

## Scriptures and Doctrine :: Holiness: The False and the True - H.A. Ironside

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It is my desire, in dependence on the Lord, to write a faithful record, so far as memory now serves me, of some of God's dealings with my soul and my strivings after the experience of holiness, during the first six years of my Christian life, ere I knew the blessedness of finding all in Christ. This will make it necessary at times, I have little doubt, to "speak as a fool"--even as the apostle Paul did: but as I reflect on the need for such a record, I think I can say with him, "Ye have compelled me."

If I may be privileged to thereby save others from the unhappy experiences I passed through in those early years, I shall feel abundantly repaid for the effort it will take to thus put these heart-experiences before my readers.

From a very early age God began to speak to me through His Word. I doubt if I could go back to the first time when, to my recollection, I felt something of the reality of eternal things.

My father was taken from me ere his features were impressed upon my infant mind. But I never have heard him spoken of other than as a man of God. He was known in Toronto (my birthplace) to many as "The Eternity Man." His Bible, marked in many places, was a precious legacy to me; and from it I learned to recite my first verse of Scripture, at the age of four. I distinctly recall learning the blessed words of Luke 19:10, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." That I was lost, and that Christ Jesus came from heaven to save me, were the first divine truths impressed on my young heart.

My widowed mother was, it seems to me, one of a thousand. I remember yet how I would be thrilled as she knelt with me as a child, and prayed, "O Father, keep my boy from ever desiring anything greater than to live for Thee. Save him early, and make him a devoted street-preacher, as his father was. Make him willing to suffer for Jesus' sake, to gladly endure persecution and rejection by the world that cast out Thy Son; and keep him from what would dishonor Thee." The words were not always the same, but I have heard the sentiment times without number.

To our home there often came servants of Christ--plain, godly men, who seemed to me to carry with them the atmosphere of eternity. Yet in a very real sense they were the bane of my boyhood. Their searching, "Henry, lad, are you born again yet?" or the equally impressive, "Are you certain that your soul is saved?" often brought me to a standstill; but I knew not how to reply.

California had become my home ere I was clear as to being a child of God. In Los Angeles I first began to learn the love of the world, and was impatient of restraint. Yet I had almost continual concern as to the great matter of my salvation.

I was but twelve years old when I began a Sunday-school and set up to try to help the boys and girls of the neighborhood to a knowledge of the Book I had read ten times through, but which had still left me without assurance of salvation.

To Timothy, Paul wrote, "From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3:15). It was this latter that I lacked. I had, it seemed to me, always believed, yet I dared not say I was saved. I know now that I had always believed about Jesus. I had not really believed in Him as my personal Saviour. Between the two there is all the difference that there is between being saved and lost, between an eternity in Heaven and endless ages in the lake of fire.

As I have said, I was not without considerable anxiety as to my soul; and though I longed to break into the world, and was indeed guilty of much that was vile and wicked, I ever felt a restraining hand upon me, keeping me from many things that I would otherwise have gone into; and a certain religiousness became, I suppose, characteristic. But religion is not salvation.

I was nearly fourteen years old when, upon returning one day from school, I learned that a servant of Christ from Canada, well known to me, had arrived for meetings. I knew, ere I saw him, how he would greet me; for I remembered him well, and his searching questions, when I was younger. Therefore I was not surprised, but embarrassed nevertheless, when he exclaimed, "Well, Harry, lad, I'm glad to see you. And are you born again yet?"

The blood mantled my face; I hung my head, and could find no words to reply. An uncle present said, "You know, Mr. M--, he preaches himself now a bit, and conducts a Sunday School!"

"Indeed!" was the answer. "Will you get your Bible, Harry?"

I was glad to get out of the room, and so went at once for my Bible, and returned, after remaining out of the room as long as seemed decent, hoping thereby to recover myself. Upon my re-entering the room, he said, kindly, but seriously, "Will you turn to Rom. 3:19, and read it aloud?"

Slowly I read, "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." I felt the application, and was at a loss for words. The evangelist went on to tell me that he too had been once a religious sinner, till God stopped his mouth, and then gave him a sight of Christ. He pressed on me the importance of getting to the same place ere I tried to teach others.

The words had their effect. From that time till I was sure I was saved, I refrained from talking of these things, and I gave up my Sunday-school work. But now Satan, who was seeking my soul's destruction, suggested to me, "If lost and unfit to speak of religious things to others, why not enjoy all the world has to offer, so far as you are able to avail yourself of it?"

I listened only too eagerly to his words, and for the next six months or thereabouts no one was more anxious for folly than I, though always with a smarting conscience.

At last, on a Thursday evening in February 1890, God spoke to me in tremendous power while out at a party with a lot of other young people, mostly older than myself, intent only on an evening's amusement. I remember now that I had withdrawn from the parlor for a few moments to obtain a cooling drink in the next room. Standing alone at the refreshment table, there came home to my inmost soul, in startling clearness, some verses of Scripture I had learned months before. They are found in the first chapter of Proverbs, beginning with verse 24 and going on to verse 32. Here wisdom is represented as laughing at the calamity of the one who refused to heed instruction, and mocking when his fear cometh. Every word seemed to burn its way into my heart. I saw as never before my dreadful guilt in having so long refused to trust Christ for myself, and in having preferred my own wilful way to that of Him who had died for me.

I went back to the parlor, and tried to join with the rest in their empty follies. But all seemed utterly hollow, and the tinsel was gone. The light of eternity was shining into the room, and I wondered how any could laugh with God's judgment hanging over us, like a Damocles' sword suspended by a hair. We seemed like people sporting with closed eyes on the edge of a precipice, and I the most careless of all, till grace had made me see.

That night, when all was over, I hurried home, and crept up-stairs to my room. There, after lighting a lamp, I took my Bible, and, with it before me, fell upon my knees.

I had an undefined feeling that I had better pray. But the thought came, "What shall I pray for?" Clearly and distinctly came back the answer, "For what God has been offering me for years. Why not then receive it, and thank Him?"

My dear mother had often said, "The place to begin with God is Romans 3, or John 3." To both these scriptures I turned, and read them carefully. Clearly I saw that I was a helpless sinner, but that Christ for me had died, and that salvation was offered freely to all who trusted in Him. Reading John 3:16 the second time, I said, "That will do. O God, I thank Thee that Thou has loved me, and given Thy Son for me. I trust Him now as my Saviour, and I rest on Thy Word, which tells me I have everlasting life."

Then I expected to feel a thrill of joy. It did not come. I wondered if I could be mistaken. I expected a sudden rush of love for Christ. It did not come either. I feared I could not be really saved with so little emotion.

I read the words again. There could be no mistake. God loved the world, of which I formed a part. God gave His Son to

save all believers. I believed in Him as my Saviour. Therefore I must have everlasting life. Again I thanked Him, and rose from my knees to begin the walk of faith. God could not lie. I knew I must be saved.

#### Holiness: The Great Desideratum

Being saved myself, the first great desire that sprang up in my heart was an intense longing to lead others to the One who had made my peace with God.

At the time of which I write, the Salvation Army was in the zenith of its energy as an organization devoted to going out after the lost. It had not yet become popular, a society to be patronized by the world and used as a medium for philanthropic work. Its officers and soldiers seemed to have but one aim and object--to lead the weary and despairing to the Saviour's feet. I had often attended its services, and in fact had frequently, though but a child, given a "testimony" by quoting Scripture and urging sinners to trust Christ, even while I was in the dark myself. Naturally therefore, when the knowledge of salvation was mine, I went at the first opportunity, the night after my conversion, to an "Army" street-meeting, and there spoke for the first time, in the open air, of the grace of God so newly revealed to my soul.

I suppose, because I was but a lad of fourteen and fairly familiar with the Bible, and also somewhat forward--unduly so, I have little doubt--I was at once cordially welcomed among them, and soon became known as "the boy preacher," a title which, I fear, ministered more to the pride of my heart than I had any idea of at the time. For, in fact, in my new-found joy I had no conception that I still carried about with me a nature as sinful and vile as existed in the breast of the greatest evildoer in the world. I knew something of Christ and His love; I knew little or nothing of myself and the deceitfulness of my own heart.

As nearly as I can now recollect, I was in the enjoyment of the knowledge of God's salvation about a month when, in some dispute with my brother, who was younger than I, my temper suddenly escaped control, and in an angry passion I struck and felled him to the ground. Horror immediately filled my soul. I needed not his sarcastic taunt, "Well, you are a nice Christian! You'd better go down to the Army and tell what a saint you've become!" to send me to my room in anguish of heart to confess my sin to God in shame and bitter sorrow, as afterwards frankly to my brother, who generously forgave me.

From this time on mine was an "up-and-down experience," to use a term often heard in "testimony meetings." I longed for perfect victory over the lusts and desires of the flesh. Yet I seemed to have more trouble with evil thoughts and unholy propensities than I had ever known before. For a long time I kept these conflicts hidden, and known only to God and to myself. But after some eight or ten months, I became interested in what were called "holiness meetings," held weekly in the "Army" hall, and also in a mission I sometimes attended.

At these gatherings an experience was spoken of which I felt was just what I needed. It was designated by various terms: "The Second Blessing"; "Sanctification"; "Perfect Love"; "Higher Life"; "Cleansing from Inbred Sin"; and by other expressions.

Substantially, the teaching was this: When converted, God graciously forgives all sins committed up to the time when one repents. But the believer is then placed in a lifelong probation, during which he may at any time forfeit his justification and peace with God if he falls into sin from which he does not repent. In order, therefore, to maintain himself in a saved condition, he needs a further work of grace called sanctification. This work has to do with sin the root, as justification had to do with sins the fruit.

The steps leading up to this second blessing are, firstly, conviction as to the need of holiness (just as in the beginning there was conviction of the need of salvation); secondly, a full surrender to God, or the laying of every hope, prospect and possession on the altar of consecration; thirdly, to claim in faith the incoming of the Holy Spirit as a refining fire to burn out all inbred sin, thus destroying in toto every lust and passion, leaving the soul perfect in love and as pure as unfallen Adam.

This wonderful blessing received, great watchfulness is required lest, as the serpent beguiled Eve, he deceive the sanctified soul, and thus introduce again the same kind of an evil principle which called for such drastic action before.

Such was the teaching; and coupled with it were heartfelt testimonies of experiences so remarkable that I could not doubt with genuineness, nor that what others seemed to enjoy was likewise for me if I would fulfil the conditions.

One lady told how for forty years she had been kept from sin in thought, word, and deed. Her heart, she declared, was no longer "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," but was as holy as the courts of heaven, since the blood of Christ has washed away the last remains inbred sin. Others spoke in a similar way, though their experiences were much briefer. Bad tempers had been rooted out when a full surrender was made.

Evil propensities and unholy appetites had been instantly destroyed when holiness was claimed by faith.

Eagerly I began to seek this precious boon of holiness in the flesh. Earnestly I prayed for this Adamic sinlessness. I asked God to reveal to me every unholy thing, that I might truly surrender all to Him. I gave up friends, pursuits, pleasures--everything I could think of that might hinder the incoming of the Holy Ghost and the consequent blessing. I was a veritable "book-worm," an intense love for literature possessing me from childhood; but in my ignorant desire I put away all books of pleasurable or instructive character, and promised God to read only the Bible and holiness writings if He would only give me "the blessing." I did not, however, obtain what I sought, though I prayed zealously for weeks.

At last, one Saturday night (I was away from home, living with a friend, a member of the "Army"), I determined to go out into the country and wait on God, not returning till I had received the blessing of perfect love. I took a train at eleven o'clock, and went to a lonely station twelve miles from Los Angeles. There I alighted, and, leaving the highway, descended into an empty arroyo, or water-course. Falling on my knees beneath a sycamore tree, I prayed in an agony for hours, beseeching God to show me anything that hindered my reception of the blessing. Various matters of too private and sacred a nature to be here related came to my mind. I struggled against conviction, but finally ended by crying, "Lord, I give up all--everything, every person, every enjoyment, that would hinder my living alone for Thee. Now give me, I pray Thee, the blessing!"

As I look back, I believe I was fully surrendered to the will of God at that moment, so far as I understood it. But my brain and nerves were unstrung by the long midnight vigil and the intense anxiety of previous months, and I fell almost fainting to the ground. Then a holy ecstasy seemed to thrill all my being. This I thought was the coming into my heart of the Comforter. I cried out in confidence, "Lord, I believe Thou dost come in. Thou dost cleanse and purify me from all sin. I claim it now. The work is done. I am sanctified by Thy blood. Thou dost make me holy. I believe; I believe!" I was unspeakably happy. I felt that all my struggles were ended.

With a heart filled with praise, I rose from the ground and began to sing aloud. Consulting my watch, I saw it was about half-past three in the morning. I felt I must hasten to town so as to be in time for the seven o'clock prayer-meeting, there to testify to my experience. Fatigued as I was by being up all night, yet so light was my heart I scarcely noticed the long miles back, but hastened to the city, arriving just as the meeting was beginning, buoyed up by my new-found experience. All were rejoiced as I told what great things I believed God had done for me. Every meeting that day added to my gladness. I was literally intoxicated with joyous emotions.

My troubles were all ended now. The wilderness was past, and I was in Canaan, feeding on the old corn of the land. Nevermore should I be troubled by inward drawings toward sin. My heart was pure. I had reached the desirable state of full sanctification. With no foe within, I could direct all my energies toward vanquishing the enemies without.

This was what I thought. Alas, how little did I know myself; much less the mind of God!

### Sunshine and Clouds

For some weeks after the eventful experience before described, I lived in a dreamily-happy state, rejoicing in my fancied sinlessness. One great idea had possession of my mind; and whether at work or in my leisure hours, I thought of little else than the wonderful event which had taken place. But gradually I began to "come back to earth," as it were. I was now employed in a photographic studio, where I associated with people of various tastes and habits, some of whom ridiculed, some tolerated, and others sympathized with, my radical views on things religious.

Night after night I attended the meetings, speaking on the street and indoors, and I soon noticed (and doubtless others did too) that a change came over my "testimonies." Before, I had always held up Christ, and pointed the lost to Him. Now, almost imperceptibly, my own experience became my theme, and I held up myself as a striking example of consecration and holiness! This was the prevailing characteristic of the brief addresses made by most of the "advanced" Christians in our company. The youngest in grace magnified Christ. The "sanctified" magnified themselves. A favorite song will make this more manifest than any words of mine. It is still widely used in Army meetings, and finds a place in their song or hymnbooks. I give only one verse as a specimen:

The people I know don't live holy;  
They battle with unconquered sin,  
Not daring to consecrate fully,  
Or they full salvation would win.  
With malice they have constant trouble,  
From doubting they long to be free;  
With most things about them they grumble;  
Praise God, this is not so with ME!

Will the reader believe me when I say that I sang this wretched doggerel without a thought of the sinful pride to which it was giving expression? I considered it my duty to continually direct attention to "my experience of full salvation," as it was called. "If you don't testify to it, you will lose the blessing," was accepted as an axiom among us.

As time went on, I began to be again conscious of inward desires toward evil--of thoughts that were unholy. I was nonplused. Going to a leading teacher for help, he said, "These are but temptations. Temptation is not sin. You only sin if you yield to the evil suggestion." This gave me peace for a time. I found it was the general way of excusing such evident movings of a fallen nature, which was supposed to have been eliminated. But gradually I sank to a lower and lower place, permitting things I would once have shunned; and I even observed that all about me did the same. The first ecstatic experiences seldom lasted long. The ecstasy departed, and the "sanctified" were very little different from their brethren who were supposed to be "only justified." We did not commit overt acts of evil: therefore we were sinless. Lust was not sin unless yielded to: so it was easy to go on testifying that all was right.

I purposely pass briefly over the next four years. In the main they were seasons of ignorantly happy service. I was young in years and in grace. My thoughts of sin, as well as of holiness, were very unformed and imperfect. Therefore it was easy, generally speaking, to think that I was living without the one, and manifesting the other. When doubts assailed, I treated them as temptations of the devil. If I became unmistakably conscious that I had actually sinned, I persuaded myself that at least it was not willful, but rather a mistake of the mind than an intentional error of the heart. Then I went to God in confession, and prayed to be cleansed from secret faults.

When but sixteen years of age I became a cadet; that is, a student for officership in the Salvation Army. During my probation in the Oakland Training Garrison I had more trouble than at any other time. The rigorous discipline and enforced intimate association with young men of so various tastes and tendencies, as also degrees of spiritual experience, was very hard on one of my supersensitive temperament. I saw very little holiness there, and I fear I exhibited much less. In fact, for the last two out of my five months' term I was all at sea, and dared not profess sanctification at all, owing to my low state. I was tormented with the thought that I had backslidden, and might be lost eternally after all my former happy experiences of the Lord's goodness. Twice I slipped out of the building when all were in bed, and made my way to a lonely spot where I spent the night in prayer, beseeching God not to take His Holy Spirit from me, but to again cleanse me fully from all inbred sin. Each time I "claimed it by faith," and was brighter for a few weeks; but I inevitably again fell into doubt and gloom, and was conscious of sinning both in thought and in word, and sometimes in unholy actions, which brought terrible remorse.

Finally, I was commissioned as lieutenant. Again I spent the night in prayer, feeling that I must not go out to teach and lead others unless myself pure and holy. Buoyed up with the thought of being free from the restraint I had been subjected to so long, it was comparatively easy this time to believe that the work of full inward cleansing was indeed consummated, and that I was now, if never before, actually rid of all carnality.

How readily one yields himself to self-deception in a matter of this kind! From this time on I became a more earnest advocate of the second blessing than ever; and I remember that often I prayed God to give my dear mother the blessing He had given me, and to make her as holy as her son had become. And that pious mother had known Christ before I

was born, and knew her own heart too well to talk of sinlessness, though living a devoted, Christlike life!

As lieutenant for a year, and then as captain, I thoroughly enjoyed my work, gladly enduring hardship and privation that I fear I would shrink from now; generally confident that I was living out the doctrine of perfect love to God and man, and thereby making my own final salvation more secure. And yet, as I now look back, what grave failures I can detect--what an unsubdued will--what lightness and frivolity--what lack of subjection to the word of God--what self-satisfaction and complacency! Alas, "man at his best estate is altogether vanity."

I was between eighteen and nineteen years of age when I began to entertain serious doubts as to my actually having attained so high a standard of Christian living as I had professed, and as the Army and other Holiness movements advocated as the only real Christianity. What led to this was of too personal and private a nature to publish; but it resulted in struggle and efforts toward self-crucifixion that brought disappointment and sorrow of a most poignant character; but it showed me beyond a doubt that the doctrine of death to nature was a miserable sophism, and that the carnal mind was still a part of my being.

Nearly eighteen months of an almost constant struggle followed. In vain I searched my heart to see if I had made a full surrender, and tried to give up every known thing that seemed in any sense evil or doubtful. Sometimes, for a month at a time, or even longer, I could persuade myself that at last I had indeed again received the blessing. But invariably a few weeks would bring before me once more that which proved that it was in my particular case all a delusion.

I did not dare open my heart to my assistants in the work, or to the "soldiers" who were under my guidance. To do so I felt it would be to lose all influence with them and to be looked upon as a backslider. So, alone and in secret, I fought my battles and never went into a holiness meeting without persuading myself that now at least, I was fully surrendered and therefore must have the blessing of sanctification. Sometimes I called it entire consecration and felt easier. It did not seem to be claiming too much. I had no conception at the time of the hypocrisy of all this.

What made my distress more poignant was the knowledge that I was not the only sufferer. Another, one very dear to me, shared my doubts and anxieties from the same cause. For that other it eventually meant utter shipwreck of the faith; and one of the loveliest souls I ever knew was lost in the mazes of spiritualism. God grant it may not be forever, but that mercy may be found of the Lord in that day!

And now I began to see what a string of derelicts this holiness teaching left in its train. I could count scores of persons who had gone into utter infidelity because of it. They always gave the same reason: "I tried it all. I found it a failure. So I concluded the Bible teaching was all a delusion, and religion was a mere matter of the emotions." Many more (and I knew several such intimately) lapsed into insanity after floundering in the morass of this emotional religion for years--and people said that studying the Bible had driven them crazy. How little they knew that it was lack of Bible knowledge that was accountable for their wretched mental state--an absolutely unscriptural use of isolated passages of Scripture!

At last I became so troubled I could not go on with my work. I concluded to resign from the Salvation Army, and did so, but was persuaded by the colonel (note: answering to a bishop in some other denominations.) to wait six months ere the resignation took effect. At his suggestion I gave up corps work and went out on a special tour--where I did not need to touch the holiness question. But I preached to others many times when I was tormented by the thought that I might myself be finally lost, because, "without holiness no man shall see the Lord"; and, try as I would, I could not be sure I possessed it. I talked with any who seemed to me to really have the blessing I craved; but there were very few who, upon an intimate acquaintanceship, seemed genuine. I observed that the general state of "sanctified" people was as low, if not often lower, than that of those whom they contemptuously described as "only justified."

Finally, I could bear it no longer, so asked to be relieved from all active service, and at my own request was sent to the Bethulah Home of Rest, near Oakland.

It was certainly time; for five years' active work, with only two brief furloughs, had left me almost a nervous wreck, worn out in body and most acutely distressed in mind.

The language of my troubled soul, after all those years of preaching to others, was, "Oh that I knew where I might find Him!" Finding Him not, I saw only the blackness of despair before me; but yet I knew too well His love and care to be completely cast down.

## The Struggle Ended

I had now been for over five years laboring in the organization with which I had linked myself, and ever seeking to be certain that I had attained a sinless state. In some twelve different towns and cities I had served, as I thought, faithfully, endeavoring to reach the lost, and to make out of them staunch Salvationists when converted. Many happy experiences had been mine, coupled, however, with some most gloomy disappointments, both as to myself and others. Very few of our "converts" stood. "Backsliders" often outnumbered by far our "soldiers." The ex-Salvation Army was many times larger than the original organization.

One great reason for this I was blind to for a long time. But at last it began to be clear to me that the holiness doctrine had a most baneful influence upon the movement. People who professed conversion (whether real or not the day will declare) struggled for months, even years, to reach a state of sinlessness which never was reached; and at last they gave up in despair and sank back in many instances to the dead level of the world around them.

I saw that it was the same with all the holiness denominations, and the various "Bands," "Missions," and other movements, that were continually breaking off from them. The standard set was the unattainable. The result was, sooner or later, utter discouragement, cunningly-concealed hypocrisy, or an unconscious lowering of the standard to suit the experience reached. For myself, I had been ensnared by that last expedient for a long time. How much of the second there was I do not dare to say. But eventually I fell a victim to the first. And I can now see that it was a mercy I did so.

When I went to the Home of Rest, I had not yet fully given up seeking for perfection in the flesh. I really expected great things from the six months' furlough granted me, in order to "find myself," as it were.

Closely allied to the Home were other institutions where holiness and faith-healing were largely dwelt upon. I felt sure that in so hallowed an atmosphere great things would be accomplished.

In the rest home I found about fourteen officers, broken in health, seeking recuperation. I watched the ways and conversation of all most carefully, intending to confide in those who gave the best evidence of entire sanctification. There were some choice souls among them, and some arrogant hypocrites. But holiness in the absolute sense I saw in none. Some were very godly and devoted. Their conscientiousness I could not doubt. But those who talked the loudest were plainly the least spiritual. They seldom read their Bibles, they rarely conversed together of Christ. An air of carelessness pervaded the whole place. Three sisters, most devoted women, were apparently more godly than any others; but two of them admitted to me that they were not sure about being perfectly holy. The other one was non-committal, though seeking to help me. Some were positively quarrelsome and boorish, and this I could not reconcile with their profession of freedom from inbred sin. I attended the meetings held by the other workers I have mentioned. There the best of them did not teach sinless perfection; while the manifestly carnal gloried in their experience of perfect love! Sick people testified to being healed by faith, and sinning people declared they had the blessing of holiness! I was not helped, but hindered, by the inconsistency of it all.

At last I found myself becoming cold and cynical. Doubts as to everything assailed me like a legion of demons, and I became almost afraid to let my mind dwell on these things. For refuge I turned to secular literature, and sent for my books, which some years before I had foresworn on condition that God would give me the "second blessing." How little I realized the Jacob-spirit in all this! God seemed to have failed; so I took up my books once more, and tried to find solace in the beauties of essays and poetry, or the problems of history and science. I did not dare to confess to myself that I was literally an agnostic; yet for a month at least I could only answer, "I do not know" to every question based on divine revelation.

This was the legitimate result of the teaching I had been under. I reasoned that the Bible promised entire relief from indwelling sin to all who were wholly surrendered to the will of God. That I had thus surrendered seemed to me certain. Why then had I not been fully delivered from the carnal mind? It seemed to me that I had met every condition, and that God, on His part, had failed to perform what He had promised. I know it is wretched to write all this: but I see no other way to help others who are in the same state that I was in for that awful month.

Deliverance came at last in a most unexpected way. A lassie-lieutenant, a woman some ten years my senior in age, was brought to the Home from Rock Springs, Wyoming, supposedly dying of consumption. From the first my heart went out to her in deep sympathy. To me she was a martyr, laying down her life for a needy world. I was much in her company, observed her closely, and finally came to the conclusion that she was the only wholly sanctified person in that place.

Imagine my surprise when, a few weeks after her arrival, she, with a companion, came to me one evening and begged me to read to her; remarking, "I hear you are always occupied with the things of the Lord, and I need your help." I, the one to help her! I was dumbfounded, knowing so well the plague of my own heart, and being fully assured as to her perfect position in holiness. At the very moment they entered my room I was reading Byron's Childe Harold. And I was supposed to be entirely devoted to the things of God! It struck me as weird and fantastic, rather than as a solemn farce--all this comparing ourselves with ourselves, only to be deluded every time.

I hastily thrust the book to one side, and wondered what to choose to read aloud. In God's providence a pamphlet caught my attention which my mother had given me some years before, but which I had dreaded to read lest it might upset me; so afraid had I been of anything that did not bear the Army or Holiness stamp. Moved by a sudden impulse, I drew it forth and said, "I'll read this. It is not in accordance with our teaching; but it may be interesting anyway."

I read page after page, paying little attention, only hoping to soothe and quiet this dying woman. In it the lost condition of all men by nature was emphasized. Redemption in Christ through His death was explained. Then there was much as to the believer's two natures, and his eternal security, which to me seemed both ridiculous and absurd. The latter part was occupied with prophecy. Upon that we did not enter. I was startled after going over the first half of the book when Lieut. J--exclaimed, "O Captain, do you think that can possibly be true? If I could only believe that, I could die in peace!"

Astonished beyond measure, I asked, "What! do you mean to say you could not die in peace as you are? You are justified and sanctified; you have an experience I have sought in vain for years; and are you troubled about dying?" "I am miserable," she replied, "and you mustn't say I am sanctified. I cannot get it. I have struggled for years, but I have not reached it yet. This is why I wanted to speak to you, for I felt so sure you had it and could help me!"

We looked at each other in amazement; and as the pathos and yet ludicrousness of it all burst upon us, I laughed deliriously, while she wept hysterically. Then I remember exclaiming, "Whatever is the matter with us all? No one on earth denies himself more for Christ's sake than we. We suffer, and starve, and wear ourselves out in the endeavor to do the will of God; yet after all we have no lasting peace. We are happy at times; we enjoy our meetings; but we are never certain as to what the end will be."

"Do you think," she asked, "that it is because we depend upon our own efforts too much? Can it be that we trust Christ to save us, but we think we have to keep saved by our own faithfulness--?"

"But," I broke in, "to think anything else would open the door to all kinds of sin!"

And so we talked till, wearied out, she arose to go, but asked if she and others might return the next evening to read and talk of these things we had gone over--a permission which was readily granted.

For both Lieut. J--and myself that evening's reading and exchange of confidences proved the beginning of our deliverance. We had frankly owned to one another, and to the third party present, that we were not sanctified. We now began to search the Scriptures earnestly for light and help. I threw all secular books to one side, determined to let nothing hinder the careful, prayerful study of the word of God. Little by little, the light began to dawn. We saw that we had been looking within for holiness, instead of without. We realized that the same grace that had saved us at first alone could carry us on. Dimly we apprehended that all for us must be in Christ, or we were without a ray of hope.

Many questions perplexed and troubled us. Much that we had believed we soon saw to be utterly opposed to the word of God. Much more we could not understand, so completely warped had our minds become through the training of years. In my perplexity I sought out a teacher of the Word who, I understood, was in fellowship with the writer of the pamphlet I have referred to above. I heard him with profit on two occasions, but still was in measure bewildered, though I began to feel solid ground beneath my feet once more. The great truth was getting a grip of me that holiness, perfect love, sanctification, and every other blessing, were mine in Christ from the moment I had believed, and mine forevermore, all because of pure grace. I had been looking at the wrong man--all was in another Man, and in that Man for me! But it took weeks to see this.

A booklet entitled Safety, Certainty, and Enjoyment proved helpful to both of us, and was a source of cheer. Other tracts were given me, and read with earnest purpose, looking up every reference, searching context and other passages of like, or apparently opposite, character, while daily we cried to God for the knowledge of His truth. Miss J--saw it ere I did. The light came when she realized that she was eternally linked with Christ as Head, and had eternal life in Him as the Vine, in her as the branch. Her joy knew no bounds, and she actually improved in health from that hour, and lived for six years



after; finally going to be with the Lord, worn out in seeking to lead others to Christ. Many will be disappointed to know that she maintained her connection with the Army to the last. She had a mistaken (I believe) notion that she should remain where she was, and declare the truth she had learned. But ere she died she repented of this. Her last words to a brother (A.B.S.) and me, who were with her very near the end, were: "I have everything in Christ--of that I am sure. But I wish I had been more faithful as to the truth I learned about the Body--the Church. I was misled by zeal which I thought was of God, and it is too late to be faithful now!"

Four days after the truth burst upon her soul in that Home of Rest, I, too, had every doubt and fear removed, and found my all in Christ. To go on where I was, I could not. Within a week I was outside of the only human system I had ever been in as a Christian, and for many years since I have known no head but Christ, no body but the Church which He purchased with His own blood. They have been happy years; and as I look back over all the way the Lord has led me, I can but praise Him for the matchless grace that gave me to see that perfect holiness and perfect love were to be found, not in me, but in Christ Jesus alone.

And I have been learning all along my pilgrim journey that the more my heart is taken up with Christ, the more do I enjoy practical deliverance from sin's power, and the more do I realize what it is to have the love of God shed abroad in that heart by the Holy Spirit given to me, as the Earnest of the glory to come. I have found liberty and joy since being freed from bondage that I never thought it possible for a soul to know on earth, while I have a confidence in presenting this precious truth for the acceptance of others that contrasts with the uncertainty of the past.

**Re: Holiness: The False and the True - H.A. Ironside, on: 2013/7/22 13:50**

The problem this man came across is common amongst those who do have a 'second blessing' but do not get good teaching from there, that it does indeed not end unintentional sin in their lives.

It is true that it causes great suffering but that is not the fault of the doctrine.

A further work must take place before the desired sinless state will be reached but unfortunately not many in the Keswick Movement knew this.

**Re: , on: 2013/7/22 14:05**

I also want to add to this that, I have noticed a pattern in people who have had the charismatic 'baptism' and who hear holiness teaching and seek it, do not manage to receive it. I have known some who go on for years yearning for it and no doubt reach the point where they reject it.

I always ask them to test the spirits and stop their tongue speaking while they are seeking.

If a false spirit is received at their pseudo baptism, then they may need deliverance first.

**Re: Holiness: The False and the True - H.A. Ironside, on: 2013/7/22 14:18**

**REAL FREEDOM IN CHRIST!**

When I heard the gospel message and knew that I needed to be saved. I cried out to the Lord to save me and He did. I knew that I was saved and Christ was living inside of me. I went to tell people at the first opportunity about the grace of God and how he saved me.

After a very short time, my new found joy with the Lord, disappeared. Then in a dispute with my mother, my temper suddenly erupted, and in an angry fit I struck her and made her fall down. Horror immediately filled my soul. She looked at me and said "Well, aren't you a nice Christian! You'd better go down to the church and tell them what a sinner you've become!". I went to my room in anguish of heart to confess my sin to God in shame and bitter sorrow.

My Christian walk from this time on was an up - and - down roller coaster experience. I longed for perfect victory over the lusts and desires of the flesh. Yet I seemed to have more trouble with evil thoughts and unholy inclinations than I had ever known before. For a long time I kept these conflicts hidden, known only to God and to myself.

It appeared to me that I was living in a Romans Chapter 7 experience.

Romans 7:14-19; " For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do."

Sin seemed to have a grip over me that I could never break. I began to think that I still had a heart that was extremely deceitful, wicked and sinful. It appeared to me that it as vile as the heart of the greatest evildoer in the world. I did not experience much of Christ's love or grace during this time.

After some time, I became interested in what is called the "second blessing". I studied about an experience was spoken of which I felt was just what I needed. It was designated by various terms: 'The Second Blessing'; 'Sanctification'; 'Perfect Love'; 'Higher Life'; 'Cleansing from Inbred Sin'; A Clean Heart and by other expressions.

This teaching went like this: When a person is converted, God graciously forgives all sins. But this person still has an evil and wicked heart that needs a further work of grace called sanctification. This work has to do with the root sin.

The steps leading up to this second blessing are, firstly, conviction as to the need of holiness, just as in the beginning there was conviction of the need of salvation.

Secondly, a full surrender to God, or the laying of every hope, prospect and possession on the altar of consecration.

Thirdly, to claim in faith the incoming of the Holy Spirit as a refining fire to burn out all inbred sin, thus destroying in total every lust and passion, leaving the soul perfect in love.

Such was the teaching and along with it were heartfelt testimonies of experiences so remarkable that I could not doubt their genuineness, nor that what others seemed to enjoy was likewise for me if I would fulfill the conditions.

One lady told how for 20 years she had been kept from sin in thought, word, and deed. Her heart, she declared, was no longer 'deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked,' but now was as holy as Christ's heart. Others testified how their bad tempers had been rooted out when a full surrender was made. Evil propensities and unholy appetites had been instantly destroyed when holiness was claimed by faith. Eagerly I began to seek this precious experience. Earnestly I prayed for this and I asked God to reveal to me every unholy thing, that I might truly surrender all to Him. I gave up friends, pursuits, pleasures - everything I could think of that might hinder the incoming of the Holy Ghost and receiving the blessing. I did not, however, obtain what I sought, though I prayed zealously for months.

I became more desperate for this blessing. I fasted and prayed for long periods. One time I fell to my knees and I prayed in an agony for hours, asking God to show me anything that hindered my receiving the blessing. I struggled, but finally cried out loud 'Lord, I give up all - everything, every person, every enjoyment, that would hinder my living alone for You. Now give me, the blessing!'

Then I cried out loud in confidence, 'Lord, I now believe you have come in. You have cleansed and purified me from all sin. I claim it now. The work is done. I am sanctified by Thy blood. You have made me holy. I believe; I believe!' I was unspeakably happy. I felt that all my struggles were ended. Even now as I look back, I believe I was fully surrendered to the will of God at that moment. .

With a heart filled with praise, and I testified from that day forward how the Lord cleansed my heart by faith.

I thought my troubles were all over now. I thought I finally came out of the wilderness and I was now in living in Canaan. I thought I was freed from sin and that my heart was pure. I thought I had finally reached the state of full sanctification with no enemy within.

For some weeks after that experience, I lived in a dreamily - happy state, rejoicing in my fancied freedom from sin. One great idea had possession of my mind; and whether at work or in my leisure hours, I thought of little else than the wonderful event which had taken place. I testified in many gatherings and held up myself as a striking example of consecration and holiness!

I did this without a thought of the sinful pride to which it was giving expression. I considered it my duty to continually dire

at attention to 'my experience of full salvation,' as it was called. 'If you don't testify to it, you will lose the blessing,'

As time went on, the excitement and thrill was gone. Then sin slowly crept back in my life. At first I did not want to accept that fact I was sinning. As time went on it was obvious that I was once again back in sin's grasp. I went to God in confession, and prayed to be cleansed again from all this.

I thought I must be backslidden because I lost the happy experiences of the Lord's goodness. I spent the many nights in prayer, asking God to renew me again and cleanse me fully from all sin and give me a pure heart. Each time I claimed it by faith, but I inevitably again fell again in sin. I was full of remorse because I continued to sin both in thought and in word, and with my actions.

Again I prayed and believed that the work of full inward cleansing was indeed done, and that I was now, if never before, actually rid of all carnality.

In vain I searched my heart to see if I had made a full surrender, and tried to give up every known thing that seemed in any sense evil or doubtful. Sometimes, for a month at a time, or even longer, I could persuade myself that at last I had indeed again received the blessing. But invariably a few weeks later prove to me once again more that I was just as evil as before.

I had to finally admit to myself and to others that I was living a lie. I went to a few ministers that I deeply respected to confess and to find out how they received the deliverance that my heart longed for. I confessed my failures and sin to these ministers and was in total shock and horror when they told me that they had not yet entered into this experience either. I was completely devastated by this knowledge.

I found myself becoming cold and cynical. This was the legitimate result of the teaching that I had been under. I reasoned that the Bible promised entire relief from indwelling sin to all who were wholly surrendered to the will of God. That I had surrendered seemed certain to me. Why then had I not been fully delivered from the carnal mind? It seemed to me that I had met every condition, and that God, on His part, had failed to perform what He had promised. I know it is wretched to write all this: but I see no other way to help others who are in the same state that I was in.

I knew that if I could only abide in Christ that all would be well, but I could not. I would begin the day with prayer, determined not to take my eye from Him for a moment, but pressure of duties, sometimes very trying, constant interruptions, often very wearing, would cause me to forget Him. I found that my unkind words became even more difficult to control. Each day brought its toll of sin, failure, and lack of power. To will was indeed present with me, but how to perform, I did not find.

Then came the question, "Is there no real rescue? Must I live like this until the day I die? Will I continue in constant conflict and, instead of victory, too often defeat?" How, too, could I preach with sincerity that to those who receive Jesus, "to them He gave power to become the sons of God, when it was not so in my experience? Instead of growing stronger, I seemed to be getting weaker and to have less power against sin. My faith and even hope were getting very low. I hated myself; I hated my sin, but I gained no strength against it.

I even began to question my own salvation. I thought; "maybe I am not really saved after all." I spent much time and effort crying out to God to save me for certain. I even got baptized in water after thinking God had finally saved me. Then all would fall apart again and then I fell on my face asking God to really save me. Then once again I thought He had, so I got re-baptized in water again.

I thought that holiness was the answer to my problems. I felt that there was nothing I so much desired in this world, nothing I so much needed. But the more I pursued and strove after holiness, the further away it became. My hope itself almost died out completely.

I did not think at the time that I was striving to attain this in my own strength. I knew I was powerless. I told the Lord so, and asked Him to give me help and strength and sometimes I almost believed He would keep and uphold me. But each day there was sin and failure to confess and mourn before God.

I almost ended up in despair. And yet, never did Christ seem more precious a Savior who could and would save such a sinner! And sometimes there were seasons not only of peace but of joy in the Lord. But they were fleeting and at best there was a sad lack of power. Oh, how good the Lord has been in bringing this conflict to an end!

All that time I felt assured that there was in Christ all I needed, but the practical question was how to get it out. He was rich, but I was poor; He was strong, but I was weak. I knew full well that there was in the vine, in the root, the stem, abundant fatness; but how to get it into my puny little branch was the question.

As gradually the light dawned on me, I saw that faith was the only prerequisite to laying hold of His fullness and making it my own. But I had not this faith. I strove for it, but it would not come. I tried to exercise it, but in vain. Seeing more and more the wondrous supply of grace laid up in Jesus, the fullness of our precious Savior - my helplessness and guilt seemed to increase. The sins I committed which were gross could not compare with my sin of unbelief which was their cause. I could not or would not take God at His word, but rather made Him a liar! Unbelief was, I felt, the damning sin of the world - yet I indulged in it. I prayed for faith but it did not come. What was I to do?

Little by little, the light began to dawn and I saw that I had been looking at my own experience and striving for holiness and not looking at Christ and What he had already done. I realized that the same grace that had saved me at first could carry me on. Dimly I apprehended that all I must be in Christ, or I was without any hope.

When my agony of soul was at its height, the Spirit of God revealed the truth of our oneness with Jesus as I had never seen it before. Then I read and began to see "If we believe not, He remains faithful." I looked to Jesus and saw that He had said, "I will never leave you." "Ah, here is rest!" I thought. "I have striven in vain to rest in Him. I'll strive no more. For has He not promised to abide with me - never to leave me, never to fail me?" And, He never will!

My faith was weak and then I saw that my faith would never have any power by striving after faith but only from resting on The Faithful one.

The great truth was getting a grip of me that holiness, perfect love, sanctification, and every other blessing, were mine in Christ from the moment I had believed, and mine forevermore, because all of pure grace. I had been looking at the wrong man - all was in another Man, and in that Man for me! But it took weeks to see this.

I have been learning all along my journey that the more my heart is taken up with Christ, the more do I enjoy practical deliverance from sin's power, and the more do I realize what it is to have the love of God shed abroad in that heart by the Holy Spirit given to me. I have found liberty and joy since being freed from bondage that I never thought it possible for a soul to know on earth, while I have a confidence in presenting this precious truth for the acceptance of others that contrasts with the uncertainty of the past.

But this was not all God showed me, nor one half. As I thought of the vine and the branches, what light the blessed Spirit poured directly into my soul! How great seemed my mistake in having wished to get the sap, the fullness, out of Him. I saw not only that Jesus would never leave me, but that I was a member of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. The vine now I see is not the root merely, but all - root, stem, branches, twigs, leaves, flowers, fruit; and Jesus is not only that; He is soil and sunshine, air and showers, and ten thousand times more than I have ever dreamed, wished for, or needed. Oh the joy of seeing this truth! I do pray that the eyes of your understanding may be enlightened, that you may know and enjoy the riches freely given us in Christ.

It is a wonderful thing to be really one with a risen and exalted Savior, to be a member of Christ! Think what it involves. Can Christ be rich and I poor? Can your right hand be rich and the left poor? Or your head be well fed while your body starves? Again, think of this bearing on prayer. If we ask anything unscriptural or not in accordance with the will of God, Christ Himself could not do that; but "If we ask anything according to His will, He hears us; and . . . we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him."

The sweetest part, if one may speak of one part being sweeter than another, is the rest which full identification with Christ brings. I am no longer anxious about anything, as I realize this; for He, I know, is able to carry out His will, and His will is mine. It makes no difference where He places me, or how. That is rather for Him to consider than for me; for in the easiest positions He must give me His grace, and in the most difficult His grace is sufficient. His resources are mine for He is mine, and is with me and dwells in me.

All this springs from the believers oneness with Christ. And since Christ is now living in my heart by faith, how happy I have been! I wish I could tell you instead of writing about it.

I am no better than I was before, I do not wish to be, nor am I striving to be, but I am dead and buried with Christ - yes, a

and risen too and ascended; and now Christ lives in me, and "the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

I now believe that I am dead to sin. God reckons me so, and tells me to reckon myself so. He knows best. All my past experiences may have shown that it was not so; but I dare not say it is not, when He says it is. I feel and know that old things have passed away. I am as capable of sinning as ever, but Christ is realized as present as never before. He cannot sin; and He can keep me from sinning.

I am sorry to have to confess it, but I cannot say that since I have seen this light I have not sinned; but I do feel there was no need to have done so. And further - walking more in the light, my conscience has been more tender; sin has been instantly seen, confessed, pardoned; and peace and joy (with humility) instantly restored; with one exception, when for several hours peace and joy did not return - from lack, as I had to learn, of full confession, and from some attempt to justify self.

Faith, I now see, is "the substance of things hoped for" and not mere shadow. It is not less than sight, but more. Sight only shows the outward forms of things; faith gives the substance. You can rest on substance; you can feed on substance. Christ dwelling in the heart by faith. Faith in His word of promise is power indeed, is life indeed. Christ and sin will not dwell together; nor can we experience His presence with love of the world or carelessness about "many things."

We should not look upon this experience, these truths, as only for a few. They are the birthright of every child of God, and no one can dispense with them without dishonor to our Lord. The only power for deliverance from sin or for serving the Lord is Christ.

I had been told over and over that the reason I had never received a clean heart was due to my lack of full consecration or lack of my full surrender. I spent much time and effort praying surrendering everything. I would consecrate myself and surrender myself to God but wound up only experiencing despair and failure. Then I would do it all over again with the same results. Now I see that this teaching is in error. Christ already dealt with my evil heart on the Cross. All of my wicked and evilness of my flesh is dead because of what He did. I am dead and buried with Christ and freed from sin. I do not have to try to consecrate myself or try to fully surrender. I do not now believe that this consecration or full surrender is even possible. The only surrender possible is to just relax in what Christ has already done for you and in you.

Romans 8:7 "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

Now I see that all my futile struggle for holiness in my life had been God's way of bringing me to the end of self - sufficiency. For the first time in my life, I began to really understand my identity as a Christian - that Christ is not simply in my life, but that He is my life.

I gave up on the trying to live a Christian life. I prayed, Lord Jesus, You know now that I've gone about trying to live my whole life the wrong way. I have tried and tried to live for You. I have tried, with Your help, to please you and to do a work for You. But today, Lord, I quit. I am not going to even try anymore. I understand now that You are my very life. So whatever needs to be done, You will have to do it in me and through me. I am going to rest in You and whatever happens - happens. You are my life.

This life in Christ is not some second work of grace. It is a new awareness and appreciation for what Christ had already done for me the second I was saved. I had possessed His life all the time, but now I was experiencing and enjoying what I had possessed from the day I was saved. I was like the pauper who discovered oil on the property where he had lived all his life. I didn't get anything new from God when I prayed that prayer. Rather, I just began to enjoy what God had given me when I was born again. I see now that I really had a pure, clean heart the whole time I was saved, but I never fully experienced it because of my unbelief.

2 Peter 1:3 - 4 "His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

May God give you the grace to lay hold on these blessed truths. God has made us one with Him, members of His very body.

**Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2013/7/22 16:49**

Hi tuc,

You wrote: ""This life in Christ is not some second work of grace. It is a new awareness and appreciation for what Christ had already done for me the second I was saved. I had possessed His life all the time, but now I was experiencing and enjoying what I had possessed from the day I was saved.""

I too am battered, bloodied and black and blue, from all struggling to be the soldier for Christ that I always looked to become. All those that overcame all in the flesh, gave me such tears that I could not attain or be like the soldier wounded and laid down, getting up and taking the fight to the enemy, I still tear up in these scenes of life. Then one day I realized by the Grace of God that I already had the greatest Person ever accomplishing things for God, the Cross, He was already in me and praise God it is Him that the Father sees making me by what He has done, my doing in Him.

I still to this day cannot be like Him, but I am by the Grace of God and still looking forward to the day that brings me into His presence, falling on my face in buckets of tears and reaching out to just touch the hem of His garment. Then no more tears, no more pain, no more bruises Just Him and the Love of God, doing all for God as it pleases Him.

Receiving the whole bucket of Grace in total when God put His incorruptible Seed in me is the first, second, third and on and on to the end, the only blessing God knows and I am coming to know, Jesus Christ is my all and in all that I need.

Thank you tuc, for allowing us to see the whole bucket of Grace in Christ Jesus in your post. Thank God He will continue His work of conforming us to the image of His Son until He comes. For by Grace are we saved, through faith.

In Christ: Phillip

**Re: Holiness: The False and the True - H.A. Ironside - posted by murrcoir (), on: 2013/7/23 6:11**

It seems that Mr Ironside was very young 14 street preaching, 16 cadet training 19 an officer in Salvation army.

Quote: People who professed conversion (whether real or not the day will declare) struggled for months, even years, to reach a state of sinlessness which never was reached; and at last they gave up in despair and sank back in many instances to the dead level of the world around them.

Sinlessness ---- can you imagine, no wonder he never got what he asked for.

Quote: The great truth was getting a grip of me that holiness, perfect love, sanctification, and every other blessing, were mine in Christ from the moment I had believed, and mine forevermore, all because of pure grace. I had been looking at the wrong man--all was in another Man, and in that Man for me! But it took weeks to see this.

Yes there we go a lesson for us all to learn, as we could easily get thousands upon thousands testimonies of how people struggle in the Christian trying to up to live up to a certain standard, which in essence is old covenant thinking. Come on you know them maybe it's you harsh, judgmental, unloving; one moment there blessing God and the next cursing their fellow human this isn't the way it should be.

And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. Ezekiel 36:27

There is only one way to live the Christian life, by the spirit as this Spirit will "cause" you to walk in his statutes.

You see when I hear people say "starve the flesh" and "feed the spirit" there no different than Mr Ironside they are struggling to attain something, like he was struggling to attain something but calling it a different name, it makes me sad to see and hear these things, because I have seen many people's lives ship wrecked over the years.

I am glad in a way that I got out of it and left the church, so there is no pressure to perform and live up to certain standards that are placed on you by men or by yourself. I look back at my vain and foolish attempt of living the new covenant life with an old covenant attitude and move on saying never again.

However "There remains therefore a rest to the people of God" Heb 4:9