

Aspirations After Holiness

by Thomas Reade

Thomas Reade's sermon emphasizes the heartfelt pursuit of holiness through reliance on God's grace and the transformative power of the Holy Spirit.

Scripture: Psalm 119:10, Ezekiel 36:26, Colossians 3:16, 1 Peter 1:15, 1 John 4:7

Topics: "Heart Holiness", "Spiritual Transformation"

Description

Thomas Reade preaches about the deep desire for holiness, expressing a longing for a heart filled with love, faith, and obedience to God. The sermon emphasizes the need for a penitent, believing, loving, obedient, and thankful heart, recognizing that true riches and blessings come from the covenant of grace through Christ's sacrifice. Reade calls for a transformation by the Spirit of Holiness, seeking to be made holy as God is holy to ultimately dwell in His presence and enjoy eternal life.

Transcript

3. ASPIRATIONS AFTER HOLINESS

"With my whole heart have I sought you: O let me not wander from your commandments." Psalm 119:10

Blessed Savior! Oh lover of my soul, give me grace to love you. Never, oh, never let me forget what you have done for an unworthy sinner! Let me never forget your bloody sweat, your cross and passion, your known and unknown agonies, when you made your soul an offering for sin. Oh! that I had a heart to love you with a supreme affection. Come, blessed Spirit, shed abroad in my heart a Savior's love, and that will kindle mine. Sit as a refiner's fire, as a purifier of silver, until the dross of sin is consumed, and your holy image be reflected on my soul; yes, until I be made fit for the inheritance of the saints in light. Give me a hatred of sin; preserve me from the wiles of Satan; deliver me from the workings of pride; save me from a worldly spirit, from a carnal mind, from sensualized affections.

Oh! fountain of all spiritual life, quicken my dead soul to act with energy in the cause of truth; give me a thirsting after holiness; strengthen my faith in the Redeemer's righteousness; my reliance on his power; my confidence in his grace; my hope in his promises; my assurance in his love. Fill me with holy joy, tranquility, and peace. Take what you will of earth away, only give me your Blessed Self, and then, through grace, I shall sing in the darkest seasons; triumph in death; and shout hallelujah in glory.

Manifest yourself, Almighty Jesus, in these days of rebuke and blasphemy, when infidelity, popery, and anarchy are combining to overthrow your church, that church, which you have purchased with your blood, that "congregation of faithful men," however differing in name, whom you have chosen out of the world. Make bare your arm as in the days of old. Stir up your people to arm themselves for the combat, with the armor of your providing for attack and defense- with the belt of truth; the breastplate of righteousness; the shield of faith; the helmet of salvation; the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; and with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, that they may be able to withstand in the evil day, and be faithful even unto death.

Preserve me, gracious Savior, from false philosophy; from that wisdom which is from beneath- the poison of the old serpent. Alas! how is your glorious plan of redemption perverted by men of corrupt minds, destitute of the truth. Preserve me from that spurious charity and mistaken toleration, which would embrace in its arms every error, every false doctrine, every heresy; and from that infidel liberality, that boasted freedom of sentiment, which delights to darken the clearest truths, and would root out of the world, if it were possible, the saving knowledge of your Divinity, your Atonement, and Intercession.

Oh, Son of God, one with the Father, God over all, blessed for evermore, give me grace to build all my hopes for heaven on You, and You alone; to plead nothing before the Throne of offended Justice but your blood and righteousness; to acknowledge my sinfulness with deep contrition; to loathe myself in your sight and my own; and to praise you by a life of loving obedience, for all that you have done and suffered for me, the chief of sinners. Give me grace to know my weakness, my worthlessness, my wretchedness, my danger. Impart unto me your Holy Spirit, that I may apprehend your saving merits; that I may taste that you are gracious; and be filled with all joy and peace in believing.

O, my soul! spread your needs before the Lord, who is ever more ready to hear than you are to pray. Lord hear my prayer, give hear to the voice of my supplication. I want to feel a greater delight in God. I want to look up to God, as my covenant God in Christ. I want a greater freedom of access to Him through the Son of his love. I want a more vigorous faith; a more spiritual understanding; a greater ardency of affection. My mind is dark; my spiritual feelings are benumbed; I seem to myself cold and lifeless! Lord quicken me according to your word. I see many around me who live only to You. Many hearts are burning with love to Christ, and zeal for the salvation of perishing millions. I behold glorious Societies flourishing in our land. Like so many trees of life, they spread their fruitful boughs over the earth, while their leaves are for the healing of the nations. O, how awful! -to be dark, in the midst of light- cold in the midst of holy fire- dead in the midst of life! Lord grant this blessing, grant that the fire of love may ever be burning on the altar of my heart, and never go out. Oh! what a precious gift is a new heart. This is the new covenant gift; "A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." What a gracious command, "My son, give me your heart."

Blessed Lord, through your abounding grace in Christ Jesus, grant this request of my lips. I want a penitent heart- a heart deeply humbled on account of sin. Only the sight of a crucified Jesus can melt my frozen heart, and cause the tear of penitence to flow, as water from the smitten rock. I want a believing heart, a heart filled with lively faith, and clear views of the power and grace of Christ; a faith, which can draw the healing virtue from the great Physician. Oh! the blessed power of faith, which can make the Savior's merits mine, and place my sins on him! What joy, what peace, what sweet assurance does this economy of grace impart to the believing soul! I want a loving heart. God is love, and every one who loves is born of God, and knows God.

"Happy the heart where graces reign,

And love inspires the breast."

Oh! that my heart were the abode of holy love; the Spirit thus witnessing with my spirit, that I am a child of God. How I long to feel the purifying influence of this heavenly grace, which assimilates the believer to the saints in glory. I want an obedient heart, the heart of a child, whereby, with filial confidence, I can cry- Abba, Father! As love is the spring of all holy obedience, so obedience is the truest test of love. All profession is vain without obedience to the will of God. The Redeemer's character was marked by obedience to his Father's will. His active obedience, and passive sufferings, proved his entire submission as man to the will of God; while, by his obedience unto death, he wrought out a righteousness to justify my guilty soul and to save me from eternal death. O, miracle of grace! the wonder of angels! and the everlasting song of the redeemed.

I want a thankful heart, a heart to praise my God with unceasing praise. A thankful heart is a tuneful heart. Its melody is sweet in the ear of Eternal Love. It is a good thing to be thankful. The joy of the Lord is our strength. Humility will help forward the work of praise, while love will strike the chords of celestial harmony. This I indeed want- one of the richest gifts of grace, a penitent, believing, loving, obedient, thankful heart. For this will I never cease to pray, knowing that this is the will of God and my sanctification.

Without the blessings flowing from the covenant of grace, through the precious blood of Christ, the greatest monarch, though surrounded by grandeur, is poor; and possessing these blessings, his poorest subject, though encompassed with misery, is truly rich. This truth our blessed Lord has taught us in the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. The blessings of the New Covenant are beyond all earthly price. Nothing could purchase them but the blood of Christ; none can bestow them but the Friend of sinners, through the indwelling of his Holy Spirit. Lord look upon me in Christ, as a member of his mystical body, then will my soul be filled with your goodness.

In myself, I am nothing but sin and misery. In Christ, I have holiness and happiness, yes, and abound in all things- wisdom for my ignorance, righteousness for my guilt, sanctification for my pollution, redemption for my thralldom. Oh! delay not, blessed Savior, to shower down upon me, the abundance of your grace. Your work is salvation; let mine be praise. You know my heart, which, though hard and deceitful by nature, can be transformed by grace. Make me holy as you are holy. If I am not be a partaker of the divine nature, in all your communicable perfections of love and mercy, faithfulness and truth, righteousness and holiness, I can never enjoy your beatific presence in the realms of light. There, all is holiness, and there, all is happiness. Sin which blighted the earthly, cannot blight the heavenly paradise. There, the tree of life forever bears its celestial fruit; no cherubim, with his flaming sword, guards it from unhallowed hands; for all the ransomed throng, having entered through the gates into the city, the New Jerusalem, have right to the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God, and may eat, and live forever. Oh! that my portion may be YOURSELF, for whom have I in heaven but you, and there is none upon earth I desire in comparison of you.

Spirit of Holiness! descend and dwell,

Within a heart which pants after thee;

Of living water, You the sacred Well,

Spring up, and rise into eternity.
O! shed abroad your love within my heart,
Fill all my soul with every pure desire!
Yourself, dear Lord, in showers of grace impart,
And kindle in me the celestial fire.
Reveal the Savior to my longing soul;
His grace and beauty may I hourly see;
The force of pride and unbelief control,
And clothe me with his own humility.
Be every day devoted to your fear;
Be every moment sacred to your will;
Your voice of mercy, hourly let me hear;
And all your righteous purposes fulfill.
Then, when I draw towards earth's remotest bound,
A weary pilgrim on life's dreary road,
Oh! may my soul with Christ my Lord be found,
And spring with triumph to his blessed abode.

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