

The Secret of Spiritual Power

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Table of Contents

	<u>Title Page</u>
<u>Chapter 1</u>	What Christ Said About Holiness
<u>Chapter 2</u>	What Paul Said About Holiness
<u>Chapter 3</u>	What Paul Said About Holiness (Continued)
<u>Chapter 4</u>	What Paul Said About Holiness (Continued)
<u>Chapter 5</u>	What Paul Said About Holiness (Continued)
<u>Chapter 6</u>	What Peter Said About Holiness
<u>Chapter 7</u>	What James and John Said About Holiness
<u>Chapter 8</u>	What Holiness Is
<u>Chapter 9</u>	It Brings Power
<u>Chapter 10</u>	Holiness Rejected Makes Strange Bedfellows
<u>Chapter 11</u>	Holiness Rejected Produces a Worldly and Barren Ministry
<u>Chapter 12</u>	Holiness Rejected Produces a Godless Christianity
<u>Chapter 13</u>	The Heavenly Vision

**The Secret
of
Spiritual Power**

By

Aaron Merritt Hills

**Beacon Hill Press
Kansas City, Missouri**

**First Printing, 1952
Printed in The United States of America**

The Secret of Spiritual Power

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 1

WHAT CHRIST SAID ABOUT HOLINESS

Pentecost filled the world with its fame. It was an epochal hour in Christian history. It might almost be said to have revolutionized the spiritual activities of the kingdom of God among men. It was the subject of prophecy hundreds of years before the eventful day came, and it is now pointed back to as the birth-hour of a dispensation of grace with the Holy Spirit as the reigning Executive of the triune God.

How remarkable it is that a day so prominent and eventful in the history of the Church of Christ should be a subject of contention and debate among the leaders and teachers of the Church! It would be amazing indeed were it not for the curious fact that upon every subject of human thought men have taken sides, and there have been diversities of opinion. A famous writer has said that if there were any conceivable motive for doing it somebody would rise up and deny that two and two are four.

Sometimes from a lack of careful thought on the subject, and often nowadays from a desire to escape the grip of the second blessing theory, men are telling us that the disciples were never converted until Pentecost; still others tell us that they were all backslidden and were only restored. These theories have apparently been invented in the interest both of the theory that "you get it all at conversion" and also the theory that "there is no such thing as sanctification."

Now the evidence is absolute and overwhelming that the disciples were Christians long before Pentecost; for

1. They had "forsaken all" to follow Jesus.
2. They were the children of God, for Jesus said to them: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." They were not then the children of the devil, but the children of God.
3. They were branches of Christ, the Living Vine, abiding in Him.
4. They had long borne a commission to teach and preach and work miracles in the name of Jesus. They even cast out devils -- a thing the children of the devil never do, for his kingdom is not divided against itself.
5. The world hated them "because they are not of the world." The world loves its own.
6. They were given to Christ, and He had kept them, and none of them were lost but one. If not lost, they must have been saved.
7. The world did not know the Spirit, but Jesus said to the disciples: "Ye know him; for he dwelleth with you."
8. Jesus had given them the sacrament to keep in perpetual remembrance of Him.
9. Jesus said of them in the intercessory prayer: "For they are thine. And all mine are thine . . . and I am glorified in them."
10. Again Jesus said: "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one."

No language could make it more evident that Jesus did not class His disciples among sinners. They were sincere

followers of Jesus, and separate from the world.

After the Resurrection, every conversation with His followers indicated that He still looked upon them as His devout and sincere followers.

Now we are confronted by the striking fact that Jesus' prayed for these converted, regenerated disciples, that they might be sanctified. Furthermore, in His last interview He told them of the promise of the Father, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and He strictly charged them to tarry at Jerusalem and wait for it. He told them that it would endue them with power, and fit them to be witnesses in all the world.

He had previously commanded them, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." He had said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." This was the fountain of John Wesley's "Perfect Love," or "Christian Perfection." The crystal stream of Methodism had its rise in the hills of heaven. The burden of Jesus' last conversation with His disciples in the upper chamber, on the eve of His crucifixion, was the ministry of the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist had said: "I indeed baptize you with water. . . but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."

Jesus' parting words to His disciples before He ascended were: "John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

Great souls, when leaving their followers, do not speak on trivial themes in their farewell addresses. Nothing can be more evident than that Jesus regarded the Pentecostal baptism as a matter of the profoundest importance to His followers of all time.

On Pentecost the long-promised and expected blessing came. What happened? The advocates of the second blessing are not theorizing here. We walk on the firm ground of revelation and historic fact. The Apostle Peter was there, one who experienced the blessing and was an eyewitness to all that occurred there, and he bore this testimony before the council at Jerusalem as to what happened when the disciples, and also Cornelius and his household, were baptized with the Holy Spirit: "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying [cleansing] their hearts by faith."

Manifestly this was the cleansing or sanctification that Jesus prayed for in the upper chamber. It too the abnormal, the unnatural, the depraved out of the hearts or natures of the disciples. Peter evidently lost his cowardice and became more modest and humble. James and John lost the worldly ambitions that urged them to seek first and second place in the kingdom, and the passion that wanted fire to fall from heaven and burn up a whole village. Thomas lost the morbid tendency to doubt and disbelieve. Martha doubtless lost her fret about household cares; and all of them lost self-seeking worldliness and became that loving band of unselfish believers wholly devoted to Christ described in Acts, who have been the wonder of the ages.

Along with that heart-cleansing came an unusual power, an sense of the presence of God with them, an assurance of victory over men and devils, that wholly lifted them above all fear or anxiety as to results. Opposition did not check them; persecution did not stay them; threatening Sanhedrins, scowling priests, and persecuting civil powers could not stop their progress. All men suddenly became conscious that those humble, obscure, unlettered disciples had all at once become men of power. Something had happened in their spiritual experience, quite as striking and marvelous as their regeneration, that riveted upon them the gaze of the world, and made them in spiritual life and power wondrously like Jesus, their Lord.

The proof of this epochal second blessing experience in the Bible is absolute. That it sanctified or cleansed the cannot be denied. That it endued them with a superhuman power to propagate their faith is beyond question. That this blessing is for all believers, of every age, Peter distinctly declared at Pentecost.

In the face of these undeniable facts, how strangely out of place it is for religious teachers in the name of Jesus to make light of this Pentecostal experience, and sneer at this second-blessing baptism with the Holy Spirit! It is a sad accompanying fact that the ministers who do it are scarcely saved from the deserved contempt of the world for their

barrenness.

This is the need of the hour in all our churches. Our ministers are conspicuously weak when they might be giants for God. Our churches confront an impudent, scorning world in conscious helplessness, when they ought to march against its spiritual foes, terrible as an army with banners. I am writing these lines in a parish in Louisiana where the worldly, tobacco-using pastor has rejected Pentecost; and as a consequence, he has not won a soul here in these last two years. The churches are clothed with barrenness everywhere, and these sanctification-despising, Holy-Spirit-rejecting, tobacco-enslaved preachers are letting the multitudes slip away from them into hell. A genuine modern Pentecost is the only known remedy for the disease of spiritual paralysis that is confessedly ravaging our churches. This is the Spirit's dispensation; and the preachers and followers of Christ must stop rejecting the Holy Ghost and welcome Him to their hearts in sanctifying power if they would see Christ enthroned in multitudes of people and the kingdom of God come with power among men.

The Secret of Spiritual Power

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 2

WHAT PAUL SAID ABOUT HOLINESS

Paul wrote the Thessalonians as Christians, unquestionably declaring them to be such in the first chapter; and in the third chapter he as certainly prays that they may have a second work of grace in their hearts, "to the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness" (I Thess. 3-13).

Three verses further on (I Thess. 4:3) he writes: "For this is the will of God even your sanctification." Here is a distinct declaration, not that one may possibly get such an experience, but that God has provided for this experience, and that it is His will, that is to say, His command that each of His children should be sanctified. God's revealed will is nothing less than a command.

I wonder any of my readers pray the Lord's Prayer. How does it read? "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." How is it done in heaven by angels? Perfectly. By whom do you pray it may be done on earth? By yourself, if you pray honestly. You would not dare pray, "Lord, let Thy will be done by the other fellow, but not by me." That would be mocking God. And so, Christian reader, you are confronted by this fact, that your sanctification is God's will; and Jesus taught you to pray, "Thy will be done." To be consistent, you should either stop praying the Lord's Prayer or begin to seek sanctification with all your heart. That is the way Paul felt about it.

Four verses further on (I Thess. 4:7) he writes: "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." If we are called to be Christians at all, we are called to be sanctified Christians. God wants us to be at our very best. We cannot afford to be anything less. Through His atoning mercy, by His holy Word, and by the convictions and wooings of His Spirit, He calls us all to this blessing. And God never called a child of His to anything that was not provided for in His grace. The Holy Spirit, by whom Paul says we are sanctified, stands ready to do His work. Jesus, our great High Priest who baptizes with the Holy Spirit and fire, stands ready to do His part. God, the triune God, is ready. The only question is, are we ready?

In the next chapter Paul tells us, "Quench not the Spirit" (verse 19). Why not? Because He sanctifies us (Rom. 15:16; II Thess. 2:13; I Peter 1:2) He cannot accomplish this divine work unless we open our hearts to His influence. To resist and oppose the doctrine of a second work of grace, and fight sanctification, is to quench the Spirit who sanctifies.

This command is followed by a remarkable prayer, four verses later (23): "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless." This is the second prayer in his brief epistle for holiness and sanctification. It is very remarkable for its clear teachings on this subject.

1. "The God of peace" himself does the sanctifying. This rules out completely the idea of self-sanctification by your own pretty living and doing, by your own fasting and praying, and growing. Nobody ever gets the blessing by that route. It is not at the end of that line. In the thirty years of my ministry I have never heard one Christian testify that he got sanctification by growth. God himself does the sanctifying if it is ever done.

2. The verb sanctify is in the aorist tense, denoting singleness of action, an instantaneous completed work, as distinguished from a continuance or repetition. There is no getting sanctified by degrees, by a long process of indefinite length and uncertain continuousness. The work is to be done in a flash of time by the baptism with the Holy Ghost.

3. The God of peace himself is thus to sanctify us wholly, "through and through." This rules out all limitation of the work to any department of our being, or any single faculty. Some tell us, and would have us believe, that all God's commands

end in the will; and that when that is correct in its choice or purpose or decision, all duty is met, and God asks no more. This text utterly refutes that idea. God wants the whole being -- intellect, sensibility, and will; body and spirit -- to be cleansed and made fit to be His temple.

4. The prayer continues: And may "your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless." The body (Greek, soma) means our physical organization with all its natural appetites and passions and necessary functions. The soul means the animating principle of the body connected with the senses. The spirit is the higher soul to which the influences of the other world address themselves. It is by this faculty that we know God, and feel His power and presence, and recognize our duty to love and obey Him. This is all to be sanctified, and then preserved so. This is all there is of a man -- body, soul, and spirit. There is nothing else about him but his clothes. And the dress question will easily be settled when the whole being is freed from depravity and the heart is right with God. What a blessedly complete work God proposes to do for us! Take all the disordered elements out of us -- all the abnormal appetites, all base propensities, all proclivities downward that would draw us away from God and sink us in hell -- and then preserve us in that blessed state of purity and Christlikeness until God calls us to himself! This is what Paul prayed for, and it is enough to make us all shout, "Amen!" and go in for the blessing. It ought to make everybody hunger and thirst for this great salvation, and cause everyone who has it to be filled with an unutterable joy.

This prayer is immediately followed in the next verse by a gracious promise: "Faithful is he that called you, who also will do it." Callesth you to what? Oh, he has just told them that God calls them to sanctification (4:7). And now, right after this prayer for sanctification, he says, "He who calls you will do it." Do what? Why, sanctify you. Nothing else can be made of this blessed and encouraging passage of scripture. The steps, which are six, are as follows:

1. The will of God is that we be sanctified (4:3).
2. God calls to the blessing (4:7).
3. The command. "Quench not the Spirit," whereby ye are sanctified (5:19).
4. The prayer. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly" (5:23).
5. And may your "spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless" (5:23).
6. Faithful is He who calls you to be sanctified, who also will do it.

A brother once said, "It took two to sanctify me." "Who were they?" "God and I." "What did God do?" "He sanctified me." "What did you do?" "I let Him do it." This is testimony true to life. Anybody can get sanctified who will yield himself to God for the blessing, and seek it with all his heart.

There is one other passage in the epistle, weighted with awful solemnity, which I have purposely reserved to the last. After saying, in I Thessalonians 4:7, that God calls us to sanctification, he adds: "He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit." We are sanctified by the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Jesus administers this blessing, and it is God's will that we should have it. Therefore he that despiseth this blessing, and opposes it, and refuses to have it or to seek it, despiseth not St. Paul, or John Wesley, or Brother Morrison, or Dr. Carradine, or any other teacher of holiness. He "despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit."

The First Epistle to the Thessalonians unquestionably teaches a second work of grace, subsequent to regeneration, called sanctification. It is urged upon you in the most solemn way. Do not reject this truth. By so doing you despise God and quench the Spirit, who has been sent to SANCTIFY YOU WHOLLY.

The Secret of Spiritual Power

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 3

WHAT PAUL SAID ABOUT HOLINESS (Continued)

The Apostle Paul is the wisest interpreter and expounder of the gospel of Christ that the ages have produced. It becomes supremely important to learn what he thought of the Pentecostal experience. Did he believe in a distinct, epochal spiritual experience, subsequent to regeneration, and quite as marked in its influence upon the soul?

A goodly number of wise theologians believe that he did. Andrew Murray says: "To the disciples the baptism with the Spirit was very distinctly NOT His first bestowal for regeneration." Dr. Watson, a prince among Methodist theologians, says: "We have already spoken of justification, adoption, regeneration and the witness of the Spirit, and we proceed to another as distinctly marked and as graciously promised in the Holy Scriptures. This is entire sanctification, or holiness."

Theologians ought not to write so unless the Apostle Paul taught it. For we may be sure that if there was a desired and required second experience Paul would certainly have found it out, and would have told the churches about it. Did he do it? And if so, what estimate did he put upon its importance?

We will let the apostle himself decide the matter, as he writes the First Epistle to the Thessalonians.

In the first chapter he makes it absolutely certain that he was writing to Christians, as follows:

1. He wrote his epistle "unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ." It was not fashionable to be a church member in those days. Nobody would join the church who did not have religion enough to forsake the world and heathenism and endure persecution for Jesus' sake. We may be sure these persons were Christians, or they would never have abandoned the religion of their country and their fathers to belong to a church "in the Lord Jesus Christ."
2. Paul says, "We give thanks to God always for you all." Who can believe that this apostle was thanking God always for a mob of sinners?

If he was thanking God for sinners, he certainly had many to be thankful for, as the heathen world was full of them. But that is unthinkable. He was thanking God for them because they were Christians.
3. He remembered "without ceasing" their "work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." Here were believers who had the three cardinal Christian graces -- faith, hope, and love -- walking with God in an earnest, laborious, patient spirit. They were manifestly Christians.
4. He called them "brethren beloved of God" (1:4, margin). This phrase is never in the New Testament applied to sinners.
5. He said he knew their election. People are not elected who are not candidates. Had they been sinners in the "gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity," it would never have occurred to Paul that they were elected.
6. "And," he says, "ye became imitators of us, and of the Lord" (1:6, A.S.V.). Who ever saw a large company of sinners picking out the best man on earth and the Lord Jesus himself to imitate?
7. They "received the word . . . with joy of the Holy Ghost." In all my work as a minister these thirty years, I have never seen a company of sinners who got any joy from the Holy Ghost. He brings joy and comfort to true believers; but He

brings only awful conviction -- the pangs of hell -- to unbelievers or sinners.

8. These Thessalonians became "ensamples to all that believe." If sinners, they must have been a choice variety, such as I have never seen! A good example to all the believers in a whole province!

9. They "sounded out the word of the Lord . . . in every place your faith to God-ward is spread around." They had a real, vital faith, not in themselves, but in God; and they had preached Christ so earnestly that everybody knew where they stood and in whom they believed. This does not indicate that they were weak Christians, much less unregenerate sinners.

10. Paul says: "Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God." No better description of a genuine conversion could be asked for. They had actually forsaken the idols of sin, and quit the sin business, to "serve the living and true God." The God of mercy and grace requires no more as a condition of sonship.

11. They waited "for his Son from heaven." Nobody has ever yet found a large company of sinners on this earth lovingly on the lookout for Jesus to come from heaven. It is the last conceivable thing that sinners would desire. Paul wrote to these same church members that the Lord Jesus would be revealed from heaven, "with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus." No, indeed! Sinners are not waiting for, and joyfully anticipating, Jesus to come from heaven. They do not want Him to come. They would prevent His coming and drive Him out of the universe if they could.

But these excellent Thessalonian Christians, full of faith and hope and love, earnest in life, imitating Paul and Jesus, were waiting for their Lord from heaven. If these people were not converted, regenerated, justified disciples of Christ, human language would fail to describe such. A church filled with such Christians would today be esteemed unusually spiritual, and its praise would be on all lips.

But did the apostle urge upon such Christians a second work of grace, after such a radical regeneration? He certainly did.

1. In the second chapter he assured them that he and Timothy had more than the experience of justification. "Ye are witnesses and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe" (v.10). In other words, they had the experience of sanctification.

2. In the third chapter, tenth and thirteenth verses, he writes them that he is "night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith . . . to the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness." In other words, their faith had laid hold of Christ only for justification; he now wished them to perfect their faith by receiving the Pentecostal experience, the baptism of the Holy Ghost for sanctification, "to the end" they might live a holy and unblamable life, as he and Timothy were living.

And the apostle felt that this second experience was so supremely important that it was the object of his prayers night and day. He knew that nothing short of the Pentecostal experience would give them the stability and steadfastness in the Lord that he coveted for them. Nothing but the crucifixion of the carnal mind would render those believers "unblameable in holiness," and wholly pleasing to the Lord. And so he prayed for them exceedingly, and urged them on to the second work of grace.

The Secret of Spiritual Power

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 4

WHAT PAUL SAID ABOUT HOLINESS (Continued)

We have seen in the previous two chapters that the chief of the apostles wrote to the Thessalonians his first epistle, urging them in the most explicit terms to seek entire sanctification as a second work of grace. It was a church only recently converted from heathenism, yet entire sanctification was the standard the apostle set for them. But we hold that the apostle was inspired; it was therefore the standard set by the Holy Ghost.

Some may suppose that this was with Paul an exceptional way of writing to a church. It will probably surprise such readers to learn that St. Paul wrote or spoke in at least five books of scripture in which the Pentecostal blessing of sanctification is clearly taught.

In Acts 20:32, we find him addressing the elders of the Ephesian church. He says: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them which are sanctified."

In Acts 26:17, 18, he relates his commission from Jesus at the time of his conversion. It was this: "Delivering thee from . . . the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes . . . that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by in me." Here are the two taught pardon and sanctification.

Paul writes to the Christians at Rome, "called to be saints." In Romans 5:1, 2, he writes, "Be justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace we stand." Here again we have the two blessings of justification and sanctification, the latter being called the standing grace.

In 6:6 he writes: "Knowing this, that our old man. is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed." This means the destruction the of the old man of carnality.

In Romans 6:11 he says: "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ." Here again is the death of the inbred sin, which brings sanctification. We reckon by faith, and God makes it a fact.

In Romans 6:13 he adds: "Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." This is the consecration that issues in sanctification, for he says, in 6:19: "So now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness."

In Romans 6:18 "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness," and in verse 22: "Being made free from sin, ye become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life."

In Romans 12:1, 2: "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. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and an acceptable, and perfect will of God." These people were already Christians -- "brethren"; but they are exhorted to go forward to the Pentecostal blessing of sanctification, which the apostle calls "the perfect will of God." For in another place he says: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification."

In Romans 15:16 he tells us that we are "sanctified by the Holy Ghost." If the apostle did not teach a second blessing to

these Roman Christians subsequent to regeneration, and urge it upon them as supremely important, then language could not do it.

The apostle writes to the Corinthian church in the same strain. In I Corinthians 1:2 he addresses his epistle, among others, "to them that are sanctified in Christ us."

In 1:10 (A.S.V.) he beseeches them to be "perfected together." In 5:7 he tells them "to purge out . . . the old leaven." In II Timothy 2:21 he assures us that if a man so purges himself, "he shall be . . . sanctified."

In I Corinthians 6:11 he says of some of them: "Ye are sanctified . . . by the Spirit of our God."

In II Corinthians 1:12 (A.S.V.) he glories in the fact that he has behaved "in holiness and sincerity." In the fifteenth verse he expresses an intention to visit the church that they "might have a second grace" (margin). Over and again he lets us know that that second grace is the Pentecostal experience.

In II Corinthians 1:22 he tells us that God seals us and gives us "the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."

In II Corinthians 7:1 he exhorts: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." How could there be given a plainer exhortation to sanctification? Lest any Christian should think this a severe and perhaps impossible requirement, he writes in 9:8: "God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work."

We turn to his epistle to the Galatians, and we find this great theme still present in the apostle's mind. He tells us in 3:2 that we receive the Spirit (who sanctifies) by faith, and in the next verse he asks the pointed question: "Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Manifestly Christian perfection is here held up as the goal of endeavor. And he taught that it came through the Spirit received by faith.

In the same chapter (3:14) he shows that Christ died that upon the Gentiles might come (1) the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus (justification), (2) that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith (sanctification).

In the fifth chapter (5:17) he points out the inevitable conflict between the carnality of the heart and every attempt to serve God, in the striking words: "For 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." The next verse gives the remedy: "But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law." The uniformity tendency to sin is destroyed by the Holy Spirit in our hearts. And so Paul urges this Pentecostal blessing upon us in the words: "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh."

We turn to Ephesians, and we find the Pentecostal theme is predominant. The apostle scarcely gets his letter started before he tells us (1:4) that God chose us "before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

In the thirteenth verse he tells the Ephesians: "In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise." Jesus called the Pentecost al outpouring of the Spirit "the promise of the Father."

In the same chapter (1:18, 19) he breaks out into a prayer, "That ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe." We know what the hope of the calling is, for he tells us we are chosen to "be holy," and called unto sanctification.

In the third chapter (3:14-20) he breaks out into another prayer, that believers may be strengthened with the Spirit, and know the length and breadth and height and depth of the love of Christ, and "be filled with all the fullness of God."

In the next chapter (4:12) he tells us that evangelists, pastors, and teachers were given "for the perfecting of the saints" -- till we all attain unto a full-grown man, "unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." In I Corinthians 3:1 he calls some Christians "babes," because they are "carnal." But here he tells us that means are provided for the perfecting of them until they are full-grown, that is, freed from carnality by sanctification.

In 4:24 he tells believers to "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." In 4:30 he tells them not to grieve the Spirit, whereby they are "sealed."

In 5:18 he tells them to "be filled with the Spirit," which rules out every form of sin.

In 5:25-27 he says: "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it . . . that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle . . . but that it should be holy and without blemish."

Yet with these two prayers and nine passages of scripture in this single epistle urging upon believers the Pentecostal experience of sanctification, multitudes have their eyes blinded to this great truth. Even many religious teachers cannot see that the apostle taught sanctification as a second work of grace.

The Secret of Spiritual Power

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 5

WHAT PAUL SAID ABOUT HOLINESS (Concluded)

The apostle writes to the Philippians, his best-loved church. He cannot get through the first chapter without a prayer for their sanctification in these words (verses 9-11): "And this I pray . . . that ye may be sincere and void of offence till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness." In the next chapter (2:14, 15) he says: "Do all things without murmurings and disputings, that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke [blemish, A.S.V.]."

In the next chapter (3:15) he assumes that he himself has evangelical perfection in these words: "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded."

In Philippians 4:19 he gives a promise that includes sanctification in the wide sweep of its meaning: "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." As Frances Ridley Havergal says, "What do we need so much as to have our hearts cleansed and kept sanctified, so that we shall not sin against God?"

Paul writes to the Colossians. Again in the first chapter he prays for their sanctification. He has already told them that they have "faith in Christ Jesus"; but he prays (1:9-12) that they "might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that

ye all pleasing who hath made to be . . . saints in light."

In Acts 26:18 he calls this an "inheritance among them which are sanctified." In Colossians 1:22 (A.S.V.) he tells them Jesus died "to present you holy and without blemish and unprovable before him." In 1:28 he declares that the object of all preaching is "that we may present every man perfect in Christ."

In the second chapter he speaks of spiritual circumcision not made with hands "in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh." This can mean nothing less, or else, than the putting off of the old man of depravity in sanctification by the Holy Spirit. In Colossians 3:5 he writes, "Mortify [make dead] therefore your members which are upon the earth," and "above all these things put on charity [love], which is the bond of perfectness" (3:14).

In 4:12 Paul quotes the prayer of Epaphras: "that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." Thus again in this epistle, the second blessing of sanctification is clearly urged upon justified Christians.

He writes to the Thessalonians. We have already discussed at length the teachings of the first epistle. We will only re-quote the remarkable verses here.

I Thessalonians 2:10: "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe."

I Thessalonians 3:10, 13 "Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith . . . to the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness." In 4:3, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification." In 4:7, "Go hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." In 4:8, "He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit."

Chapter 5:19, "Quench not the Spirit." Chapter 5:23, 24: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless . . . Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."

When those verses are thus put together, they make wonderful reading on the subject of the second blessing; for they were written to people who, Paul says, were already Christians.

In his second epistle to the same church he wrote (II Thess. 2:13, 14): "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto our gospel."

St. Paul writes to Timothy. He tells him (I Tim. 2:15) that people will be saved "if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety." Chapter 6:11-14, "But thou, O man of God, . . . follow after righteousness, godliness . . . keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable."

II Timothy 2:19, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

II Timothy 2:21, "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

Verse 22, "Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness . . . with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." II Timothy 3:17, "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good work."

He wrote to young Titus (Titus 2:12): "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."

Two verses later he tells us why Jesus died (Titus 2:14, A.S.V.): "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession."

In the third chapter, he names the works of grace, justification and sanctification, in these words (3:5, 6): "He saved us, by the and RENEWING OF THE HOLY GHOST; which he shed on us abundantly." That is precisely what was promised by God, and accomplished at Pentecost, as Peter plainly testified.

We come now to the Epistle to the Hebrews. If this letter had been written on purpose to teach the doctrine of sanctification, how could it have been more explicit? It has fourteen passages on this subject. Here they are.

Hebrews 2:11: "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."

Hebrews 6:1: "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection."

Hebrews 7:25: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost." This could not be said of Jesus if He did not save us from "the old man" of "indwelling sin."

Hebrews 9:13, 14: "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer . . . sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ . . . purge your conscience?"

Hebrews 10:10: "By which will we are sanctified."

Hebrews 10:14, 15: "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us."

Hebrews 10:29: "Who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing."

Hebrews 11:40; 12:1: "God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. Wherefore . . . let us lay aside . . . the sin which doth so easily beset us."

Hebrews 12:10: "He [chastens] for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness."

Hebrews 12:11: "Afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness."

Hebrews 12:14: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

Hebrews 13:12: "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might with his own blood, suffered without the gate."

Hebrews 13:20-21: "Now the God of peace . . . make you perfect in every good work to do his will." Conclusion

In the examination of the writings of the Apostle Paul we reach the following remarkable results.

1. There are more than seventy passages of scripture urging upon believers the Pentecostal experience of sanctification, showing beyond all question how important he esteemed it to be.
2. He prayed nine prayers that Christian believers might become sanctified.
3. Fourteen times he commanded believers to obtain this blessing.
4. In urging upon them this Pentecostal experience, he used the verb "sanctify," in its various tenses, sixteen times; the noun "sanctification," nine times; "righteousness," eight times; "perfect," seven times; "holiness," five times; "holy," four times; "perfection" and "perfectness," four times; "righteously," "cleanse," "without blemish," and "unblameable," twice each; the words "holily," "godliness," "without spot," "without reproach," "a pure heart," "complete," and "uttermost," once each. (See King James and Authorized versions.)

In the face of these facts, can any candid, teachable, and honest mind deny, or doubt for one moment, that the Apostle Paul urged upon Christian believers the second Pentecostal experience of sanctification?

The Secret of Spiritual Power

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 6

WHAT PETER SAID ABOUT HOLINESS

We have seen in previous chapters how highly Jesus and St. Paul estimated the importance of Pentecost. Paul was the wisest interpreter and greatest theologian of the Christian religion and Church. As we have seen, he urged the Pentecostal experience upon Christian believers, as a second work of grace, in more than seventy passages of scripture. He evidently believed in the baptism with the Holy Ghost for sanctification.

What about Peter, the first leader of the apostolic band? Did he, too, accept this doctrine? We shall see. He had heard his Savior in the upper chamber pray that the disciples might be sanctified. He had heard His parting charge to tarry in Jerusalem and wait for the promise of the Father. He had heard the parting promise, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not, many days hence." "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

Peter was among the number that waited in the Pentecostal chamber. He was there the morning that the Holy Ghost fell upon them, and he, with the rest, was filled with the Holy Spirit. The day did not pass before he was urging the multitude in these words: "Repent, and be baptized . . . for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:38, 39).

In Acts 15:8, 9, he tells in a speech what happened both to Cornelius and his household and to the disciples at Pentecost: "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith."

Now we turn to his epistles.

In I Peter 1:1, 2, he writes "to the . . . elect . . . through sanctification of the Spirit."

He does not get through the first chapter before he writes (I Peter 1:15, 16), "But 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."

He says again (verse 22): "Seeing ye have purified your souls . . . love one another from a clean heart" (A.S.V., footnote).

In the next chapter (I Peter 2: 1, 2) he exhorts them thus: "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."

In I Peter 2:5, he says: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood."

In I Peter 2:9 (A.S.V.), he tells them: "Ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, people for God's own possession."

In I Peter 2:21, 22, he writes them: "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin."

In I Peter 2:24, he gives the very purpose of the death of Christ: "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree; that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness."

He commands Christians, in I Peter 3:15, "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts." Dr. Godbey makes this striking comment on this passage: "The unsanctified Christian has Christ and depravity in his heart. Christ rules or He would not stay. Cast out all else and let Christ rule alone. That is to sanctify Christ as Lord of the heart." The verb "sanctify" is in the aorist tense. Dr. Steele renders it: "Sanctify once for all place in your heart for Jesus as Lord."

In I Peter 4:1, 2, the apostle says: "He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God."

This First Epistle of Peter closes with the promise (5:10): "But the God of all grace . . . after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." Dr. Godbey observes that the Christian does not need to suffer any longer than it takes the old man to be crucified; then God will do the perfecting work, and stablish the Christian in sanctification. Second Epistle

At the very outset (II Peter 1:3), he assures Christians that Christ "hath given unto us all things that pertain unto LIFE and GODLINESS." We receive life in regeneration, and godliness in sanctification.

Then in verse four he says Jesus "hath given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." This escape from corruption is the fundamental idea of sanctification. It is not corruption suppressed and retained, but corruption slain and escaped from, that is held up as the blessed hope of the Christian's heart.

In II Peter 3:11, he writes: "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all conversation [living] and godliness."

He then closes the epistle with the injunction (3:14): "Be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless." The same adjectives are applied to Jesus, the precious Lamb without spot or blemish, indicating that we can live like Jesus, the Lamb of God. Conclusion

Here, then, are seventeen passages of scripture in the lips and from the pen of Saint Peter. In some of these he vigorously exhorts and commands believers to get sanctified; in others he speaks of Christians as having already obtained the blessing. He uses such phrases as: "cleansing their hearts," "clean heart," "an holy priesthood," "an holy nation," "ceased from sin," "partakers of the divine nature," "escaped the corruption that is in the world," "without spot," "without blemish."

He used the words "sanctify" "sanctification," "purified," "righteous," and "perfect," one time each; he used the word "godliness" twice and applied the adjective "holy" to men five times. (See King James and Authorized versions.) He was the voice of God to give all believers the command, "Be ye holy"; for I am holy."

He plainly taught that this was induced in the heart of a Christian believer by the cleansing baptism with the Holy Ghost, the Pentecostal experience.

Can any fair-minded student of the Holy Word bring all these seventeen passages of scripture together, weigh their meaning, the definition of the words, and the spiritual import of these wonderful phrases, and then be in doubt as to whether the Apostle Peter placed a high estimate upon Pentecost? Yea, more, is it not perfectly evident that he believed that the Pentecostal baptism cleansed the hearts of Christians and enabled them to be "holy," "sanctified," "without spot and without blemish"?

Now add to these seventeen passages by Peter the more than seventy others of the same import from the Apostle Paul. Eighty-seven passages from two authors of the New Testament, urging Christians to become sanctified and holy, by commands, exhortations, promises, and prayers!

To deny that these writers taught an epochal experience called sanctification or holiness, subsequent to regeneration, is

to trifle with the solemn Word of God!

The Secret of Spiritual Power

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 7

WHAT JAMES AND JOHN SAID ABOUT HOLINESS

We have already seen in previous chapters what Jesus and Paul and Peter seemed to think of the importance of the Pentecostal experience. The evidence is ample, yea, superabundant. They undeniably regarded the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit as a second work of grace subsequent to regeneration.

This being true, we might naturally expect so important a Christian doctrine would find expression in the writing of James and John. We are not disappointed. Although James's epistle is not distinctly doctrinal, yet unmistakable traces of this doctrine are there.

In James 1:4 we read: "But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." Here is a most manifest reference to that Christian perfection or life of perfect love, induced by the Holy Spirit, which John Wesley so mightily magnified. Godbey says: Pride is the Satanic mother of all impatience. It is the baptism with the Holy Spirit that kills this Satanic pride in Christian hearts, and makes us meek and humble."

In James 3:2 we read: "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man." Here, again, is this evangelical perfection, or sanctification, evidenced by a holy conversation.

In James 4:8, 9 we have the commands: "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and PURIFY your hearts, ye DOUBLE MINDED." In this message the doctrine of the second work of grace is clearly implied. (1) Here are two classes named -- sinners and double-minded people. Sinners have no double mind. Their mind is single -- set on sin, hostile to Jesus and loyal to the devil. Sanctified people have no double mind. Their mind, also, is single -- wholly set on righteousness, wholly loyal to Jesus, and hostile to the devil and all his works. It is the regenerated, justified but un sanctified Christians, who have the double mind. When they would do good, evil is present with them. For the flesh [sarx] 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." It is this double-minded man that is so unstable in his ways. They love Jesus and His truth and His service; but the carnal mind often betrays them into sudden acts sadly at variance with the general tenor of their life. They suddenly do things over which they sadly grieve, and for which they heartily repent, and seek the forgiveness of God. It makes them appear inconstant and double. (2) James commands these sinners to cleanse their hands, that is, forsake their outward sins; but he commands the double-minded to get their hearts purified by the sanctifying work of the Holy Ghost. It is never sinners, but always regenerated children of God, who are exhorted in the Scriptures. to become "purified," and "sanctified," and "perfected."

I John

We now turn to the First Epistle of John. Here we are on the old battlefield, where those who fight holiness think they get their weapons from the arsenal of God's Word. It is only by a shocking misinterpretation of scripture that anything can be found here against the doctrine of sanctification.

To understand the epistle, one must know what led the Apostle John to write it. A class of heretical teachers had arisen in the Early Church called in history Docetae. They held these errors:

1. All sin was connected with the physical body, but not at all with the spiritual nature. Matter was essentially impure.
2. Christ did not have a real body, but only a phantom body. He was born without any participation of matter.

3. All the acts and sufferings of His human life, including the crucifixion, were only apparent. They denied accordingly His resurrection and ascent to heaven.

4. It would follow logically that the Savior made no real atonement for sin by the shedding of His blood.

5. Having led them so far into error, Satan induced them to plunge into riotous excesses and licentiousness. And when Christian teachers urged them to forsake their sins and accept Jesus, they replied that they had no need of a Savior, and had no sins, and no sin. Only their physical body had done anything out of the way; their souls, their real beings, were still clean and pure, and had no need of saving grace.

These awful errors were seducing believers and corrupting the Early Church.

The Apostle Peter (II Peter 2:13, 14) wrote of their reveling in their love feasts, "while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from in; beguiling unstable souls."

Jude said of them (verse 4): "There are certain men crept in unawares . . . ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness."

John explains his epistle by saying (I John 2:26): "These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you." "Little children, let no man deceive you" (3:7).

Now let us see how and what the apostle wrote.

In the first paragraph (I John 1:1-4) he says we know Jesus was no phantom Christ, a man only in appearance; for we have "seen [Him] with our eyes," and "handled" Him with our hands, and "we have heard" Him, etc.

In the second paragraph there are six verses -- written in pairs. The first member of each pair contains the truth of the gospel of full salvation, justification and sanctification by the all-sufficient, cleansing Blood.

These three alternate verses, put together, read as follows:

Verse 5. "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

Verse 7. "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."

Verse 9. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to FORGIVE us our sins, and to CLEANSE us from all unrighteousness."

Here are the two blessings stated in unmistakable language, forgiveness which is received in justification, and cleansing which is received in sanctification. This great truth, the possibility of being cleansed "from all unrighteousness" (unrighteousness), is the mainspring of the holiness movement of our day.

Now we turn to the second members of these three pairs of texts, which administer a crushing blow to the awful error that was sweeping over the churches like a tidal wave of destruction from the bottomless pit.

Verse 6. "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness [indulging in orgies of lusts, as these vile teachers are doing], we lie, and do not the truth."

Verse 8. "If we say we have no sin [as these Christ rejecters are saying while still practicing vice], we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

Verse 10. "If we say that we have not sinned [as these wretched profligates are saying while steeped in iniquity and full of lasciviousness], we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

I John 2:4. "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments [as these seducers are doing while full of disobedience], is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

2:22. "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?"

We could quote many more passages to show the meaning and intent of this epistle.

It is passing strange that the opponents of holiness should quote these verses which St. John wrote against the teachings of licentious heretics, to oppose the blessed truth of full salvation. By so doing they make the eighth verse flatly contradict the seventh, and the tenth contradict the ninth. No sane author, even though uninspired, would thus contradict himself.

We now proceed to show what further the beloved disciple said about sanctification.

I John 2:5. "Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God PERFECTED."

3:3. "Every man that hath this hope in him [Christ] PURIFIETH himself, even as he is pure."

3:5, 6. "And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him SINNETH NOT."

3:8. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that HE MIGHT DESTROY the works of the devil." No work of the devil is so peculiarly malignant and so awfully harmful as this implanting of the germ of sin, the poison of depravity, into the moral nature of every child of Adam. This gave to each member of the race a spirit of alienation from God, a satanic relish for evil. This disaster, if not repaired, would be absolutely fatal to the kingdom of God. But Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil, to correct this depravity and restore the race to its rightful heritage of holiness. It would be an awful reflection on Jesus to say that Satan could inflict an evil on the soul which the infinite Son of God could not repair.

4:12. "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his LOVE IS PERFECTED in us.

4:17. "Herein is our love made PERFECT, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment."

Here we touch that love that is the "fulfilling of the law," and makes us wholly acceptable to God. This is the evangelical perfection of love, for which John Wesley contended, and which he so strenuously urged upon the regenerated children of God. It comes only by the sanctifying baptism with the Holy Spirit. Conclusion

We have seen that James and John, in describing the work of grace in the heart, used the word "perfect" four times; "perfected" twice; and such phrases as "purify your hearts," "cleanseth," "cleanse from all unrighteousness" "purifieth himself" "take away sins," and "destroy the works of the devil" -- eleven passages in all.

If such Words and phrases do not teach heart-cleansing and sanctification, human language could not do it.

And When we add to these the words of Jesus and Paul and Peter, we have more than a full hundred passages of scripture, by every variety of expression, teaching that it is the privilege of the regenerated child of God to receive the sanctifying baptism with the Holy Ghost.

Whoever does or does not have this experience, this certainly is the teaching of the Word of God. There is nothing for the honest soul to do but to bow to the truth and seek a clean heart. If we walk in the light, led by the Spirit, the blood of Jesus Christ will cleanse us from all sin. "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." And, "Faithful

is he that calleth you, who also will do it."

The Secret of Spiritual Power

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 8

WHAT HOLINESS IS

We have seen in the foregoing discussion how very much is said about this Pentecostal experience in the New Testament. The verb "sanctify" is used twenty times, and the noun "sanctification" ten times; and such words as "holy," "perfect," "righteousness," "perfection" and "holiness," many times each. Moreover, such words and phrases as "cleanse," "cleanseth from all unrighteousness," "cleanseth from all sin," "purity your hearts," "purifieth himself," "a pure heart," "without blemish," "with reproach," "purge," "complete," "sinneth not" -- such words, phrases, and kindred phrases move through the New Testament like a flock of blackbirds through the August sky. And the blessing indicated by all these scriptures is connected unmistakably with Pentecost. It was the baptism with the Holy Ghost that cleansed the hearts of the disciples, "sanctified," "pure," "holy," "perfect," What, now, do these words mean? What is the Pentecostal blessing?

The Bible teaches us that through race-connection every member of the human race has inherited a depraved and fallen nature from Adam. Universal human experience proves it sadly true.

That depravity is called in Scripture "the old man," "the body of sin," "sin that dwelleth in me," "the law of sin," "the body of this death," "the carnal mind," the "root of bitterness," "the sin that doth so easily beset us," and "the law of sin and death." If for the word "law" we substitute its synonym "a uniform tendency," and read "a uniform tendency to sin and death," we have it exactly. It is a PROPENSITY TO EVIL in the heart that is "ENMITY AGAINST GOD."

The above list of terms is horribly suggestive; but the thing named in the heart is more horrible still.

Both the Bible and theology alike teach us another thing, viz., this "carnal mind," this proneness to sin, is not removed in regeneration. This explains why Jesus prayed that His regenerated disciples might be sanctified; and why the apostles invariably urged the Pentecostal experience upon Christian believers, but never urged sinners to seek it. It is a blessing to which only the regenerated child of God is eligible. Hear the theologians on this point.

Frederick W. Robertson, the great preacher of Brighton, England, said in a sermon: "Two sides of our mysterious twofold being here. Something in us near to hell; something strangely near to God. Half diabolical, half divine; half demon, half God. In our best estate and in our purest moments, there is a something of the devil in us, which, if it could be known, could make men shrink from us. The germs of the worst crimes are in us all."

The elder Dr. Stephen Tyng said to his communicants: "Be watchful. Your Christian course is to be maintained in the midst of temptations. Though truly a child of God, you will still carry with you a heart far from sanctified, a remaining sinfulness of nature in the appetites and propensities which demands increasing vigilance. You cannot afford to relax your vigilance over the outgoings of your own sinful nature."

Wesley said: "That believers are delivered from the guilt and power of sin we allow; that they are delivered from the being of sin we deny."

In other words, all Christians, though converted, regenerated, are still "carnal," precisely as the Corinthians were, and as the early disciples were, until they have their Pentecost.

While this tendency to sin, this troublesome "old man," remains in the Christian's heart, the tendencies to backsliding will always be multiplied and strong; to fall will be comparatively easy. The Christian life will be robbed of much of its victory and joy. Its fruitfulness will be lessened and its growth dwarfed, and the Savior's delight in us will be greatly

abridged, as those in whom His grace has not been permitted to do its perfect work.

Now it is the appointed work of the Holy Spirit to sanctify the heart, to cleanse the being from this indwell when we plead for the Spirit, will perform His priestly office, and baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire.

This incoming of the divine energy will consume carnality, "cleanse" the being, "purify the heart," "crucify the old man," "saved from all cleanness," "purge away the dross," "like a refiner's fire." No evil propensity will be left, like a traitor in the citadel of the soul, to betray it to Satan in some evil hour. Then, "the peace of God that passeth all understanding" will mean something; for there will be no longer any civil war within our hearts. Bull Run defeats and Gettysburg struggles will be a thing of the past; for there will be no more a law in our members warring against the law of our mind. The flesh will Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that we may not do the things that we would. The flesh will be "done away" by the Holy Spirit, who crucified it, and a heavenly peace will reign in the soul. The unruly appetites and fierce passions will all become normal and sweetly obedient to the law of Christ. Body, soul, and spirit will be sanctified through and through, and the whole being will say "Amen" to the blessed will of God.

This is what is meant by "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." All unrighteousness of being, everything improper and abnormal in nature, tending to sin and provocative is cleansed away by the Pentecostal baptism; and the child, once so cursed by sins and carnality, becomes "holy, acceptable unto God."

It is not difficult to find reasons why God wants this Holy Spirit cleansing wrought within us. He hates sin and every trace of the work of Satan within our souls. He loves, like any parent, to have us reproduce His perfect likeness, and reflect to the moral universe His glory. He wants us to be at our best and clothed with power for service, and this we never can be while sin dwelleth in us. He loves to show to onlooking angels what Jesus can do in saving sinners with an uttermost salvation. It is to the praise of His glory who "loved the church, and gave himself for it; he might sanctify and cleanse it . . . that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle . . . but that it should be holy and without blemish."

There remains a little space briefly to indicate the conditions on which this Pentecostal baptism may be received.

1. It must be sought of God in importuning prayer. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" But no lazy praying ever got this blessing.

2. There must be a complete surrender of the will to God in absolute obedience. We read in Acts 5:32 that God gives the Holy Spirit "to them that obey him." It means hearty, whole-souled obedience to the slightest whisper of the Holy Spirit. It means to surrender whatever the conscience, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, condemns; to consent to be, to do, to say, to have, to want, or to go as God directs, without hesitation and without complaint.

I am willing
To receive what Thou givest,
To lack what Thou withholdest,
To relinquish what Thou takest,
To suffer what Thou inflictest,
To be what Thou requirest,
To do what Thou commandest.
Amen.

3. Present your bodies a living sacrifice to God, in complete consecration. "Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Pass yourselves over into God's hands to own you completely and forever, your body to be the temple of the Holy Ghost, and kept pure for His service; your mind to think for God; your heart to love Him supremely; your lips to talk for Him; your time to be spent and your possessions to be used in His service.

4. When one has consciously gone so far in seeking this blessing, it is not difficult to obtain the prize. He has reached

believing is received by faith. We are "sanctified by faith." The heart is cleansed by faith. As Jesus is received by faith for pardon, so the Spirit is received faith for cleansing and empowering. The Holy Spirit will come in Pentecostal power when the obedient, consecrated, praying soul believes for the blessing.

The Secret of Spiritual Power

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 9

IT BRINGS POWER

Power is universally coveted. Men love to gratify ambition and be dominant. Achievement will bring notoriety and publicity; conquest will be succeeded by renown. Authority calls forth the consideration and obeisance of others. How highly these things are esteemed by multitudes! Oh, yes people want power. It will bring honor, prominence, and gain. Everybody is after it. By it the railroad magnate car down his rivals; the politician can secure a better office and lay a heavier hand upon the state; the lawyer can get more clients, and the doctor more patients, and the preacher a larger audience and a bigger salary? What a fine thing it is to have power!

Jesus promised power to His disciples. But be it noticed that their hearts were first cleansed by the Holy Ghost. It is not safe to entrust carnal men with power. It would almost certainly be abuse and perverted to selfish ends. Witness what men have done with power through the ages: warriors that have ravaged realms, kings that have wasted the resources of empires, prelates that have ruined churches and impeded the progress of the kingdom of God. Jesus' own disciples would have done it before Pentecost. John and James wanted first and second place in what they supposed would be a material and visible kingdom of God. Had they secured such positions, without an increase of grace, they would most likely have been ruined.

But the great gift of power to the disciples was wisely postponed until their hearts were cleansed by the Holy Spirit. Then they were free from selfishness, and would use their extraordinary power with an eye single to the glory of God. Peter could then preach his moving sermon, not at all for Peter's exaltation, but for the glory of Jesus. The whole apostolic band, suddenly clothed with an unwonted power that made men marvel, could remain sweet, humble, and modest without a touch of which so often disfigures the character of carnal man. Paul, cleansed of the Holy Spirit, could move like a conqueror and king among men, and yet on himself as the servant of all, and rejoice in the privilege of suffering for the blessed Lord.

What then is the power which Jesus gives?

It is a power to bear witness for Jesus. "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." It is painful to observe how many professors of religion there are who have no testimony to give for their Lord. They are silent in the prayer meeting (or never go to it), silent in the private conversation about their spiritual life. If the world depended upon them for knowledge, it would never hear that it had a Savior.

A friend of mine once asked President Finney why Prof. _____, of Oberlin College, never told his experience. He promptly replied, "I think it is because he has none to tell." Whether these dumb Christians have any experience at all, God knows. But it is more than likely that their heart-life is so unsatisfactory, and the pulse-beat of their piety is so feeble, that they are reluctant to talk about it to others. There is no gushing spontaneity and overflow of soul, no burning fire within that will not suffer them to keep silence.

But let these same believers come to a Pentecost, and they would at once be like the early disciples of whom it is written, "And they were all filled with the Holy. Ghost, and began to speak."

When Peter and John were forbidden to talk about Jesus, their prompt answer was, "We cannot but speak." Their hearts were too full; like an artesian well, they must pour out what was in them. When men and women get the Pentecostal pressure and power upon them, their religion will be heard from.

But that witness-bearing was the early form of preaching. Men will have power to preach with a divine unction when the Holy Ghost comes upon them, which will be manifest to all. Sinners will be pricked to their hearts, and will hasten to the altar to unburden their souls, and be rid of their load of sin. Believers will be fed and built up in the faith of the gospel. President Mahan said that prior to his baptism with the Holy Ghost he was successful in leading men to Christ, but he could get them no further; he did not know how to feed the flock of God. All ministers have a similar experience. Indeed it is now getting worse than that. Without a Pentecostal experience ministers are now finding themselves unable to win converts.

It would be difficult to name one conspicuously great soul winner during the last two hundred years who was not by the baptism with the Holy Spirit equipped for his work. Such men as Edward, Wesley, and Whitefield, Fletcher, Finney, Caughey, A. B. Earle, Moody, Bishops Matthew Simpson, W. M. Taylor, and the Booths, Phoebe Palmer and Maggie Van Cott, are illustrations of the enduement of Pentecostal power. A hundred others only less famous might easily be named who graduated from the Pentecostal chamber into usefulness and fame. It is not at all an exaggeration or overstatement to say that they were made by the baptism with the Holy Ghost.

I find the following in the Texas Christian Advocate, in an article on "The Enduement of Power":

"In the last twenty-five years the subject of spiritual power for service has engaged the earnest and prayerful attention of Christian men as it has not since the days of the apostles. We are to review the results of these profound studies as given to us in the published works of the leading pastors and evangelists of Europe and America. A symposium of views upon this subject that, so far as I am aware, has never before been made.

"I ask first of all, in what does this enduement consist? what does it do for men?"

"It is what the Scriptures call a 'baptism of the Holy Ghost,' by which a Christian becomes endued with power for the work to which God has called him. It was received by the disciples upon the day of Pentecost, and by multitudes in every age since that time.

"Dr. Fletcher Wharton, in a published sermon, asks, 'What is it, then, to have this spiritual power?' He answers: 'Let me answer. Let me answer slowly. It is to have God in our souls. Not some other one's experience of God, but God. Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.

"President Finney says that the term 'power,' used in our text, means 'The power to prevail with God and man, the power to fasten saving impressions upon the minds of men.'

"Dr. Adam Clarke says: 'The apostles were endued with power for three purposes, one of which was that their preaching might be attended by the power of the it, so that their hearers might believe and be saved.'

"It is the united testimony of all effective workers that the apostolic baptism of fire, giving power for service, is the supreme need of the Christian today.

"Says Dr. B. M. Long: 'Our efforts will be futile unless we are anointed by the Spirit of God.' He adds this important truth: 'Too many of us are satisfied with conversion, and therefore fail to go forward and get the anointing of the Spirit, the baptism of power.'

"Mrs. Booth: 'I most unhesitatingly assert that the great want is power.'

"Mr. Moody: 'God has a great many sons and daughters without power. A great many people are thinking that we need new measures. That is not what the Church of God needs today. It is the power that the apostles had. When the Spirit of God is upon us for service, we are anointed, and then we can do great things. So we are not going to lose anything if we tarry till we get this power.'

"Mr. Finney said: 'No one has at any time any right to expect success unless he first secure this enduement of power from

on high. It is the supreme need of today.'

"The importance of this matter is vastly intensified if we remember that Jesus sought and obtained this enduement by the Spirit. It was at His baptism by John that the Spirit came upon Him, anointing Him for His life work.

'F. B. Meyer: 'His human nature needed to be empowered by the Holy Spirit before even He could do successful service. If Christ waited to be anointed before He went to preach, no young man ought to preach until he, too, has been anointed by the Holy Ghost.'

'Mr. Moody: 'Even Christ Himself did not undertake the great work of preaching until the Holy Ghost descended upon him for this special service.'

"A medieval legend relates that once upon a time Satan turned preacher and spoke with great beauty and eloquence upon the humble birth, the lowly life, the cruel death of the Son of God upon Calvary. He spoke with such tenderness and pathos that his hearers wept at the recital of the tragic story. At the conclusion of the sermon, one who knew him asked why he preached. He replied: 'I preach without unction, therefore all who hear me, although I give them the pure gospel, are but hardened by it.' St. Paul refers to just this thing when he says to the Church at Corinth: 'My speech and my preaching are not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.'"

Surely Bishop Thoburn is right when he says: "If we could bring back the church of Pentecost to earth, or, rather, if we could receive anew universally the spirit of that model church of all ages, the idea of evangelizing the world in a single generation would no longer appear visionary; but on the other hand it would seem so reasonable, so practicable, and the duty to perform it so imperative, that everyone would wonder why any intelligent Christian had ever doubted its possibility, or been content to let weary years go by without a vast universal movement throughout all the churches of Christendom at once to go forward and complete the task."

But still more dear to God than all our achievements is ourselves, and God gives us not only power to do but power to be. Multitudes are willing to do great and brilliant things for every one who is willing to be like Jesus. People prize notoriety above character, and achievement more than personal worth. God is pleased to have us like Him. The Holy Spirit, therefore coming into the heart in Pentecostal power, cleanses us -- in other words, gives us the power to be holy. This is the power that will make us pleasing to God, and like God. "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."

Oh, how wonderful a feat it is for the Holy Spirit to fix us up so that Jesus shall not be ashamed to own us as kinsfolk in the presence of the Heavenly Father and the holy angels! This is power indeed! power to overcome the world, the flesh, and the evil; power to be "more than conquerors through him that loved us."

This above all else is dear to God, to have us show to an onlooking universe that "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin," that we are redeemed from the curse of the fall, and by this redeeming grace can walk the earth in the white robes of righteousness, and remain "unspotted from the world shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, ye shall be witnesses."

The Secret of Spiritual Power

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 10

HOLINESS REJECTED MAKES STRANGE BEDFELLOWS

In my rounds in many states I have observed a remarkable spirit of union and fraternity among people who seemingly would have no bond of union whatever. Here are the conflicting theories of these separate classes.

1. There are those who proclaim very openly that there is no such thing as sanctification. It is a state impossible of attainment. The devil puts his finger to his nose at this announcement, and all the giddy and backslidden of earth nod their assent, and the tides of worldliness and sin roll on "merry as a marriage bell."

2. Another group rise and declare that they "got it all at conversion." Satan indulges in a little broader smile, and every imp of the pit is delighted, and all their confederates in the dead churches are serenely happy over the between class No. 1 and class No. 2.

3. Another company testify that they are of the opinion that somehow they must have missed it at conversion; but they hope they are growing into it, or would at least like to do so. Beelzebub, at this, laughs audibly; his confederates in the pit join in, and class No. 1 and class No. 2 open their ranks to welcome class No. 3. They all clasp hands and, without the slightest sense of inconsistency, sing, "How pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity and love!"

4. Another large throng say that sanctification is a good thing, that would be very convenient to have around, if we could only get it in this life. It would truly be just the thing to help us through the tight places of our earthly pilgrimage. But the inbred sin of our natures is so deep-seated that the blood of Christ cannot reach it, nor the fire of the Spirit-baptism consume it. Therefore we must wait until the great physician, death, purges our hearts of the Satan loose a peal of laughter that makes the wreathing clouds of the ascending smoke of torment tremble with the waves of jubilant sound. All the demons of the pit join in to swell the chorus. All the careless and the backslidden of earth stop their card playing and dancing long enough to make a motion that classes No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3 admit class No. 4 into fraternity. It carries unanimously, and they all join in singing, "The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above."

5. A still larger throng rise and say "Yes, sanctification is a good thing. We must doubtless all have it to be for heaven. But it is beyond the possibility of either any divine grace or even death, to effect it; it is to be wrought in us by our purgatorial fire" This transfers the whole thing over to Apollyon's territory! And he rises amidst great applause, and moves that this view be celebrated by a carnival in hell. It is unanimously carried with a din of merriment that is indescribable. Meantime this mirth is catching on earth. Bishops and presiding elders and church officials smile and joke about this universal sanctification which, like the grace of God, leaves none out. The spirit of union grows wider, and the first four classes open to take in the fifth. They lustily sing: "Brothers, brothers all are we, A jolly confraternity."

It begins to look as if all humanity were going to be banded together in unity and love.

6. A little company rise and humbly say, with a heavenly radiance on their upturned faces: "After our conversion we sought, by faith, purity of heart as a second work of grace. The baptism with the Spirit came upon us with the suddenness of Pentecost. We are sanctified now; for 'the blood of Jesus Christ . . . a hallelujah of praise floats down from the skies. But quicker than a flash the devil leaps to his feet with a roar of rage that makes every cavern of hell quiver. Every power of darkness fairly howls his hate, every hell-bound bays his loudest. Meantime on earth every spiritual harlot and covetous moneybags and scheming ecclesiastic and carnal bigot and backslidden worldling, and all the other five classes, who were so lenient towards one another's divergent views, open up in a torrent of vituperation and rage. With consent they cry, "Down with this heresy!" "Put them out!" And all earth and hell pour out their hottest venom against these

devoted people, reminding one of the enmity that once howled about the cross of Christ.

How is all this to be accounted for? How can all those other five classes tolerate one another so graciously as common bedfellows, while they rise in such a storm of hate against the testimony to sanctification as given in the blessed Word?

Candidly now, is not this the only explanation: that this doctrine is the truth, and the devil is determined that none shall testify that the blood of Jesus . . . cleanseth us from all sin"? He raises earth and hell to put this testimony down. John Wesley long ago said, "This is the word which the devil peculiarly hates, and stirs up his children against; but it is the word which God will always bless."

Let those who band together to fight holiness think on these things.

Let them ask how it is that the irreconcilable divergence of the first five views troubles nobody, and the adherents of them are in such sweet peace with one another; while they all unite in virulent opposition to the sixth view, by John Wesley and his spiritual descendants, and belch forth a common chorus of hate like that which raged about the Cross, springing from ever class and condition of men.

Is not this plainly the old war of carnality against truth and God? Is it not the same contest, age-long, between good and evil, light and darkness, righteousness and sin?

In a Texas conference some years ago three men preached on the subject of sanctification. The first held that it was gotten at the time of conversion. The second held that Christians grew into it after conversion. The third held that we obtained it at death. But all three of those ministers, and all the rest who did not care when they obtained it, or whether they received it at all, or whether there was any such thing, banded together and expelled from the ministry a fellow minister for preaching sanctification as a second work of grace, received by faith after regeneration!!

Truth forever on the scaffold,
Wrong forever on the throne,
Yet that scaffold sways the future,
And, behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow,
Keeping watch above His own.

What more pathetic passage is there in Christian literature than John Wesley's closing appeal, "On Christian Perfection?" "Who is he that will open his mouth against being cleansed from all pollution, both of flesh and spirit, or against having all the mind that was in Christ -- has the hardiness to object to the devoting, not a part, but all our soul, body and substance to God? Let this Christian perfection appear in its own shape, and who will fight against it? It must be disguised before it can be opposed. It must be covered with a bearskin first, or even the wild beasts of the people will scarce be induced to worry it. But whatever these do, let not the children of God any longer fit against the image of God. Let not those who are alive to God oppose dedicating all our life to Him.

"We allow, we contend, that we are justified freely through the righteousness and the blood of Christ. And why are you so hot against us because we expect likewise to be sanctified wholly through His Spirit? How long will you who worship God in spirit . . . set your battle in array against those who seek an entire 'circumcision of heart' who thirst to be cleansed 'from all filthiness of flesh and spirit,' and to 'perfect holiness in the fear of God?' Nay, we your enemies because we look for a full deliverance from the carnal mind, which is enmity against God? Nay, we are your brethren, your the vineyard of our Lord, your companions in the kingdom and patience of Jesus."

The Secret of Spiritual Power

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 11

HOLINESS REJECTED PRODUCES A WORLDLY AND BARREN MINISTRY

Every worthy man will seek to magnify his calling and make it honorable. Every true soul craves success. The nobler the occupation, the more honorable the ambition to succeed. Of all human callings, the most sacred and the most important is to stand as God's mouthpiece and ambassador, to plead with guilty souls to be reconciled to God. A man is dead indeed who would not be anxious to succeed in a work which rescues men from eternal ruin, and gets the smile of God and heaven for a reward. People with monumental courage climb burning buildings to rescue the helpless from the flames; they dash through the breakers to rescue the shipwrecked from the billows. What ought we to do to snatch men and women from an endless hell?

And yet there is not such zeal, we are pained to confess, in the ministry in general as there ought to be. Lawyers often plead with more enthusiasm and eloquence when only the value of an old cow is at stake than preachers manifest in pleading for souls for whom Christ died. Richard Baxter once said: "Nothing is more sad than to see a dead minister in to dead souls the living gospel of the living God."

There are two difficulties or perils that confront every minister:

1. The world puts upon his spirit a steady pressure, a devitalizing influence. Its temptations beat upon him from every quarter as the surf beats upon the rock that rises out of the deep. His very position multiplies his perils. His gifts and character make him welcome and sought after by his fellows. The prizes of life appeal to his ambition. The smiles of society greet him, and the blandishments of the world charm him and bribe him to forget the seriousness of his purpose. Honor waves her magic wand, and self-indulgence, like a sorceress, whispers her incantations to his tempted soul. All these together, by a constant leaking away of spiritual forces, exhaust the life, and the from his loving Lord.

Then other things than God become his reliance. Fraternities invite him to depend upon their friendly help. Culture in the head is substituted for Christ in the heart. Eloquence and oratory rather than Holy Spirit are deemed more essential to success. The newspaper and the supplant the Holy Word, and the flashy to hungry hearts in the place of the gospel of the atoning Christ. Gradually, but none the less surely, the life becomes self-centered rather than Christ-centered. The holy abandon of the being to Christ in self-sacrifice, like a seed sown in the soil, is unknown. The sublime truth of Jesus, "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal," is not understood. Selfishness becomes the law of action, and it consumes the heart of piety like a canker.

2. As an outgrowth of this state of heart and life, truth itself becomes nebulous and unreal. Speculation takes the place of a "Thus saith the Lord." Failure in preaching the old gospel, because a lack of dependence upon God, nurses the foolish idea that changed; that new truths and new measures are essential to the new conditions. The "gospel of Christ" which Paul was "not ashamed of" is relegated to the lumber-room, or stake of criticism. The young preacher is given to by the theological professor that he must be "up to date" in evolution, higher criticism, and social settlements; he goes from the seminary to his first pastorate with supercilious contempt of old-fashioned is wholly unphilosophical, and as for SANCTIFICATION, why should there be a second blessing when the first is quite superfluous? Education and confirmation are entirely sufficient for this wonderful new generation coming on from our Sabbath schools and our cultured homes! Thus it comes to pass that revivals in many quarters are spurned; full salvation, or, for that matter, any salvation, is discounted; and the old concern for lost souls does not press, like an ever-present sorrow, upon the pastor's heart. The church becomes a social club, and the pastor its leading lecturer and the toastmaster at periodical suppers!!

God forbid that I should say that this is the universal condition of the Church! But that this is the condition in some quarters, and that the tendency is toward it in many, cannot be denied.

Hence we have an educated, polite, fashionable, worldly ministry whose conspicuous barrenness, in all denominations, is the astonishment of men.

Recently I was told of a minister who is talented and brilliant, and once was famous as a soul winner. At one time he led one of the greatest revivals that ever occurred in the Southwest, in which six hundred people found God. After that he was brought face to face with Pentecost. After deep deliberation he refused to pay the price of sanctification. Since then, during several years, I am informed, it is doubtful if he has won a soul, and he has said with bitterness "I hate the very word sanctification." In other words, he deliberately rejected Pentecost and he is left in barrenness and bitterness of soul, even hating "the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14, A. S. V.).

The Secret of Spiritual Power

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 12

HOLINESS REJECTED PRODUCES A GODLESS CHRISTIANITY

The phrase "A Godless Christianity" sounds like a meaningless contradiction; an absurdity of speech. But let us not be too sure that it is meaningless. I am moved to write this by General Booth's graphic description of the dangers confronting the twentieth century: "I am of the opinion that the dangers which confront the coming century will be religion without the Holy Ghost; Christianity without Christ; forgiveness without repentance; salvation without regeneration; politics without God; and heaven without hell."

The words are startling in the extreme. But, alas! there is enough in current phases of the popular religion to make them no idle picture of an imaginary alarm. For instance,

1. Have we no "politics without God"? The great Gladstone said, "As I think of the political sins of England I tremble when I remember that God is just." When we see our own land, and the other of Christendom licensing the infamy of the liquor traffic, and our cities licensing brothels and tolerating gambling hells, and the great political parties down on their knees before the oligarchy of rum, can we believe that old General Booth was so very far out of the way? One of our most brilliant United States senators a few years ago declared that "morality in politics is an iridescent dream!" If such an atrocious sentiment should ever prevail in this country and pass unrebuked, and become the law of political action, then "politics without God" will no longer be a dreaded specter but a baneful reality. But,

2. Are none talking of or expecting forgiveness without repentance? Who can doubt it as he contemplates the low living, the moral obliquities, and measureless worldliness of people professing godliness? What mean the vicious habits, the cherished animosities, the low tastes, the loud and profane speech, the Sabbath desecration, the awful irreverence and financial crookedness of multitudes of church members? Each one of them thinks himself pardoned, and expects to be saved. Why the abounding hatred of the doctrine of holiness, as a possible experience if sin is not still loved and willingly cherished in the heart?

Nothing is more certain than that this is not God's picture of repentance. He says "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts." Shame and self-loathing and abhorrence of iniquity, coupled with a self-abasing confession and forsaking of sin, are the characteristic of that repentance which God is pleased to honor and reward with forgiveness. But the advocates of the doctrine of necessary and continuous sin either fall far short of any such experience or their doctrines belie their hearts. Such a doctrine, universally believed, would land the Church in universal godlessness.

3. Who has not heard of salvation without regeneration? A fashionable minister of a fashionable church some time ago blandly informed his delighted auditors that conversion and regeneration were no longer needed as they once were; our dear people are now so cultured in Sabbath schools and high schools and colleges that the violent experience of a new birth is quite unnecessary; a little catechetical instruction and church joining are quite sufficient. The preachers who have joined the godless lodges, and sported with the world until they have lost all spiritual power to lead people to God, are very prone to adopt this theory. It is a nice robe to cover their barrenness, such a beautiful whitewash for their sepulcher of rottenness! They can now flood their churches with multitudes of unconverted worldlings, and boast of church joiners, and offer incense to their statistics, and pass on to a higher appointment and a larger salary, and cover their shame. Meantime the poor, deceived, deluded church members are populating hell! If this becomes universal it will mean a church swallowed up in the maelstrom of godlessness.

4. Christianity without Christ -- we shall have it as an awful reality when our preachers all do as some of them already do,

get their themes from the daily papers instead of from Word, and preach about everything else but Jesus, the only Hope of sin-cursed men. I was once holding a revival meeting in Michigan. The international Sabbath lessons at the time were in the Gospel of John. There was a popular minister in the neighborhood who was teaching a large Bible class of young men in his Sabbath school. He had not, as I was informed, taken a lesson from the Bible in six months; and the particular Sunday that the Sabbath schools in America were studying the wonderful intercessory prayer of Christ in the upper chamber, this popular preacher was talking to his class about Portugal! I once attended the Sunday evening service of a prominent preacher of Boston. His theme for the evening was "The Gospel of Greece." He announced for his next Sabbath evening the "The Gospel of Montenegro!" What is needed today is men who will preach the GOSPEL OF CHRIST, "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

5. Heaven without hell. Preachers are now becoming too refined to offend the sensitive tastes of their cultured parishioners by any mention of the realms of the lost. The word hell is too gross for their gracious lips to frame. The very idea of it is banished from thoughts, along with the ghosts and spooks that tormented our superstitious and benighted ancestors, things which enlightened people of our day have happily outgrown.

I once heard a prominent preacher in Hartford, Connecticut, say that "if anybody feared God it was because he did not know Him. A famous preacher in Boston declared, "There is nothing in God to fear."

This awful delusion of no hell is sweeping over the willing ears of our luxurious, easygoing age. How blindly such preachers read history! What! the God of the hurricane, and cyclone, and pestilence, and thunderbolt; and of Sodom and Gormorrah, and of the Canaanites, and of ancient Jerusalem; the God of the wrecked civilizations and lost empires! -- nothing in Him to fear! The writer of the Epistle

to the Hebrews evidently thought otherwise, and wrote "Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and Godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire."

I was once on a train on my way to Cincinnati to lead a revival meeting. Right behind me were three men: a drummer for a wholesale liquor house, a man who confessed that he had won all the clothes he had on in a bet, and a man who boasted how he was constantly cheating the railroads in a matter of freight -- in other words, a liquor man, a gambler, and a thief. After a time their when one of them said with a bland smile, "There isn't any hell. Beecher has filled it up." And so it is liquor men, thieves, gamblers, debauchees, the profane, the vile, the worldly, the sensual, the devilish, and the fallen preachers -- all are happy to believe that there is no peril in sin, and nothing in God to fear.

This belief, were it universal, would make of modern society another Sodom.

6. But lastly, and to my mind the worst of all, and the root from which all the other errors spring, is religion without the Holy Ghost. This takes out of our modern church life all change of heart, all regeneration, all witness of the Spirit, all sanctification -- in short, all the supernatural; and substitutes poor human for the divine. Are we in no dangers from this type of religion getting among us? What mean the covert and even open sneers at revival and conversions and the baptism with the Holy Ghost? How is it that churches are depending wholly upon the culture and oratorical skill and presence and social standing of their preachers, and with in their turn, are teaching the people to ignore the Holy Ghost. Witness the following: I supplied the pulpit of a large church in Massachusetts some years ago. At the close of the sermon, an aged minister said to me: "It seemed good to hear the old gospel once more; our last pastor, in seventy-three sermons and prayers, made no reference to the Holy Spirit!"

Two or three years ago one of my students saw a preacher peer under the pews and say contemptuously: "Where is that thing that you call the Holy Ghost? You wouldn't know Him from an old sow if should see Him!"

Another of my students heard a preacher say in his prayers: "O Lord God, Thou knowest that we know there is no such thing as the Holy Ghost." Another of my pupils saw a little time ago in Oklahoma a preacher go about the church before his audience, waving his hat in the air and crying blasphemously: "If there is any Holy Ghost in the house we want to get Him out!"

If this kind of conduct is not akin to the sin of blasphemy that hath never forgiveness what could be? And it is driving

God from our sanctuary services, clothing the churches and sending multitudes to hell. This religion without the Holy Ghost.

A prominent official of a great church, in an address before a great convention, took the position that children did not need conversion -- merely training up in the right way. He made religion to be an evolution and education. He discounted religious experience, and by assertion and illustration made religion to consist merely in taking hold and performing Christian work. If ever this kind of teaching takes possession of the Church and goes to seed, we shall have a godless Christianity, a civilization lost, a church damned.

Let holiness people draw near together and stand firmer than ever for an inspired Word, a genuine repentance, a regeneration begotten of the Spirit, the sanctification by the Holy Ghost, God ruling the nations, righteousness the law of life, and Christ all in all.

The billows of unbelief and sin may be rising; but ours is the cause of truth, and our movement inspired by the Holy Spirit is the hope of the world.

The Secret of Spiritual Power

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 13

THE HEAVENLY VISION

In spite of the stares of the wise, and the world's derision, Dare travel the star-blazed road, dare follow the Vision.

The world is a vapor, and only the Vision is real -- Yea, nothing can hold against hell but the Winged Ideal. -- Edwin Markham

We are in a world where the whole course of things tends to secularize and degrade whatever is angelic in the soul. Aspiration is depressed, judgment is warped, conscience is drugged, faith is one, and hope is slain by the incessant grind of earthliness.

Whatever tends to stimulate the moral nature and bring men into higher condition than belong to their ordinary experience is a preparation for seeing invisible things as really and clearly as if they were visible. These visions -- for such they are -- come in innumerable ways: sometimes by a flash of truth upon the aroused intellect, sometimes through the quickened affections, sometimes through the awakened moral sentiments, sometimes through the excited imagination. A thousand things and occasions can play upon the corded soul and lift it above itself, till sordid cares are forgotten, and the burdens that have depressed the spirit are thrown off, and the Son of God breaks the chains of Satan that have bound him. He then stands and looks for a brief space with clear eye upon spiritual and eternal things. Clouds disappear, mists vanish, the glamour of unrealities is dispelled, and for one moment he sees as in the light of God.

How blessed a thing it is that there is in the nature of man that out of which may come these heavenly visions! How gracious that God kindly uses this possibility for moral ends, and arrest at times the attention of the soul and fixes it upon eternal things! Peter had such a vision when God would take narrow bigotry out of his heart and teach him the sublime truth of the common fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

Little Samuel had such a vision when God would make the child acquainted with himself, and cause him to be the mouthpiece of Jehovah to a guilty house and a fallen people. It was Samuel's call and induction into office as the prophet and reformer of Israel.

Gideon had such a heavenly vision when God would lead him out of obscurity and timidly and fearfulness of heart, and clothe him with power for leadership and deeds of daring.

Saul, the mad bigot, breathing out threatening and slaughter, hating Jesus and His followers, in spite of manifold evidence of Christ's divinity and the innocence of His disciples -- this excited, half-insane fanatic received a sudden vision of the glory and divinity of Jesus, and the wickedness of his persecutions, and the awful folly of vision smote him and made him fall before the pierced feet. He bowed his will in submission, and his life was forever changed. John, imprisoned on a barren and desolate isle for Christ's sake, filled with sorrow over what seemed the impending doom of the kingdom of God, receive a comforting vision of the Son of Man's reigning in supernal glory, overcoming the prince of darkness, and setting up His eternal kingdom of light and love. The aged apostle gathered hope, and sent his comforting message and loving warning to the churches to prepare them to resist the on-sweeping persecution of the pagan emperor.

Such were visions, and such their varied purposes in other days. God for similar ends is sending them yet. Some illustrations of the working of God's Spirit and providences will throw light upon this subject.

A college student in England had neglected his studies, rioting at night with dissipated companions, and sleeping in the

classroom when he ought to have been listening. A fellow student came into his room one morning before he had risen from his pillow and solemnly said to him in the name of Jesus: "Paley, you are a fool! You are wasting your opportunities. Do not throw away your life. I have no talent, but you can make of yourself what you will." Years afterward Paley wrote: "I was so struck with what he said that I lay in bed until I had formed my plan for life. I ordered my fire to be always laid at night. I arose at five o'clock in the morning, and read steadily all day. I allotted to each portion of the day its proper branch of study, and became Senior Wrangler." What an hour that was when God sent to that young man a vision of his possible greatness and impending ruin! A resolution was formed that converted a wrecked and dissipated young man into a consecrated scholar and one of the most stalwart defenders of Christianity, till all time and all eternity will be debtor to his influence.

Sometimes souls are aroused by special providences to hear the voice of God and change their destiny. Such was the case with both Lord Clive and Garfield. Lord Clive, the founder of England's great Indian empire, landed in India a wild, reckless youth with a purse empty and a character lost by dissipation. Weary of life, which was a disgrace to his friends and a burden to himself, loading a pistol and putting the muzzle to his head, he drew but only to flash the powder in the pan. Renewing the priming once more he put his finger on the trigger and the muzzle to his brow, and was about to draw when, impressed by his remarkable escapes, he laid the pistol down, saying, godless and graceless man as he was, "Surely God intends to do some great things by me that He has so preserved me!" Thus the failure of the deadly weapon to take his life was the voice of God to his soul, and made him the founder of a Christian empire.

So with Garfield. The reading of a bad book fired his youthful mind to leave the society of his prayerful mother and have a sensational career at sea. He went to a vessel on Lake Erie to seek service as a sailor. The captain cursed him and the sailors jeered at him so brutally that he was abashed. He then thought to begin lower down by service on a canal-boat. He fell or was knocked into the fourteen times the first trip, and he could not swim. One night in some way, while he was handling the rope, it caught in the crevice of the boat by kinking and then slipped suddenly and threw him into the dark waters where none could see him but God. He caught the slack rope as he sank, when it suddenly straightened and, climbing hand over hand, he regained the vessel. Another kink in the rope had caught in the crevice and saved him. Drenched as he was, he sat down in the darkness to think. He threw the rope into the crevice six hundred times and it would not kink again. He said to himself: "I might throw this rope ten times as many times without its kinking, so there were six thousand chances against my life. Against such odds Providence alone could have saved me. God therefore thinks my life is worth saving, and if that's so I will not throw it away on a canal-boat. I'll go home, get an education, and become a man." Thus again a striking Providence aroused a reckless youth to a sense of his worth, by which a Christian statesman was saved to the world.

Oh, these experiences that heaven's messages into the soul these VISIONS that lifts the curtain of destiny and turn wandering and tardy feet into the path of divine appointment! How gracious they are! What benedictions from heaven!

And they come to Christians also as a kindly call to a higher and fuller life. It was the prayers of two holy women, pleading for Moody's anointing with the Holy Spirit for special service that brought him his heart-hunger for God, his vision, and all that he afterward became. It was in the gray dismal morning in London that the holy Mr. Studd came to and F. B. Meyer's room and moved him to welcome the Holy Ghost in all His blessed fullness into his heart. Dr. Wilbur Chapman says: "I had had visions of this power of the Holy Spirit, and glimpses of what I might be if I were 'filled with the Spirit,' but all this time, as it was with the disciples at Ephesus, was a great lacking." At last by reading a tract received a vision of how to receive the blessing and he bowed and entered in.

The prophet Isaiah had a vision of the holy God and a holy heaven, and was convicted for HOLINESS, and received the blessing. It is the hour of all hours to a believer when this vision and call to holiness comes. The late Professor Drummond says: "The departure of the soul from God begins when the believer rejects the tender of holiness. He thus turns away from God to face the perils of moral deterioration and death. It means moral suicide and ante-mortem damnation."

Mr. L____ stood high in the church of which a friend of mine was pastor -- a preacher of full salvation. A revival wave of the holiness kind struck that church, and it brought to Brother L---- the vision of a clean heart. But he held off and advocated the growth theory. He stood for a time face to face with God, and the issue consciously rejected sanctification. He soon began to neglect the house of God. The family altar went down. Zeal for the church wanted. Another revival

came, in which his own children were converted, but he dodged it. The faithful pastor urged upon him present holiness as the only reliable thing in the midst of life's uncertain. But he refused all pleadings and persuasions, holding out against the call of God. A few weeks later he fell from a tree and was killed instantly.

A minister of unusual gifts and power had a humble brother in his church who was blessedly sanctified. The minister, like the prophet Isaiah, got convicted for a clean heart. He took the humble brother in his carriage out to a grove and asked him to pray for him. But he was not quite willing to pay the price for the unspeakable gift; he felt that the consecration required was too much. The heavenly vision had come, and sanctification was rejected. In the course of time this talented minister lost his power and his sweetness, became bitter and full of the spirit of persecution against holiness. He turned that humble brother out of the church, and hated the cause he represented. Now that minister is a backslidden wanderer in a distant state; while the humble, sanctified brother has become an evangelist known from ocean to ocean

Oh, this vision -- this call to holiness -- it is the touch of God and the breath of heaven to the soul! If any reader of these lines has seen the truth, has felt the call, I beseech you, be not disobedient to the heavenly vision." "He that despiseth, despiseth not man but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit." It is an awful, a fatal thing to quench the Spirit of God.