

BACK TO BETHEL

Separation from Sin, and Fellowship with GOD

by

F. B. Meyer, B. A.

Author of

"*Old Testament Heroes*," "*Meet for the Master's Use*," etc.

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CHAPTER THREE

HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD

Holiness stands for three things.

First, *separation from sin and common use*, as the one day among the days of the week, as the one mountain amidst the mountains of the world, and as the child Samuel amidst the boys and girls of his age separate from sin and common use.

Second, *it means to be separated unto the service of GOD*. That which is kept from sin is reserved for GOD's most holy use, and that which is taken from common service is reserved utterly and absolutely for Him. Just as you would not permit the instruments which are used for the Lord's table service to be employed for the common meals of your own home, so that which is holy is reserved and set apart for sacred use.

Third, *while holiness means separation from and separation to, it also implies Godlikeness*, because that which is reserved for GOD's use takes on something of GOD's nature. Just as the silver plate at the Lord's table reflects the light of the face of him who bears it, so that which is used by GOD tends to become like GOD. Never forget that holiness is not an attainment, but an attitude. It is the opening of the heart to the balmy air and sunlight of GOD's nature, which, entering in, fill the spirit of man or woman.

THE HIGH PRIEST'S FRONTLET

In Exodus 28:36, the high priest stands before you vested in his full white robes, with breastplate of gold. On the frontlet of his forehead, the legend **HOLINESS TO THE LORD** is inscribed, so that wherever he goes to and fro, he bears upon his brow that sacred text.

Suppose I should turn from him, and speaking to you say that I want from this evening until you meet CHRIST in glory that you should bear that frontlet upon your brow and have that holy legend inscribed upon you, it might be you would shrink back and say:

"No, no, I will never be a hypocrite. I do trust in CHRIST and desire to be like Him. But I dare not arrogate to myself that sacred frontlet, that holy legend. I am not **HOLINESS TO THE LORD.**"

Then, my friend, you are putting away from you the privilege of this dispensation, of which Zechariah says that in this age there shall be so much Holy Spirit given to the men and women who believe in CHRIST that **HOLINESS TO THE LORD** shall be engraved upon their heads, that the common vessels in their homes shall have the same legend upon them, and be as holy as the vessels in the Lord's house:

"In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar." (Zechariah 14:20).

I remember so well spending some winter days in the city of Boston. I shall never forget the blue sky and the crisp white snow, the absence of the rumbling of wheels, and everywhere the sweet music of the sleigh bells. The bells of all our life, the dinner bell, the rising bell, the bell summoning us to our daily work, the telephone bell asking us to hold conversation with another all the bells ringing in our lives are to have these words inscribed, so that our whole life shall have this as its keynote.

What I am going to say can be very well noted under three words abolition, inclusion and elevation.

FIRST ABOLITION

I think Zechariah meant that in the age of the Holy Ghost in which we are living, there should be the abolition of the line between secular and sacred. So many people draw a line between these two. They say "business is business, and religion is religion," "a place for everything, and everything in its place." They live in two houses. Over their homes perhaps may be the words **HOLINESS TO THE LORD**, but they spend most of their time away from their homes, and they would hesitate to write those words over their pleasure resorts and places of business. Some people put on their religion and put it off with their Sunday clothes. They wear it with difficulty. Oh, this terrible, terrible habit of Christian people in drawing such straight lines of demarcation, living in water-tight compartments so that one is wholly religious and the other wholly secular.

That cannot be right because of three things:

First, *Christianity is not a creed, not a formula, not a ritual, but a life.*

If it is a life begun by the Holy Spirit, a real life, the germ of the CHRIST life planted in our spirits and to rise up in the majesty of CHRIST's likeness, you cannot divest that life from ordinary existence.

- A flower's life must always express itself in its fragrance and hue.
- A bird's life must always express itself through its song, its nest building and its care for its young.

- An artist must always look at things artistically.

And if a man is truly enjoying the life of GOD in his soul, that life must rise up in every word he speaks, in every look of his eyes, in every movement of his nature. I do not say that he will always be talking about GOD, but the divine life will express itself in his laughter and in every movement of his life.

Then, secondly, *we must remember that Christianity is the recognition of CHRIST's kingship.* That is, the true Christian is the absolute property of JESUS CHRIST.

I shall never forget when I saw a slave for the first time. It was in a street of Tangiers, Morocco. My companion pointed to a woman advancing toward us. She was barefooted, but laden with heavy gold ornaments. He said:

"That's a slave."

For the first time I was face to face with one who had no property in her own nature, but whose every quality was owned by her master. She was absolutely his, everything about her and every faculty she possessed. I looked up to the sky and said:

"Oh, GOD, I thank Thee that if she is a slave, I am one also."

My friend, have you ever looked into CHRIST's face, and said, "Whose I am, and whom I serve! My Master, JESUS! Everything I have and everything I may acquire are all my Master's." If so, you cannot give Him part of your life and keep back the rest. Your whole life must be under the mastership of the sweetest Master and King.

Third, *Christianity is a testimony to the world, the confession of the mastership of the Lord.*

The world seldom comes into our churches. If it does not, therefore, see you living on Christian principles in your business and pleasure and daily life, your testimony to the world is at an end. Therefore, for the world's sake, I protest against this division of the secular from the sacred. I ask that wherever we are, always and everywhere, we shall bear upon our faces and upon our bodies, upon all our pleasures and business, upon all the bells that ring in our lives, these words: "Sacred to JESUS"; that is, set apart for our blessed Master and Lord.

INCLUSION

If that is true of you, I want you to take a step further that is a most important one, and that is expressed by the word "Inclusion."

Horses were forbidden the ancient Jew. A horse is no more harmful than a mule. GOD made it a most useful animal, but because of its association with pride and show and war, GOD tabooed it for the Jews. But after centuries had passed and the people had been purified, elevated and taught, GOD said:

"There is no reason why you should not have your horses now, but engrave upon their bells the words **HOLINESS TO THE LORD.**"

The ancient hermit said he could have no wife or child. No woman's hand might be laid on his sick brow with gentle caress. No children's voices might ring in his home. He must dedicate himself to GOD, and deny himself the comforts of home. He put away horses.

Then came the Puritans, who said, "I must have no work of art in my home, nothing that will excite amusement." No horses, no horses.

A young man once told me that since he had become consecrated he had given up manly games and his violin.

If you cannot continue in such things because of evil associations, then give them up, not because they are wrong in themselves, but because of the associations. But if you can go into them and elevate your companions, if you can make them pay the price of your companionship - no swearing, no dirty talk, no gambling, do you not think it is a greater thing to join them, and as a grain of salt, as a beam of light, lift the whole of their conversation? Is not that what Zechariah meant when he said:

"You may have your horses, but see to it that you engrave upon their bells, **HOLINESS TO THE LORD.**"

A young girl who wishes to consecrate her life to GOD, thinks she must give up her piano. But suppose she can use it to keep a brother at home nights instead of wandering off to his evil companions, isn't that a higher use to put it to than to give it up absolutely?

Keep the horses if you can, but write upon them **HOLINESS TO THE LORD.**

But someone says, "Stop, sir. Don't you think you are introducing a bad principle? Don't you think a man might argue on your principle and say that he is going to the dance, or the billiard hall, or theater, and lift them up for CHRIST?"

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In answer to that I would advise you to take these two texts as the guiding stars of your life:

I Corinthians 6:12: "**All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.**"

Then I Corinthians 10:23: "**All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. Let no man seek his own, but every man another's good.**"

The first principle is this: "**I will not be brought under the power of any.**" Doesn't that touch your cigar? I am not now denouncing smoking, but are there not men listening to me who are

absolutely under the power of the pipe? They cannot lay it down and pick it up as they please. They are really under its mastery. It is the same with the use of morphine and the like. And whenever you cannot lay a thing of that kind aside, are you not under its power?

The other principle is equally true. "I will never do a thing which will hurt another." That comes home, young man, to your treatment of women. Always make it easy for a girl to do right, never make it hard for her.

As to the theater, doesn't that law come in there, too? You cannot go there without making the theater possible for others. Even though you and I might go without harm, we are making it possible for others to go who have not such a level head as we have. Then, too, we always must think of the actors and actresses. I dare not make sweeping charges, but statements have been made to me, which I can verify, which make me know that the theater is specially perilous to those whose profession it is.

You say: "What about the dance?"

I do not think you can write **HOLINESS TO THE LORD** over the waltz. If girls only knew the thoughts which fill many men's hearts when they dance, I do not believe that pure girls would expose themselves to the close embrace of the waltz. It is only because they do not think, and have not had a high standard put before them.

If you are a true child of GOD and have "**HOLINESS TO THE LORD**" written upon you, you will be very careful, first, how you dress, and then how you dispose of your body. Anyhow, you ought first ask the Holy Spirit how you may treat His temple.

But I come back to this. Everything which is right, human and holy may be given unto GOD. I try to make it a rule of my life to pass no day in which I do not see one beautiful thing, read one beautiful thought, hear one sweet strain of music. I try to cultivate my love for beautiful things, and I think I can do that for JESUS.

ELEVATION

Let me close with a word about elevation.

It is not a leveling-down policy, but a leveling up. It is not that the high priest should take off his holy plate and think no more of his Temple service than of harnessing his horse for a ride, but that he should mount his horse with the same sense of GOD as he bore with him unto the Holy Place.

We need to strike the keynote, as a leader of music would if there were no organ, and everything will be accorded to that key. So Sunday strikes the keynote for the week, and your prayer time in the morning strikes the keynote for the day.

But you ask, "How am I to get thus?"

Look upon

YOUR LIFE AS A CALLING OF GOD.

There are three "callings" in First Corinthians.

In I Corinthians 1:1, called to be an apostle; in 1:2, called to be saints; in 7:20, called to be business men. A call to business life is as great a calling as to be a minister, but go to your life day by day for JESUS.

In Revelation we are told that no one could buy or sell that had not the mark of the beast on the hand or forehead (Revelation 13:16, 17). We are also told that the name of the Lamb shall be in the foreheads of His servants (Revelation 22 14).

Everyone has the mark of the beast upon their foreheads, or the mark of CHRIST. We cannot see it, but the angels can; and on every brow in this audience there is inscribed in letters of light or letters of darkness, the words **HOLINESS TO THE LORD** or the mark of the beast.

Let your life from this time forth be wholly for JESUS. He will not take anything from you that is for your good, but He will accept your whole being, and from this moment until you die it shall be your joy to live absolutely for CHRIST.

~ end of chapter 3 ~

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