

When Can We Be Made Holy?

by Samuel Logan Brengle

To be holy, we must put off the old man and put on the new man, and this can be done just as soon after conversion as we see the need and the possibility of it being done.

Scripture: Romans 7:21, Ephesians 4:22

Topics: "Inner Transformation", "Holiness"

Description

Samuel Logan Brengle emphasizes the necessity of holiness in the life of a believer, illustrating through the experiences of a young soldier and a little boy who, despite their conversion, struggle with the presence of the 'old man' within them. He explains that while conversion brings forgiveness and a desire to do good, there remains an inner nature that must be dealt with to achieve true holiness. Brengle asserts that this transformation can occur in this life, as supported by Scripture, and encourages believers to seek a pure heart filled with the Holy Spirit without delay. He shares a testimony of a young girl who, upon realizing the possibility of a clean heart, earnestly sought and received this blessing. The message is clear: holiness is attainable now, and believers are called to pursue it with faith and determination.

Transcript

A bright young Soldier got up in one of my meetings several years ago, and said, 'Since the Lord converted me, I never wanted any bad thing, but there was something in me that did.'

A little boy of my acquaintance got blessedly saved, and was very happy and good for some time. But one day he came to his mother, and said, 'Mamma, I'm tired of living this way.'

'Why, what is the matter now?,' asked the mother.

'I want to be good all the time,' said the little fellow. 'You tell me to go and do things, and I go and do them; but I feel angry inside, and I want to be good all the time.'

Both the young man and the boy were converted. Each wanted to be good, but each found in himself something wrong, and he knew that while that something remained, he was not holy. However correct the outward life might be, the heart was not clean. This is the experience of every converted person who has not pressed on into holiness, and it corresponds to the Scripture in which Paul says, 'When I would do good, evil is present with me.'

When we are converted, our sins are forgiven, and we feel a sweet peace within, and we love God and man, and want to do good and be good all the time, and we have power to do good, and to overcome bad habits and temptation, but there is still something in our hearts that needs to be removed before we are holy. That something within, the Bible calls, 'the old man.' It is the old nature that gets angry when people or things do not suit us; that is deceitful, and proud, and unclean, and disobedient, and silly, and selfish. Of course, conversion gives a great blow to this 'old man,' and subdues him, and makes him behave himself, so that he no longer acts so badly as he once did; but he is still alive, and watching his chance to get the victory again. And, sad to say, he often does get the victory, causing converted people to do and say things that are wrong, and that grieve and quench the Holy Spirit. The 'old man' causes quarrels and jealousies, and envyings and evil speakings, in churches and in Corps, and leads to backslidings of all kinds, and the ruin of many Christian lives. Paul had a Corps that was greatly troubled in this way. (See I Cor. iii.)

Before we can be holy, this 'old man' must be put off, this evil within must die, this seed of all sin must be destroyed, and this is something that can and does take place just as soon after conversion as we see the need and the possibility of its being done, and come to Jesus with all our heart, and with perfect faith to have it done.

Some people say that we cannot get rid of this evil nature until we die; but we must stick to the Bible, and believe what that Book says. And the Bible certainly teaches that we can be made holy in this life. The Bible says, 'Be ye holy;' and that means now, not after death. If a man says to his boy, 'Be honest, be truthful,' he means, Be honest and truthful now, for this world, not in Heaven only. And so God means that we must be holy here, and now.

Again the Bible says, 'Put off the old man, which is corrupt and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.' (Eph. iv. 22-24) We are told to 'put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.' And we are told to 'be filled with the Spirit.' All this is to take place now.

We read of the disciples who 'were all filled with the Holy Ghost' (Acts ii. 4), and of 'Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost' (Acts vi. 5), and of believers whose hearts were purified by faith (Acts xv. 9) long before they got to Heaven. God is no respecter of persons; and just as He gave this great blessing to the early Christians, He will surely give it to us, when we give ourselves fully to Him.

I shall never forget how one Sunday afternoon, after hearing of the possibility and blessedness of a pure heart, a beautiful girl of sixteen walked straight up to the penitent-form, fell on her knees, and lifting her face to Heaven with tears, told the Lord how she wanted a clean heart filled with the Holy Spirit just then. She saw that she need not wait, but that now was the accepted time. And oh! how God blessed her! Soon the smiles were chasing away the tears, and the joy of Heaven was shining on her face. Years after, I found her on the platform, a Lieutenant, with her face still shining, and her heart still cleansed.

And so, my dear young Comrade, this priceless blessing may be yours. Jesus has died to purchase this uttermost salvation, and it is your Heavenly Father's will for you, just now. Have faith in God, give yourself utterly to Him, even now, and begin to seek the blessing with a determination never to stop seeking until it is yours, and you shall not be long without it. Praise the Lord!

Saviour, to Thee my soul looks up, My present Saviour Thou; In all the confidence of hope I claim the blessing now.

'Tis done! Thou dost this moment save, With full salvation bless; Salvation through Thy blood I have, And spotless love and peace.

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