

# Failure to Obtain the Experience

by Harmon A. Baldwin

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*The failure to obtain the experience of holiness does not negate its possibility, and there may be various reasons for this failure.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 11:12, 2 Timothy 2:15, Hebrews 11:6, James 4:3

**Topics:** "Sanctification", "Spiritual Growth"

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## Description

Harmon A. Baldwin addresses the objection that holiness cannot be obtained by sharing a story of a man who doubted the Methodists' religion because he did not receive it immediately. Baldwin emphasizes that the lack of sanctification in some individuals does not negate the truth that God sanctifies those who seek Him. He explains that failure to obtain holiness may be due to lack of earnestness, improper spiritual condition, wrong motives, lack of faith, or misunderstanding of the conditions for cleansing.

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## Transcript

Another objection which is sometimes urged, may be stated thus, "I sought the experience of holiness carefully and honestly and did not obtain it, hence there is no such a thing." This reminds one of the man who went out and knelt under a certain tree and prayed, "Oh, God, if there is such a religion as the Methodists profess, give it to me." It did not come immediately, so he went and spread the news abroad declaring it could not be obtained and was all a fraud.

This objection only proves one thing, and it does prove that conclusively, that is, the objector did not get sanctified. If there is not one sanctified person in the world yet the facts remain the same, God still declares, "I am he that sanctifieth thee." In matters of experience negative testimony is no testimony. Twenty men declare they did not see John Jones shoot James Small and that they do not believe he did the deed, but two men did see the shooting, the result is John Jones is convicted of murder. One hundred professed Christians do not profess holiness and do not believe in its attainment, but two do profess it and bear the fruits. This proves the contention that God still sanctifies.

The failure to obtain the experience may result from different reasons, and the failure does not negative the possibility.

1. The seeker may not be earnest enough. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force." -- Matt. 11:12.

2. The seeker may not be in a proper condition to receive it. A clear, victorious experience of pardoning and keeping grace precedes the possibility of entire sanctification.
3. The seeker may not have proper motives in seeking. "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." -- Jas. 4:3.
4. The seeker may not have proper faith, or he may allow doubts as to the possibility of cleansing, "for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." -- Heb. 11:6.
5. The seeker may not comprehend the conditions upon which cleansing is given. God is not dealing with horses that need a bit in their mouths to guide them because of their lack of intelligence, but he is dealing with human beings and demands all there is of them even their intellect. Not that they could know everything, but they must know the "sore of their souls" and apply for the only remedy. "Study to show thyself approved unto God." -- II Tim. 2:15.

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