

Holiness and Unconscious Influence

by Samuel Logan Brengle

The sermon explores the profound and often unconscious influence of holiness in the lives of believers and its impact on others.

Scripture: Genesis 50:19, Judges 5:31, Ecclesiastes 9:17, Matthew 10:34, Luke 6:19

Topics: "Holiness", "Unconscious Influence"

Description

Samuel Logan Brengle emphasizes the profound and often unconscious influence of a holy life, illustrating how individuals filled with the Holy Spirit can inspire and bless others without even realizing it. He shares stories of how holy conversations and silent presence can lead to significant transformations in others, highlighting the power of a sanctified life to comfort, convict, and even provoke persecution. Brengle encourages believers to fully consecrate themselves to God, allowing the Holy Spirit to work through them, thus becoming vessels of healing and light in a dark world.

Transcript

Some people often sing:

"Oh, to be nothing, nothing;"

but, in reality, to be something, to be useful, is one of the first and strongest desires that spring up in the heart of a truly saved person. And one of the blessed things about a holy life is its supernatural, constant, and often unconscious influence for good. A holy person does not have to resolve, and struggle to be a blessing. Without conscious effort, his life and talk and looks inspire the fainthearted, encourage the timid, instruct the ignorant, feed the hungry, and rebuke the proud, and selfish, and wayward. He blesses people in all sorts of ways, without at the time knowing it, and is often surprised to learn how the Lord has been blessing him.

Luke says that 'The whole multitude sought to touch Jesus; for there went virtue out of Him, and healed them all.' And, just so, virtue goes out from holy people, as perfume floats from a rose, or warmth from fire, or light from a flame.

A sanctified Officer said to a comrade who was deserting his post, 'I feel that woe is me, if I preach not the Gospel.' Some weeks later an Officer said to him, 'I overheard you that day when you said, "Woe is me, if I preach not the Gospel," and it stirred my soul, and made me feel that way too.' Those words had been

said quietly, but God was in them, and they were with power. This fits Solomon's saying, 'The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools.' (Eccles. ix. 17.)

A number of years ago in America, two sanctified Salvationists, a man and his wife, were followed home from their meetings several nights by a nurse from the hospital near by. She could not get away from her duties long enough to attend the meetings, but she said to herself, 'I will walk home behind them, and maybe I shall get something for my soul.'

And she did. All unconscious that a hungry heart was feeding upon their words, the Salvationists talked out of their clean hearts about Jesus, and His love, and His word, and His uttermost salvation, and as a result, the nurse was so filled with desire to glorify God and save souls that she left her work for people's bodies, and became a missionary, and is now in the far east. This strange story came back to the two Salvationists from Korea, after many days, to surprise and gladden them, and fill them with wonder at the unconscious power of holy conversation.

The very silence of a holy man is with power. I have known such silence to still the voice of slander and foolishness, and hush the laugh of silliness and folly. An Officer with a clean heart aflame with love, met a girl who had offered herself for the Slum Work. She was giggling and chattering in a way that convinced him that instead of being filled with the Holy Spirit she was empty. He wanted to speak to her about her soul, but hardly knew how to begin, so he was silent, and prayed in his heart for her. Afterward she said, 'I looked at his face, and said to myself, "There is a holy man, a man dead to sin. But I am alive yet." And that sight of his face led her to seek and find the blessing, and now for years she has been a most useful and devoted Officer. The very presence of such a man is a rebuke to sin and half-heartedness and folly, and is a mighty inspiration to goodness.

After the overthrow of Sisera and all his host, Deborah and Barak sang a song of triumph and thanksgiving and closed it with these words, 'Let them that love Him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might.' (Judges v. 31.) Think of it! How mighty the sun is! how he floods the world with light! how he melts the snow, and thaws the iceberg, and warms the whole earth, and quickens and gladdens every living thing! None can stop him in his course; and so God means that it shall be with holy men and women. They comfort those that are right, and convict those that are wrong, just as the sun energizes everything that has life, and hastens the dissolution of everything that is dead.

But while holy people have power to bless and do good, they also have a strange influence often to arouse persecution. They prove the saying of Jesus, 'I came not to send peace, but a sword' (Matt. x. 34.)

But even this will turn to a blessing. God makes it work for good to them that love Him, and it often leads to the salvation of the persecutors. The godly life and testimony of Joseph rebuked his unclean brothers, and they sold him into slavery. But years after, when he ruled over all Egypt, and his brothers were seeking his forgiveness and mercy, he said, "Fear not: as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.' (Gen. 1. 19, 20.) Thus persecution often leads to the salvation of many people.

This very power of a holy life to arouse hatred and persecution and opposition, is a part of the unconscious influence of holiness, and is mightily used by God for the advancement of His Kingdom on earth, so that many have been able to say with Paul when he was put into jail, that locking them up had only made the Gospel spread more, and made other men bolder to preach it. (Phil. i. 12-20.)

'Come,' said a distinguished Scotch professor to a German skeptic, 'and I will show you a student that will make you think of Jesus.'

'There is no difference between him and the Book,' said his fellow-townsmen of a Chinese convert.

'Ye are the light of the world,' said Jesus; 'ye are the salt of the earth,'

Such lives are full of healing, cleansing, helping, comforting power; and such may be your life, my brother, my sister, no matter how dark your surroundings, if you will consecrate yourself entirely to God, take up your cross and follow Jesus, and seek, ask for, and receive the Holy Spirit as your Sanctifier.

Oh, that He may come into your heart right now, and nevermore be grieved, or allowed to depart!

Oh, make my life one blazing fire
Of pure and fervent heart desire,
The lost to find, the low to raise,
And give them cause Thy name to praise,
Because, wherever I may go,
I show Thy power to every foe!

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