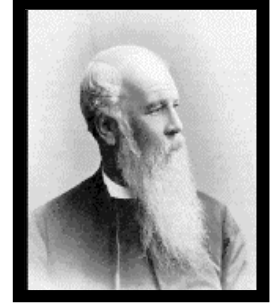


JC Ryle

1816-1900

Great Christians of History



Biographer Eric Russell describes JC Ryle as a man of Granite with the heart of a child. I will be forever indebted to JC Ryle to leading me to an understanding of true conversion in Christ.

Holiness is Ryle's most influential book. In *Holiness*, Ryle persuades Christians to understand that salvation consists of three things: regeneration, justification and sanctification. The Trinity is at work in each part of our salvation.

We are regenerated by God the Father. He takes our callous, rebellious stone-cold hearts and replaces them with a heart of flesh- *Ezekiel 36:26*. Regeneration is new birth- the essence Ryle tells us- of Christ's command in *John 3:3* that "unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

We are justified by God the Son- Christ. Salvation is given to the believer not because any one deserves it. The Scriptures show us in many different ways that "there is none who does good, not even one."- *Psalms 14:1; Romans 3:10*. *Romans 5:6-21* beautifully describes this process of justification. It is the Great Exchange- Christ transfers His righteousness to those who trust in Him and through the cross He accepted our unrighteousness. When we die, there will immediately be a judgment of faith that is separate from the judgment of works. During this faith judgment, the only question will be: whose righteousness do you claim? It's a pass/fail question. We score 100% if the answer is Christ and zero if we claim our own goodness. Jesus Christ is our only hope of glory- *Colossians 1:27*.

We are sanctified by the God the Holy Spirit. The majority of *Holiness* by Ryle tackles this subject. What does it mean to be set apart- sanctified? Can we have no inward warfare against sin and still claim that we are saved? Ryle says "No." The Christian must have a continual inward warfare against sin. He/she must "strive for holiness without which no one will see the Lord."- *Hebrews 12:14*. In a day and age where many Christians believe that they are saved because they have walked an aisle or said a prayer, Ryle brings us back to the Bible and teaches that holiness is not an elective for the Christian life. Without a striving for holiness and a hatred of sin, Ryle persuades that we are under delusion- our profession in Christ is false.

Read JC Ryle. You will be richer for it. His short book, *Are You Ready for the End of Time?* has some amazingly accurate insight into Israel's role in the last days. It is hard to believe that he wrote it 50+ years before Israel became an official nation in 1948. *Knots Untied, Practical Religion, The Christian Race, Duties for Parents, Thoughts for Young Men* are all terrific along with Ryle's biographies of Christian leaders- *Light for Old Times and The Christian Leaders of the Last Century*. Ryle lived in England and was well acquainted with sorrow. He buried three wives- often nursing them in prolonged sickness while caring for children. He burned with a holy passion for God. He was tender in heart but carried a theological backbone of steel.