

Inconsistencies in Professors

by Harmon A. Baldwin

The existence of counterfeit holiness does not negate the reality of true holiness, and inconsistencies in professors' lives do not prove that the doctrine of holiness is pernicious.

Scripture: Proverbs 21:2, Matthew 7:6, 1 Corinthians 4:3, 1 Timothy 6:3, Titus 1:16

Topics: "True Holiness", "Sanctification"

Description

In his sermon, Harmon A. Baldwin addresses objections to holiness based on the inconsistencies seen in the lives of believers. He compares the existence of counterfeit money to counterfeit holiness, emphasizing that the presence of fake holiness does not diminish the value of true holiness but rather highlights its beauty and grace. Baldwin challenges the notion that inconsistencies in some believers' lives discredit the doctrine of holiness, pointing out that good doctrines serve as a restraint against evil deeds. He also questions the authority of unsanctified individuals to judge the holiness of others, highlighting the importance of God as the ultimate judge of sanctification.

Transcript

Some base their objections to holiness on the inconsistencies they see in the lives of professors.

This method of argument is as reasonable as to take the stand that there is no genuine money because there is a counterfeit. The fact is there can be no counterfeit without a genuine, and, since there is a mock holiness there must be a true holiness. It is natural that the more counterfeit money we discover the more likely we are to distrust all money, but our distrust does not change the character of the real neither does the counterfeit take from the actual value of the genuine, if it makes any difference at all it increases our appreciation if not the value of the genuine. Thus with holiness, if the fact of the existence of counterfeit makes any difference at all it should increase our appreciation of the genuine. And since holiness is a voluntary condition, if this condition remains steadfast and keeps the soul amid shams and frauds the realization of its actual value will increase as the days go by, and in proportion to the oppositions which it endures and amid which it conquers. Again, the fact that holiness is counterfeited does not change the character of real holiness and the more spurious professions there are the more does the beauty and grace of real holiness shine forth, and the more is its actual character revealed.

Then the objector asks to be shown a genuine case of entire sanctification. When Wesley was asked to cite some examples of sanctified persons he answered that if he knew any he would not point them out to the quibbler for no matter how holy they might be the objector would only tear them to pieces. "Cast not

your pearls before swine lest they trample them under feet, and turn again and rend you."

While these inconsistencies may be formidable in the mind of the objector and while they may constitute an objection which he thinks cannot be answered yet the whole matter fades into nothingness from any angle it is viewed.

1. The bad life of no single man or body of men is an objection to a good doctrine which they may hold. While the false doctrines of an heretic are the cause of his evil doings (for men are prone to do evil if they can find an excuse for so doing), yet on the other hand the good doctrines of a man who believes in holiness are not the cause of his evil deeds but are the restraint that keeps him from greater evils. If he does wrong he will immediately tell you it was a transgression of his doctrine.

This statement is not negated even though the bad men that hold the good doctrine may profess to be governing their lives by their doctrine; instead of proving that the doctrine has a pernicious effect it only proves that the professors are either ignorant or hypocritical.

The fact that bad men make a profession of holiness does not prove that the doctrine of holiness is pernicious; holiness cannot be pernicious for its very nature is opposed to evil, these men may profess holiness for policy or to bring reproach on the cause.

2. Inconsistencies in one or many men's lives do not prove that inconsistencies exist in every man's life. Because one man gets angry when he whips his child he naturally thinks every man does the same, but this is not necessarily the case.

3. Because many men fail in their efforts to be holy, and because you never met any one who according to your opinion was holy, does not prove that all men fail and that there are no holy men. Darius Green's flying machine would not fly, but men are flying now every day whether you ever saw them or not, and whether you believe it or not.

4. What right has an unsanctified man and especially one who is prejudiced against the experience of holiness to set up a standard and then because no person he knows comes up to his ideas brand all holiness professors as hypocrites and self-righteous? Surely such a man falls into his own pit and his feet are taken in his own snares. He is the self-righteous man.

5. Who is the judge of a sanctified man, the quibbler or God?

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