

An Open Letter To A Young Man Seeking Spiritual Help

Samuel Logan Brengle:

My dear Comrade,

Your letter has just now reached me, and I hasten to reply.

You say: 'I have sought and found Holiness many times, but the longest I have been able to keep it was seven weeks,' and then you mention some besetting sin against which you have struggled for five years.

Let me ask, did you yield to this besetting sin? And then feeling condemned, did you come to the penitent-form seeking a Clean Heart? If so, you have probably made the great mistake so many make of claiming heart purity, when what you received was the peace of pardon. If I fall into sin, I must first confess my sin with a penitent heart and trust for pardon through reliance upon the Blood of Jesus, and if I do this the peace of pardon will fill my heart, but I must not mistake this for Sanctification.

When I am pardoned I am then called to consecrate my redeemed life to God, and when I wholly consecrate myself to Him who has loved me out of my sins, my guilt, my condemnation, I must trust Him to purify my whole being, to sanctify me wholly and fill me with the Holy Spirit. And if I believe, He can and will do the wonder work of grace in me. He will make me holy; He will perfect me in love; He will fill me with passion for His glory, so that I sing from my heart:

Take my love, my Lord, I pour At Thy feet, its treasure store;

Take my life and it shall be Ever, only, all for Thee.

And with joy I sing:

The Blood, the Blood is all my plea; Hallelujah! for it cleanses me.

You speak of keeping the Blessing seven weeks. How did you keep the Blessing so long? Was it not by walking with the Blesser? If your attention is fixed upon the Blessing instead of the Blesser; if you think of Holiness as separate from the Holy Spirit, you will lose all. If you fail to recognize, honour, love, trust, and obey the Blesser, you lose the Blessing, just as you lose the beauty of the rose when you turn your eyes from the rose, or the sweetness when you take away the honey, or the music when you lose the musician. Why and how did you lose the Blessing after seven weeks? Was it not because under stress of temptation you took your eyes off the Blesser? You forgot the sweet, sacred presence of the Blesser. and turning from Him you yielded to sin, or you doubted, and then the enemy robbed you of the Blessing. 'Watch and pray that you enter not into temptation.' When temptation came you should have said, 'Get behind me, Satan.' You should have resisted the Devil, and drawn nigh to God. The Blesser was there. The Holy Spirit was present. The infinitely loving Redeemer, with all His redemptive power, was with you, but you forgot Him, and so lost the Blessing.

You should have turned to Jesus in love and loyalty and trust, and said, 'O Lord, I am Thine; keep me! I trust Thee. I love Thee. I praise Thee, and I will not fear mine enemy.' If you had done this, you would not have lost the Blessing. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from thee. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to thee.' That is the way, and I know of no other way of victory. In that way, and that way only, I have been getting victory for nearly half a century, and in that way you can get victory, and get it quickly, and get it always. Hallelujah

You are discouraged. You wonder if you can ever gain and keep the victory. You can, bless God! You can. The victory is at the door now. The Victor is at the door. Open and let Him in, and victory is yours. Drop on your knees now, just now, and tell Him all; then trust Him, thank Him, praise Him, whether or not you have any great feeling. Just keep on trusting, thanking, praising, and obeying Him, and peace and victory will come.

Keep your eyes on Jesus, and guard yourself against the beginnings of temptation and sin. Keep your mind pure. Fill it with clean thoughts, loving thoughts, and holy affections. Lift your thoughts above fleshly and low things to spiritual levels. Sing songs and make melody in your heart to the Lord.

Deal promptly and sternly with your eyes and your ears. Turn away your eyes from beholding evil, and your ears from listening to evil. Make a covenant with your eyes as did Job. Stand on guard at eyegate and eargate lest sin get into your heart through those gateways.

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Sin does not leap upon us fully armed. It steals in through a look, a swift, silent suggestion or imagination, but love and loyalty to Jesus will make you watchful and swift to rise up and cast out the subtle enemy. Do this and you shall live, and live victoriously.

Often drop on your knees or lift your heart in secret prayer, and do not forget to mingle thanksgiving with your prayers. You do not praise God enough. Begin now. Thank Him now and praise Him, for He is worthy, and you are much behind in this sweet duty.

When you wake up in the morning ask Him for some verse of song to cheer you through the day, and find some verse of Scripture upon which to stay your mind. Finally, seek to pass some of your blessing on to some other soul, as the widow of Sarepta shared her bit of oil and handful of meal with Elijah and found it multiplying through the months of famine. So will you find your blessings multiplying as you share them with others.