

The Holiness of Common Things.

by Horatius Bonar

The sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing and practicing holiness in everyday tasks and common objects as a way to glorify God.

Scripture: Psalm 139:23, Matthew 11:28, Mark 9:24, John 7:17, John 10:14, John 14:1, Romans 1:21, Philippians 3:10, 1 John 2:3, 1 John 4:13

Topics: "Experiential Knowledge", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

The preacher delves into the depth of the Greek word 'ginosko,' emphasizing that it signifies acquiring knowledge through experience, not just intellectual understanding. This experiential knowledge is crucial for Christ followers to desire regarding the Person of Christ, as seen in verses like John 8:32, John 17:3, and Php 3:10. 'Ginosko' is not merely about accumulating facts but about intimate relations, spiritual knowledge, and obedience to God's Word, leading to a deeper understanding of God's truth and love.

Transcript

"On that day even the harness bells of the horses will be inscribed with these words: Set apart as Holy to the Lord. And the cooking pots in the Temple of the Lord will be as sacred as the basins used beside the altar. In fact, every cooking pot in Jerusalem and Judah will be set apart as holy to the Lord Almighty. All who come to worship will be free to use any of these pots to boil their sacrifices. And on that day there will no longer be traders (Canaanites) in the Temple of the Lord Almighty." Zech. 14:20-21

It is of millennial days that the prophet is speaking; days when Paradise shall be restored, and earth shall be as heaven; when Israel shall be restored, Jerusalem rebuilt, and the great kingdom set up that cannot be moved. Of this period it is the holiness that he specially points to; so unlike everything in Jerusalem or on the earth in preceding days. "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty," shall then be the theme of every song. Jerusalem shall be truly what it is now, and has been hitherto, but in name, "the holy city." But it is the holiness of common things that he yet more specially dwells on. Not holy men merely, or holy service, or holy songs, or holy Sabbaths; but holy vessels of every kind; holy bells (or bridles), holy pots, holy bowls, with the holy use of all these; so that every sight and sound shall proclaim holiness. On wall, and gate, and bar, on houses, and doors, and posts, and lintel, shall be inscribed "holiness." On leaf, and flower, and tree shall be holiness.

The following paraphrase will bring out the exact meaning of each clause. "In that day shall there be even upon such common things as the horse-bells, holiness unto the Lord; every vessel in the temple shall be

holy, and even the common boiling pots shall be as sacred as the altar-bowls; no, not the temple-pots alone, but every pot in Jerusalem and throughout the land shall be holiness to the Lord of hosts; and all those who come from afar to sacrifice shall make use of them: and there shall be no more the Canaanite (like the present Moslem) in the house of the Lord of hosts."

Thus the commonest of common things are selected to illustrate the great truth or fact of that day, that is, the universality of consecration. Nothing shall be left unsanctified. Everything shall be for God; everything shall glorify him; exhibiting the full meaning of the text, "Whether you eat or drink, do all to the glory of God." It is not then the spiritual nature of the things themselves that is needed for the consecration. The things named are evidently chosen to prevent that mistake. It is of the holiness of things that are not in themselves spiritual that the prophet speaks. These common things we are to lift up out of their low position- to ennoble and dignify them.

And how is this to be done? Not by changing their nature; not by spiritualizing them. But by the right use of them. By connecting them with God, and God with them. By refastening the link between the material and the spiritual; not by transforming the material into the spiritual. It is the right use of common things, in connection with God, that is the true consecration. They are not consecrated by some mysterious process, in order to their glorifying God; but the right use of them in the service of God is the true consecration. God is here dealing with us about common daily things; common, daily, and as men would say, carnal duties. He desires Holiness in our common works and words; our eating and drinking; our ploughing, and sowing, and reaping; holiness in the shop, holiness in the market-place; holiness in each room of the house; in journeying and in resting, in buying and selling; holiness in the railway carriage, and upon the highway; holiness in our reading, our conversation, and our letter-writing; holiness in our business, and our recreation; holiness in our mirth, in our feasts, in our ordinary communion. All our common works so done that God shall be glorified in them.

Many forget all this. They think that a religious life should omit as many as possible of common duties, whereas it is by the right doing of these that we are to exemplify true religion. A religious life is not a life by itself, the life of a recluse or hermit; it is common life, sanctified. Many say, Were I but a minister, with nothing to do but with religious subjects and acts, it would be well. Ah, a minister has not the opportunities of glorifying God which others have; he has not so many of life's every-day duties to discharge.

Or they say, Had I more time to spare, I could glorify God more. Ah, it is seldom the idle man, the man of leisure, that does this. A life of leisure is not so easily managed or sanctified as many think; self comes in; irregularities come in; time is not properly valued; efforts are haphazard. It needs much grace to regulate and lay out for God a life of leisure. There is much meaning in the words, "six days shall you labor." The little things of life are to be attended to; the common, menial, earthly things. In these Adam served God when he tilled the ground; Abel when he kept sheep; Amos when he gathered sycamore fruit; Joseph when he labored as a carpenter; Paul when he made tents. It is thus that we are to glorify God- inscribing "holiness to the Lord" on everything we do; so transacting daily business that men shall say of us, "They fear God;" so making our plans that in them God shall always have a place; so speaking the little or common words of each hour, that men shall recognize in us the servants of God.

It is easy, and it is well, to hang up a text upon the walls of our chamber; but let our words and deeds be a continual recognition of the holy Lord God, and this shall be more efficacious. Let us make ourselves the texts. Regulate your house (with every room in it) so that it shall speak of God. Make your family arrangements such that they shall all speak of God. It is not at family worship, or in asking a blessing,

alone that God is to be seen. These are mockeries, if God is left out of all the rest of the day. Let him be everywhere seen and felt. Do all to his glory. While consecrating common things, beware of profaning holy things. Reverence and godly fear become us in dealing with all that is divine.

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