

Do the Scriptures Teach a Second Blessing?

by Samuel Chadwick

Samuel Chadwick explores the concept of the Second Blessing, emphasizing the need for personal experience and scriptural understanding in the pursuit of holiness.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 1:2, 2 Corinthians 7:1, Galatians 5:17, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, 1 John 1:7

Topics: "Sanctification", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

Samuel Chadwick emphasizes the challenge of proving the doctrine of a Second Blessing from the Bible compared to ecclesiastical declarations and theological definitions. He highlights the importance of seeking truth firsthand and the difficulty in formulating doctrines solely based on isolated texts. Chadwick stresses that the Second Blessing is not confined to a single text but is woven throughout the entire Bible, requiring a comprehensive understanding of all Scriptures. He underscores the necessity of personal faith and spiritual discernment in grasping divine truths, ultimately leading to sanctification and obedience to God's commandments.

Transcript

It is easier to prove the doctrine of a Second Blessing from John Wesley, than from the Bible. The demand for scriptural proof calls a halt. In creeds and theologies, truth is defined and stated clearly and dogmatically. They give the results of analysis and classification, without hint of the processes by which the conclusions were reached. From ecclesiastical declarations and theological definitions, it is easy to prove the need for a second work of grace in believers. The Bible, however, is not so explicit. Its doctrines are neither stated in dogmatic utterances nor expressed in syllogisms. There is much theology that is not biblical, and most people prefer to have their doctrines formulated for them. The task of seeking truth at first hand is not easy. Christian truth has been evolved through long and varied processes. It is embodied -- not to say embedded -- in a series of books in which the unity does not appear upon the surface. The raw material has to be analyzed and systematized. Nothing must be imported, nothing suppressed, nothing "squared." The doctrine must be comprehensive enough to include all the Scriptures have to contribute. There must be space for apparently contradictory propositions. No statement may override another. Proof by isolated texts can be made to prove anything. Truth flows through a thousand channels, and doctrine must gather up all phases in its ultimate statement. For this reason it is not enough to buttress a statement by texts; the statement must be the final issue of all the texts. The proof is an accumulation of truth. Conviction is not begotten of logic. A man does not believe a doctrine because something proves it; he believes it because everything proves it. That is why the things of which we are

surest are always most difficult to prove. The Second Blessing is not in a text; it is in the whole Bible. Because the man who has found it sees it everywhere, it is difficult for him to prove it anywhere. The multiplicity of proof bewilders in the presence of one who cannot see, but the experience itself brings the supreme Teacher. There is an unction of the Holy One by which the sanctified are led into the Truth. The pure in heart see. Love made perfect sanctifies all life, and perfects the knowledge of divine things. Hereby we know, and know that we know, if we keep His commandments.

HIDDEN TREASURE

People often ask why a doctrine so important is not more explicitly stated and commanded in the Bible. The same question applies to all doctrine within the Kingdom. The command to repent and believe, the necessity of forgiveness and regeneration, are definite and explicit enough, because these are concerned with them that are without. When once the boundary is passed, truth has to be discovered. It cannot be mechanically or magically poured into a man. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned. They cannot be passed on as articles of faith. Every soul has to find them for itself. Jesus commanded His disciples to tell no man He was the Christ. He Himself had many things to say, but His lips were sealed. The Spirit leads each into the possession of truth, that can only be received by the experiment of personal faith. To those who have entered in, there is given a glorious assurance and much treasure which they cannot divide with those who have it not. All they can say is: This is our testimony -- go and "buy for yourselves."

Those who are keen to know that they may possess will find it fully set forth in the Scriptures. There is no other guide, nor any other authority. The Bible is its own interpreter, and they that will to know that they may do, will not seek in vain. It is an experience that must be rooted and grounded in the Word of God.

It must be admitted that passages urged as the basis of a Second Blessing carry little weight, apart from those who have the key to them in their own hearts. There are smiles of incredulity, mingled with pity, when the blessing is discovered in Exodus and Leviticus; in the architecture, furniture, and ordinances of the tabernacle; as well as in distinctions of speech that seem forced and fanciful. So marked has this become that the method of interpretation is labeled and tabooed. But those who have entered the experience see the teaching from Genesis to Revelation, and the method has the warrant of apostolic example.

THE SCRIPTURAL BASIS

That the Scriptures require us to be holy, no one denies. Without holiness no man can ever enter heaven. Neither is it denied that provision is made in Christ for our sanctification. He came to save from sin. That involves more than pardon and deliverance from its dominion. Sin is of the heart, and its presence is more offensive than its acts of transgression. Christ redeems, that He may cleanse and restore. Sin remains in the regenerate. It does not reign, but it remains. Of that there can be no doubt. Scripture and experience affirm it. The Christians at Corinth were sanctified, and yet carnal (1 Cor. 1: 2; 3:1-3). They were exhorted to cleanse themselves "from all defilement of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1). The Galatians had received the spirit of adoption, and to them the Apostle said, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh" (Gal. 5:17). Thus people already in a state of grace are urged to an experience of cleansing and fullness. Count Zinzendorf's teaching, that "all true believers are not only saved from the dominion of sin, but from the being of inward as well as outward sin, so that it no longer remains in them," is utterly without warrant. The New Testament saints were true believers, and carnality remained in them. That there is cleansing from the being of inward sin, is

abundantly manifest from God's Word. The commands assume it, and the promises declare it. "The blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth us from all sin." That cleansing is by faith. There is no other condition, but faith is impossible without conviction. It is a definite act with a definite aim. If the soul is to be cleansed from sin, it must take place somewhere between regeneration and heaven; and that point is reached where faith claims the blessing. The Apostle desired to come again to the believers at Thessalonica, that he might "perfect that which was lacking in their faith," and the desire was expressed in the prayer:

"And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who will also do it."

I ask the gift of righteousness,

The sin-subduing power,

Power to believe, and go in peace,

And never grieve Thee more.

I ask the blood-bought pardon sealed,

The liberty from sin,

The grace infused, the love revealed,

The Kingdom fixed within.

Thou hear'st me for salvation pray,

Thou seest my heart's desire;

Made ready in Thy powerful day,

Thy fullness I require.

My vehement soul cries out opprest,

Impatient to be freed;

Nor can I, Lord, nor will I rest,

Till I am saved indeed.

Art Thou not able to convert?

Art Thou not willing, too?

To change this old, rebellious heart,

To conquer and renew?

Thou canst, Thou wilt, I dare believe,

So arm me with Thy power,
That I to sin shall never cleave,
Shall never feel it more.

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