of some of the speech-making and name-calling there is to be seen a spirit such as was seen in Peter and John of calling fire down from heaven to destroy those who oppose our way of life, rather than a spirit of love and compassion as exhibited in our Saviour.

How clever the devil is, for if he can get God's children all worked up and upset, filling their souls with poisonous venom of hate, even stirred up to physical acts of violence, he can succeed in using a righteous cause to unrighteous ends.

Instead of hate, let there be the love of the Holy Ghost shed abroad in our hearts--love that is tender and compassionate, love that will even cover a multitude of sins. Instead of oaths and curses for the enemies of liberty, may there be upon our lips prayers for deliverance for these deluded souls.

Don't misunderstand. I believe we should all be concerned about the appalling advance of Communism on all fronts. And, I believe the clergy are in their proper role in opposing this godless ideology. As the late J. Edgar Hoover once said: "If Communism is to be defeated, the task must rest largely upon the theologians and the ministers of the Gospel."

But what about you today? Is the life you are now living a testimony for Christ? Are you as dedicated to the will of God as the Communist is dedicated to his party?

If you are Christian, the call of God is to holiness.

Dr. William Culbertson, the late president of the Moody Bible Institute, once wrote: "It is apparent from God's Word that God wants us to live holy lives. More than that, He has provided for us so to do."

Dr. Culbertson continued: "If God would give us even a handful of people who really meant business with Him, who would go all out for the Lord, who would in utter surrender and absolute faith walk with the Lord, the ends of the earth would feel the impact of that kind of living."

Dr. Culbertson concluded by saying: "WE NEED CHRISTIANS FULL OF THE HOLY GHOST."

Indeed, this is the challenge every believer faces, particularly in view of the soon return of our Blessed Lord to be ready for His coming. For He hath said: "Be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

What is Holiness?

Of a great missionary Robert McCheyne once said: "O to have Brainerd's heart for perfect holiness--to be as holy as God is holy--pure as Christ is pure--perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect."

Is this too difficult a goal to achieve, too high for which to strive? Why not press on toward the mark of spiritual growth and maturity? Why not follow peace and holiness?

In this life of Christian growth even the Scriptures admit to a spiritual progression concerning which many are unaware. They suppose there is no room for advancement, and their Christian life is stifled by stagnation.

Chrysostom once said, "He who thinks that he has attained everything, hath nothing!" What a powerful indictment of those who do not seek more, who rest satisfied without hungering for holiness.

In Romans, chapter 6 and verse 19, the Apostle Paul challenges these believers, saying, "As ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness."

Did you hear it?

I realize sanctification is a subject that few seem to know anything about. But listen and think with me for a moment about what the great Apostle Paul is saying.

Might I illustrate? A little boy is told not to take any of mother's cookies. But when she is not looking, the little fellow gets terribly hungry and sneaks one from off the table. When mother suspects that some cookies are missing, she says to her son, "Did you take any cookies?" He replies, "No, mother!"

Now did you notice there is progression in sin? As Paul says, "Iniquity unto iniquity." So, this boy first of all stole a cookie, and then he lied about it.

As there is progression in sin, so there is progression spiritually "from righteousness unto holiness."

I don't claim to be a theologian or much of a theological student, but to me it is clear that there is growth and development in the Christian life. This all is related to the believer's sanctification.

Dr. A. B. Simpson once declared, "The supreme idea of sanctification is the incoming of Jesus by the Holy Spirit to receive His own life in us, and to supply to us the purity, the love, the power, the faith of our new and victorious life and work."

Other definitions might be given. For instance, Webster defines sanctification as the act of grace by which the soul is cleansed from sin and made holy in the sight of God.

Definitions themselves sometimes need defining, and today we would rather go to the Scriptures in order to comprehend this doctrine of sanctification.

First, may we point out that SANCTIFICATION is part of salvation. As we read in I Thess. 2:13, "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth!"

Did you notice? Salvation is spoken of here as a work of God conditioned upon two things: (1) believing the truth and (2) sanctification of the Spirit.

Someone has well said, "Justification is something God does FOR you. Sanctification is something God does IN you."

Again, Paul, writing to the Corinthians, says, "But ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

It would seem that this two-fold relationship in salvation is well established in the Scriptures. JUSTIFICATION is that act of God in declaring the believer righteous through his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and SANCTIFICATION is the work of the HOLY SPIRIT in cooperation with the believer in setting him apart unto a life of holiness.

Secondly, sanctification is separation. How clear the Scripture is on this. "Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord..." Ah yes, there should be a distinguishable difference between the believer and the unbeliever. The very idea of sanctification implies separation from sin. "Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity," is the clear teaching of Holy Scripture.

Thirdly, sanctification is surrender--surrender to the will of God. Moody once said, "The secret of the Holy Spirit's coming in power to the believer is the individual's complete surrender to the Saviour."

Of our blessed Lord Himself we read that He said, "Then said I, Lo, I come...to do thy will, O God...by the which will we are sanctified."

We may think we have yielded in every area of our being, but God who tries the heart knows whether there is any pride there; knows whether there are lusts and evil passions there; knows whether there is a murmuring or complaining spirit there; He knows whether there is selfishness. It is as we surrender

wholly to the will of God that the blessed Holy Spirit can sanctify our hearts.

R. A. Torrey says: "The surrendered will and life is the great secret of receiving the Holy Ghost. All turns upon this. We may deal with individual sins, and we may cry to God for the filling of the Holy Ghost, but unless there is total surrender to God at the center of our being, unless we yield ourselves to God, nothing is likely to come of it. Oh, how many have longed, and prayed, and agonized that the Holy Spirit might come upon them, but He came not. There was no yielding of self to God! And then they have yielded themselves to God. They have bowed their faces and said: "O God, I yield. I give myself up utterly to Thee. I place myself unreservedly at thy disposal. I hold back nothing, and as they have bowed, the Holy Ghost has fallen upon them."

Fourthly, in sanctification the stirrings of the flesh must needs be crucified. In order that Christ be enthroned in our hearts and lives, self must be slain.

Dr. V. Raymond Edman, writing about "Crisis Experiences in the Lives of Noted Christians," says: "Into each life there arises an awareness of failure, a falling short of all that one should be in the Lord. Then there is a definite meeting with the risen Saviour in utter surrender of heart, which is indeed death of self..."

The Apostle Paul put it this way, saying: "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2:20)

Fifthly, in sanctification there is self-denial.

Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me!"

Self-denial does not necessarily imply sacrificing or doing without for the sake of merit or favor with God.

Years ago over the teletype of the radio newsroom where I was employed, there came the story of a bandit who held up a clergyman on a dark night. Discovering his identity, the thief said to the clergyman, "I'm sorry, I didn't know it was you." The minister, trying to appear nonchalant, then proceeded to offer a cigarette to the thief, who refused the offer by saying, "O no, I don't smoke during Lent!"

This sort of hypocritical self-denial is not what the Scriptures imply. Surely there needs to be a denying oneself of lusts and habits in a once-for-all action with the help of God's Holy Spirit.

But there also needs to be the consecration of one's aims and ambitions in a life completely devoted to Christ.

Dr. Paul Carlson, who went to the Congo as a medical missionary, depriving himself of fame and fortune, is an example of what is meant by self-denial. Although we may not be sent on missions of mercy, there are ways whereby we can exemplify the sanctified life in living wholly for Jesus Christ.

Sixthly, sanctification implies the sanctity or sacredness of the physical relationship.

In I Thess. 4 we read, "For this is the will of God, even your SANCTIFICATION, that ye should abstain from fornication" ... "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."

The testimony of Scripture is clear in relating sanctification to a life of purity. In a day of unwholesome relationships--impurity and immorality--how we need this emphasis of sanctification.

Finally, sanctification relates itself to the spirituality of the whole man.

In I Thess. 5:23 we read, "And the very God of peace sanctify you W-H-O-L-L-Y; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Quite an assignment, isn't it? What a goal to which we should and can aspire! For the very next verse assures us of fulfillment, for we read, "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it!"

In view of the coming of Christ, we need to be sanctified wholly and our whole spirit, soul and body preserved blameless! Impossible? No, faithful is He that calleth you who also will do it.

May God grant it. Amen.

Health and Holiness

How's your health?

Even the most spiritual have aches and pains, and they die. As Paul declares: "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..." (Rom. 8:21-22)

So we are not any less spiritual just because we suffer physically. On the other hand, the Apostle John wrote: "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." (That's a good promise for the year ahead.)

Is there a relationship between our soul's prosperity and our physical health? What relationship is there between health and holiness?

Is it God's will that we have feeble knees and hands which hang down? Or, did the Lord not indicate His more perfect will to be, "Let it rather be healed." Heb. 12:12-13

Dr. Granger Westburg, professor of Preventive Medicine of the University of Illinois Medical School, comments on the need of ministry to the whole man.

In a recent poll taken in the United States, 90% of those questioned said they believed in God; 75% said they believed in Jesus Christ as God's Son, but only 60% said they would turn to a priest or minister in a time of serious trouble.

Although these figures show the importance of having a religious faith, the evidence is that few put their faith to practice in real life situations, according to this survey.

When we say that we believe in God, do we really? Then let us prove it.

Can we testify of everyday occurrences where God protects, keeps, heals?

For instance, what about your health? Is there any relationship between health and holiness? That's an unusual question--but that's our subject.

We might ask, what are the greatest needs of Christians today?

Could the answer be Health and Holiness?

So many letters which we receive are related to either physical or spiritual needs. There are those suffering from arthritis, or a heart condition or some similar malady. And there is the request to pray for unsaved loved ones or for release from habits of sin and lust.

Did you know that God wants to answer prayer in providing both health and holiness? He wants to "heal" as well as give victory over our sinful "habits."

Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, one of the best known Biblical scholars, reminds us that the word "holiness" can be traced to a simple Anglo-Saxon root--halig-- which means "whole, complete."

Morgan notes: "From that root, two words have come into common use, namely, health and holiness." So do you see the relationship between having good health and living a holy life?

He notes: "In our differentiation in the use of words which have originally the same meaning, we have applied the word 'health' to things physical, and the word 'holiness' to things spiritual." Says Morgan: "What health is to the body, holiness is to the spirit; and taken in its simplicity, holiness means health, wholeness, perfection in the spiritual sphere."

It is in view of our Lord's coming that we read of God's preservation of both the physical and spiritual part of our being.

Turn to I Thess. 5:23-24 where we read: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it."

First, we would point out that the word for sanctify and the word for holiness are the same in the original Greek language. So a sanctified person is a holy person. And one professing holiness is also one who claims to be sanctified. They are in essence the same word.

In the second place, God's purpose is to sanctify us wholly. On the air you probably think I am saying "h-o-l-y," when in reality, the word used here is "w-h-o-l-l-y." God's will is that you be sanctified completely. And He goes on to spell out the area of our sanctification--our body, as well as our soul and spirit.

God wants our bodies to be sanctified and that relates to our physical well-being. Some wrongfully suppose that the Lord is interested only in our soul. But this Scripture reminds us that He is also interested in our bodies. The prayer of the Apostle Paul was that the spirit, soul and body all be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Apparently there is a definite relationship between health and holiness. A person who prays and reads his Bible daily and believes in a God of miracles should experience miracles and enjoy an abundant life of miracles. On the other hand, a person who drinks, smokes and carouses in sin should soon realize the results of such dissipation in diseases associated with such activity--cancer, liver trouble, heart failure and similar maladies.

Actual surveys taken show that Christians who live clean lives have a much healthier body and a longer life than those who are not Christians. For this reason alone we would conclude that it pays to live a decent, upright, clean life.

In the third place, we would emphasize that these verses have their greatest application as we get closer to the coming of our Lord. For God's will is that the "whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Naturally, we would assume that God's grace does keep our spirit and soul until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. But mention is also made of keeping our bodies until the day of His coming! Thus, we must conclude that the great power of God available to believers today is able to cope with every situation of life, so that some will be here when Jesus comes.

Finally, in the fourth place, we point out that God is able to keep us--spirit, soul and body, until Jesus comes. For this Scripture tells us: "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."

If we are living in the day when we believe our Lord is soon to come, and if we are anticipating being alive when He comes, then we can maintain that hope because of God's promise here in His Word. Hallelujah!

It is possible that some may not have this hope because they think the coming of the Lord to be a far-distant event. But if you believe His coming is near at hand, then cherish the thought of being alive when Jesus comes. For that is a better hope than to hope to be in the grave when He returns.

Some are like Martha to whom our Lord said: "Thy brother shall rise again." Martha replied, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." But Jesus answered: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"

Martha replied: "Yea, Lord, I believe." But did she really believe? She did not really expect that the Lord would raise Lazarus from the dead. When our Lord asked for the stone to be removed from the cave, Martha protested, saying, "Lord, by this time he stinketh; for he hath been dead four days."

So Martha didn't really believe what our Lord had just said--that, though Lazarus was dead, yet shall he live right now. Rather, she said, "Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God...." (John 11:27)

Now it's important to believe that Jesus is the Son of God. Peter, too, testified of Jesus, saying, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And our Lord honored Peter by saying that it was upon this testimony that He would build His church. So, all who truly confess that Jesus is the Christ who died for our sins, and truly receive Him as Lord and Saviour, can be saved.

But what about believing that the Lord can keep us alive and well even until the day of His coming? What about believing that the Lord can meet our physical needs--that He can preserve us--spirit, soul and body until the day when Christ returns?

Is this an impossibility? Or, is this your hope?

I suppose it's all right to own a cemetery lot if you expect to die before our Lord comes, but why not let your hope be in the coming of the Lord who promises to transform our physical bodies into the likeness of His glorious body? For some, death is a detour--and "absent from the body is present with the Lord." Yet, there is excitement and a thrill in anticipation of being alive when Jesus comes.

Our Lord once asked the question, when the Son of man cometh shall He find faith on the earth? So, what kind of faith do we have? Do we believe that the Lord can keep us until the day of His coming? Or, have we given up hope that we will be alive for that glorious event?

Understand, we have no assurance that we will be alive then, for no man knoweth the day nor the hour. Nevertheless, this can be our hope; and based on the verses we have just read, God is able to preserve us--spirit, soul and body--until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it.

Do you believe it?

We're convinced that if we had enough people believing the promises of the Word of God, we would see such miracles wrought that would prove that God's power is available and that God is alive. Although we say He is alive, we often act as though He were dead. Some churches offer sums of money for evidence of proof of a single miracle. The truth is that they wouldn't recognize nor accept a miracle if they saw it.

However, there is coming a time when one will appear whom we call the Antichrist. The Bible says that he will deceive them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do. (Rev. 13:14) Some people who don't believe God works miracles today will accept the miracles wrought by the Antichrist because they are deceived.

Why is it that some people are always ready to criticize those who believe in miracles? After all, the Bible says: "Without faith it is impossible to please (God,) for he that cometh to (Him) must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. 11:6)

The way to please God is to believe that He is a miracle-working, all-powerful God who rewards them that diligently seek Him. But we're living in a push-button age. If we don't see answers to our prayers after five minutes of praying, we don't believe in miracles.

Our Lord reminded us that "Whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith." (Mk. 11:23)

Do we believe this?

Where do you see that kind of faith? This would seem to be the ultimate in believing in the power of God.

Paul writes: "Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains and have not love, I am nothing." (I Cor. 13:2)

So, it is faith that worketh by love that will be rewarded when Jesus comes. Today, believe His Word, obey His commands, and love the Lord with all your heart, trusting that He will come for you when the trumpet sounds--when the dead shall be changed, and those who are alive shall be caught up to meet our Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Indeed, be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.

Personal Holiness

One of our popular news magazines relates the story of a southern banker who testified that he had always believed in the Bible, but not until recently did he fully accept Jesus as "personal Saviour." It was following a message he had heard in which Jesus told Nicodemus that he must be "born again" that this bank president likewise came to experience the New Birth. "That sermon turned my life around," he recalls. Now he rises at 5:30 a.m. to read the Bible and pray. Once reticent about his faith, he now talks freely about Christ to people he meets.

While it is always exciting and most exhilarating to hear of those who have experienced conversion, it must be remembered that one's faith is as strong as one's contact with the source of faith--Jesus Christ. Our Lord Himself must ever be recognized as the author and finisher of our faith. We are not advanced spiritually by our popularity. If anything, popularity can hurt, greatly harm, and even hinder our testimony if there can be a flaw found in one's life. For that reason the Scriptures do caution in I Tim. 3:6-7 that a man chosen for the ministry, for example, is not to be a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. Those are Paul's words of caution written under the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

But do not the Scriptures admonish all of us to stand fast in the faith? For while we can have assurance of salvation, is it not possible to backslide and, in backsliding, not be ready for Christ's coming?

While our trust must ever be in the Lord Who is able to keep us from falling and to present us faultless before His presence with exceeding joy, on the other hand, we are cautioned, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

There is ever the danger of falling, and for that reason we are admonished to keep our eyes focused on Jesus and not on our problems or temptations. As long as Peter looked to Jesus who bid him come to Him, walking on the water, he was able to navigate successfully, but the moment he got his eyes off the master and looked at the troubled sea, he went down.

So, throughout the Apostle Paul's teaching, he urges us to be on guard lest we succumb to temptation. To the Corinthians he is heard saying, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." (I Cor. 16:13)

The great Baptist preacher, Charles Spurgeon, expressed the necessity of being ever watchful, particularly in view of

our Lord's coming.

Said Spurgeon: "Watch for Him and be always ready that you may not be ashamed at His advent." Then he asks: "Should a Christian go into worldly assemblies and amusements? Would he not be ashamed should his Lord come and find him among the enemies of the Cross?"

Declared Spurgeon: "I dare not go where I should be ashamed to be found should my Lord come suddenly."

In I John 2:28, we are admonished: "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming." Or, as the Greek text suggests, "in shame shrink back from Him at His coming."

Is it possible to be ashamed at Christ's coming? By the life we are living, could it be we are unprepared for this glorious event? And, might it be possible that we would be left behind were Jesus to come at that moment of unpreparedness?

This scripture we have just quoted expresses the idea that we are to abide in Christ so that when He appears we may have confidence and not in shame shrink back from Him at His coming.

I heard the pastor of one of the largest churches in the country testify that he awakened one morning to find himself crouched in the corner of his bedroom. This verse came to him and he was reminded that if the Lord would have come, he would not have been ready! However, this drove him to his knees and in heartsearching, he became ready.

More and more sincere believers are seeing that the rapture could be a reward to those who are ready, whereas those who are lukewarm in their Christian profession and given over to iniquitous practices could be left behind to endure the chastening fires of tribulation.

Are we not to abide in Christ? John writes, "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not." (I John 3:6)

Thus, our Lord reminds us: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name have done many wonderful works?" Our Lord replies: "And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matt. 7:22-23)

You see, the possibility exists that we might be bold in our profession, but if we have never repented of sin, our faith is not genuine.

As Jesus declares: "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

The trouble with many of us is that we want a religion that allows for some sinning--doing our own thing, and giving in to our own desires; whereas, our Lord reminds us that we must do the will of God who is in heaven.

We think if we pray a little prayer we will be forgiven and we can go our merry way on the merry-go-round of sin--back to confession--more sin, with no change of heart and no regret for our sin.

It's time we get right with God and right with one another, for there is forgiveness for those who will repent of sin, confess it and forsake it, and trust Christ as our Saviour from sin. Then let's get busy serving the Lord and be found doing His bidding when He comes.

Spurgeon tells of going to the home of a parishioner and finding her washing and whitening the front steps of her home. She apologized, but he assured her that we need to occupy 'til He comes. Said Spurgeon; "We are never in better trim for seeing our Master than when we are faithfully doing His work. There is no need for a pious smartening up; he that abides in Christ always wears garments of glory and beauty; he may go in with his Lord into the wedding whenever the midnight cry is heard."

If you are really looking for our Lord to come, you will want to be ready! And you will be ready. By repenting of sin and placing saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, you can be ready.

Writes John; "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." (I John 3:2-3)

So, our future is certain--our destiny is sure--if we are born again into the family of God. We will forsake sin and live holy lives knowing that our Lord is calling us to a life of holiness especially in view of His coming.

John R. Rice, writing in the SWORD OF THE LORD publication, notes that "the average Christian is really indifferent about personal holiness." Says Dr. Rice; "We talk a good religion, but how much heart hunger do present-day Christians have for personal holiness, to be pure in the sight of God, to be set apart altogether and absolutely for Him...Oh, that Christians today would hunger for personal holiness."

Beloved, is that not the message we need to hear? We need this kind of encouragement. We will never be absolutely perfect as long as we are in this life, but if our heart is set on doing the will of God, we can be found ready when our Lord appears.

Indeed, be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

Hindrances to Holiness -

What Holds Back the Power?

Of late we have been reporting on the world-wide moving of the Spirit of God in our day.

There has been something noticeably lacking among evangelical Christians today. The Scriptures themselves bear witness to this to declare that in the last days there would be those who "have a form of godliness denying the power thereof."

This lack of power was predicted by General William Booth who, a half century ago, declared that the greatest evil threatening us in the 20th century would be "religion without the Holy Ghost."

When upon earth, our Lord bid His disciples to tarry until they be endued with power from on high. (Luke 24:49) Again note His promise, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

Billy Graham observes: "We have learned much about the power of the Holy Spirit." Observes Graham: "I believe the time has come to give the Holy Spirit His rightful place in our preaching, in our teaching, and in our churches! We need to go back and study again what Paul meant when he said, "Be filled with the Spirit." We need to learn once again what it means to be Baptized with the Holy Spirit!" Says Graham: "Give it any terminology you want, but we do not have the same dynamic and the same power the early Church had."

Today we should like to discuss some of the hindrances which keep the Holy Spirit from coming in mighty power into our midst.

The first hindrance we might suggest is lack of surrender. Moody, the great evangelist who shook two continents for God, has noted: "The secret of the Holy Spirit's 'coming' in power to the believer is the individual's complete surrender to the Saviour. We do not have to wait upon God to do something for us. He is waiting for us to yield ourselves to Him."

R. A. Torrey says: "The surrendered will and life is the great secret of receiving the Holy Ghost. All turns upon this. We may deal with individual sins, and we may cry to God for the filling of the Holy Ghost, but unless there is total surrender to God at the center of our being, unless we yield ourselves to God, nothing is likely to come of it. Oh, how many have longed, and prayed, and agonized that the Holy Spirit might come upon them, but He came not. There was no yielding of self to God! And then they have yielded themselves to God. They have bowed their faces and said: 'O God, I yield. I give myself up utterly to Thee. I place myself unreservedly at Thy disposal. I hold back nothing, and I hold back from nothing that Thou biddest,' and as they have bowed, the Holy Ghost has fallen upon them."

Dr. James M. Gray, calling attention to the Scripture in Romans 12:1 where our Lord beseeches us to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, says: "God gives you the privilege and the indescribable honor of presenting your bodies to the Holy Spirit, to be His dwelling place on earth. If you have been washed in the blood of the Lamb, then yours is a holy body, washed whiter than snow, and will be accepted by the Spirit when you give it. Will you do so now?"

Dr. Walter Wilson says: "I entreat each of you to go directly to the Holy Spirit Himself, to give Him your body, and then look to Him constantly to do what He wants with that body for the glory and honor of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The second hindrance to receiving God's power is the lack of confession.

Charles Finney received such an overwhelming baptism of power that his words, dropped here and there, seemed to fasten themselves like barbed arrows in the souls of men.

Emphasizing the importance of confession, Finney says: "When, by the Spirit's power, there is an ingenious breaking down, and a pouring out of the heart in confession of sin, the floodgates of revival will soon burst open and salvation will flow over that place."

"A revival of religion may be expected," observes Finney, "when Christians confess their sins one to another."

The principle of specific confession is clearly taught in the Scriptures. In Lev. 5:5 we read: "And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that

he hath sinned in that thing." Sins committed against individuals should be confessed to those who have been wronged with restitution made where possible if we are to receive God's power in abundant supply in our lives.

Lack of death to self will prevent the infilling of spiritual power.

As Moody observes: "Many are praying to be filled with the Holy Spirit when, in fact, they are full already--full of self! They are full of sin, worldliness, and inconsistencies that are separating them from the power of God.

"They should first pray to be emptied of self and sin that there might be room for the infilling and indwelling of the Holy Spirit."

Alexander MacLaren points out: "There is no such force for the spreading of Christ's Kingdom and the witness-bearing work of His Church as the possession of this Divine Spirit. Plunged into that fiery baptism, the selfishness and the sloth which stand in the way of many of us are all consumed and annihilated, and we are set free for service because the bonds that bound us are burnt up in the merciful furnace of His fiery power."

Andrew Murray would remind us, "One of the deepest secrets of the Christian life is the knowledge that the one great power that keeps the Spirit of God from ruling, that the last enemy that must yield to Him, is the flesh. He that knows what the flesh is, how it works, and how it must be dealt with, will be conquerer."

The Scripture says: "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." (Gal. 5:24) Says Murray: "Paul wants to teach them (the Galatians) how the Spirit, and the Spirit alone, is the power of the Christian life, and how this cannot be except as the flesh, with all that it means, is utterly and entirely set aside."

Murray continues: "Let us believe that as we daily glory in the Cross, and in prayer and obedience, yield the flesh to the death on the Cross, Christ will accept our surrender, and will, by His Divine power, maintain mightily in us the life of the Spirit."

The fourth hindrance to the infilling of the Spirit is lack of obedience.

J. Hudson Taylor, commenting on Acts 5:32, writes: "God gives the Holy Spirit, not to those who long for Him, not to those who pray for Him, nor to those who desire to be filled always, but He does give the Holy Spirit to them that obey Him."

Gen. Booth cautioned: "If there is something you are holding back, or refusing to do--some idol, something about which you feel condemned but which you refuse to give up--out with it. Give it no rest. Give it up. Destroy your idols and hindrances with an everlasting destruction."

Let all go! And you will be flooded before you rise from your knees. The world will feel the power of it, and God shall have all the glory.”

Acts 5:32 would remind us that God gives the Holy Ghost to those that obey Him.

The Holy Spirit's incoming is hindered by lack of honesty.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth. Certainly a dishonest or deceitful person cannot receive of God's power.

The Scripture reminds us: “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?”

Before the incoming tide of the Spirit's power, the heart must be cleansed and honest preparation made so that the Spirit may be received.

The sixth hindrance to spiritual power is lack of unity.

Read the account of Pentecost and you will soon discover that the disciples were in “one accord in one place.” Throughout the book of Acts the unity of the Spirit is a prominent factor as the multitude was of “one heart and of one soul.” What power was manifested by these early Christians!

A. B. Simpson once said: “Today the church of Christ has broken to pieces. Here and there we find a sound member, but the whole body is mutilated and severed so that it is not possible for the Spirit to flow with undivided and unhindered fullness through the whole; consequently, we do not have the gifts of the Spirit in the same measure as in the day of Pentecost.”

Simpson then goes on to point out: “What we need today is the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and then the union will come because of the unity, and we shall not need our platforms and our convocations to bring the body together, but bone to his bone, member to member, and heart to heart we shall stand in ‘unity of Spirit,’ and the Church of Jesus will be ‘fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.’”

Lack of hunger will deprive us of the Spirit's power.

The Scriptures would remind us that to hunger and thirst after righteousness is to be filled.

A prominent preacher writes: “More and more every day my heart hungers to be endued with power from on high...in my room alone many nights I say to God, ‘Lord, I would rather die in this room tonight than to preach without the Holy Spirit's power.’”

R. A. Torrey similarly relates how, out of great hunger, he sought the Baptism of the Holy Spirit when he became convinced from the study of the book of Acts that no one had a right to preach the Gospel until he had been baptized with the Holy Spirit.

J. Wilbur Chapman relates how he summoned 30 of his men to assist him in his work in Philadelphia, asking them to pray

for the fullness of the Spirit. One of the men was quite illiterate. He literally murdered the King's English. When he got up to speak, you would have thought he had better sit down. But this man hungered for the Spirit's baptism, and going alone to one of the rooms, he cried out: "O Lord, take all sin from me. Teach me what it is that hinders Thy coming. I will give up everything. Come, O Holy Spirit, come and take possession of me, and help me to win men." This man came forth from the secret place beaming with joy, for his hunger had been met, and according to Chapman, during a three-year period this man had led more than a hundred men to Christ.

The eighth hindrance to spiritual power is a lack of liberty.

Many are afraid of the work of the Spirit's ministry in their lives lest they be overcome with some emotionalism.

Vance Havner says: "Many Christians are afraid of getting out on a limb on the subject of the Holy Spirit when they've never been up the tree." It should be quite natural to enjoy the presence of God in fellowship with His Spirit which should find its expression in joyous liberty.

Someone has declared: "No other public gathering could survive if conducted in as dead a manner as many of our church services. We would end the football and basketball games in one season if we could take the average church crowd and make them act as dead at the football game as they are in church."

Freedom of expression, joy and enthusiasm, should characterize our services. For where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. (II Cor. 3:17)

Then again, lack of spiritual power shows a lack of knowledge of the Word.

Dr. Hyman Appelman, commenting on the Spirit-filled life, says: "First, foremost, beyond the possibility of argument, there must be a full dependence upon the Holy Spirit's instrument which is always the Word of God. We ourselves must be utterly, unalterably, completely saturated with the Word, satisfied of the authority and complete sufficiency of the Bible."

Lack of prayer will stifle the Spirit's incoming in power to our lives.

The devil doesn't want people to know the clear teaching of Scripture which admonishes us that we must have holiness in order to see the Lord. Nor does he want us to understand this teaching.

In some instances he has so greatly confused the doctrine of holiness as to link it with the ability to handle serpents and not be bitten. To some it means only speaking in tongues and the ability to shout, so that confusion naturally results from an understanding of the meaning of sanctification.

Writing to the Romans, the apostle Paul speaks of Christian growth from "righteousness unto holiness." (Rom. 6:19) Doesn't that sound like a second work of grace?

Why shy away from this truth especially when "holiness" or "sanctification" is a part of salvation?

Notice what we read in II Thes. 2:13, "...God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."

We emphasize believing the truth of God's Word to be saved, but why do we not emphasize sanctification, too, when it is so clearly taught in the Scriptures?

After all, we clearly recognize that sanctification or holiness is the work of Christ on the cross. He died to save us and to sanctify us. Thus Paul declares: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (I Cor. 1:30)

Hallelujah!

Thus it is possible not only to have this sanctification that Christ has provided through His shed blood, but we should share this message with others. For that reason we have felt led to prepare this series of messages and place them in booklet form.

Incidentally, most of these messages were delivered in a revival in Canada more than a decade ago. Recently while in Canada, I was told by people who were in that meeting that the conversions that occurred were real and that those who came for sanctification still were enjoying their testimony and living for God, so I was not only convinced of the reality of this experience but for the need of proclaiming this message.

What is holiness?

Webster defines sanctification as that act of grace by which the soul is cleansed from sin and made holy in the sight of God.

Is that not the message we need, particularly in view of the coming of the Lord? We need to repent of sins that may be in our lives and get right with God and with our fellowman in order to be found ready for Christ's coming.

Some who claim to have had this experience of full surrender may need to be quickened anew and refreshed in their experience. The Bible not only speaks of attaining "holiness" but of "perfecting holiness." (II Cor. 7:1) Nowhere in our Christian life and experience should we think we have arrived. There is always growth and development in the life of the believer which finds our Lord more firmly in control and ever glorified.

After all, as Dr. Claude Ries testifies: "Holiness is making Christ pre-eminent!"

May our Lord Jesus Christ be glorified by these messages is our prayer. In His name we pray, Amen.