



God's Way of Holiness

Horatius Bonar

1864

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Preface

The way of peace and the way of holiness lie side by side, or rather, they are one. That which bestows the one imparts the other; and he who takes the one takes the other also. The Spirit of peace is the Spirit of holiness. The God of peace is the God of holiness.

If at any time these paths seem to go asunder, there must be something wrong—wrong in the teaching that makes them seem to part company, or wrong in the state of the man in whose life they have done so.

They start together, or at least so nearly together that no eye, save the divine, can mark a difference. Yet, properly speaking, the peace goes before the holiness, and is its parent. This is what divines call “priority in nature, though not in time,” which means substantially this, that the difference in such almost identical beginnings is too small in point of time to be perceived by us, yet it is not on that account the less distinct and real.

The two are not independent. There is fellowship between them, vital fellowship, each being the helpmeet of the other. The fellowship is not of mere coincidence, as in the case of strangers who happen to meet on the same path, nor of arbitrary appointment, as in the case of two parallel roads, but of mutual help and sympathy—like the fellowship of head and heart, or of two members of one body, the peace being indispensable to the production or causation of the ho-

liness, and the holiness indispensable to the maintaining and deepening of the peace.

He who affirms that he has peace, while living in sin, is “a liar, and the truth is not in him.” He who thinks that he has holiness, though he has no peace, ought to question whether he understands aright what the Bible means by either the one or the other; for, as the essence of holiness is the soul’s right state toward God, it does not seem possible that a man can be holy so long as there is no conscious reconciliation between God and him. A spurious holiness there may be, founded upon a spurious peace, or upon no peace at all; but true holiness must start from a true and authentic peace.

- Horatius Bonar, Kelso, Scotland, July 1864

Chapter I

The New Life

It is to a new life that God is calling us; not to some new steps in life, some new habits or ways or motives or prospects, but to a new life .

For the production of this new life the eternal Son of God took flesh, died, was buried, and rose again. It was not life producing life, a lower life rising into a higher, but life rooting itself in its opposite, life wrought out of death, by the death of “the Prince of life.” Of the new creation, as of the old, He is the author...