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PURITY OF HEART

Chapter 6 – PURITY POSSIBLE

Hebrews 13:12 – *Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate.*

My Dear Comrades, I can very well imagine that some of my Soldiers, after reading what I have been saying about a Pure Heart, will be asking the question: "Is it possible for me to obtain this treasure?" I am aware that many people outside our borders openly assert that such an experience is impossible. They declare that no man or woman can live in this world without committing sin. They say that no matter how we hate our sins, or weep over them, or pray to be delivered from them, or trust in Jesus Christ for victory over them, we must be beaten in the strife and go on sinning, or, at the best, keep on sinning and repenting, right down to the River of Death. Now, with regard to this objection, I maintain with the Apostle John, that not only is God willing and able to forgive us our sins – which no one who believes the Bible will deny – but that He is equally willing and able to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

But before we go further, let us have another word of explanation. We must understand one another. What is it that I am saying? I reply, I am declaring to you who hear these words, nothing less than the Scriptural doctrine that God can keep you from committing sin.

Perhaps some of you will ask, What is Sin? I reply that the same Apostle, that is John, answers that question in such a simple manner that anyone can understand him. He says in his Epistle, that "All unrighteousness is sin." That is, whatsoever thing a man does, or consents to being done, in his thoughts, desires, or actions, which he knows to be wrong, that is sin.

Now I affirm, on the authority of the Bible, that Jesus Christ your Saviour is able and willing to keep you from doing wrong. His Name was called Jesus, that is, Saviour, because He "should save His people from their sins."

As I have shown you already in these Letters, you may make mistakes; you may have



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temptations; you may be low-spirited; you may have pain in your body, perplexity in your mind, and anguish in your heart; the world may be against you; dark clouds may hang low, and the future be threatening; nay, you may, like Jesus Christ on the Cross, even feel as though God and man had forsaken you, and yet, in spite of all this and all else of the same kind, you can be kept from sin. In the name of my dear Lord, I assert that it is possible for you to have and to keep a Pure Heart.

Many of you believe this already – and are as sure of it as I am myself. But some may be in doubt. Let me try and make it plain to them. 1. And, first, you cannot doubt God's Ability to make and keep you free from Sin. He who made you, and sustains you in being, who redeemed you on the Cross, who pardoned your sins, and wrote your name in Heaven, can surely do this for you. He who will raise you from the dead, and land you at last safely in Heaven, is surely able to keep you from breaking His commandments and grieving His Holy Spirit all the rest of the short time you may have to spend in this world! I am sure He can.

It will be a difficult task, perhaps, fixed as you are, with your particular trials of body and soul, or circumstances. There may be something in your family or your business very strongly opposed to your leading a holy life. You may have tried before, again and again, but only to fail. You may be full of doubts and fears, even to despair, and nothing short of a great Salvation will meet your case. But God will be equal to the undertaking. I am sure He will.

He has saved you from many sins already. Evil habits and passions, that used to reign over you, have been mastered; nay, some of them have been destroyed. Why, then, should not your prayer be answered?

"Finish, then, Thy new Creation,
Pure and spotless let me be;
Let me see Thy great Salvation,
Perfectly restored in Thee."

I see no reason why He should not do this. He is able to keep the Angels from sinning. They do not keep themselves. It is His almighty arm that holds them up and prevents



them from falling.

He will be able to keep you from sinning when you reach the Celestial Land; and, thank God, He can keep you here. You believe He is mighty to save. You sing, and sing, and sing again:

"All things are possible to him
That can in Jesus' name believe;
Lord, I no more Thy truth blaspheme,
Thy truth I lovingly receive;
I can, I do believe in Thee,
All things are possible to me."

2. And then my Comrades, if God is able to make and keep you Pure, you cannot question His willingness to do it. This must be equally plain to you, and yet it will bear looking at. It is very important indeed, that you should see – yes, and feel as well – that Jesus Christ is not only able, but perfectly willing – nay, waiting, even while this is being read to you, to take away from your hearts the evil things that have been the plague of your lives, and for ever to keep them from coming back to harass, and wound, and torment you again.

(a) The very Nature of God proves His willingness to make you Holy. All beings everywhere act out their nature. You see illustrations of this around you every day – wicked people delight in the wickedness of their neighbors. Good people find pleasure in their goodness. God is Holy. He tells us so, again and again; and being Holy and hating iniquity, He must abhor wickedness in men and women, and find the great delight of His heart in making them pure and good like Himself. I am sure that nothing would gratify Him more, my Comrades, than to take everything that is unclean out of your hearts and lives. Will you let Him do it?

(b) God tells us, in plain language, in the Bible, that He wants to make you Holy. Listen to some of His words: "Put on the new man," He says, "which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto



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Holiness." "This is the will of God, even your Sanctification."

3. Jesus Christ came into the world" and lived and suffered and died that you might be made Holy. This was the main object of His life and death and resurrection. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." Paul says that "Jesus gave Himself for His church" – that is, for you and for me – "that He might sanctify and cleanse us, and that He might present us to Himself . . . not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that we should be holy, and without blemish."

4. His love for His Children proves His willingness to save them from their Sins. No miser ever loved his gold; no patriot ever loved his country; no mother ever loved her babe; no father ever loved his boy; no bridegroom ever loved his bride; no, not all the love of all the created beings on this earth put together would equal the love which God bears to you, His children, my dear Comrades. And knowing as He does, that sin is your great curse, He must, nay, He does, long to deliver you from it.

5. God has promised you a Clean Heart if you will seek it. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

6. But I am also sure that God is willing to give you a Clean Heart because He has done the work for so many of His servants in the days gone by, and for so many of your Comrades in our present time. He is no respecter of persons. You are as welcome to wash away your inward iniquities, in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, as any other son or daughter of Adam. Oh, He Will be delighted for you to step into the blessed stream at once:

"Will you, will you now enter in?
Will you, will you wash and be clean?"

7. If you are a Holy Man or Woman you will help forward the War, and spread the glory of Christ's Name far more effectively than you will if you are not fully saved. Holy



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people are the great need of the world. I am sure they are one of the great wants of The Army.

8. Do you not feel in your heart, while I am talking to you, that the Holy Spirit wants you to be Pure, and is waiting now to give you the Blessing? The fire of desire for your Sanctification is burning strongly in my heart while I write this Letter. Does not your desire also rise up for this? I believe it does. Well, wait no longer! All things are now ready! Is not a holy yearning springing up within you? Go down this moment before God, and sing:

"Oh, that the Fire from Heaven might fall,
And all my sins consume!
Come, Holy Ghost, for Thee I call,
Spirit of Burning, come!
"Refining Fire, go through my heart,
Illuminate my soul;
Scatter Thy life through every part,
And sanctify the whole."

Yours affectionately,
William Booth

"More hard than marble is my heart,
And foul with sins of deepest stain;
But Thou the mighty Saviour art,
Nor flowed Thy cleansing Blood in vain;
Ah, soften, melt this rock, and may
Thy Blood wash all these stains away!
"O grant that nothing in my soul
May dwell, but Thy pure love alone;
O may Thy love possess me whole,
My joy, my treasure, and my crown!
Strange flames far from my heart remove;
My every act, word, thought, be love."