



The
William Booth
Collection

PURITY OF HEART

Chapter 9 – WITNESSES

Acts 1:8 – But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

My Dear Comrades, Have you grown tired of my subject? I hope not. From my youth until this very day the subject of Holiness has always had an unspeakable charm for me. To pray and hear, and sing and believe, and testify to the power of the Precious Blood to cleanse from sin, and fill with love, and keep from falling, has been among the most precious privileges of my life. The charm is as fresh to me today as ever. I trust you feel as I do.

A devout Saint of old sang in words that always thrill my soul when I hear them:

"I'll carve His passion in the bark;
And every wounded tree
Shall droop, and bear some sacred mark
That Jesus died for me.
And men shall wonder as they read,
Inscribed through all the grove,
How Heaven itself came down to bleed,
To win a mortal's love.

Is not that beautiful, my Comrades? Ought not we Salvationists to be anxious to sound out, by our lips and lives, to the sons and daughters of men, at every opportunity the glorious fact, that Jesus Christ died not only to save men and women from open and deliberate sin, but to purify unto Himself "a peculiar people, inwardly as well as outwardly clean.

Has He wrought this deliverance for you, my Comrades? Or are you deterred from seeking it by doubts as to His ability to effect this purification of the heart? Let me call



The
William Booth
Collection

PURITY OF HEART

a few witnesses, who will testify to its realization in their own experience. I am sure you will listen to what they have to say.

I will begin with the Saints of the Bible. Hear them. To begin with we read that: – 1. Enoch walked with God three hundred years. God Himself testifies that Enoch's ways were pleasing in His sight. What a blessed testimony. Who can question that Enoch had a Pure Heart?

2. Noah was a good man and perfect in his generation. So far as he had the light he lived up to it. He condemned the world and became "heir of the righteousness," that is the holiness "which is by faith." He had a Pure Heart.

3. The Lord Himself testified, that Job was a perfect and an upright man. He was perfect in love, and perfect in faith. He was able to look up even in the darkest hour, and say, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." He loved God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself. He had a Pure Heart.

4. We have a most remarkable testimony to Abraham's Faith and Obedience. God told him, as He tells you, to "Walk before Him, and be perfect," and we have the most striking evidence of Abraham's obedience to God in the offering up of his son Isaac. Who can doubt that he had a Pure Heart?

5. Isaiah was a Holy man, We read that when the Prophet acknowledged his uncleanness in the Temple, God's angel touched his lips with a live coal of fire from off the altar, and testified that his iniquity was taken away and his sin was purged. Whereupon Isaiah rose up and consecrated himself there and then to go out as the messenger of God. He had a Pure Heart.

6. Zacharias and Elizabeth his wife, we are informed, were both righteous. They walked in all the commandments of the Lord blameless. Being delivered out of the hand of their enemies, they served God without fear, in holiness and righteousness all the days of their lives.



The
William Booth
Collection

PURITY OF HEART

7. The Apostle John testified that he was made perfect in love. "God is love," he says; "he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world."

8. Paul called his comrades to witness that his life was a Holy life. "Ye are witnesses," he says to the Thessalonians, "how holily, justly, and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you."

But let me call a few witnesses of modern times. I testify that they belong to the choicest spirits who have ever walked this earth. I start off with the saint, John Fletcher, a Clergyman. He says: "I will confess Him to all the world, and I declare unto you in the presence of the Holy Trinity that I am dead indeed unto sin; Christ is my Prophet, Priest, and King, my indwelling Holiness, my All in All!"

Hear another witness: "All at once, I felt that a Hand, not feeble, but Omnipotent, not in wrath, but in love, was laid upon my brow. It seemed to diffuse through me a holy, self-consuming energy. The deeps of God's love swallowed me up. All its waves and billows rolled over me.

Hear the testimony of one of the holiest and most useful men ever possessed by the British Church – a man whom I admire more than words can tell: "My soul was all wonder, love, and praise. It is now twenty-six years ago; I have walked in this liberty ever since. Glory be to God! I have been kept by His power. By faith I stand."

A host of other testimonies are before me. One more is all I can find room for. Hear him. He says: "I was alone in the field one beautiful day in the early spring. The sky clear, the sun glorious, the happy birds, and all nature, quick and springing into life, were but the symbol of my heart's experience. It was a glorious day within and without. I can never forget that day. I shall never enjoy a happier until I walk the fields of Paradise. 'What is it that you want?' seemed to be asked me. 'I want victory over all sin,' was my answer. 'Have you not got it?' 'Yes,' I replied. 'What else do you want?' I answered, 'I want power to perform all the known will of God.' 'Do you not do this?' 'Well, then, have you not received the blessing you have asked for?' And never from



The
William Booth
Collection

PURITY OF HEART

that hour have I doubted for a moment the reality of that work." Comrades, I have convinced you that there is no fatal necessity laid on you to sin, either in word, or thought, or deed. I have declared to you the unchanging faithfulness and power of your redeeming God. And now, what will you do? Your Lord is waiting to bring you into the land of Perfect Purity, of Perfect Love. I have shown you how you can enter in. Again I beseech you to rise, and go up to possess the good land, in God's own way; that is, by Faith. But, do it now, and if at first you do not succeed, do not give up the search; but persevere, and try, and try, and try again.

Yours affectionately,

William Booth

"Now rise, exulting rise, my soul,
Triumphant sing the Saviour's praise;
His name through earth and skies extol,
With all thy power through all thy days."