

Holiness Through All Ages of the Church

by J.B. Galloway

The sermon emphasizes the timeless call for Christians to pursue holiness as a reflection of God's nature and the work of the Holy Spirit throughout church history.

Scripture: Isaiah 57:15, Acts 2:4, Acts 19:2, Romans 8:14, 2 Corinthians 7:1, Ephesians 4:24, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, 1 Timothy 3:8, Hebrews 6:2, 1 Peter 1:16

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Sanctification"

Description

J.B. Galloway preaches on the significance of holiness as one of the highest attributes of God, emphasizing that man was created in His moral likeness and can be restored to holiness through the merits of our Savior. The sermon delves into the historical and biblical context of holiness, from God's sanctification of the Sabbath to the anointing of individuals like Moses, kings, prophets, and the apostles with the Holy Spirit. It highlights the importance of seeking the filling of the Holy Spirit, as seen in the Early Church and various movements throughout history, culminating in the establishment of holiness churches like the Church of the Nazarene.

Transcript

Holiness is one of the highest attributes of God. Man was created in His image, not the physical image, but in His moral likeness. "Which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:24). Man lost his blessed holy estate by the fall, but the new man may be restored again to holiness through the merits of our Saviour. The first thing that God did to set man an example was to rest upon the Sabbath day; He sanctified it and made it holy. God not only created man in His image of holiness, but He wishes man to be like Him through all the ages. "Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:16).

God would not permit Moses to approach Him without first recognizing His holiness. The Holy Spirit anointed the judges and kings of Israel. Samuel anointed David with oil, and the Spirit of the Lord came upon him from that day forward (1 Samuel 16:13). The prophets were moved and spake by the Spirit. Isaiah was only a man of unclean lips until God touched him with the fire and Holy Spirit. John the Baptist had a special anointing of the Holy Ghost, and so did Jesus. The apostles received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost; and time and time again the Holy Spirit came upon them with fresh power in times of need.

The birthday of the Church was a baptism of the Holy Ghost, and this same power has been found in the Church ever since. Sometimes only a few have professed it, but God never has been without a witness of

holiness in the earth. Paul was constantly talking about it. When the Church needed to select officers, the qualification for deacons was "men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom." When new converts believed, as at Ephesus, the Church sent down certain disciples, who inquired, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" And when they heard that they had not, they laid their hands on them, and "they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Great Bible scholars and church historians recognize the fact that it was the custom of the Early Church to pray for all believers to be filled with the Spirit. The usual custom was to baptize the converts, and then the elders would lay their hands upon them and pray that they might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. The Early Church believed in and prayed for the filling of the Holy Spirit, and this was the secret of their great power. They lived in the Spirit, walked in the Spirit, prayed in the Spirit, and testified in the Spirit. They were undaunted in persecution because they were helped by the Holy Spirit within them.

Many writers before the days of Constantine have left their testimony that they believed in and lived a life of holiness; from some of these we have quoted. The same thing is seen in the literature coming from Ambrose, Chrysostom, Jerome, and Augustine. When the Church became ritualistic and formal, the Latins demanded fourscore pounds of gold for the anointing oil, and there was a quarrel between the Roman and the Greek Catholic churches. The Greeks rejected the authority of the Roman bishop, and began to consecrate their own anointing oil; and since that time they have been separate churches.

From time to time through the Dark Ages witnesses to the truth of holiness appeared, and with the dawn of the Reformation the light begins to shine again. The Quietist movement among the Roman Catholics, which centered around Fenelon and Madame Guyon, and the Quakers among the Protestants, were two great movements to make the whole Church feel the need of being filled with and led by the Holy Spirit.

John Calvin acknowledged that the custom of praying for the new converts to be filled with the Holy Ghost was derived from the apostles, and admitted that the Protestants should have something in the place of it, yet did not emphasize this in his teachings. We read this from his "Commentaries" when commenting on Hebrews 6:2, which speaks of laying on of hands:

This one passage abundantly testifies that this rite had its beginning from the Apostles, which afterwards, however, was turned into superstition, as the world almost always degenerates into corruption Wherefore the pure institution at this day ought to be retained, but the superstition ought to be removed.

In Oxford University there was a group of students who were seeking after holiness; they were ridiculed and called the "Holy Club." Soon we hear of the great Wesley revival which was conducted by some of the former members of this club. They placed great emphasis upon the Holy Spirit and the doctrine of sanctification. Wesley said that the purpose of the Methodist church was to spread scriptural holiness over the lands. He says in his Journal that at one time there were almost as many people seeking and claiming entire sanctification as claimed salvation in his meetings. When the movement spread to America, hundreds and thousands were reached. Many were professing the blessing of holiness for many years in the Methodist meetings, especially in the revival and camp meetings. Then the modern holiness movement began to be heard of; at first it was interdenominational. Those who believed in and professed the experience of holiness, from all churches, began to get together in associations and hold revivals and camp meetings all over America, and also in other countries.

As opposition became more and more marked, it soon became evident that, if the cause of holiness was to be conserved, it would be necessary to organize the work. Then little holiness churches began to

appear in the eastern part of our country, and almost simultaneously they appeared on the western coast, and in the South. Several of these churches united under the leadership of Dr. P. F. Bresee and Dr. H. F. Reynolds, and the Church of the Nazarene came into existence in 1908. Other holiness churches appeared, and thousands now belong to the holiness churches. Hundreds of young people are in the holiness colleges, and other holiness institutions are aiding in various capacities to carry on the work. Thousands of pages of holiness literature are coming from the presses of the publishing houses of those who believe in holiness. Holiness churches and revival meetings dot the land from coast to coast where the holy fire burns upon the altar; and sacrificing missionaries are carrying the message of full salvation to the ends of the earth.

The long list of the holy saints of God who have lived and preached holiness is too numerous to mention, but God has them all recorded in the Book of Life. The apostles carried the message of holiness from the Upper Room on the Day of Pentecost to the Jews, and Paul was not satisfied until he had carried the same truth to almost all the great Gentile cities. John laid down the work at Ephesus at the close of the first Christian century; then the long stream of heroes carried the same truth to the multitudes from that day to this.

There are Polycarp, Clement, Barnabas, and Hermas of the early days of the Church, preaching the truth. Ambrose, Athanasius, and Chrysostom followed the days of Constantine with the blessed, holy gospel; and a few lights here and there shined out from the Dark Ages with the message of holiness. Savonarola thundered against sin and worldliness in the streets of cultured Florence until the people knew that they must live holy lives. One of the vilest popes had him burned on the public square of the city he had done so much for and loved so dearly. Fenelon and Madame Guyon were bright lights for holiness among the Catholics.

Then there are George Fox, John and Charles Wesley, George Whitefield, and John Fletcher in England. There are Jonathan and Mrs. Edwards, David Brainerd, and Asbury, who enjoyed the blessing of holiness in the early history of America; they are followed by Upham, Mahan, Charles Finney, the great revivalist who preached holiness. And we may mention Harriet Beecher Stowe, Mrs. Phoebe Palmer, Frances Ridley Havergal, Frances Willard, and Hannah Whitall Smith, who wrote *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*, and a host of others from among the noble women who enjoyed the blessing of holiness. Then there are A. B. Simpson, David Updegraff, Daniel Steele of Boston University, J. A. Wood, Inskip, and McDonald, all great holiness preachers; and on down to our sainted Dr. P. F. Bresee—these all died in the faith.

Today, hundreds are preaching the same message of holiness to the masses; almost everywhere you go there is an advocate of holiness. Who has not heard of the late Bud Robinson, who for so many years preached holiness every time he spoke?

The Church Of The Nazarene And Holiness

The fight for holiness did not originate in the twentieth century, nor with the Church of the Nazarene. No, it is the fight of the ages. Holiness graced the inner chambers of eternity. Holiness is older than sin; it is coexistent with God. Holiness is as eternal as the Jehovah of the Bible. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit" (Isa. 57: 15). We may be accused of being a small 'bunch of religious "faddists" with a new notion of religion that we are trying to propagate, but not so. Those who judge us so

are only betraying their own ignorance and lack of reading concerning holiness, sanctification, and perfect love. We are not alone. The greatest minds and holiest saints of all ages of the Christian Church have upheld the doctrine and enjoyed the experience of holiness.

Holiness is not just a doctrine of the Church of the Nazarene held by a little handful of professors of religion here and there, but there are a great number from almost all denominations who believe in and teach the same blessed truth of holiness. There is a great cloud of witnesses to the rich experience that the children of God may enjoy. A number of denominations are known as holiness churches. The Methodist church stood for holiness before she grew so worldly and filled with Modernism. Some teaching on holiness occurs in the doctrines of almost every church. The Wesleyan Methodists, Free Methodists, Primitive Methodists, Orthodox Quakers, Holiness Methodists, Reformed Baptists, Full Gospel Presbyterians, Christian Missionary Alliance, Pilgrim Holiness, Salvation Army, and a number of smaller churches stand with the Church of the Nazarene as advocates of holiness.

Its Doctrine of Holiness

The Church of the Nazarene stands for the fundamental evangelical doctrines, but makes the test of all its standard of holiness and entire sanctification. The doctrine of the church on entire sanctification or holiness is as follows:

10. We believe that entire sanctification is that act of God, subsequent to regeneration, by which believers are made free from original sin, or depravity, and brought into a state of entire devotement to God, and the holy obedience of love made perfect.

It is wrought by the baptism with the Holy Spirit, and comprehends in one experience the cleansing of the heart from sin and the abiding indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, empowering the believer for life and service.

Entire sanctification is provided by the blood of Jesus, is wrought instantaneously by faith, preceded by entire consecration; and to this work and state of grace the Holy Spirit bears witness.

This experience is also known by various terms representing its different phases, such as "Christian Perfection," "Perfect Love," "Heart Purity," "The Baptism with the Holy Spirit," "The Fullness of the Blessing," and "Christian Holiness."

-- Manual, Church of the Nazarene. We'll girdle the globe with salvation, With holiness unto the Lord

Reader, do you enjoy this blessing? It may be yours today.

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