



TAKE TIME TO BE
HOLY



365 DAILY INSPIRATIONS
TO BRING YOU CLOSER TO GOD

Samuel Logan Brengle

Edited by Bob Hostetler

In the early 1880s, William D. Longstaff wrote a poem that later became a hymn called “Take Time to Be Holy.” Becoming a holy person is intentional; you have to work at it. Samuel Logan Brengle embodies for me everything I could imagine a holy person to be. What I see is a man who knew lots about life in the streets but saw it from the perspective of knowing lots about life in the Lord’s presence. Bob Hostetler has done us a service by arranging Brengle’s holiness writings into bite-size pieces, one for each day of the year, to help us spend time in secret with Jesus.

GORDON MACDONALD

Author, speaker, and pastor for more than 40 years

This daily diet of wisdom from Brengle’s life affords a wonderful opportunity to deepen the health of your own journey toward wholeness. The simplicity of a day-to-day dose of wisdom from such a godly man is a gift that will multiply in effect each day. Holiness, in its generous and transforming nature, perfectly reflects the deep complexity of God’s own heart. The Holy Spirit will work its restoring way in your heart as you walk this path of daily devotions. God’s holy nature will become a new and fresh breeze each day.

KEVIN MANNOIA

Founder and chair of the Wesleyan Holiness Consortium and professor of ministry at Azusa Pacific University

Take Time to Be Holy is a splendid book. The richness of its devotional selections from the writings of Samuel Logan Brengle reveals the depth of his insights into the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and a subtle delineation of biblical holiness. The diligent unraveling of this multifaceted subject discloses a multifaceted character who deserves to be rediscovered as a twenty-first century “prophet of holiness.”

LEONARD SWEET

Bestselling author, professor (Drew University, George Fox University), and chief contributor to Sermons.com

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Take Time to Be Holy: 365 Daily Inspirations to Bring You Closer to God

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INTRODUCTION

I met Commissioner Samuel Logan Brengle when I was a young man.

The Salvation Army's greatest exponent of holiness died twenty-two years before I was born, but when I was a teenager, I read Clarence Hall's inspiring biography of Brengle, *Portrait of a Prophet*. As a result, I began systematically reading Brengle's own works, and by the time I was twenty, I had read them all: *Helps to Holiness*, *Heart Talks on Holiness*, *The Way of Holiness*, *The Soul-Winner's Secret*, *When the Holy Ghost Is Come*, *Love-Slaves*, *Resurrection Life and Power*, *Ancient Prophets and Modern Problems*, and *The Guest of the Soul*. Perhaps more than any other person, living or dead, Commissioner Brengle taught and guided me as a young man, and his influence remains with me to this day.

Brengle's thinking, preaching, and writing sailed comfortably on the current of nineteenth-century holiness teaching, building on the tradition of John Wesley, Charles Finney, Asa Mahan, James Caughey, Phoebe Palmer, and William and Catherine Booth. As an officer in The Salvation Army, Samuel Logan Brengle made it his central mission to serve others and tell them of salvation through Jesus Christ and new life through His Holy Spirit. "His articulation of entire sanctification . . . served as the basis for Salvation Army

holiness self-understanding through most of the twentieth century.”¹ Brengle espoused a doctrine of full sanctification that was often misunderstood even in his own time, and the conversation continues in the church today. Brengle made it clear that he did not mean Christians can achieve heavenly perfection in this life or be free from sin and temptation, but that moment-by-moment deliverance from sin by the power of the Holy Spirit is possible for everyone who believes.

It is my hope that *Take Time to Be Holy* will enhance and enlarge Brengle’s influence and broaden the conversation on the transforming work of the Holy Spirit in every believer’s life. The selections in this volume have been drawn from his books, and I have taken care to preserve the integrity, impact, and voice of the original writing while making a few necessary changes. These include:

- editing for length, to fit the devotional format;
- revising archaic terms and updating the language to reflect more contemporary usage;
- shortening and simplifying sentence structure to conform more closely to contemporary practice;
- explaining specific Salvation Army references that may be unfamiliar to some readers;
- updating Scripture references (at times retaining the King James Version—used exclusively in Brengle’s writings—while frequently incorporating modern translations, especially when doing so will aid comprehension and enjoyment);
- citing Scripture quotes not referenced in the

original and noting the sources for quotes, lines from hymns, etc.;

- adding introductory, transitional, and concluding phrases when necessary.

It is my hope and prayer that even the most devoted reader of Brengle's writings will find his or her enjoyment and blessing not only unimpeded by such changes, but heightened.

Finally, the words of General Bramwell Booth in the preface to Commissioner Brengle's first book apply equally to the volume you hold in your hands:

This book is intended to help every reader of its pages into the immediate enjoyment of Bible holiness.

Its writer is an officer of The Salvation Army who, having a gracious experience of the things whereof he writes, has been signally used of God, both in life and testimony, to the sanctifying of the Lord's people, as well as in the salvation of sinners. I commend him and what he has here written down to every lover of God and His Kingdom on the earth.

To which I will add, only: Amen.

Bob Hostetler

SAMUEL LOGAN BRENGLE

Born on June 1, 1860, in Fredericksburg, Indiana, Samuel Logan Brengle became a follower of Jesus Christ as a teenage boy. After serving four rural Indiana churches as a circuit preacher, he enrolled in Boston University School of Theology. There he encountered such influences as Dr. Daniel Steele, a professor and leading proponent of the doctrine of holiness, and the writings of Hannah Whitall Smith (*The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*) and Catherine Booth (*Popular Christianity*). He also described the impact of a sermon by Dwight L. Moody:

God searched me. I saw the corruptions of my heart as never before. I was humbled into the dust. . . . Day and night for weeks I asked, I sought, I knocked. . . . Then one glad, sweet January morning suddenly the door opened at which I had knocked so importunately; I received, I found what I so earnestly sought. It was far beyond what I received when I was saved as a boy. That was the day, dawn; this the broad day with the sun risen in my soul. That was "peace with God"; this was "the peace of God." That was forgiveness and the new birth; this was cleansing from all sin, heart purity, and fullness of love and joy and peace and long-suffering. That was accompanied by the witness of the Spirit; this by the fullness of His

indwelling. It was the fulfillment of that great group of promises and assurances of Jesus in John 14:15-23. He had fulfilled His promise and the Father had given me the “Other Comforter.” . . . Christ was revealed in me, and, oh, how I loved it! It seemed I would nearly die of love. . . . My whole inner being was transformed.²

Before long, Brengle felt God calling him into service with The Salvation Army. In May 1887, he sailed to London, where he presented himself to General William Booth, who told him, “You belong to the ‘dangerous classes.’ You’ve been your own boss for so long that I don’t think you will want to submit to Salvation Army discipline.”³

Nonetheless, Brengle was accepted into the Salvation Army’s training school in London. There, the first assignment given to this scholar and accomplished orator was to black the boots of his fellow cadets (Salvation Army seminarians). Though at first he inwardly disdained the task, he soon remembered the biblical example of Jesus washing His disciples’ feet, whereupon he prayerfully and joyfully submitted to the work.

Brengle was commissioned a Salvation Army officer and returned to the United States to serve in Boston. One night, a brick hurled by an angry drunkard struck Brengle in the head. The blow nearly killed him, and sidelined him from preaching for eighteen months. But during that time, Brengle wrote a series of articles on holiness. These were later gathered and published as a little red book entitled *Helps to Holiness*. That book would become

an international success, and the first of nine by Samuel Logan Brengle, causing him later to remark, “If there had been no little brick, there would have been no little book!”⁴

By the time of his death in 1936, Commissioner Brengle was an internationally renowned preacher and worldwide ambassador of holiness. His influence continues today, perhaps more than that of any Salvationist in history other than the founders, William and Catherine Booth.

SOURCE MATERIAL

Each daily reading includes an abbreviation and a chapter number to denote the original source of the excerpt.

<i>Helps to Holiness</i>	HH
<i>Heart Talks on Holiness</i>	HTH
<i>The Way of Holiness</i>	WH
<i>The Soul-Winner's Secret</i>	SWS
<i>When the Holy Ghost Is Come</i>	HGC
<i>Love-Slaves</i>	LS
<i>Resurrection Life and Power</i>	RLP
<i>Ancient Prophets and Modern Problems</i>	AP
<i>The Guest of the Soul</i>	GS

The Future Before You

Behold, I am doing a new thing. (Isaiah 43:19)

Don't underestimate the power of God in you. Paul tells us not to think too highly of ourselves (Romans 12:3). Yet he said of himself, "I can do all things through him who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13). He thought of himself linked to the illimitable strength of Christ, and therefore omnipotent for any work Christ set him to do.

The future before you is big with opportunities and possibilities. Open doors on every hand invite you to enter and do service for the Master and for others, and the strength that worked in Paul works in you, if you do not hinder it by selfishness and unbelief.

Keep the fire of love and faith and hope burning in your heart, and you may start a blaze that will someday sweep the world. Seek the Lord. Seek Him daily, constantly, with your whole heart.

If honor comes, thank God and lay it at the torn feet of Jesus, and forget it, lest it ruin you. If honor comes not, still thank God and go on. Seek only the honor of walking in the footsteps of Jesus, of loving, serving, sacrificing, suffering for others, and you shall have your reward. You surely shall, and it will be great, exceeding abundantly above all you ask or think, given by the Master's own hand.

LS, 17

Redeem the Time

Walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. (Ephesians 5:15-16, NKJV)

Value time. Diamonds and gold nuggets are not so precious as minutes. Eternity is made up of moments, and “lost time is lost eternity.”

“Believe me,” said William Gladstone, “when I tell you that . . . the waste of [time] will make you dwindle, alike in intellectual and in moral stature, beyond your darkest reckonings.”⁵

What is life but a glad, present consciousness of God and self and duty, and a hearty obedience thereto? And yet thoughtless idlers try to “kill time,” and thus destroy their most valuable possession.

If you would redeem the time, begin the moment your eyes open in the morning. Let no idle, foolish, hurtful thoughts be harbored for an instant, but begin at once to pray and praise God and to meditate on His glories, His goodness and faithfulness and truth, and your heart will soon burn within you and bubble over with joy. Bounce out of bed at once and get the start of your work and push it, else *it* will get the start and push *you*.

SWS, 6

The Work of the Spirit

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth. (John 16:13)

All lovers of Jesus should in these days seek fresh renewings and a greater fullness of the Holy Spirit. We should study what the Bible says about Him as a Person. He is not a mere influence, passing over us like a wind or warming us like a fire. He is a Person, seeking entrance into our hearts that He may comfort us, instruct us, empower us, guide us, give us heavenly wisdom, and fit us for holy and triumphant service.

If we will seek His presence and yield ourselves to Him in secret prayer, He will make the Bible a new book to us. He will make Jesus precious to us. He will make God the Father ever real to us. We shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. We shall not be weak in the presence of duty or temptation, but “strong in the Lord and in the power of His might” (Ephesians 6:10, NKJV). We shall be “ready for every good work” (Titus 3:1).

God has greater things for all His people than the world has ever yet seen, if we but believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and permit the Spirit to lead us.

GS, 2

The Blessing of the Holy Spirit

John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now. (Acts 1:5)

Do you want to know what the blessing of the Holy Spirit is? It is not a mere sentiment. It is not a happy sensation that passes away in a night. It is a whelming flood of love that brings every thought into captivity to the Lord Jesus (2 Corinthians 10:5); that casts out all fear (1 John 4:18); that burns up doubt and unbelief as fire burns flax; that makes one “meek and lowly in heart” (Matthew 11:29, κϋν); that makes one hate uncleanness, lying and deceit, a flattering tongue, and every evil way with a perfect hatred; that makes heaven and hell eternal realities; that makes one patient and gentle with the disobedient and sinful; that makes one “pure . . . peaceable . . . open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere” (James 3:17); that brings one into perfect and unbroken sympathy with the Lord Jesus Christ in His toil and travail to bring a lost and rebel world back to God.

Oh, how I had longed to be pure! Oh, how I had hungered and thirsted for God—the living God! And He gave me the desire of my heart. He satisfied me—I weigh my words—He satisfied me!

HH, Introduction

A Perfection God Requires

Let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. (James 1:4)

God alone is absolutely perfect in all His attributes, and to such perfection we can never hope to attain.

There is, however, a perfection which we are given to understand God requires in us. It is a perfection not of head but of heart; not of knowledge, but of goodness, of humility, of love, of faith. Such a perfection God desires us to have, and such a perfection we may have. I am proclaiming only the plain, simple truth as it is revealed in God's Word, and we ought to desire to rise up to all the privileges God has conferred upon us.

If we go down before Him in complete humility and say, "Lord, I am willing to have my heart changed. Though it may mean that I shall be despised and hated and persecuted, I will take up my cross; I will crucify myself. I am willing that my selfishness and pride and hate and uncleanness shall be taken from me, and that You shall reign in me and create in me a clean heart, perfect in its love, submission, loyalty, trust, and obedience"—if we will say that to Him, He will answer our prayer today, now, this moment, if we will but believe.

GS, 5

A Good Tree

A good tree produces good fruit. (Matthew 7:17, NLT)

Holiness is not absolute perfection, which belongs to God only; nor is it angelic perfection; nor is it Adamic perfection—for, no doubt, Adam had a perfect head as well as a perfect heart before he sinned against God. But it is Christian perfection—such perfection and obedience of the heart as a poor fallen creature, aided by almighty power and boundless grace, can give.

It is that state of heart and life which consists in being and doing all the time—not by fits and starts, but steadily—just what God wants us to be and do.

Jesus said, “Make the tree good and its fruit good” (Matthew 12:33). Now, an apple tree is an apple tree all the time, and can bring forth nothing but apples. So holiness is that perfect renewal of our nature that makes us essentially good, so that we continually bring forth fruit unto God, with never a single work of the flesh grafted in among this heavenly fruit.

It is possible for the Son of God thus to transform us. It is as easy for me to be and to do what God wants me to be and to do in this life, every day, as it is for the archangel Gabriel to be and do what God wants of him.

HH, 1

A Perfect Heart

The blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

(1 John 1:7)

The Bible tells us that holiness is perfect deliverance from sin. “The blood of Jesus . . . cleanses us from *all sin*” (1 John 1:7, italics added). Not one bit of sin is left, for your old self is crucified with Him, “that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin” (Romans 6:6), for we have “been set free from sin” (Romans 6:18).

The Bible also tells us that it is “perfect love” which must expel from the heart all hatred and every evil disposition contrary to love (1 John 4:18), just as you must first empty a cup of all oil that may be in it before you can fill it with water.

Thus, holiness is a state in which there is no anger, malice, blasphemy, hypocrisy, envy, love of ease, selfish desire for good opinion of others, shame of the Cross, worldliness, deceit, debate, contention, covetousness, nor any evil tendency in the heart.

It is a state in which there is no longer any doubt or fear.

It is a state in which God is loved and trusted with a perfect heart.

HH, 1