

'With Peace Unbroken'

by Samuel Logan Brengle

The sermon emphasizes the importance of perseverance, diligence, and courage in maintaining the blessing of holiness.

Scripture: Joshua 1:9, 1 Samuel 30:6, Psalm 46:1, Isaiah 41:10, Matthew 7:7, Luke 1:75, Romans 8:31, Philippians 4:13, Hebrews 12:1-2, 2 Peter 1:4

Topics: "Perseverance in Faith", "The Blessing of Holiness"

Description

Samuel Logan Brengle emphasizes the importance of perseverance in seeking holiness, encouraging believers to rise after failures and continue striving for the blessing of holiness. He shares the experiences of John Fletcher and his own journey, highlighting that maintaining holiness requires diligence, courage, and a constant connection with God. Brengle reassures those who feel discouraged that God's grace is available and that they should keep seeking until they find it, as God's delays are not denials. He reminds the congregation that with God's presence, there is no need to fear, and encourages them to be strong and courageous in their faith. Ultimately, he affirms that it is possible to keep the blessing of holiness forever.

Transcript

"In holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of their life (Luke i. 75).

The Rev. John Fletcher, whom Wesley thought was the holiest man who had lived since the days of the Apostle John, lost the blessing five times before he was finally established in the grace of holiness, and Wesley declared that he was persuaded, from his observations, that people usually lose the blessing several times before they learn the secret of keeping it. So, if any one who reads this has lost the blessing, and is tormented by the old enemy of souls -- the devil -- with the thought that you can never get and keep it, let me urge you to try again and again and again.

You prove your real desire and purpose to be holy, not by giving up in the presence of defeat, but by rising from ten thousand falls, and going at it again with renewed faith and consecration. If you do this, you shall surely win the prize, and be able to keep it in the end.

The promise is: "Seek, and ye shall find."

"But how long shall I seek?"

Seek till you find!

"But suppose I lose it?"

Seek again till you find it. God will surprise you some day by pouring out such a full baptism of His Spirit upon you, that all your darkness and doubts and uncertainty will vanish for ever, and you will never fall again, and God's smile will be no more withdrawn, and your sun will never more go down.

Oh, my discouraged brother, my disheartened sister, let me urge you to look up and trust Jesus, and keep on seeking, remembering that God's delays are not denial -- Jesus is your Joshua to lead you into the promised land, and He can cast down all your foes before you. People who give up in the midst of defeat have much to learn yet of the deceitfulness and hardness of their own hearts, and of the tender forbearance, and longsuffering, and mighty saving power of God. But it is not God's will that any who receive the blessing should ever lose it, and it is possible to keep it for ever.

But how?

One day, as an old divinity school chum of mine, who had finished his course of study, was going to his field of labor, I followed him on to the train to have a hearty handshake and to say good-bye, perhaps for ever. He looked up and said:

"Sam, give me a text that will do for a life motto."

Instantly I lifted my heart to God for light. Now, if you want to keep the blessing, that is one of the things you must constantly do -- lift your heart to God and look to Him for light, not only in the crises and great events of life, but in all its little and seemingly trifling details. By practice, you can get into such a habit of doing this that it will become as natural for you as breathing, and it will prove quite as important to your spiritual life as breathing is to your natural life. Keep within whispering distance of God always, if you would keep the blessing. Well, I proved to be in whisper touch with Jesus that morning on the train, and immediately the first eleven verses of the first chapter of 2 Peter were suggested to my mind; not simply as a motto, but as a plain rule laid down by the Holy Ghost, by the following out of which we may not only keep the blessing and never fall, but also prove fruitful in the knowledge of God, and gain an abundant entrance into the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Notice it, all you who wish to keep the blessing of holiness. You see in verse 4 the Apostle speaks of being made "partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." That is holiness, to escape from the corruption of our evil hearts and receive the Divine nature. Now, the Apostle urges these holy people to diligence, and not only diligence, but "all diligence." A lazy, sleepy man cannot keep the blessing; in fact, he cannot get it. To get it you must seek it with all your heart. You must dig as for hidden treasure, and to keep it you must use diligence. Some people say, "Once saved, always saved," but God does not say anything of the kind. He urges us to watch and be sober and diligent, for we are in the enemy's country. This world is not a friend to grace. If you had one hundred thousand dollars' worth of diamonds in a land of robbers, you would watch and keep your treasure with all diligence. Well, you are in the enemy's country, with a holy heart and "the earnest of the Spirit," your passport to Heaven, your pledge of eternal life. Be diligent to keep it.

The Apostle says: "Beside this, add to your faith, virtue." You had to have faith in "the exceeding great and precious promises" to get this blessing, but you will have to add something more to your faith to keep it.

This word "virtue" comes from the old Latin word which means courage, and that is probably its meaning here. You must have courage to keep this blessing.

The devil will roar like a lion at you at times; the world will frown upon you, and maybe club you, and possibly kill you. Your friends will pity you, or curse you, and predict all sorts of calamities as sure to befall you, and at times your own flesh may cry out against you. Then you will need courage. They told me I would go crazy, and it almost seemed that I would, so earnest was I to know all the mind of God for me. They said I would land in a bog of fanaticism; they said I would end in the poor-house; they said I would utterly ruin my health, and become a lifelong, useless invalid, a torment to myself and a burden to my friends. The very bishop whose book on holiness had stirred my soul to its depths, after I got the blessing, urged me to say very little about it, as it caused much division and trouble. (I afterward learned that he had lost the blessing.) The devil followed me by day and by night with a thousand spiritual temptations that I had never dreamed of, and then at last stirred up a rough to nearly knock my brains out, and for many months I was prostrated with bodily weakness, until the writing of a post card plunged me into distress and robbed me of a night's rest. So I found it took courage to keep this "pearl of great price," but-hallelujah for ever! -- "the Lion of the tribe of Judah," who is my Lord and Saviour, is as full of courage as He is of strength and love and pity; and He has said in the Book of instruction and encouragement He has left us: "Be strong, and of a good courage." Yea, He puts it stronger, and says: "Have not I commanded thee to be strong and of good courage?" It is a positive command, which we are under obligation to obey. Over and over again He has said this, and seventy-two times He says: "Fear not," and He adds, as a sufficient reason why we should not fear: "For I am with thee." Glory to God! If He is with me, why should I be afraid? And why should you, my comrade?

My little boy is very much afraid of a dog. I think fear was born in him. But when he gets hold of my hand he will march boldly past the biggest dog in the country. God says: "I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear thou not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee; yea I will help thee, yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness; I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Never! Jesus, the very same Jesus who died for us, says: "All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth; and lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Why fear?

The devil is an old hand at deceiving and overthrowing souls, but remember that Jesus is the "Ancient of Days." From everlasting to everlasting He is God, and He has put all the wisdom and power and courage of His Godhead at the disposal of our faith for our salvation, and certainly that ought to fill us with courage. Are you downhearted and afraid? Cheer up! Pluck up courage, and let us boldly say with King David, who had a good deal more trouble and cause for fear than either of us:

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble: therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea."

I have been helped very much by one experience of David's. Once upon a time he had to flee from Saul, who hunted for his life as men hunt for partridges on the mountains; so David went down into Philistia, and dwelt in a village which the king gave him. Then the Philistines went to war against Saul, and David went too. But they were afraid David might turn against them in the hour of battle, and so they sent him home. When David and his men returned to their homes, they found some enemies had been there and burned their village to the ground, and had carried off their goods, their cattle, their wives and the little ones. The men were mad with grief, and determined to stone David. Certainly there was reason for fear; but the Bible

says: "David encouraged himself in the Lord." Read the story for yourself, and see how wonderfully God helped him to get everything back again (I Sam. xxx.).

As for me, I am determined to be of good courage. God has been better to me than all my fears, and the fears of all my friends, and He has outwitted all my enemies, and proved stronger than all my foes, and enabled me, by His power, and infinite love and goodness, to walk in holiness before Him for almost ten years

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