

# CHRISTIAN PURITY

By Randolph Sinks Foster

## 7. MEANS FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF ENTIRE HOLINESS

There is a phase of the subject which may better be introduced at this point than later. It is this, "Is the attainment of entire sanctification instantaneous or progressive, or both?" It is obvious that the question as to the means of attainment must be affected by the answer that shall be given. And there is yet another question of much importance, in order to perfect clearness, which may best be introduced here. It is this, "Is entire sanctification distinct in kind from regeneration?"

Entire sanctification, when attained, is not a discriminated kind of holiness from that which is imparted to the believer; it is not an experience different in its genus from that which he obtained when he was converted; it is not a birth into another kind of grace, or estate, or life, from that given before. But while regeneration and entire sanctification are the same in kind, the one being partial holiness, the other being consummate holiness, they are evidently different in degree, and are differentiated as the complete is distinguished from the incomplete. When the second stage of experience is reached, therefore, it is distinct in degree from the first, and may in a true and proper sense be called a second blessing. The cases are really different, and ought so to be recognized. *The one is the culmination of the other*, and ought not to be described as identical with it. If an injustice is done to the first by depreciating its kind, an injustice is done to the second by depreciating its degree. If a small aperture should be made through a wall into a dark room, some light would be admitted; if the walls were made perfectly translucent, it would be filled with light. In both cases there would be the same kind of element taken in, but in the one case it would be partial, in the other complete. There would be no difference in kind, but a marked and most important difference in degree. The second stage would be very distinguishable from the first. The blade differs from the full corn in the ear. It is the precursor of the corn, has the identical life in it which the corn has, and the corn cannot be without it; but it is not the corn. The end of the seed life is not the blade, but the corn.

It is a great mistake and a great wrong to ignore this obvious distinction. Most fatal would be the blunder if the farmer should harvest his corn blades. He might say it is the same as the corn, since it has the same life as the corn; but *the mistake would be disastrous*. Content with the blade, he might fail to obtain the corn. The answer to the next question will still further illustrate this point.

Is entire sanctification a *progressive or instantaneous work*? This, like the former question, has been greatly confused by indiscreet words and hasty and crude generalizations.

That there is growth in holiness, we cannot imagine any Christian doubts. That growth in holiness, from the degree of it imparted in regeneration, is progress toward the completeness of it in entire sanctification, we cannot conceive a Christian denying this with understanding. All real advances along a line in the direction of a point must be approximating the point. The stream that keeps ever widening and deepening is coming to be a river. The river in its flow must be ever nearing the ocean; but the point sought differs from the several points along the line of approach; the stream differs from the river; and the river is not the ocean.

Christian development differs from natural development, but there is some analogy. A seed contains a life, which when it germinates tends to maturity in a regular and fixed order of growth, and must pass over determinate and uniform stages, from the blade to the full corn, or fail and die.

If there is any analogy to this in the order of Christian development, it is not perfect. When a soul is born of God, its goal is holiness. The principle implanted in it is a principle of holiness. The seed has germinated; it is a living seed. Its life tends to the goal of maturity, but whether it will reach that point ever or today, depends not on the seed or any determinate order of growth. There is not in the life implanted the principle of necessary

growth, which determines either that it must infallibly become consummate, or in what order of time it will reach perfection. It may be killed entirely, or it may be of starved and stunted growth, or scarcely grow at all, or it may be of healthy and thrifty growth, or it may spring from germ to ripeness with great rapidity, or it may in a single bound of life exhibit the full corn in the ear. In this it is only somewhat analogous to nature. Many conditions combine to determine the order of development both in nature and in grace. The seed must have a perfect living germ, or it will not grow at all; it must be placed in good and sufficient soil, or it will wither and die before it comes to ripeness; it must have light and warmth and rain; it must be protected from violence and encouraged by cultivation. The seed may be good, but if any of these other conditions be wanting it will bring forth either no fruit, or small fruit, or late and imperfect fruit, when it comes to the reaper's bosom. We think in all these respects the analogy holds substantially, and must hold, therefore, that the way to the end, or full corn in the ear, in the spiritual as in the natural, is along the line of growth; it is reached by and not without progress; it is growing up into Christ; it is first babes, then men; it is going on to perfection; it is hungering and thirsting and being filled.

We have no favor for the sentiment that growth in grace is not growth toward entire holiness.

Every earnest and thrifty Christian is advancing directly toward the goal of that great experience. So taught Jesus and the Apostles:

*"Wherefore, laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Peter 2:1-3). "And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity. For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:5-8). "But ye beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 20, 21).*

*"But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Eph. 4:15). "Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection" (Heb. 6:1).*

But conceding all this, and dissenting with any, if there are such, who deride the doctrine of progress in holiness, or *progressive sanctification*, we fear that many just at this point miss their way.

If the work of entire sanctification may be the end of a line of progressive sanctification, they infer that it cannot be instantaneous. This, we doubt not, is a dangerous mistake. A traveler may reach a point which lies near him by going round the globe to get to it, and every step he takes may be precisely along a line that will bring him to it, but the long journey will be a great waste of time and force. He might have reached it by a single step the day he started. We doubt not it is so in this case.

There is no intelligent Christian who does not believe that advances in ripeness and holiness may be more or less rapid, varying from the slowest and most tedious, to the most vigorous and swiftest paces. This given, the problem is to find *the quickest possible attainment*. That the earliest possible attainment of the end is most desirable — is duty — we must

believe.

Moreover, it is important to remember that while earnest Christians are ever advancing toward entire holiness, they *will never attain it without specific effort*. If they reach the goal it must be by distinct and masterful faith, by great and special seeking, not by mere lapse of time and ordinary endeavor. No one will cross this Jordan at a common pace. He must smite the waters. He must be taken into the Mount. He must be apart and alone with the Master. His soul must feel its need so urgently that nothing short of immediate and complete salvation will satisfy its craving. It must no longer be content with progressive successes, or it will never come into this Canaan. The Gospel it will need and demand is one of immediate help. Woe to the messenger who, by his teaching, encourages delay by discouraging the hope of immediate victory. Entire holiness, not at death, not at the end of a long journey, not by slow growth, however possible it may be, and even certain, but entire holiness now, the privilege and duty of all believers, we must hold is the doctrine of God, and the doctrine which needs most to be urged upon the Church which is His bride.

We hope, reader, unless you have already entered and become a dweller in the land, that you are now anxious to “pass over.” But if it should be that, like Reuben, and Gad, and Manasseh, you have been content to settle down on this side of the Jordan, finding it a goodly and pleasant country; and if, even yet, you should be satisfied to remain here, because “of its fertility” and abundance, we trust you will remain content no longer. Goodly, and pleasant, and abundant as you have found “Heshbon,” and “Gilead,” and “Bashan” — more glorious by far than Egypt — places of delightful rest from the toils and dangers of the wilderness; yet they are not the promised inheritance; their richness and fertility is not the exuberance of the heritage of God’s people; they abound not with the “figs and pomegranates and clusters” of the covenanted possession; they are not as “Hebron” and “Bethel,” as “Eshcol” and “Beulah” — as that “Hephzibah” in which the Lord delighteth, “and which floweth with milk and honey.”

Thank God, some have gone over, and are marching through the length and breadth of the land; many are going over; and many more are looking wishfully after their brethren, who have courageously advanced and taken possession. O that there may be a general movement, a simultaneous uprising, and shout of “onward” among the “sacramental host.”

It is universally well enough known that faith is the condition; but where assistance is needed is, at these points; What is faith, and how may it be exercised? How often have we exclaimed, and how often have we heard others, with agonizing distress, exclaim, when exhorted to believe, to exercise “simple faith,” What must we believe? How can we believe? This common, we had like to have said universal, exclamation indicates where the true difficulty lies.

While we point out certain things to be done as *aids to faith*, let it be remembered that these things are not supposed to be either meritorious, or performed or performable in our own strength. We can do nothing without gracious aid; we distinctly attribute all our power to work, in the way of seeking, to a gracious ability bestowed upon us, and so acknowledge whatever is done to be of grace. But as we are dependent upon grace for ability, so grace is always furnished for our use, and we need never be in any want. Thus distinctly acknowledging the whole to be of grace, we shall now state what by the aid of grace we are to do as coworkers with God: “Working out our own salvation with fear and trembling, while He worketh in us to will and do of his own good pleasure.”

Faith, in order to its exercise, presupposes the knowledge of sin, and sorrow for it; the knowledge that there is a Saviour, and a readiness to embrace him. The following advices are intended to assist you to find out the way more clearly:

1. And first, endeavor to have *a clear and distinct view* of the thing at which you aim — have the mark definitely in your mind. How shall you obtain this definite idea? By reading, (particularly the Scriptures,) conversation, meditation, and prayer. With sincere desire, and humble prayer, you will not need to linger long; the discovery will be made.

By far the best means at this point is earnest prayer. The Holy Ghost alone can furnish the light you need. He shines most brightly in the praying soul.

He best reveals sin. He most clearly presents the remedy. “He helpeth our infirmities.” Linger at the gracious throne until you comprehend clearly the precise point you aim at. If we would avoid sad and hurtful blunders, great and earnest painstaking will be required here. Delusion and sin will inevitably follow hasty generalization, and the last state may be, nay, will be, worse than the first.

2. And now, having obtained a clear discovery of your privilege, in the second place, *endeavor to realize your need*. If you have no sense of need, you will assuredly make no progress. If, with them of Laodicea, you say, “I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing,” — I have religion enough, I see no special reason for making so much ado about the matter, — if such, or any thing resembling this, is your feeling, you will not soon occupy advanced ground. Seek to realize your wants. But how shall you do this? There is but one way. O that we could prevail upon you to be faithful here! Taking the twin lamps of truth, the Bible and conscience, with sincere prayers for the guidance of the Holy Ghost, make that diligent search which the importance of the case requires.

Be candid with yourself. Make no extenuation, no apology, use no tenderness on yourself. Ferret every recess thoroughly; probe to the bottom; pass through every chamber of your soul; search it through and through, with a determination to know your case, to look at yourself stripped of every disguise. What do you find? Are there no idols in the sacred temple? No “images of gold?” No “Babylonish garments?” No concealed “spies?” No pride, no envy, no jealousy, no anger, no malice, no undue love of the world, no undue desire for the praise of men, no improper ambition? Does God possess your heart without a rival? Are you wholly the Lord’s? O for faithfulness! Would you attain to holiness? Linger at this point. Have no mercy on yourself, be resolved to know the worst! You may have such discoveries as will astonish and distress you; still, make a diligent search. What is your example? Is it all that a Christian’s ought to be? Do you daily exhibit, in the family, in the social circle, in your business, everywhere, those fruits which should adorn the Christian character? What is your influence? Is it, so far as it is under your control, always decidedly and undividedly for Christ?

And upon this point let us add, that this discovery of your destitution of holiness and sense of want should be accompanied with the deepest contrition and self-abasement — penitence for having so long lived beneath privilege, below duty. If the work of forgiveness is preceded by godly sorrow as well as confiding faith, so also is the greater and still more glorious work of holiness; a sorrow, it may be, not attended with the same bitterness, and doubt, and fear, which usually follows initial repentance, but needs quite as much, aye more, of grief and self-abnegation to obtain. And what more can be necessary to gain this penitence than a discovery of facts? Surely, when we see ourselves our hearts will melt within us. We shall see, nay, we shall feel, ‘Tis worse than death our God to love, and not our God alone.

3. Having thus obtained a distinct view of holiness, and having made a discovery of your own wants and defects, and remaining sinfulness, you have gained an important point. The next thing to be secured is willingness. *Are you now willing and desirous to be made holy?* It is possible for a man to perceive his sins, and yet be unwilling to give them up. Many do this. How is it with you? Are you now willing to give up all your idols, to “cut off right arms,” to “pluck out right eyes,” to put to sacrifice dearest and most cherished indulgences? Look well to this! How vain to expect, or pretend even to desire, salvation from all sin, at the same time that you are harboring some in the heart! Would you be holy, you must make up your mind to the crucifixion of every sin; the very last must be surrendered, and given to the cross and spear.

Holiness! Are you willing to receive it, with all its consequences, of watchfulness, and sacrifice, and self-denial, and entire devotion of the soul and life to God? Not only are you willing, thus to be freed from sin, and to take the responsibility of holiness, but are you desirous to do so? Is it the supreme wish of your heart? Are you willing, in proof of your sincerity and preference, to accept it in lieu of every thing besides?

4. Still further; it is not only needful that you become willing and desirous upon the subject, but you must likewise come to the *firm purpose and*

**resolution** that through grace you will be holy; that you will never rest short of this state; that at all hazards you will persevere, and never cease the effort until you attain. If you find it difficult to form the purpose — if there is discernible a remaining feeling that, if you should not immediately succeed, perhaps you may give up the struggle — pray and agonize, for the victory here; never rest until your mind is determined. Nothing great can be accomplished without resolution. An “unstable” or “double mind” cannot prosper. Be firmly resolved, therefore, that you will contend for and claim your privilege — that you will attain.

Some commence seeking God, or engage in the pursuit of holiness, without a decided purpose to succeed. They have a will to commence working, but not a will to do all that may be necessary, to make all the required sacrifices, to persevere through every opposition. This may be your case; if so, stop short, and resolve firmly, irrevocably, that from now on you will be for God wholly.

The work of resisting and sin-crucifying every improper desire, being entirely for God — will meet with opposition, strong opposition; a feeble purpose will soon yield; the soul will relapse into its former state. The work will not be accomplished; not because it was impossible, but because there was not the requisite resolve. A man is dying of a tumor; he wishes it removed, and goes to a surgeon; but the knives intimidate him — his resolution fails; he returns home with the fatal tumor still upon him. Would you be holy? Learn by this illustration the value of resolution; resolution that will not cower when the knife is laid to the heart to amputate its idols!

The purpose now being formed, **the next point is entire consecration** — the giving up of yourself to God — your soul, your body, your time, your talents, your influence, your all; withdrawing all from the world, and from sin, and from self, and giving all in complete sacrifice to God, to be His, and His alone, forever. Will you do this? Examine yourself carefully in this way.

Are you willing to devote all, entirely, forever, to the Lord? Holiness implies this: if we are not willing to make the consecration, we are not willing, and hence not ready, to receive holiness. Here, again, you will need grace to enable you to make the consecration. You cannot do it in your own strength. You will need to pray, and look to God for the assistance of the Spirit. Thus doing, bring forth every thing separately — yourself, your family, your reputation, your property; and, with all sincerity, relinquish all claim, and surrender the whole to God, to use and enjoy them only as He directs, and with reference to His glory; never to withdraw again what you thus solemnly covenant shall be only His. Will you now do this? Is this your mind?

A word more upon this point: **consecration is not sanctification**, it is a part of it. Consecration is your work, God giving the requisite grace; when it is complete, entire sanctification, which is the work of the Holy Spirit, must immediately follow.

But more particularly, **What is consecration?** It is the entire dedication of the whole person to God; in other words, — the complete subordination of the human will to the Divine will, complete acquiescence in His will, and reference in all things to His glory. It does not imply that we retire from the world; that we give our whole time to religious exercises; that we withhold fellowship from others; that we give our entire thoughts, affections, and efforts to technically religious duties; such a thing would be impracticable in this world, would conflict with the expressed will of God, and would be itself therefore sinful. We have business to do, to provide for our households and to enable us to gain property wherewith to do good; our thoughts may be given to this; we have families and friends, we may love them, and minister to them, and enjoy them; nay, these things are a part of our duty. By consecration to God, therefore, we mean simply a supreme reference to the will and glory of God in all things; using and enjoying all as He wills we should; disclaiming any rights that conflict with His rights; pursuing such business, and in such manner, as from our best light we believe is according to the will of God; using all the proceeds of our labor precisely as we believe God directs; loving those objects, and in that degree, which He approves; doing those acts which will be for His glory; living in the world, but living for God.

6. Have you a definite view of holiness? Do you realize your need of it? Are you willing to receive it? Is it your desire and purpose to persevere until you obtain it? And, in order thereto, do you realize a readiness to give up all to God, in entire consecration? If this should be your mind, one thing more and the work will be done; “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

**Faith is the only condition** upon which the blessings of the Gospel are offered. “Justification” is by faith; “regeneration” is by faith; “sanctification” is by faith; “glorification” is by faith; by faith as the instrument, and by the blood of Jesus as the merit, and by the Spirit as the agent. Whenever faith is exercised, the work will be done. The preceding advices are only prescribed as means of assisting, as co-operating with the grace of God to bring the mind up to the point of faith, to prepare us for this saving exercise. And let it not be supposed that a long process is necessary in order to this preparation. With diligent application, and by Divine assistance, the work may soon be accomplished.

It may be important to be still more explicit at this point. Faith includes the ideas both of “belief and trust,” and exists in various stages.

1. A general belief in Christ, as the Saviour and sanctifier;
2. Belief that He is able to sanctify you;
3. Belief that He is willing to do it;
4. Belief that He is able and willing to do it now, not tomorrow;
5. Belief that He has promised to do the work, and that His promise will not fail;
6. Belief that if I now have faith, He will now, this moment, do it;
7. Reliance, or trust in Him now, this moment, to do, accompanied with a belief that He doeth it.

Note well, that He now, **when you believe according to His promise**, doeth it; not a belief that it is done, but, accompanying my faith, it being a sound faith, that He doeth the work. An error has gained considerable prevalence, and has wrought not a little evil, in relation to this very subject the faith which brings the sanctifying grace.

It has been indiscreetly said, “We are to believe the work is done, and it will be done.” Persons seeking the blessing have been told that they must believe they are sanctified, and they will be sanctified. What a misfortune that so great, so dangerous an error should be taught, in connection with so important a subject! What a manifest absurdity; Making our sanctification to depend upon the belief of an untruth; namely, a belief that it is now wrought, in order that it may be wrought! This is a great delusion. It is not the doctrine of the Bible. It is not, and never was, the doctrine of any branch of the Church. Some sincere and honest Christians have fallen into this delusion without perceiving its absurdity; and it has gained considerable currency. We trust it will no more find place in the language of the friends of this glorious doctrine.\* (*Regrettably this was a vain hope. Books containing this are still read. See Phoebe Palmer on the “Dancing with Ichabod” page. This early notion has even influenced some on this website, which has caused me much difficulty in choosing those excerpts that omit this confusing perspective. ES*)

**The stages of faith** immediately at the point of entire sanctification, and just before, and right after it, may thus be described. And let it be remembered, that when the exercise of faith takes place, it is not a mere intellectual calculation; it occurs when the soul is travailing for sanctifying power; when it is groaning for deliverance from distressing sinfulness; when it is giving up all to Christ; when it is feeling that “it is worse than death its God to love, and not its God alone”; when it is purposing to claim and obtain holiness, no matter what. That is the state of the soul; it is now agonizing at God’s altar; it is pleading for salvation, looking at the promises; the Holy Spirit is helping, imparting illumination, and strengthening the faltering faith. Now comes the moment when sanctification is about to be imparted. Now the soul believes it will be done; taking firmer hold of the promises, and looking steadfastly upon the atoning sacrifice, now the intercessor, it believes it is being done; the refining fire touches it, “as the coal Isaiah’s lips”; it yields, it trusts — the work is done; and now the soul, sanctified, believes it is done, and rejoices in the rest of faith. The belief that it will be done, that it is being done, is

the trust which brings the blessing; the belief that it is done follows after. They are each distinct, though all may occur in the interval of a moment.

After noticing one more abuse we shall close the present chapter. The abuse to which I refer is, the rendering a profession of sanctification a condition of its attainment. Let those who are clear in the enjoyment of holiness declare it with becoming meekness and humility; if there is any need, when they are satisfied of their attainment, let them be advised to make a public confession. **But let no man be urged to make a profession,** the truth of which he does not know with certainty, and which he even doubts, with the hope that profession under such circumstances will benefit. It may fasten delusion upon him, but cannot bring sanctifying grace. If you are sanctified, evidence is when it will be to the glory of God, and in a manner befitting so high a state. If you have almost attained, so as to think perhaps you are entirely sanctified, confess so much, and look for more. If you desire to be entirely sanctified, confess your desire, and contend for the witness. But never fall into the delusion that you must profess beyond what you are persuaded is true. (that is -be HONEST!!! ES)

It is implied, of course, in all the foregoing advices, that during the time this struggle is going on, whether a longer or shorter period, you are attentive to all the means of grace, particularly prayer, reading the holy word, attendance upon the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, meditation, conversation with those who may be able to give advice, perusing books on the subject, and all other means, public and private, such as God is wont to own and bless. These things must be done until we attain, and after we attain. But let us beware that we fall not into the error of depending on forms and means. There is no doing without them, but in themselves they

are nothing. They are to be received only as aids to saving, to sanctifying faith; as scaffolding about the firm wall of confiding trust. But our only help is in God, who gives effectiveness to means.

No distinct chapter has been assigned to the agency of the Holy Ghost in the accomplishment of this great change. But this is not because we esteemed it an unimportant point; on the contrary, we hold it to be a cardinal truth. The Holy Ghost is the great agent in the regeneration and sanctification of souls. His power alone effects the change. Do not lose sight of this. Do not fall into the delusion that what you do will effect the work. What you want to see is, that in you there is no help; that so far as making yourself holy is concerned you can absolutely do nothing — that this work is of God, entirely. Here, means do nothing; they only bring you to God, and He sanctifies; without them you cannot come to God, and unless you come He cannot sanctify; but your coming does not sanctify, it brings you to Him who does. You employ the means only to bring you in contact with the agency.

**It is the fire which refines the gold.** Men dig it from the earth, and bring it to the crucible. If it is not put in the flame it will not be refined. The fire does not refine the gold unless it be brought; the bringing does not refine; it must be brought, and the fire must exert its power upon it. The soul is not sanctified by means, nor in the absence of them. The means are necessary to bring it to God; when it is brought, God does the work. Remember this, seeking soul; and now, having employed the means, expect God to touch you, and accomplish His promise. Look now away from means; look away from self; trust in Him; yea, trust now! Fall at his feet, and He will make thee whole!

## 8. EVIDENCE BY WHICH ONE MAY KNOW THAT HE IS ENTIRELY SANCTIFIED

How may one know, after he shall have employed the means prescribed in the foregoing chapter, that they have been effective — that he has attained the object of his desires?

This is obviously an important question, contemplated in whatever light it may be viewed. To any who may be anxious upon this great subject of personal holiness it must be invested with peculiar interest. In the goodness of God, we are so constituted that we cannot rest short of a reasonable certainty in matters we consider important. Doubt torments before the time; uncertainty generates despair; suspense, who can bear! But bad as uncertainty is, it is better than false security! Better to be disquieted than rest upon a volcano! Unrest is preferable to slumbers beneath the avalanche!

In calling attention, therefore, to some of the evidences upon which one may conclude himself to have attained unto the experience of holiness, and in which he may securely rest, we hope to accomplish two objects. First, to prevent security upon false grounds; and, second, to encourage and lead forward trembling faith to solid rest; so aiding to convince the deluded, and comfort the sincere; to rebuke the hypocrite, and build up the true, but hesitating disciple.

**Every stage of religious progress** has its distinctive marks, and may be ascertained with great certainty by giving heed to these. The incipient work of the Spirit, conviction for sin — asserts itself in an unmistakable manner; penitence has its infallible signs; justification is accompanied with its appropriate witness; entire sanctification is not without proof.

One may be a child of God, possibly, without a clear and definite witness to himself; nay, we doubt not, this is so in some instances, but such cases are not common, and may generally be traced to some peculiarity of the mind itself, or to untoward circumstances.

As men differ in natural traits, habits of mind, education, and physical health, their spiritual experiences may vary; but, with few exceptional cases, a genuine experience will not fail to be supported by sufficient proof. The manner and time of the great change will not always be manifest; but the fact, as a rule, will be unquestionable.

Religious experience is authenticated to the mind in two modes: First, inwardly, by the witness of the Divine Spirit conjointly with our own

spirit. Second, outwardly, by the external manifestations the fruits of the life. Where these are found coexisting, there will be but slight probability of delusion. The great danger is unfaithfulness in applying the tests. Under most unfortunate teaching some are hurried on to profession without a clear understanding of their own case, and perhaps, in some instances, against their own convictions, with the vain hope that it will do them good; and having made profession, under the influence of pride, and a vague conception that it will in some way help them, they are induced to continue it; meantime they give sad proof to themselves, if they would observe it, and to others, who will not fail to see it, that they are laboring under a fatal mistake. If this is so with regard to regeneration itself, it is much more likely to be so with respect to entire holiness...

**When entire sanctification takes place,** it will be evidenced directly and indirectly.

1. Directly, by the joint witness of God's "Spirit with our spirits" that the work is done. Where this witness is given, it is conclusive and complete. Other testimony is only required to assure us that we are not mistaken in supposing this. When it is certain God's Spirit attests a work, that attestation needs no further corroboration. The doctrine of the direct witness of the Holy Spirit together with our spirit needs no vindication here, it is clearly a Bible doctrine. "We know that He abideth in us by the Spirit which He hath given us" (1 John 3:24). "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8:16). "We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God" (1 Cor. 2:12).

"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself" (1 John 5:10). "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of love, and of power, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim. 1:7). There is no dispute as to the fact, that the passages cited teach the doctrine of the witness of the Spirit. There is, however, a question as to whether they refer to a justified state alone. This has come to be a point of so much importance as to require more detail.

There is no doctrine of the Scriptures more difficult to formulate than this of the witness of the Spirit, so as to make it clearly understood in what precisely it consists of, and how it is rendered and understood.

This much we may say, the method of the Spirit's witness we do not conceive to be by outward signs. It may be accompanied by such, but is not ordinarily; not by an audible voice, not by a visible manifestation, not by a palpable touch, not any thing of this kind; and yet the witness is direct and assured, as much so as if it were accompanied with outward manifestations. It is a consciousness wrought in the soul that a change has been made.

One may be ready to exclaim, "How can these things be?" This is no new question. One of old, and he a ruler in Israel, propounded it to our Saviour, not, indeed, concerning the witness, but concerning the work itself. We borrow our Lord's answer: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth." The fact you cannot question; the way it is done is a mystery. The manner of one spirit's communion with another spirit is shut away from our knowledge, but the fact of such communion is a matter of undoubted experience; the mode of the contact unknown, but the thing itself a part of consciousness.

But may one rely upon the witness here indicated? Is there not great probability of mistake? Take the blind man, whose eyes have been sealed in darkness for a life-time; whose sightless eyeballs have rolled in rayless night; who, amid outward things, has groped his cheerless way for half a century, ever wondering what they were, what their appearance, what the beauties of color and form of which others spoke: take him out amid the splendors of the starlit sky, where millions of resplendent worlds bewilder the gaze; or lead him to the forest, or the mountain, or the river, or the ocean; or to gardens of flowers, or galleries of art; suddenly lift the veil: will he know the change?

Open, among the ravishing strains of a cathedral choir, the ears of one born deaf; will he know it? Quiet the sufferings of the child of affliction, who has spent sleepless nights of pain; bring glad tidings to the broken heart; pour joy into the bosom filled with sorrow; hush the storm to the tempest-beaten voyager; lift the burden from the shoulders of the fainting; will they know it? And shall it not be known when the Spirit bears witness with our spirits that we are become children of God? When the heart that was broken is bound up? When the heart that was dead is made alive? When the heart that fainted under the burden of sin, and trembled at the impending wrath of God, is lifted up, and beholds, by faith, a smiling Saviour? If the watcher knows when midnight is past, the sailor when the tempest subsides, surely the soul shall know when the morning of peace breaketh, and the storm of guilt is hushed!

But how shall one discriminate between the witness of the Spirit in justification and entire sanctification? The Spirit is given when we are justified; what more may we expect when we fully attain at the time holiness is brought in? When he is entirely sanctified, the same Spirit bears witness again, just as He did before; but now it is to another fact, not that he is pardoned, but that he is entirely sanctified. And if the former change was known to his own consciousness, so also will this latter be. Thus the Spirit witnesses with our spirits to our religious state whatever it may be, whether of justification merely or entire sanctification.

In this connection, and before we pass on to consider the fruits of this state distinctly, we may say a word with respect to the more general spiritual phenomena immediately attending it.

In *the moment of sanctification* the emotional experience is doubtless varied: some are exercised in one way and some in another; some have one class of emotions, some another. There is diversity of operation both with respect to the Divine and the human spirit. We may venture to suggest, however, some things very generally attending this wonderful change:

(1.) It is, perhaps, generally immediately preceded and accompanied with *unusual illumination* of mind, imparting clearer and more distinct views of the atonement, the nature of holiness, and the depth of internal corruption.

(2.) This is associated with a *marked increase of faith*. The soul, favored with this glorious illumination, realizes a strength of faith at which itself is astonished, which claims the promises with a very certain assurance, and without wavering.

(3.) Attending this wonderful faith is an *immediate assurance given*, as above described, by the Divine Spirit, and attested by the soul, that sin is all gone and the soul is purified. This assurance amounts to entire certainty in the conviction of the soul enjoying it.

(4.) Then follows, in some instances, great joy and ecstasy; but this, I think, is not the general experience. Ordinarily the soul at this crisis *is filled with peace rather than joy*; simple rest, tranquillity, a sense of complete satisfaction, attended, in most instances, with almost no emotion, in exceptional cases only, with great rapture. The expectation of great rapture is common; this not infrequently leads to difficulty.

(5.) All this is accompanied with a *sense of the Divine presence*; of communion with God, and intimacy — a oneness that is peculiar to this grace; a feeling that God is all in all; a total abandonment of self and the creature, and a delightful acquiescence in the will of God, and calm repose upon Him.

And now, the soul being brought into this sense of union and communion with God, its life will be in Him, and this will be evidenced further by its fruits.

II. Hence we proceed to state, in the second place, that sanctification is evidenced indirectly by its fruits. "*By their fruits ye shall know them*," is a good rule; and we might, with great propriety, add, by your fruits ye shall know yourselves. There are certain fruits which proceed from sanctification, which must exist where that grace itself exists, as evidences of its presence, and certain other and counter fruits, proceeding from unsanctified dispositions, which must necessarily exist where it does not, as manifestations of its absence. Now these fruits, if carefully considered, must constitute a most important branch of evidence in the case.

By what 'fruit of the Spirit' may we 'know that we are of God,' even in the highest sense?

By love, joy, peace, always abiding; by invariable long-suffering, patience, resignation; by gentleness, triumphing over all provocation; by goodness, mildness, sweetness, tenderness of spirit; by fidelity, simplicity, Godly sincerity; by meekness, calmness, evenness of spirit; by temperance, not only in food and sleep, but in all things natural and spiritual.

Entire sanctification is a state of *absolute freedom from sin*, properly so called; it will, therefore, evidence itself by the absence of sin. Any sin, whether of the motive, of the will, of the desire, or of the life, negates its existence. To conceive of entire sanctification as coexisting with sin — properly so called, is to contradict yourself. Either it must be admitted that it is possible to men to be without sin and to live without it, or the doctrine of entire sanctification must be surrendered, for sin cannot be a constituent element of entire sanctification. Man as man is, and must continue to be while in the body and when out of it, a finite and limited being in all his powers. But finiteness is not sin; limitation of perfection is not unholiness. There is no need that he should remain contaminated by sin. Here is good and plain ground upon which to test ourselves; and with sincerity and care we shall be very likely to arrive at the truth. Are your motives pure? Are your intentions in harmony with the will of God? Your desires single? Your acts holy, according to your gracious ability? Are these things so without interruption?

*Your tempers*. How are they? Do you become impatient under trial; fretful, when chided or crossed; angry, revengeful, when injured; vain, when flattered; proud, when prospered; complaining, when chastened; unbelieving, when seemingly forsaken; unkind, when neglected? Are you subject to discontent, to ambition, to selfishness? Are you worldly? Covetous of riches, of vain pomp and parade, of indulgence, of honor, of ease? Are you unfeeling, contemptuous of others, seeking your own, boasters, proud, lovers of your own selves? Beware! These are the sediments of the old nature!

Nay, if they exist in you, in however small a degree, they are demonstrative that the old man of sin is not dead. It will be a sad mistake if you detect these evils within and yet close your eyes to them, and

continue to make profession of holiness. These are not infirmities; they are indications of want of grace. Remember that secret sins — sins unknown to all without — sins of the imagination, of the thought, of the heart — sins of desire and affection — are sins. Men may not see them; in their eyes you may be blameless — but the pure and holy God sees them, and condemns them. Until grace shall have thoroughly purged your soul, and you are made conscious thereof, you will need to cry unclean, unclean.

**Your duties.** How with regard to these? Do you delight in them? Are they your pleasure? Do they constitute your chief joy? When God evidently calls, do you go willingly, though it be through the furnace; through persecution; through losses, reproaches, sorrows? In the midst of all, is God your joy and rejoicing, and can you say, “The will of God be done” — enduring patiently, and performing joyfully, “as seeing Him who is invisible?” Is your will as God’s will? Does He find in you no murmuring, no drawing back, no displeasure; but on the contrary, submission and joy?

**Your experience.** How upon this point? Have you an unwavering confidence in God? Is your peace of mind full? Have you joy in the Holy Ghost? Do you have free communion with God? Do you feel a consciousness of purity within? Though, without, there be tempest or calm, sorrow or joy, trial or triumph, do you still, in every case, find a full communion between your soul and the Divine Spirit? By this we do not mean that you are always to be happy, ecstatic; but always to realize union with God, whether you sorrow or rejoice. Do you rejoice even in

tribulation? And is the life that you live altogether by the faith of the Son of God?

Are you entirely the Lord’s? Ponder this question. Look well to it. Have you any thing which you do not hold in God? Are you separate from Him at any point? Are you opposed to Him in any thing?

Are your actions and enjoyments all in unison with Him? Are your influence, your property, your entire position, and your whole life, so far as you can control them, with Him? Are you wholly the Lord’s? In your work, in your rest, in your indulgences, in your denials, in your affections, in your volitions, in your associations, in your endeavors, are you always, everywhere, by intention and effort, in union with God?

If to the above questions you can with honesty return a favorable answer, then may you conclude that you are one with the Lord, that you are entirely sanctified.

These are severe tests, but they are not more searching than truth and honesty require. If you shrink from the ordeal, you furnish the best proof that you are cherishing a delusion about this high state. If they should seem to condemn you, be not discouraged. You are not therefore without hope.

You are still a child of grace, and what is wanting may be at the eve of completion. Only be faithful to yourself and allow no temporizing, no tenderness toward real faults, and all will yet be well.

## 10. HINDRANCES TO THE PRESENT ATTAINMENT AND PERMANENT RETENTION OF HOLINESS

Why is not this high and desirable experience generally attained by Christians? This is a point worthy of more extended consideration than can be bestowed upon it in this connection; yet here we may venture to suggest a few reasons. The two cardinal reasons were hinted at in the introductory chapter to this work; *a failure clearly to apprehend privilege*, and consequent insensibility to obligation. But these causes of neglect and immaturity arise out of others, and produce, in their turn, a complication of other and inferior hindrances. The reason why Christians generally are not entirely sanctified is not because it is not their privilege; not because they have sought for this great blessing earnestly and persistently, and have failed to attain; not because of the insufficiency of ordained means to bring them to its possession; not because they do not need it; not because God does not will it; not because the blood of Jesus was not shed for it; not because the Holy Spirit is not able to effect it; not because duty does not require it; none of these. It is not because Christians do not, on the whole, prefer holiness; not because they would not wish to be delivered from sinwardness; not because they are entirely without efforts in this direction. Most Christians, perhaps there are no exceptions, do have hours of deep and earnest solicitude, and crying to God; do mourn over their shortcomings, and cherish habitual aspirations and longings after a higher state — *a state faintly apprehended, and fitfully sought after*. But they do not succeed, in a majority of instances, until near the close of life, perhaps in the very struggle of death, for many painful reasons, among which we may name particularly the following:

There is an obvious reason why this experience is not ordinarily attained at the same time that regenerating grace is; namely, the mind of the penitent is not turned to it distinctly at all; perhaps not one in a thousand ever thinks of it at that time. Their whole effort is directed to the gain of pardon and reconciliation. For this they pray, and weep, and mourn. The cry of their heart is, “God be merciful to me a sinner,” “Save, or I perish.” Their faith is kept upon this one object. Allowing, therefore, entire sanctification to be a distinct work, as we do, and allowing that its condition is faith, it is no marvel that it is not obtained at the same time as pardon. It is not asked for, it is not believed for; and so it is not, of course, bestowed.

His soul rests for the present in perfect peace. *Time passes on, temptation comes*, and now he feels an inward motion — the uprising of some unholy temper. This first motion to evil is followed by others of the same kind; and the young convert awakes to the fact that there are lurking enemies within him, seeking to bring him again into captivity. He is surprised to

find that, though he cannot doubt his pardon, (if indeed the new discovery does not awaken doubt,) and though conscious of the great change he has experienced, and though assured of the love of God, yet he is not entirely sanctified. He awakens to the consciousness of an evil lying deep within — entrenched in his very nature. The discovery brings distress. It is not enough that he is pardoned, he now feels that he must also be healed. But hindrances arise; and alas, but too generally, hindrances which long keep the enemy in possession of the heart, so as to disturb its peace, and divide its empire.

The first hindrance we shall name is that of *defective and unsound teaching*, and, consequent upon this, confused and incoherent views; as expressed in another connection, privilege is not apprehended, duty is not enforced. There is not sufficient plainness and simplicity in the teaching of the pulpit. The doctrine is too much taken from its connections, and presented in such a manner as to intimidate and confuse, rather than enlighten and encourage. The subject is mystified, and made to assume the character of the marvelous and impracticable; whereas it should be placed before Christians in simple earnestness, as a part of their common privilege and calling.

Without startling them with it as a far-fetched novelty, as a thing to be speculated about, it should be kept before them, in connection with other doctrines and duties, as the great point to which they are constantly to aim, and which, in the use of the means, they are to expect at any moment. Let it thus be insisted upon in simple, honest earnestness, and multitudes will seek and find the blissful experience.

2. A great hindrance has arisen to the progress of this work from the manifest *extravagances and inconsistencies of some* who make a profession of it — extravagances more in language than conduct, evincing ignorance, pride, and presumption; and inconsistencies of life and temper, convicting them either of hypocrisy or delusion. These causes have done much to disgust and injure honest and sincere minds, occasioning them to look upon the whole subject either with doubt or fear.

Identifying the doctrine and experience of holiness with the imperfections and improprieties alluded to above, and attaching, as a consequence, a kind of prejudice to the profession, many have turned away from the whole subject with a strong distaste, if not absolute disgust. This is not excusable. We do not apologize for it. But it is not unnatural that it should be so.

**What are called schools have been formed:** a class of Christians have separated themselves from their brethren, and this has brought them and their profession into discredit. We must believe it has greatly, though we are convinced not intentionally, injured this work of God. Their influence among their brethren is impaired, and what of good is in them is lost.

But having thus candidly admitted a great hindrance as originating with those who profess this grace, we must, with equal candor and no less pain, record another and more fatal hindrance, coming from the ranks of Christians making no such profession. Some of these, having become prejudiced against the doctrine, and particularly against the profession, from the causes above alluded to, have indulged in a spirit and strictures both discreditable to themselves and injurious to others; in some cases bestowing upon the whole subject sneers and contemptuous epithets, and so grieving the Spirit of grace, and discouraging and absolutely intimidating those who would seek and enjoy its blessed experience.

But the great hindrance is in ourselves; we are not willing, we will not consent. We speak of Christians generally. Many Christians seem desirous to get along with *as little religion as possible*, just so they may not forfeit them. Hope; others have higher aims; they wish to be exemplary, and will not be satisfied without the comforting influence of the Spirit; but the number is comparatively small who honestly desire, and earnestly

## 12. MOTIVES TO ENTIRE HOLINESS

Motives to holiness! Where shall we not go to find them! What direction shall we take to elude them? Are they not everywhere? Do they not come down from the heavens, and spring up from the earth? Do we not feel them within; and behold them without us? Is there any thing that has a voice that does not enforce them? Do not even mute and dumb things urge them, with silent but persuasive eloquence? What is heaven but an eternal monument of its glory? What is hell but a terrible and endless declaration of its necessity? The happiness of the former and the anguish of the latter equally impress it upon the hearts of thoughtless mortals. Indeed, turn where we will, whether to time or eternity, to the throne or the abyss, a million arguments commend it to us, a million preachers urge it upon us.

If the fabric of the universe and the history of Providence unite to impress a single great lesson upon mankind, it is that which is considered in these pages — the beauty and utility of holiness; if they combine to constitute one great motive, it is a motive to holiness. But for the deep-seated perversity of our fallen nature, nothing more would be requisite; the sermon of a ceaselessly-preaching universe would prove effectual; Providence would not teach in vain; the cry that comes from above and beneath, from within and without, as from the grave and the judgment, from heaven and hell, and from all regions, and from all beings, admonishing us in solemn language, “Be ye holy,” would sink deep into our hearts. Alas! We have no ear for the solemn discourses; the great sermon proceeds; and we heed it not. God preaches in all nature, in all providence; we hear Him not. Death, and judgment, and eternity, and heaven, and hell, prolong the discourse; but we close our ears against them. Our own hearts take up the theme, and every throb enforces it; but we smother the voice, and will not hearken.

But, reader, turning away from these general reflections, let us invite your attention to a few, a very few, of the motives we desire particularly to bring to your consideration.

1. What ought to be an irresistible motive to holiness is found in its own essential nature, *its intrinsic excellence and glory*.

Are single virtues, separate and alone, worthy of love — entitled to the homage of our hearts, as fidelity, charity, filial affection? Do ye yield to these an involuntary admiration wherever found? How much more should we esteem the constellation of all virtues in a single heart! If we pause to contemplate with delight a solitary grace, blooming alone amid a desert waste, with what greater delight should we behold an oasis, where all the graces bloom in perfection of beauty together, shedding their blending fragrance over one lovely spirit!

What would you not give if that spirit were yours? If it might be

endeavor after, entire consecration — after all the mind that was in Christ. Satan may not be tolerated, but Christ does not reign without a rival. Self assumes a part of the government; and while we would not for any consideration allow Satan to divide the sovereignty with Christ, we most earnestly contend to divide it ourselves. What a fatal mistake! How much of loss and unhappiness it causes to ourselves! How much of good it prevents with regard to others! We must have a little of our own will with regard to our property, our time, our indulgences; we must spare some of our lusts, not quite put them to death; we cannot quite consent that the Lord should be all in all; in most things He may govern, but in some (minor things, to be sure) we must have it our own way. Here is the great cause why we do not become wholly the Lord's — we cannot quite crucify self.

Consider what is required of you; ponder well your responsibility; and with your eye upon the present, and your mind upon the future, act nobly your part. Contend for the mastery. Other hindrances than those named may appear; doubtless this will be so. But what then? Shall they prevail? Duty is plain. Privilege is manifest. A thousand voices urge you forward. An Omnipotent hand is at your command. Go forward. The greater the hindrance the greater the triumph, and the more glorious the reward. Be animated to effort, and may you prevail! Remember in whom is your strength, and doubt not.

purchased, would worlds, were they in your possession, be too great a price? You attach value to wealth, beauty, learning, good name, happiness. It is well. These are all desirable; but how less than dust in the balance are they compared with conscious, inviolable virtue! Would you not prefer to be the hero of a single virtue, rather than conqueror of the world? — a martyred Paul, shining in radiant vestments, rather than a bloody Alexander, dazzling with the splendors of conquest? Why do you attach the idea of beauty and glory to angels? Is it not because they are holy — because they love with perfect love, adore with perfect adoration, and glow with perfect fervor? If they sing sweetly, is it not because they feel purely? Is it not holiness which spreads joy over all the celestial regions? Which causes the gush and rapture of the skies? Which kindles the luster and awakens the song of heaven? Which suffuses the very spirit of Jehovah with His ineffable glory, and the spirits of all His holy worshippers with inexpressible and everlasting bliss? Surely, if this be so — and who can doubt it? — we are correct when we assume that there is, in the very nature of holiness, an infinite motive to its gain. Rubies are not so precious, and nothing that can be desired can be compared unto it.

2. But if holiness is urged upon us from a consideration of its own intrinsic excellence, much more is it from the fact that *God requires it*. Let us pause here, for one moment, and take in the impression of this truth. God not only prefers that we, His creatures, should be holy, but He requires it; his authority commands it. Who ever resisted His command and prospered? Reader, know you not that God is now speaking to you? Will you hearken? What does He say? Hear him, and ponder: “Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.” Is this God's speech? What does it require of you? Do not, at your peril, hasten away: Do not treat it with contempt. Remember who it is that speaketh. What will you say to Him? He commands you to be holy. What will you answer him? You must answer.

Will you refuse? Look well to your position. Project your thoughts forward; let your mind take in what surrounds and what lies before you, and answer to yourself the question. Can you afford to be indifferent, or even for a moment longer fail of your privilege? Let your decisions be reached in the presence and under the eye of God.

3. The interest of your Master's cause requires it; and the common glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. *How can we glorify God fully without* entire consecration and perfect conformity to his entire mind and will? Will not every manifest, nay, even every secret defect, mar and sully the cause and honor of our Redeemer? We are His witnesses, called to be the lights of the world: “If the light that is in us be darkness, how great is that darkness!” Men will take knowledge of us, and thence draw their

conclusions; the consequences will not terminate with ourselves; they will reach forward to the vitals of the cause.

The lives of Christians, practical exponents as they are of the principles and spirit of our religion, are among the great agencies for the conversion and sanctification of the world. Books and sermons may be resisted; even tears and entreaties may be despised; but the silent and unostentatious influence of holy lives will speak a language to the heart it cannot easily gainsay, a language which will sound on when we sleep in the dust. The dim tracery of words will be washed away and effaced from memory; but the deep lines of a beautiful example, chiseled into the heart, will remain forever.

It is holiness, not the profession of it, that will give us influence both with God and men: winging our prayers with faith, and our counsels with wisdom, deriving power from above, and sending out from us currents of influence through the earth.

4. But especially we derive motives to a higher life and more entire consecration from the circumstances which surround us.

Never, since the beginning, as we believe, was there a more interesting, a more important period, than the present moment. Contemplated in any aspect, it is pregnant and portentous: a grand culminating point is undoubtedly approximating; never, therefore, did the Christian Church need to be so wide awake, so much alive, as now. Like a majestic vessel riding into harbor under the pressure of a fierce storm and full sail, the world seems nearing the port of destiny; she needs now, if ever, experienced and skilled hands to bring her safely and speedily to the mooring. The great harvest is ripe, waving with worldwide expanse. Sturdy reapers are wanted. The materials are gathered, and the temple is rising up out of the midst of them — builders are in demand.

The Church is not ready to meet *the demands of the times*. And her want is in a vital point, it is radical — at the heart. Not that she is more deficient now than formerly. This we do not believe. We are not of those who ask, “Why were the former days better than these days.” The Church of Christ, if we judge correctly, was never more vital than at the present moment; but her demands have increased more rapidly than her piety. Extraordinary times demand extraordinary means. Napoleon overran and subjugated Europe with his veteran legions; but they stood still before Wellington, they were not ready for the crisis at Waterloo.

Now is the time when every soldier of Jesus should be at his post, should have on the whole armor, should do valiant battle for the Lord, proving himself a man. See how God has honored us; what a breach He has given us to fill! O that we may feel our mission, and rise up and gird ourselves to honor it! Now the world wants men, full-grown Christian men, not babes or dwarfs. The man who will dignify his position at this crisis, or even hereafter, must be worthy of it. If we would do anything, men of God — if we would not be ciphers in the glorious strife — if we would not die without offspring — we must prepare for the portentous day in which God has seen fit to give us existence. Every thing now is in earnest. Quick time is the watchword. What we do must be done quickly; a moment, and the opportunity rushes past us; a moment, and we are gone; a step, and the grave contains us. If we would make impression for God, for man, we must strike now. O that we could awake and see and feel the mighty verities thronging around us, and display for once that noble and glorious spirit which becomes sons and daughters of the Most High! Every thing else will perish. Our fortunes, our heroic deeds, our distinctions — these will all sink down to be remembered no more; what we do here, and in this cause, will live forever; the waves we create here will roll on in widening circles through eternity.

5. And let us look away for a moment into that glorious eternity; is there no motive here? How evanescent and transient are all things beneath the sun! You may live without holiness here — you cannot hereafter. Would you see the value of holiness, linger here. Pursue the upward destiny of a soul brightening under the smile of God forever, see its ever-increasing and unfolding beauty, hear the ravishing melody of its triumphant song. The ages flee away; but mightier than decay, stronger than death, the soul lives on, ascending, widening its circle, becoming more and more like God, and losing itself ever in his ineffable radiance. Such is *the destiny of a soul washed in the blood of Jesus*.

Behold, on the other hand, a soul darkening under the frown of Jehovah. Ages fly away: its darkness broods darker still, its sorrow gathers down in denser folds: it is lost. The lengthened periods of eternity roll by, but they bring no redemption; deep, dark, dismal gloom settles around its sphere forever. Learn by the contrast the value of holiness. Its presence is life — its absence is eternal death.

Could you pursue this contrast through eternity — could you have but a faint glimpse of the reality you would no longer rest, but fly in trembling haste to a Saviour’s wounds for shelter and for life.

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