

# Holiness: The False and the True: Including an autobiography of his conversion and struggle for holiness

H. A. Ironside, CrossReach Publications

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FOR over twelve years I have considered the advisability of penning these papers. There seemed some good reasons why it might not be wise; there seem to me now to be more why I should undertake it. The two chief reasons that have come before me to hinder my writing them heretofore are these: (a) The detailing of a large measure of personal experience is necessarily involved. This is distasteful to many, and to none more than to myself. But I have been much impressed lately with the many instances in which the chief of the apostles uses his own experience as a warning and lesson to others who would put confidence in the flesh. For this cause alone I am at last persuaded to narrate my own endeavors to attain perfection by following the socalled "holiness teaching." There can surely be no charge brought against me of glorying in self in so doing. The record is too humiliating for that. Nor do I desire to take a morbid satisfaction in detailing my failures. But for this recital of my past errors and present blessedness I have not only apostolic example, but the entire book of Ecclesiastes is a similar record; written only that others might be spared the anguish and disappointment of treading the same weary path. (b) It is difficult to write an account like this without apparent criticism of the organization to which I once belonged, both as to its methods and its doctrines. This I shrink from. I have the fullest sympathy with the great work being done among the "submerged" in the larger cities of the world by these self-denying workers, and I would not say or write a word to hinder any who thus seek to save the outcast and wayward. I only regret that the converts are not given a clearer gospel, and more scriptural instruction afterwards. Many of my old "comrades" are still toiling as I once toiled in what they believe is a God-raised-up and God-directed "Army"; whose teaching they consider to be fully in accord with Scripture; and I know this record must give some of them pain. I would spare them this if I could. But when I reflect that thousands are yearly being disheartened and discouraged by their teaching; that hundreds yearly are ensnared into infidelity through the collapse of the vain effort to attain the unattainable; that scores have actually lost their minds and are now inmates of asylums because of the mental grief and anguish resultant upon their bitter disappointment in the search for holiness; I feel I should not allow sentimental reasons to hinder my relating the unvarnished truth, in the hope that under the blessing of God it may lead many to find in Christ Himself that sanctification which they can never find elsewhere, and in His Cross that exhibition of perfect love which they will look for in vain in their own hearts and lives. Therefore I send forth these papers, praying that both the experimental and doctrinal parts may be helpful to many and hindrances to none; and in commending all to the reader's spiritual intelligence, I would earnestly beseech him to "prove all things, and hold fast that which is good."

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