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Holiness Writers

Possibilities Of Grace

By

Rev. Asbury Lowery, D.D.

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World

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POSSIBILITIES OF GRACE

BY

REV. ASBURY LOWREY, D.D.

AUTHOR OF "Positive Theology"

Autos de ho Theo tas heranas hagianmai humas holoteleis.

-- 1 Thess. v, 23 --

Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

-- I Chron. xvi, 29 --

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.

-- Eph. i, 3 --

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POSSIBILITIES OF GRACE

By Asbury Lowrey

INTRODUCTION

-- HOLINESS -- HISTORY OF THE DOCTRINE

The possibilities of grace focalize in personal holiness, and perfect holiness is the highest achievement proposed by redemption in this life. There are other benefits of Christ's mission and work, but they are not receivable until it shall please the Lord to change the realm and mode of our being. Moreover, holiness is inclusive of every Christian grace. There is no degree of salvation from sin, or element of spiritual life, which this blessing does not comprehend.

The history of holiness, therefore, is the history of the Christian religion. Expunge this element, and religion ceases to be religion. Indeed, the quality of absolute purity finds its genesis in God Himself, and is thus traced back to a source infinitely high and remote.

Holiness in God is a basal attribute in which all other Divine perfections take root. It is, therefore, essential and necessary to His unmixed goodness. And as all moral natures are in essence the same, holiness becomes a fundamental principle indispensable to all excellence in every rank of intelligence. Christians could not be Christians, angels could not be angels, and God could not be God, without it.

If God were not holy He could not be just, nor true, nor good, nor loving. But being a holy essence; an immaculate intelligence; living in a high and holy place; bearing a holy name, and naturally delighting in the diffusion of His own excellence, He reproduces Himself in a finite degree in angels and men. Nor could he have done otherwise, in respect of moral character. It were impossible for Infinite Purity to implant an element of evil in creatures of His own production.

But the existence of holiness in God is not under consideration. It is only with the history of this quality as it stands related to redemption, and may be personal to ourselves, that we are profoundly interested. And this is a long and mysterious chapter -- a complex proposition, resting on sad facts upon the one hand, and upon miraculous interpositions of mercy on the other. We are not wanting in information upon these points. We have the fact of the loss of sanctity recorded, and then a bitter experience to corroborate the historic recitals. And happy for us, on the other hand, we are not lacking in full and explicit revelations respecting the wonderful scheme for its recovery. For no sooner had the original Divine image been effaced from the human species, than God projected a plan for its reproduction. Indeed, there are many passages in the Bible which indicate that God anticipated our loss, and provided, by fixed purpose, for a complete restoration before our federal lapse occurred.

But whether this first impulse of mercy was anterior or subsequent to the fall, it is certain that the history of holiness is coincident with the beginning of redemption. The moment human nature was struck with the blight and corruption of sin, that moment the remedy began to be applied. The policy

of God was to neutralize sin by its opposite, to put perfect love in the heart as an expulsive power, to banish all affections contrary thereto. The recovery of purity, therefore, became not only the major premise in the argument, but the whole proposition of redemption. It is not merely a thread linking together and interlacing all the dispensations, but the entire woof and warp of the whole fabric of Christological salvation. Not that holiness is the only subject embraced in the Scriptures; but the object that underlies all other subjects. Not that personal sanctity is the only good set before men as a proper object of pursuit; but the object in which all other objects focalize. Not that the other parts of salvation, such as repentance and justification, are rendered less important than their merits demand by a kind of abnormal exaggeration of holiness; but that they are placed in right relations to this crowning truth -- the relation of auxiliaries and of means to an end.

The idea is this: Holiness is a root-principle. In vegetation there can be no trunk, no limbs, no flowers, no fruit, or vital sap without a living root. So in religion there can be no complete and superlatively beautiful Christian character without perfect holiness. Wherever this property is not attained, or is possessed in a low degree, it affects the Christian life as a defective and half-rotten root affects the tree or vine. But as all the parts of a vegetable are vitally connected and interfused with a common sap to give it thrift and fruitfulness, so all the stages of grace interact and coalesce, thus becoming complements to each other.

Such is the relation of Holiness to Redemption and redeemed men, and so it is pictured to us in both sacred and ecclesiastical history.

It is the pith of the "Book of God," and the fundamental element in Christian experience. A Christian, then, at his best is a cluster of many graces all sprouting up from the seed-principle. He is a compound of many inseparable excellences of which holiness is both the germ and the ripe fruit. As Fletcher says: "By Christian perfection we mean nothing but the cluster and maturity of the graces which compose the Christian character in the Church militant. In other words, Christian perfection is a spiritual constellation made up of these gracious stars: perfect repentance, perfect faith, perfect humility, perfect meekness, perfect self-denial, perfect resignation, perfect hope, perfect charity, and, above all, perfect love." *1

Now, to evolve such a character, all the plans and purposes of grace are made subsidiary and conducive. As the needle to the pole, they point through all the dispensations to this end. The sacrificial system and symbolism of the Jewish economy; the Levitical discipline and moral law; the burden of prophetic vision; the preceptive code; the chain of miracles; the trend of historic facts; the imagery of the Old Testament and the parables of the New; and, above all, the golden list of exceeding great and precious promises, sprinkled all through both Testaments, are saturated with the spirit of holiness. There are four symbols in the Old Testament which pertain almost exclusively to this work of spiritual purification: the oil symbol, indicative of the Spirit's anointing; the blood symbol, a picture of the atonement; the water symbol, a representative of cleansing; and the fire symbol, which tells of the refinement and sublimation of sanctified nature.

THE NEW TESTAMENT

When we come into the New Testament we find the types and foreshadowing of the Old in full bloom. What was obscure and prospective, now becomes actual and present, a privilege to be enjoyed at once, an obligation to be discharged immediately. In the writings of the prophets there was a commingling of prophecy and promise. What we now realize was seen through the vista of years. The promises were uttered in the language of anticipation and future tense: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you;" "After those days I will pour out of my Spirit;" "He shall be as a refiner's fire and as fuller's soap;" "He shall purge the sons of Levi;" "And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness." All this language has a future aspect and a prospective outlook.

But in the New Testament the prophetic style is dropped, and the present tense is used: "Blessed are the pure in heart;" "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit;" "Be ye there fore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." It is a peremptory command instantly to appropriate a finished redemption to the extent of salvation from all sin.

But specific proof-texts cannot be cited and analyzed in a historic sketch. Nor is it necessary: for no one will doubt that the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles, and the book of Revelation, are keyed to the high note of sinless purity and perfect love. The New Testament is a sweet monotone on this subject. Not so as to give monotony to the Gospel or narrowness to the scope of religious thought and inquiry; but to give unity and concentration to the saving knowledge of Christ. Not so as to exclude variety and that due proportion in teaching required by a wise and well-balanced system; but to make every thing converge and center in the ultimate design of restoring the lost image of God to man. There is, therefore, nothing preposterous in presenting Christian perfection as the indispensable grace, the vital element, without which there can be no full-orbed character or ripe experience.

We grant there is great diversity, and nothing redundant in the Gospel. We also grant that the inspired authors are chiefly occupied in telling men how to start, and how to run the Christian race; but the goal invariably set before the racer is a sinless state. And those who talk about progressive sanctification without such definite goal, talk nonsense. It is like shooting into vacancy, and then prowling around through the weeds for the game.

Hartmann, the German philosopher, though a skeptic, says: "The notion of progress contains necessarily that of an object, for if, after having taken a thousand steps, I am no nearer the goal than before beginning to walk, because it ever remains infinitely removed from me, such progress is in reality no progress at all. The notion of progress disappears with that of an end to be attained."

Such was the recognized relation of the doctrine of holiness to Christian life down to about the close of the first century. Soon after that period the precious truth became blurred with various errors and superstitions.

With the rise of monastic orders spiritual religion, excepting in its widely separated lucid intervals, was found either dead, morbid, or fanatical. As Milman says: "Monasticism withdrew a great number of those who might have been energetic and useful citizens, into barren seclusion and religious indolence. Except where the monks formed themselves, as they frequently did, into fierce

political or polemic factions, they had little effect on the condition of society. They stood aloof from the world, the anchorites in their desert wildernesses, the monks in their zealously barred convents; and secure, as they supposed, of their own salvation, left the rest of mankind to inevitable perdition." Western monasticism was different. It was industrious and productive. It preserved arts and letters, and built splendid edifices. But still it was secular and unspiritual, though alternately enthusiastic and fanatical. As the same author again says: "In Eastern India it became a kind of Christian Paganism; in Europe, a moral and religious Rationalism, fatal both to morals and to religion." *2

ECLIPSE OF HOLINESS

As the Gospel took effect first and chiefly among the Gentiles, immediately after its initiatory promulgation among the Jews, Christianity came early in contact with heathen forms of religion and philosophies falsely so-called. Naturally a conflict arose, and as it occurred with the most learned and polite nations of antiquity, the contest was fierce and prolonged. Indeed, the first four hundred years was one continual grapple with heathen errors, vices, and superstitions. And though the Gospel finally triumphed, it did not come out of the war without wounds.

Corruptions in doctrine, hierarchical assumptions, and degeneracy in life were the result. The power of godliness was lost in the form. The simplicities of Gospel truth and worship were changed into the beginning of a gorgeous ritual and priestly arrogance. From these early corruptions the Church has not yet recovered.

Before even the apostolic pastorships had ceased, the Church was confronted with idol worship, Greek philosophy, Judaism, open infidelity, and vainglorious Gnosticism.

Religion soon became fearfully intermixed with these false ideas, the relics of which still remain. As Dr. Pope remarks: "There is not an error in the Church today, the germs of which may not be found in the writings of the Fathers." *3

The effect of this vast corruption in doctrine was a thorough dilution of spiritual religion. Not the denial of holiness, but a lapse into a superficial experience, and the adoption of a mongrel faith that fell very far below the Gospel standard.

The fathers had a morbid martyr spirit and reckless zeal that courted suffering and death. They were more anxious to die for Christ as martyrs, than to die in Christ to all sin.

But, notwithstanding the general weakness and insipidity of Patristic literature, we find gleams and coruscations of holiness in the pages of many of the Fathers whose writings have been held in high esteem. They shine and sparkle like diamonds among the sand and sediment of river bottoms.

We quote some of the best utterances of the Fathers in another place, and, therefore, omit their testimony in this historic sketch. But Gnosticism deserves a passing notice, both because it contained much excellent teaching and because it contributed largely to the corruption of spiritual religion.

The Gnostics claimed a sort of ethereal perfection and spirituality consisting in present redemption from the bondage of matter and flesh. *4 Having placed the seat of sin in the body, the culminating point of holiness in their estimation was deliverance from corporeal grossness and corruption. This, they fancied, they had attained, which filled them with a supercilious idea of their own personal sublimation, corresponding with their kindred conceit that they were preeminent in illumination and knowledge. *5

But, leaving the Gnostics and Christian Fathers, in whose hands the Gospel doctrine of holiness began to be disfigured and covered with rust, we enter a prolonged period in which the great truth was buried for the most part in the ashes and debris of a fallen Church. It was so intermixed with foul thought and practice, that many, it must be confessed, who professed it went, in some cases, to the extreme of shocking excesses. But while smoke can cover a crystal or a diamond with a coat of obscurity, it cannot penetrate the substance. It is so with the subject of holiness. Though intermingled and soiled with the mistakes and pollutions of degenerate years, yet, as a neglected jewel, it sparkled here and there among the dust and trumpery of mediaeval superstitions. There were all along through the Dark Ages individuals and societies who believed in a high type of Christian perfection, and strenuous efforts were made from time to time to graduate experience up to the ideal standard.

This doctrine of Christian perfection during the mediaeval times was represented chiefly by five classes of exponents, namely: Fanatics, Ascetics, Mystics, Pietists, and Evangelicals. This line runs from the apostles to Wesley. There are many divergences, more or less sound; but it is a continuous line, which, like our railroads, has come up from the strap iron of absurdity to the steel rail of well-defined faith.

FANATICS

The history of the fanatics may be traced back to Montanus, the founder of Montanism, in the second century. He claimed that the Paraclete dwelt in him as a sort of third dispensation, and that he was a prophet ordained to lift the Church to a higher perfection. He called his followers "Pneumatici," or Spiritualists. *6 Their experience was crystallized into pure spirituality or transcendental sublimation of soul. *7 In this conceit, as in all half-truths, there was not only a modicum of right faith, but a basal principle of true Christian experience, to wit: the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. Tertullian defends Montanus and adopts his teaching. *8

The fault of Montanus, and all like enthusiasts, is not the rejection of faith, but the overstraining of faith -- the pushing of faith to extravagance. We find shades of this excess in faith at the present day in those sincere, but mistaken brethren, who claim to be spoken to by God, and led by the Spirit, instead of governing themselves by the Word of God spiritually interpreted. They follow impressions, which often lead them into ludicrous predicaments. A man in traveling felt an impression to visit a house some distance from the road to talk and pray with the occupants. Being pressed for time he proceeded on his way, neglecting what he felt to be his duty; but the impression redoubled upon him and he returned, but found the house empty. The story goes that it had been converted into a pig-sty. Spirituality must be regulated by an enlightened judgment. Holiness does not supersede common sense, and spiritual enlightenment was never intended to supplant a man's reason.

ASCETICISM

Asceticism is another form of half-truth and blurred holiness. This type of piety on its right side may be traced back to the Gospel itself: "If thine hand offend thee, cut it off;" "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out;" and to Paul, who says, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection." But this needful discipline was soon pushed to shocking extremes in the form of sour asceticism. The first and worst type of this morbid sanctity, and that which gave rise to all the austerities and the monastic orders of Romanism, took its rise in Egypt in the second century. Egypt seems to have been the hotbed of hypochondria and fanaticism. Mosheim says: "That country has in all times, as it were, by an immutable law or disposition of nature, abounded with persons of melancholy complexion, and produced, in proportion to its extent, more gloomy Spirits than any other part of the world." But ethical discipline resembling the hygienic exercise of the body is, undoubtedly, a Christian duty, and cannot be dispensed with in the race for the highest perfection. "Exercise thyself unto godliness," is the Christian regimen. This virtue has been practiced in all ages of Christianity, and out of it has grown, not legitimately, but by perversion, the hybrid of extreme asceticism. We say extreme, for it must be confessed that the purest specimens of Christian life, and those which have redeemed the Church of Rome from utter apostasy, have been found among the Ascetics. But this Christian duty has been abused, and, therefore, from Origen down, it has taken on the aspect of self-torture. Asceticism is founded upon the idea of a perpetual conflict between the flesh and spirit. Adopting practically the heathen and Gnostic notion, that sin is located in the body, they wage war upon its members, and aim to crucify its natural and innocent appetences. And as they cannot get rid of the body till they die, the Ascetics have at all times been obliged to put in a caveat against salvation from all sin in this life. This makes their teaching inconsistent. In one paragraph they are quite on a plane with Wesley and Fletcher, in the next they drop down among the brethren who tell us that a bit of sin is necessary to preserve our humility. How absurd! A deposit of death to keep us alive.

Among the Ascetics who held to sublime holiness with the remains of some sin may be named Macarius, of Egypt; Nilus, a Greek disciple; and Marcus Eremita. The faith of these men, like Fenelon, Madame Guyon, De Renty, like Chalmers and Edwards, of later times, rose to the verge of full salvation, and yet, like St. Augustine, and the whole Calvinistic school, they were fettered with the servile belief that concupiscence or some sin must remain till death.

The relics of this doctrine are now, rife in England. Unable to ignore the popular revival of holiness, and yet unwilling to accept the doctrine of the extirpation of sin, they assert the possibility of holiness "in the presence of sin." They also teach that there are two natures in the believer, the carnal and the spiritual. These, it is asserted, are in lifelong grapple; but holiness consists in keeping the carnal nature in subjection. The old man, like Napoleon on St. Helena, is confined, but still lives, and struggles for supremacy -- not crucified and dead, as in the case of Paul, but crippled. It is possible Dr. Pope, in his Compendium of Theology, has made a concession which will be misconstrued to support this chronic mistake of the ages. He allows the continued existence of concupiscence, and some affinity for sin, and teaches that a sanctified man, in his federal relation and liabilities, is only a sinner among sinners. This, however, is only an unguarded expression. Dr. Pope forcibly and beautifully teaches the possibility of salvation from all sin. *9

MYSTICISM

Mysticism is next in order. This form of marred truth figures largely in the ancient struggle for the attainment of sublime holiness. Like Asceticism, it took its origin in Egypt in the second century, under Ammonius Saccas, a native of that country. He attempted to lift up a lofty standard of sanctity by forming a coalition between the Egyptian, Platonic, and Christian philosophies and religions -- another foolish attempt to blend truth and error, light and darkness -- the first instance of Broad-Churchism. From this cockle and wheat sprung the Mystics, which have since ramified into various sects. The Mystics did not differ much in their austerities and aim from the Ascetics, only they were more extreme, and, in some cases, more absurd. And yet as the underlying principle of Mysticism was personal sanctity, it could not perish. On the theory of the immortality of truth and the necessary survival of the fittest, it has outlived every change, defied all persecution, and transfused itself into every spiritual type of religion, from Ammonius, of the second century, to Wesley, of the eighteenth. Its vital element was early incorporated into all that was good and true in Catholicism, and from Catholicism it has been transferred into the Pietism of Germany, the Moravianism of Bohemia, the Quakerism of England and America, and, finally, into the Methodisms that now belt the world. Luther himself was a Mystic and commended Mystic theology. The germinal principle of Mysticism was in Fenelon, Madame Guyon, De Renty, Thomas a' Kempis, William Law, Spener, Peter Bohler, and largely in Wesley and Fletcher.

Mysticism was based on the great truth that there is a hidden sense in the text of Scripture which the carnal mind cannot perceive. No doctrine is more absolutely true. But some of them rode this splendid hobby to destruction. They ran it into hallucination and vagary, and found sense where there was nothing but nonsense. The bottom fact, however, was a truth which has been most hallowing in all ages. For it must be confessed that this principle of superior enlightenment by an unction from the Holy One is scriptural, and, as such, has been aimed at and coveted by all the spiritual and holy from the days of Christ until now. It has braided itself like a golden thread into all the systems of reform and symbols of belief that have had for their object the destruction of vice and the perfection of human character. The misfortune of the Church in all periods has been, not so much the loss of truth, as the corruption of truth; not the extinction of the sparks and embers of holy fire, but the covering of them with error and superstition. And the duty of the Church today is not to discover and put forth a new doctrine, but to burnish up the old; not to coin a new currency out of other and richer minerals, but to rub off the tarnish and dirt from the very fine gold that lies neglected and trampled under foot all around us. The great mission of the ministry is the universal propagation of this faith, and the revival of a corresponding experience.

REFORMATION

We now come to the Reformation. After that great upheaval in despotic ecclesiasticism and mighty revolution in ideas, by which a buried Bible was exhumed and magnified, the results of faith and holiness were more rationally pronounced, and more positively insisted upon.

Luther said: "The holiness of common Christianity is this: that the Holy Spirit gives the people faith in Christ, and sanctifies them thereby; that is, makes a new heart, soul, body, work, and being, and writes the law of God, not on tables of stone, but in fleshly hearts. He sanctifies them, not only by the forgiveness of sin, but also by the laying aside, expelling, and destroying of sin." *10

Spener, the founder of the Pietists, emphasized holiness in like manner. But his teaching was more preceptive than doctrinal. He began with the ministry, and taught that no person who was not himself a model of piety and divine love was qualified to be a public teacher of piety, or a guide to others in the way of salvation. He did not believe a man was qualified to expound the Scriptures who had not the light of personal experience to aid him.

He formed societies in Frankfort, as Wesley did in London, to promote what was called vital religion. The rules adopted were as rigorous as those of the Methodist Discipline. Dancing, public sports, pantomimes, theatrical diversions, the reading humorous and comical books, with other kindred dissipations, were prohibited. Their religious meetings were called colleges of piety, the prototype, we may suppose, of Wesley's Holy Club at Oxford.

From these Pietists sprang the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and Dr. Sprecher claims in his work that the marvelous phenomena of Methodism are traceable to the same source. And for this there is good reason, because the history of the Hussites, Moravians, and Pietists are confluent, and sprang from a common origin.

And we all know that Wesley received the incipency of light on holiness from the Moravians. He separated from Count Zinzendorf, not because the Count denied the doctrine of perfect salvation from sin, but because he taught that perfect and final purification takes place in conversion, and was imputed.

HOLINESS UNDER WESLEY AND OTHERS

We are now brought to the definition and enforcement of holiness by the Wesleys. In them the subject reached its culminating point and clearest enunciation. John expounded the truth; Charles voiced it forth upon the ear of the world in sweetest verse and richest melody; while Fletcher came to its defense in the choicest polemics the world ever saw. And these, as a sanctified triumvirate, sealed their faith by a personal exemplification of the experience. From that day to this Methodism has poured a full diapason of Gospel harmony upon the theme. Her credo has been free from the slavish idea of necessary sin, on the one hand, and wild fanaticism on the other. She has flung out to the world the banner of holiness in the sense of salvation from all sin. Her motto has been death to the inbeing of sin and the re-occupancy of the soul by the Holy Ghost and all the fullness of God.

Holiness, in a general sense, is not peculiar to Methodism. As a goal, more or less vague and indefinite, it has been the theme of the ages.

But there are three aspects of the great question which trace their genesis to Methodism. First. It declares the possibility and obligation of salvation from all sin in this life. All other theologies limit the privilege by a stipulation for a little necessary sin so long as we are in the body. Luther, Barclay, Chalmers, Edwards, and Hodge talk sublimely on holiness, but each takes special pains to notify the reader they do not mean salvation from all sin. The cancer is cured, but the roots are there. Still take Christ as a complete Saviour, they seem to say, but do not conceit that he saves you now completely. Methodism says, with the apostle: "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." *11

Second. Methodism has assigned to perfect holiness a distinct chapter in systematic divinity. Watson, who wrote the first body of theology after Wesley's time, leads the way and indexes the topic as a benefit of the atonement under the head of "Entire Sanctification." No other conspicuous writer has such a division. No other consensus of faith has such a crowning credo. Edwards, Dwight, and Stuart made approaches to the subject, but their pages were only flecked here and there with it. The gold was left in the ore of crude and ill-defined belief; but Methodism reduces it to plain statement, and sets it forth as a possible experience.

Methodism begins a new fashion in recounting the benefits of the atonement -- a new era in theological arrangement and discussion. She puts a new item into the make-up of topics for the pulpit, a new fact into the testimony of witnesses for Jesus, a new section into Christian biography, and a new force into the power of dying grace.

From this time forth we may conclude that no body of divinity will be formulated without incorporating holiness as a distinct feature. Two elaborate systems have just appeared in Methodism, from Drs. Raymond and Pope. Holiness is a cardinal factor in each. Dr. Hodge, the peerless divine among Presbyterians, recently published a ponderous theology. In it he discusses Christian perfection, appealing to John Wesley as authority, and giving due credit in the margin to his "Plain Account." The hour-hand on the dial-plate of theology has moved permanently forward in the direction of high noon in spiritual things.

Third. It is a peculiarity of Methodism to utilize holiness as a qualification for work. It is not looked upon and treated merely or chiefly as a feast for the sensibilities. Nor is it sought as an insurance policy against the dangers of hell, or a sly passport to heaven. It is sought as a working force, put on as a business coat, selected for everyday wear, not for dress-parade or state occasions. It is buckled on as the whole armor of God to fight with. Mr. Wesley again and again attributes the success of his preachers to the preaching of holiness, and wherever there was a declension he found the cause in the neglect of this experience.

And it is a fact, confirmed by history, that just as the luminary of Christian perfection walked the heavens of his people full-orbed, or passed under an eclipse, the revival under Mr. Wesley waxed or waned. As the fortunes of the Israelites, God's chosen people, swung back and forth, true as the pendulum of a clock, and kept time with their fidelity to God, or relapse into idolatry; so the successes of Wesley and his people vibrated between light and shadows in proportion to their holiness during the whole life of that apostolic man. It was this ever-present phenomenon and ever-speaking witness that led Mr. Wesley to say the Methodists were raised up to "spread scriptural holiness over these lands."

The same may be said of the victories and defeats of Methodism in this country. The Church has gone up or down, grown weak or strong, as it has become cold or ardent toward this experience. There has been a great deal of speculation in regard to the secret of that marvelous power which attended this strange organization in the earlier periods of its history. Some have placed it in the itinerancy; some in the simplicity of dress and manners; some in her poverty and consequent humility; some in her extemporaneous preaching and vehement earnestness in exhortation and prayer; others to the utter deadness of surrounding denominations and a sudden flash of light upon

the world through the medium of a newly-converted people. Others have traced the marvelous effect to the pathetic recital of our experiences, thus keeping up a perpetual play upon the sympathies of the congregations. All these agencies, no doubt, have had their effect; but as they have existed and been in operation, to some extent, in other denominations, without producing the same results, we must conclude that they do not amount, either singly or combined, to an adequate cause. Our conviction is that the secret lay in the supreme principle of holiness. Not that all in early times were preeminently holy; not that bad men and ministers did not then, as now, creep into the organization; but the dominating principle, the characteristic quality, and invincible power of the strange movement was that of supreme personal holiness. This imparted to them a divine sacredness, and clothed the whole sect with a wand of mysterious power. They made themselves felt as living in a transition state between earth and heaven, and as being in league, as indeed they were, with the Supreme powers.

If I were asked whether the Church is not as holy now as in primitive times? I would be obliged to answer -- Yes, and No. It is my belief that there are men and women among us today as absolutely consecrated to God as ever lived. The number also is greater. It must be conceded, likewise, that the piety of our age is more intelligent, more expansive, more large-hearted and munificent than that of the fathers. But while there has been a magnificent growth in stature, there has not been a corresponding increase in health and strength. Samson has lost some of his locks. While the blood has gone out into the extremities, the heartthrobs have become weaker and less frequent.

Two points may be noted which differentiate the past from the present:

1. There is not that mystic sacredness attending our ministry that belonged to this holy order in other years.

2. There is not that preeminent religiousness in our homes that dwelt in these domestic sanctuaries in the childhood of Methodism.

But the personal qualities and magnificent achievements that peculiarized the fathers of this denomination may be repeated. They sprang from a source which may be common to mankind. The root-principle of every excellence and of the highest capabilities for good is holiness. And holiness is the heritage of the world, the legacy from Jesus to all his family. It is the gift and work of the Holy Ghost receivable any moment, by faith, when the antecedent conditions are met.

ENDNOTES

1 Fletcher on Christian Perfection, Works, vol. ii, pp. 492, 493

2 Milman's Latin Christianity, vol. i, pp. 23, 26.

3 Pope's Theology, vol. iii, chapter on Sanctification

4 Dr. Burton's Bampton Lectures, lecture ii, "Gnostics"

5 The Gnostics were the first corrupters of the Christian faith and practice. -- Mosheim. But, notwithstanding their errors and excesses, much good is ascribed to them by the Fathers. Clement of Alexander says: "He is the Gnostic who is after the image and likeness of God." "To do good out of love and for its own excellence is the Gnostic's choice." Again: "The Gnostic, morally, physically, and logically occupies himself with God. Whence this abode (a pure body) becomes receptive of the soul which is most precious to God, and is dignified with the Holy Spirit through sanctification of soul and body perfected with the perfection of the Saviour." -- Vol. ii, pp. 57, 60, 202, 215

6 Mosheim. M'Clintock and Strong's Cyclopaedia, art. "Montanus"

7 Tertullian against Marcion, p. 268. Antenicene Library

8 Tertullian, vol. iii, p. 124. Tertullian was himself a Montanist

9 Pope's Theology, chapter on Sanctification

10 Dr. Sprecher, Groundwork of Evang.-Lutheran Theology, chap. iii

11 See 1 John i, 7.

POSSIBILITIES OF GRACE

By Asbury Lowrey

PREFACE

The brightest hopes of the Church today cluster around the revival of interest in experimental religion.

All Evangelical Churches are coming to have a more scriptural and comprehensive view of the grand possibilities of grace. As never before, the mission of Jesus is seen to be a thoroughly saving mission. Not so much in heaven hereafter, as in Christ here.

Much more of the great affluence of redemption is expected in this life at the present time than ever before. Indeed, the conviction has become quite general, that all the cleansing work of the blood, and refining, sealing, quickening, comforting, and empowering effects of the Holy Ghost belong to this life.

Heaven is a place where the fruits of a holy life are garnered. Earth is the sphere for preparation.

Again: Christ is apprehended now, not so much as a distant object of faith and love, as a personal Presence, an indwelling life. Our Lord is seen to be the embodiment of His own religion, and that embodiment is transmissible to us, so that, having Christ, we have both cleansing and filling, both crucifixion and resurrection, both death to sin and life in God. Indeed, having Christ, we have the whole of redemption which belongs to this world, and the very quintessence of that life which belongs to the next.

But the most marked change in the apprehension of believers respects the Holy Ghost. Heretofore the Divine Spirit has been allowed the place of a person in the thought and theory of the Church; but in conception and worship He has been treated as an influence. We think the consciousness of the body of believers will support this assertion.

But now the Holy Ghost is coming more and more to be apprehended and worshipped as a Person, conceived of and enthroned in our affections and faith as an active abiding Divinity in the world. He is crowned as the teacher and guide of believers, through the word, into all truth. Indeed, the devout faith of the Church ranks Him as the Executive of the Godhead to whom is committed all the administrative offices of redemption.

He revives the recollections of Christ's words, expounds and applies the truth, creates a spiritual discernment, enlightens, convicts, renews, sanctifies, witnesses, and comforts. He calls and qualifies the ministry, makes the Gospel as preached by them spirit and life, gives efficacy to the sacraments, and generates in the hearts of all believers, love, joy, meekness, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.

With such high ideals of Christ and the Holy Ghost, the possibilities of grace have become the questions of the hour. Accordingly the great problems now agitating the Christian mind are these:

To what extent may a man be saved from sin in this life? Is it a partial or complete salvation? Is it possible for a man to be saved from all sin before death? and, Can he live an un sinning life.

Is it true that Christ personally lives in a believer who has been crucified with Him and quickened into a divine life by the Holy Ghost? Is it possible for a man actually to become a "habitation of God through the Spirit?" or is that a mere figure of speech? What measure of Divine enduement for effective service comes within the scope of Christian privilege and duty? What kind and degree of power shall we receive after that the Holy Ghost is come upon us?

All these questions, together with many other cognate inquiries, are considered in the following pages. Not in a speculative style, but practically. Not to entertain and please the popular taste, but to expand the idea of Christian privilege and duty, to deepen the sense of obligation to be holy, and to excite faith and hope in the provisions of grace.

I have not adopted the rigid and frigid style of writers on systematic divinity, but endeavored to feed the spiritual appetite and throw some life and inspiration into cold didactics. My object has been to vitalize theory and clothe the skeleton of theological statement with nourishing truth. In my expositions and researches I have not aimed to be exhaustive or specially critical, much less to appear original, literary, or learned. But one desire has dominated my thought, to wit: to be clear, instructive, and edifying.

The proof-sheets have been submitted to Dr. M. S. Terry, one of our best scholars and clearest thinkers. His review and commendation has increased my humble confidence in the tolerable accuracy and useful merits of the production. With the profoundest conviction that the theme discussed in these pages is paramount to all others, and indispensable to the completeness of any character and the efficiency of any Church, I give this work to the public, fervently asking the blessing of God upon it.

A. Lowery.

New YORK, May 26, 1884

POSSIBILITIES OF GRACE

By Asbury Lowrey

Chapter 1

What majesty and grace
Through all the gospel shine!
'Tis God that speaks, and we confess
The doctrine most divine.

THE GREEK TEXT

METHOD OF INTERPRETATION

Critical knowledge of any doctrine, duty, or privilege of the New Testament requires an examination of the language in which it was first promulgated.

It is well known that the Gospel was originally written in the Greek tongue. Not the classic Greek of Plato, Aristotle, Xenophon, Sophocles, and others, but the common or Hellenistic Greek, which abounded in Hebrew and Aramaean idioms. This modified tongue, as Harman forcibly says, "was the vehicle which the writers of the New Testament used wherewith to give a permanent form to the great truths revealed in the Gospel." *1

The Hebrew was the primal channel, divinely chosen, for the communication of God's will to man; but when the Jews lost their political independence by the Babylonish captivity, they also lost the independence of their language. The Hebrew was supplanted by the Aramaic dialect, which was a mixture of Syriac and Chaldaic, and, therefore, called SyroChaldaic, or Aramaean, which had an intimate relation to the Hebrew.

The Aramaean dialect became, in its turn, supplanted, or largely modified, by the Greek. In a transition state the Aramaic was the current language of Palestine in the time of Christ and the apostles. *2 On this account the Greek of the New Testament received a Hebrew and Aramaic complexion. This mixture, it is probable, was the cause of the tradition, as mentioned by Eusebius, *3 that the Gospel of Matthew was originally written in Hebrew.

It has been asserted, and as often denied, that Christ adopted the Aramaic dialect in his addresses to the people. Those who claim that he did not use the Aramaic, affirm that he spoke the colloquial Greek. But it is almost certain that he used both interchangeably, and, perhaps, other dialects; and this he did, not by the aid of scholarship, much less by drawing upon his miraculous power, but as a vernacular. To speak many languages is a characteristic of Eastern peoples. Even now it is no uncommon thing for persons in the Orient to speak fluently a half dozen or more languages. This is not done as a matter of scholarship, but natively, as we learn and utter our mother tongue. There is evidence for the supposition that Christ addressed the people in common Greek as a rule, but often emphasized his thoughts by a resort to the Aramaic. *4

But whatever may have been the precise media of oral communication with the congregations by Christ and his apostles, there is a substantial agreement now among scholars that the first records of Gospel truth were made in the common or Hellenistic Greek. To this source we must apply for the truest import of our Lord's sayings and the most correct report of the teachings of his apostles. It was in writing these words, not for the sake of the words themselves, but to convey certain meanings, that the Holy Ghost guided the hand of the amanuensis. Words are the vehicle of ideas, the casket in which it has pleased the Lord to lodge the jewel of truth, the scabbard in which he has placed the sword of the Spirit. Therefore, whatever God has proposed to us on the subject of holiness will be more clearly understood by a reference to the original modes of expression. If personal purity, as inculcated in the Scriptures, was intended to signify salvation from all sin as a present experience, we have a right to expect that the original words employed by the Holy Ghost will clearly indicate the nature and measure of that grace.

On this account an appeal to this first and highest authority is highly important.

But in making this appeal two extremes must be avoided. First, we must not confine ourselves too closely to the primary meaning of the words. This is the fault of some interpreters who quite neglect the sense attached to terms and phrases by the connection in which they stand. The grammar and lexicon are made a higher standard than the text. Indeed, the relative and true sense of certain passages is utterly ground out of them by being placed between the "upper and nether millstones" of rigid literalism and the arbitrary rules of classic rendering. We should never forget that the text is older and more authoritative than either the grammar or the lexicon. The text must largely make the grammar and lexicon, and not the grammar and lexicon the text.

All the grammar and lexicon can legitimately do is to formulate rules and definitions according to what is written. The construction of the sentences and the reigning idea of the passage must determine the import of the words used. This may be very far from the classic use and signification of them, and also quite various as found in different connections in the Gospel.

On this point Dr. Donaldson makes some very instructive criticisms, in his article, already referred to, on the Biblical Relation of the Greek Language, in Kitto's Cyclopaedia, and adopted by M'Clintock and Strong.

He says: "The vocabulary of the New Testament is of a peculiar nature. This arises from the novelty of the teachings, combined with their exalted morality. The new thoughts demanded new modes of expression, and hence the writers did not hesitate to use words in senses rare, if not entirely unknown, to the classical writers. This fact cannot be fully illustrated without exhibiting the results of investigation into various characteristic words. such as [mysterion] mystery; [dikaios] righteous; [dikaiosune] righteousness; [pistis] faith; [zoe] life; [thanatos] death; [doxa] glory.

"These results seem to us to form no inconsiderable addition to the proof of the divinity of Christianity, for the grand moral ideas that were expressed by some of them are unique in the age in which they were uttered. Thus the word [zoe] is frequently used to denote an absolute consecration of soul, body, and spirit to God, for it is this entire consecration which they look upon as the life-principle of man. Living, with them, if it be not living to God in Christ, is not living at all, but death;

and a death which works not merely in the soul, but also in the body. Plato and the Stoics had something like this notion of [zoe]. But with them it was a speculation. They are continually reasoning about it. The writers of the New Testament treat it as an unquestioned, realized fact.

"So again [doxa] means glory, but the writers of the New Testament separate from it every notion of material splendor and earthly renown, and use it to denote that spiritual irradiation of the whole man which takes place when God reigns in him, when the image of God is realized in him. Thus we come short of God's glory when we fail to present the purity and holiness of his character and image in our characters. Thus the [doxa] of the New Testament is purely spiritual and moral.

"Then, again, it is remarkable, how, in the case of words like [hudor] water; [lutron] redemption; [baptidzo] baptize; the material meaning often vanishes out of sight, and the writers express by them the spiritually purifying power of Christ which really and entirely cleanses both soul and body."

Dr. Harman takes a similar view. He says: "As the Greek language was of heathen growth, it sometimes lacked words wherewith to express clearly the ideas of the Christian revelation. Hence the New Testament writers were compelled to give to some of the words of the language novel meanings. It is true that the translators of the Old Testament had already led the way by rendering into Greek the moral and religious truths of the Old Covenant. But their vocabulary was not extensive enough to express clearly and appropriately all the truths of the New." *5

We reach the conclusion, therefore, that the Gospel is a standard for itself, and must be interpreted mainly by the trend of its teachings."

The other extreme to be avoided is that of paying little or no respect to the literal and primary signification of words.

It should be remembered that the holy Ghost did not coin words, but took such forms of speech as had an established meaning, and communicated truth through that channel understood by the people.

There is something, therefore, to be gained by the philological history and etymological derivation of words.

It is to be presumed that every term chosen by the Holy Spirit had in it a germinal idea which is never entirely lost by future combinations. A knowledge of this original thought is quite indispensable to a correct and comprehensive understanding of the mind of God. It is also necessary in order to a correct understanding of the text to keep in mind the well-known fact that every Greek word has a list of various meanings. Only one of these can be given in a translation. It may be the more or less important sense, according to the judgment, faith, or bias of the translator. The true import, therefore, of a word in any given case, must be ascertained from the relation it holds to the subject under consideration. The strain of the writer and scope of the argument are the best rules of interpretation.

GREEK WORDS INDICATING PURITY EXAMINED AND DEFINED

In this analysis the original word is defined according to its various significations, as used in the New Testament. Under each different sense given, a text is quoted containing the word, which is put in italics to distinguish it from other parts of the sentence. *[Transcriber Note: In this electronic version, such words are placed in brackets. Note also that Greek words in this version are not shown with both the Greek letters and the English spellings as in Lowery's printed book -- we have included only the English spellings, also enclosed in brackets.] The scope of the passage will show the correctness of the rendering.

[hagiadzo]

From [hagios,] holy.

I. To separate, set apart, consecrate, sanctify -- to set apart from a common to a sacred use.

Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that [sanctifieth] the gold? ... Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that [sanctifieth] the gift? Matt. xxiii, 17, 19.

II. To esteem or reverence as holy or sacred. When applied to God as infinitely separated from all sin and wrong, and infinitely superior to all created beings.

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, [Hallowed] be thy name. Matt. vi, 9.

But [sanctify] the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear. 1 Peter iii, 15.

III. To purify, cleanse from pollution, whether ceremonially, as under the Levitical dispensation, or personally and truly by the offering of the body of Christ.

For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, [sanctifieth] to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? Heb. ix, 13, 14.

By the which will we are [sanctified] through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Heb. x, 10.

For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are [sanctified]. Heb. x, 14.

Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he [was sanctified], an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? Heb. x, 29.

For both he that [sanctifieth] and they who are [sanctified] are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. Heb. ii, 11.

IV. To sanctify, and make holy, separated from sin. In a moral sense to purify, to sanctify, to make clean, to cleanse.

And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are [sanctified]. Acts xx, 32.

To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are [sanctified] by faith that is in me. Acts xxvi, 15.

That he might [sanctify] and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. Eph. v, 26, 27.

And the very God of peace [sanctify] you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Thess. v, 28.

[hagiasmos]

From [hagiasmai,] perf. pass. of [hagiadzo.]

I. Sanctification, purity of heart and life -- holiness.

I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded Your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto [holiness ... But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto [holiness], and the end everlasting life. Rom. vi, 19, 22.

For this is the will of God, even your [sanctification], that ye should abstain from fornication: that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in [sanctification] and honor. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto [holiness]. 1 Thess. iv, 3, 4, 7.

Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and [holiness] with sobriety. 1 Tim. ii, 15.

Follow peace with all men, and [holiness], without which no man shall see the Lord. Heb. xii, 14.

II. The purifying work of the holy Spirit.

But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through [sanctification] of the Spirit and belief of the truth. 2 Thess. ii, 13.

[hagios] holy.

I. Pure, clean, i. e., ceremonially or morally clean, sacred, immaculate.

[a] Applied to God.

And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. [Holy] Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. John xvii, 11.

[b] Applied to the Spirit of God.

And grieve not the [Holy] Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Eph. iv, 30.

Wherefore as the [Holy] Ghost saith, Today if ye will hear his voice. Heb. iii, 7.

[c] Applied to Christ.

Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the [Holy One] of God. Mark i, 24.

Therefore also that [holy thing] which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. Luke i, 35, last clause.

[d] Applied to Angels.

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the [holy angels] with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. Matt. xxv, 31.

[e] Applied to Christians.

Wherefore [holy] brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. Heb. iii, 1.

II. Holy, sanctified, separated from sin. In this sense the word is extensively used to qualify Christians.

For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and a [holy], and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly. Mark vi, 20.

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be [holy] and without blame before him in love. Eph. i, 4.

In the body of his flesh through death, to present you [holy] and unblameable and unreprouable in his sight. Col. i, 22.

But as he which hath called you is [holy], so be ye [holy] in manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye [holy]; for I am [holy]. 1 Peter i, 15,16.

The various applications of the words holy and holiness, as here given, enable us to ascertain its real meaning when predicated of Christians. Being applied to angels and the holy Spirit, it must signify more than to set apart from common to sacred uses. It would be absurd to say that angels, or the holy Spirit, were consecrated or set apart from profane to hallowed services. Holiness in angels and the Divine Spirit is essential. The same is true of Christians. Sanctification proper enters into the essence of the moral nature. The only difference being that holiness in angels and God is inherent and natural, while in men it is inwrought and gracious. Of course we speak of quality, not of degree.

[hagion]

Neuter gender of [hagios,] used substantively. A holy place.

For Christ is not entered into the [holy places] made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the [holy place] every year with blood of others. Heb. ix, 24, 25.

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the [holiest] by the blood of Jesus. Heb. x, 19.

The application of this form of the word, it would seem, is to places more especially.

[hagiotēs]

From [hagios].

Purity, sanctity, holiness. Perfect sinlessness corresponding with the nature of God himself.

For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his [holiness]. Heb. xii, 10.

This noun, [hagiotēs] is chiefly employed to represent a property of moral natures. It is an attribute of God and a quality of sanctified men.

[hagiosunē]

From [hagios,] holy.

I. Sanctity, holiness, sanctification.

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting [holiness] in the fear of God. 2 Cor. vii, 1.

To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in [holiness]. 1 Thess. iii, 13.

This word [hagiosune] is synonymous with [hagiotes], the noun defined above and remarked upon, with this shade of difference: the latter is mainly restricted in its application to men, and emphatically signifies personal purification. It is a heart work. "Stablish your hearts unblameable in [holiness]." It cannot, therefore, be legal, ceremonial, or imputed holiness. It is a thoroughly sanctified state of the affections.

II. An essential attribute of Christ and of his work.

And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of [holiness], by the resurrection from the dead. Rom. i, 4.

It will be observed that while [hagiadzo] and its cognates include the idea of setting apart as their primary and weaker signification, yet it must be noted that the stronger and dominant sense of these words, as used in the New Testament, is that of spiritual cleansing and making personally holy. There is a current notion that sanctification means merely to set apart from a common to a sacred use. This we reject on the ground that it is not authorized by the Greek text. The limitation is in our theology and hearts, not in the original Scriptures. The words which the Holy Ghost adopted plainly teach the possibility and duty of being saved from all sin, both in spirit and life. From this high authority there can be no appeal.

[hagnidzo]

From [hagnos,] pure.

I. To purify externally and ceremonially or Levitically.

And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to [purify] themselves. John xi, 55.

II. [Hagnidzomi.] To be separated, or to make one's self sacred by a vow or rite.

Them take, and [purify thyself] with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads. Acts xxi, 24.

Then Paul took the men, and the next day [purifying himself] with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them. Acts xxi, 26.

Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me [purified] in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult. Acts xxiv, 18.

III. To purify internally and spiritually.

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and [purify] your hearts, ye double-minded. James iv, 8.

Seeing ye have [purified] your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently. I Peter i, 22.

And every man that hath this hope in him [purifieth himself], even as he is pure. 1 John iii, 3.

[hagnismos]

From pass. of [hagnidzo,] purification.

Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of [purification], until that an offering should be offered for every one of them. Acts xxi, 26.

[hagnos]

From [hagos,] purity.

I. Chaste, pure.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are [pure], whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Phil. iv, 5.

To be discreet, [chaste], keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. Titus ii, 5.

But the wisdom that is from above is first [pure], then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. James iii, 17.

II. Undefined, clear from sin, like Christ, who was without sin.

For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a [chaste] virgin to Christ. 2 Cor. xi, 2.

Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself [pure]. I Tim. v, 22.

And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is [pure]. I John iii, 3.

[hagnotes]

From [hagnos.]

Purity, pureness of life.

By [pureness,] 2 Cor. vi, 6.

[hagnos]

Adv. from [hagnos,] purely, sincerely.

The one preach Christ of contention, [not sincerely], supposing to add affliction to my bonds. Phil. i, 16.

While the words of this root clearly signify spiritual purity, yet they have a primary reference to the sanctification of the body, the chastities of social intercourse, the purities of appetite, passion, and feeling.

[katharidzo]

From [katheiros,] pure.

I. To make clean, to cleanse in general, both externally and internally.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites I for ye make [clean] the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, [cleanse] first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Matt. xxiii 25, 26.

And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees [make clean] the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness. Luke xi, 39.

II. To cleanse or make clean from leprosy, as symbolical of spiritual cleansing.

And, behold, there came a leper and worshiped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst [make] me [clean]. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; [be] thou [clean]. And immediately his leprosy was [cleansed]. Matt. viii, 2, 3.

Heal the sick, [cleanse] the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give. Matt. x, 8.

III. To cleanse in a legal and ceremonial sense.

And the voice spake unto him again the second time, what God hath [cleansed], that call not thou common. Acts x, 15.

But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath [cleansed], that call not thou common. Acts xi, 9.

IV. To cleanse and purify from the guilt and pollution of sin.

And put no difference between us and them, [purifying] their hearts by faith. Acts xv, 9.

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us [cleanse] ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. 2 Cor. vii, 1.

That he might sanctify and [cleanse] it with the washing of water by the word. Eph. v, 26.

Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and [purify] unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Titus ii, 14.

How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, [purge] your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? Heb. ix, 14.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son [cleanseth] us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to [cleanse] us from all unrighteousness. 1 John i, 9.

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. [Cleanse] your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. James iv, 8.

[katharismos]

I. A cleansing purification by water before meals, or by baptism. Also of women after childbirth.

And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the [purifying] of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. John ii, 6.

And when the days of her [purification] according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord. Luke ii, 22.

Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about [purifying]. John iii. 25.

But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was [purged] from his old sins. 2 Peter i, 9.

II. A purification, or being cleansed from leprosy.

And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy [cleansing] those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. Mark i, 44.

And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy [cleansing], according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. Luke v, 14.

III. A purification from sin by expiation.

New Version, "made purification of sins." Heb. i, 3.

[katharos]

I. Clean, pure physically.

And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a [clean] linen cloth. Matt. xxvii, 59.

Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is [clean] every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. John xiii, 10.

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with [pure] water. Heb. x, 22.

And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in [pure] and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. Rev. xv, 6.

And he showed me a [pure] river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. Rev. xxii, 1.

II. Clean, lawful to be eaten or used.

But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are [clean] unto you. Luke xi, 41.

For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are [pure]; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offense. Rom. xiv, 20.

Unto the [pure] all things are [pure]: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing [pure]; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. Titus i, 15.

In all the texts there is a plain reference to the Levitical code requiring cleanness.

III. Clean, pure, in a spiritual sense, from guilt and defilement of sin.

Blessed are the [pure] in heart: for they shall see God. Matt. v, 8.

Jesus saith to him, he that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are [clean], but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all [clean]. John xiii, 10, 11.

Now ye are [clean] through the word which I have spoken unto you. John xv, 3.

Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a [pure] heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. 1 Tim. i, 5

Holding the mystery of the faith in a [pure] conscience. 1 Tim. iii, 9.

[Pure] religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. James i, 27.

[katharotes]

From [katharos.]

Cleanness, pureness in the Levitical sense.

For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the [purifying] of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? Heb. ix, 13, 14.

The New Version brings out the meaning of the word more literally: "For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling them that have been defiled, sanctify unto the [cleanness] of the flesh," etc.

The prevailing thought that pervades all the shades of meaning attached in this case to the verb, adjective, and noun, is the notion of cleanness by washing, of which water is the typical cause, but representing the Holy Spirit, the effective agent.

The prime idea of this class of original words is not physical or material cleansing, but spiritual purification. Nor is the meaning restricted to the washing away of guilt alone, but also the removal of those depravities which have come upon us both by inheritance and involuntary transgression.

[pluno]

To wash properly by dipping in water.

To purify character, to cleanse from all sin.

And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have [washed] their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Rev. vii, 14.

This word [pluno] must signify salvation from all sin, as we have stated. The persons seen by John in his vision had prepared for heaven by this washing, and unless it had effectuated an entire cleansing the gates of pearl had not opened to receive them. Dr. Whedon's comment on the word is both valuable and faulty. It is as follows: "Washed their robes -- Purified their characters. This is a very vivid image of sanctification through the atonement. It illustrates how deep the doctrine of the atonement maintained in the Apocalypse. But we must look through the intense imagery at the literal fact, and not allow our imagination to be lost in the imagery. There is no literal robe, no literal washing the robe in blood. What is true is, that Christ died for our sins, and through the merit of His atonement the holy Spirit is bestowed upon us, giving us power to resist temptation, to repress our disordered affections, and bring all into obedience to the law of Christ. And that is sanctification."
*6

The first part of the note is a proper caution. But the doctrine of repression brought out in the second part, as definitive of sanctification, we must pronounce extremely erroneous. And to the positive assertion, "And that is sanctification," we have only to say, "And that is not sanctification."

Is power to resist temptation and repress disordered affections all that grace does for us? Then every unconverted man is sanctified, for he has natural power "to resist temptation and repress disordered affections." All codes of criminal laws are founded upon the assumption that every man has such power. And repressive obedience to the law of Christ, in the sense here mentioned, is possible to the natural man. Grace, then, does nothing more for us than resolution and good habits can do.

The Greek here, and similar original words elsewhere, teach that grace penetrates into the texture of our spiritual being, and destroys "disordered" affections by, as Dr. Chalmers says, "the expulsive power of a new affection."

[louo]

From [luo,] to remove defilement.

I. To wash the body.

And it came to pass in those days that she was sick, and died: whom when they had [washed] they laid her in an upper chamber. Acts ix, 37.

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies [washed] with pure water. Heb. 1, 22.

II. The soul washed from sin in the blood of Christ.

Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. Rev. i, 5.

The powerful image of washing the soul in blood, gives a vivid idea of the power of the atonement as working both our justification immediately [by faith-Author], and our sanctification mediately, by the Spirit purchased for us at the price of the blood." *7

[apothnesko]

From [apo] and [thnesko.]

I. To die a natural death, to perish.

And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and [perished] in the waters. Matt. viii, 32.

Peter said unto him, Though I should [die] with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Matt. xxvi, 35.

II. To die and undergo dissolution.

Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it [die]. 1 Cor. xv, 36.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and [die], it abideth alone: but if it [die], it bringeth forth much fruit. John xii, 24.

III. To be dead to the law. That is, to cease to depend upon it as the source and power of justification. We are dead to it in the sense of being transferred from law to grace.

For I through the law am [dead] to the law, that I might live unto God. Gal. ii, 19.

Wherefore If ye be [dead] with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances. Col. ii, 20.

IV. To be dead to sin, [apothanein te hamartia.] That is, according to Dean Alford, separate from sin and apathetic toward it, as a "corpse is dead and apathetic toward the stir and motions of life."

V. To renounce sin.

How shall we, that are [dead] to sin, live any longer therein? Rom. vi, 2.

For ye are [dead], and your life is hid with Christ in God. Col. iii, 3.

VI. To die on account of sin -- to make an atonement for sin.

For in that he [died], he [died] unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Rom. vi, 10.

VII. Eternal death or endless punishment. A tropical meaning.

And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never [die]. Believest thou this? John xi, 26.

This strong figure of death to sin as applied to a work in the heart can mean nothing less than the extinction of the life and power of sin in that heart. Sinful motions and sinful being have expired. Just as speech and breathing and action cease at death, so the unhallowed pulsations of sin die out of a soul in which the work of the Spirit is consummated. CRUCIFIXION

[stauroo]

From [stauros,] to stand as a cross.

I. To crucify, to fix or nail to a cross.

And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to [crucify] him: and the third day he shall rise again. Matt xx, 19.

Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and [crucify]; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city. Matt. xxiii, 34.

Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover and the Son of man is betrayed to be [crucified]. Matt. xxvi, 2.

II. To crucify in a spiritual sense. To crucify the flesh, or the "old man," according to Robinson, "is to slay, put to death, mortify, vanquish, destroy the power of the carnal nature."

Knowing this, that our old man is [crucified] with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. Rom. vi, 6.

I am [crucified] with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Gal. ii, 20.

But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is [crucified] unto me, and I unto the world. Gal. vi, 14.

And they that are Christ's have [crucified] the flesh with the affections and lusts. Gal. v, 24.

SPIRITUAL DEATH AND LIFE

[thanatoo]

From [thanatos,] to subdue, mortify, kill.

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are [become dead] to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. Rom. vii, 4.

For if ye live alter the flesh, ye shall [die]. but if ye through the Spirit do [mortify] the deeds of the body, ye shall live. Rom. viii, 13.

The word [thanatoute,] rendered "mortify" in this latter text, does not signify to check, moderate, and overcome, but contains the stronger idea, to kill, to destroy utterly.

FREEDOM

[eleutheroo]

From [eleutheros,] free. To free, to set at liberty.

I. From Jewish ordinances.

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us [free], and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Gal. v, 1.

II. To make free from the power, penalty, and corruption of sin.

[Being] then [made free] from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. Rom. vi, 18.

If the Son therefore shall make you [free], ye shall be free indeed. John viii, 36.

But now [being made free] from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. Rom. vi, 22.

The original words and phrases rendered "free from sin" in Romans, sixth chapter, must be understood to convey the idea of salvation from all sin, as here defined, because such definition alone accords with the antitheses which run through the whole chapter. In that chapter there are three marked antitheses. The first is between death to sin and life in God. The second is between servitude to sin and obedience to God. The third is between bondage to sin and the liberty of holiness.

Wherever truth is taught by antitheses all true interpretation requires that the perfect balance of the antitheses be maintained. One must be the exact counterpart of the other. If life in God is real and absolute, then death to sin is real and absolute. If service to sin was abject in the lowest degree, then

service to God takes us to the opposite pole of exalted holiness. If bondage to sin positively separates us from all righteousness, then freedom from sin lifts us to the high and sunlit summit of entire sanctification.

REDEMPTION

[lutroo]

From [lutron,] a ransom. To ransom, redeem, deliver, by paying a price.

I. To deliver from subjugation and bondage, whether national or personal.

But we trusted that it had been he which should have [redeemed] Israel. Luke xxiv, 21.

II. To free and save from sin by the blood of Christ.

Who gave himself for us, that he might [redeem] us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Titus ii, 14.

Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not [redeemed] with corruptible things as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers. 1 Peter i, 18.

[lutrosis]

From [lutroo.] Redemption having the sense of salvation and holiness.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and [redeemed] his people. Luke i, 68.

And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise into the Lord, and spake of Him to all them that looked for [redemption] in Jerusalem. Luke ii, 35.

Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood be entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal [redemption] for us. Heb. ix, 12.

[lutrosis,] in the passage cited Luke i, 68, is the noun, and should have been so translated. The Revised Version gives the true rendering, "For he hath visited and wrought REDEMPTION for his people." It is inclusive of all righteousness.

This class of texts has two principal senses, the first signifying general provision by a ransom price. This puts full salvation within the reach of every man. The second includes the idea of personal application. It means redeeming grace appropriated and made effective in the actual sanctification of the believer.

[luo]

I. To loose, to loosen, to untie, to unbind.

And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and [unloose]. Mark i, 7.

Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou [loosed] from a wife? seek not a wife. 1 Cor. vii, 27.

II. To pronounce, determine, not to be binding.

And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt [loose] on earth [shall be loosed] in heaven. Matt xvi, 19.

III. To break, to violate.

Whosoever therefore shall [break] one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. Matt. v. 19.

IV. To dissolve, destroy in the sense of killing the body.

Jesus answered and said unto them, [Destroy] this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. John ii, 19.

V. To destroy and exterminate sin.

He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. 1 John iii, 8.

For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath [broken down] the middle wall of partition between us. Eph. ii, 14.

It will be observed, the bottom thought of this word in all its applications is to undo.

As applied to the works of the devil it signifies thoroughly to counteract and abolish them; not to mitigate but to extirpate, to put an end to them in toto.

[teleioo]

From [teleios.]

I. To execute fully, to complete, to finish.

Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to [finish] his work. John iv 34.

For by one offering he hath [perfected] forever them that are sanctified. Heb. x, 14.

II. To be made perfect in official character.

For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation [perfect] through suffering. Heb. ii, 10.

And being made [perfect], he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. Heb. v, 9.

III. To advance to a completeness of its kind.

Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service [perfect], as pertaining to the conscience. Heb. ix, 9.

For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto [perfect]. Heb. x, 1.

IV. To be fully developed in spiritual character, i. e., perfected in love.

And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made [perfect] in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 2 Cor. xii, 9.

Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made [perfect]? James ii, 22.

But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God [perfected]: hereby know we that we are in him. 1 John ii, 5.

No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is [perfected] in us. 1 John iv, 12.

Herein is our love made [perfect], that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. I John iv, 17.

Let us therefore, as many as be [perfect], be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Phil. iii, 15.

[teleiotes]

From the adjective [teleios,] complete, perfect.

Perfection, completeness, perfectness.

Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto [perfection]; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God. Heb. vi, 1.

And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of [perfectness]. Col. iii, 14.

The perfection here taught is the completeness of the whole cluster of divine graces, the integrity of a ripe and rounded character, the perfection of love.

[hosios]

I. Holy, pure, pious, as conformed to God and his laws, thus distinguished from [dikaios,] righteous, which refers more to human laws and duties.

But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, [holy], temperate. Tit. i, 8.

I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up [holy] hands, without wrath and doubting. 1 Tim. ii, 8.

II. Supremely holy, pertaining to God as the personification of holiness.

Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine [Holy One] to see corruption. Acts ii, 21.

Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine [Holy One] to see corruption. Acts xiii, 35.

For such a high priest became us, who is [holy], harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. Heb. vii, 26.

Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art [holy]: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest. Rev. xv, 4.

[hieros]

Holy, sacred, consecrated to God.

Holy things given to us from God.

And that from a child thou hast known the [holy] Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 2 Tim. iii, 15.

Do ye not know that they which minister about [holy] things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? 1 Cor. ix, 13.

This word applies chiefly to things dedicated to sacred uses.

[amiantos]

Undeiled, unstained, freedom from impurity, inviolate.

To an inheritance incorruptible, and [undeiled] and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you. 1 Pet. i, 4.

For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, [undeiled], separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. Heb. vii 26.

Pure religion and [undeiled] before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. James i, 21.

Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed [undeiled]: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. Heb. xiii, 4.

Uncontaminated is the reigning idea in these passages. Not an in wrought work of purification, but a stainless essence, condition, and character.

[agapao]

To love. [agape,] love.

Neither the verb "to love" nor the noun "love" expresses directly any process or work of purification, but both as spiritual affections are expulsive of all sin when in a perfect state. Love is the all-inclusive grace. It signifies both salvation from all sin and the possession and practice of all righteousness. It is at the same moment subtraction, addition, and multiplication. It takes away sin, adds the fullness of God, and from that point goes on multiplying our gifts forever. There is no fear in love because there is no sin in love. Love completely fulfills the law because it does nothing which the law forbids, and leaves nothing undone which the law requires.

It must be remembered that it has not been the intention of the writer to produce and analyze all the Greek words used in the New Testament to represent spiritual purification, but simply to trace the headlines of the great subject as found in the original text, and then to array and define a sufficient number of terms to show clearly that the glorious theme of holiness finds its genesis in the Holy Scriptures, and is a part of the original revelation of truth which came direct from the lips of God. It is no fungus growth of after years, no dogma of the schools, no shibboleth of a sect, no

fanatical extravagance of the visionary and chimerical, but a sublime thus saith the Lord put into the very title-page of God's covenant with men.

It is no modern conceit or speculation, but an ancient doctrine. It dates back, if not to the period when God laid the foundations of the earth, and the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy, yet to the first written words from God. *8 The God of wisdom and love seems to have anticipated the fall, and accordingly decreed to provide for the reproduction of his defaced image in the hearts of men. Pursuant to such a purpose the sacred pages are studded thick as the stars in the canopy of heaven with words and phrases, figures and symbols, which tell of the magnificent possibilities of grace.

How great the wisdom, power, and grace,
Which in redemption shine!
The heavenly host with joy confess
The work is all divine."

ENDNOTES

1 Harman's Introduction, p. 426.

2 M'Clintock and Strong, " Aramaean Language," A.

3 Ecclesiastical History, book iii, chap. xxiv.

4 Biblical Relation of the Greek Language. Dr. Donaldson, Kitto, M'Clintock and Strong.

5 Harman's Introduction, p. 427.

6 Whedon's Commentary, Rev. vii, 14.

7 See Whedon's Commentary, Rev. i, 5.

8 Job xxxviii, 7.

POSSIBILITIES OF GRACE

By Asbury Lowrey

Chapter 2

Triumphant host! they never cease
To laud and magnify
The Triune God of holiness,
Whose glory fills the sky.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE FATHERS

An appeal to the original Scriptures, as we have seen, develops the important truth, that perfect holiness is therein defined and inculcated. We need not, therefore, speak of Christian holiness or Wesleyan holiness in order to make ourselves understood, and place before the Church the highest type of purity, but fail back upon the Divine standard, and enforce scriptural holiness.

The patriarchs and prophets, and more clearly Christ and the apostles, were teachers and exponents of perfect holiness.

Nor has God ever left himself without witnesses to this great grace in the worst days of the Church's apostasy. A golden chain of testimonies extends from the ministry of the apostles to the present time.

The light has been eclipsed, the gold dimmed, and the "most fine gold changed," but in the midst of the deepest degeneracy the precious truth has gleamed and sparkled like the diamond, in spite of the surrounding darkness.

In support of this proposition we will give a few citations from the Fathers; not all -- not the tenth part of what might be quoted, but enough to show the trend of thought in their days. Some of the testimonies and sentiments will appear obscure and defective, because Christianity became early tainted with Platonic philosophy, Judaism, Gnosticism, sacramental salvation, and various forms of religious superstition and spiritual fanaticism. Still the ring of silver and tint of gold are in them. If the pearl of great price has been buried, or covered with rust, it tells the field whence it was digged. As barbaric ruins may reveal genius, so even superstitious sanctity may show the estimate in which holiness was held. As a pile of disgusting rubbish has often contained a jewel, and mud a diamond, so a fallen Church has often preserved the seeds of truth.

Prof. Schliermann, the antiquarian, has found gold in graves. So may we.

POLYCARP

Polycarp, who, according to Eusebius, *1 was an associate of the Apostle John, says, speaking of faith, hope, and charity:

For if any one be inwardly possessed of these graces, he hath fulfilled the command of righteousness, since he that hath love is far from all sin. *2

The following extracts are taken from a work, entitled "Early Liturgies and Syriac Documents," believed to have been in use in the year 200 A.D.:

1. We pray and beseech Thee, merciful God, to grant in Thy goodness that we may spend this holy day and all the time of our lives without sin, in fullness of joy, health, safety, holiness, and reverence of Thee. *3

2. Bring us to Thy precious altar with a good conscience, and cleanse our hearts from all pollutions. Drive away from us all unholy thoughts, and sanctify our souls and minds. *4

3. O, sovereign Lord, who hath brought us up from the depths of darkness to light, who hast given us life from death, who hast graciously bestowed upon us freedom from slavery, who hast scattered the darkness of sin within us, through the presence of Thine only begotten Son. do Thou now, also, through the visitation of Thy all-Holy Spirit, enlighten the eyes of our understanding, that we may partake, without fear of condemnation, of this heavenly and immortal food, and sanctify us wholly in soul, body, and spirit, etc. *5

4. We beg aid from Thee for the strengthening of our souls that in perfect love and true faith we may administer Thy gift to us. *6

5. And make us worthy, O Lord our God, to stand before Thee continually without stain, with pure heart, with open countenance, and with the confidence which is from Thee, mercifully granted to us, etc.

6. Wherefore, emptying the soul of what is evil, we must fill with the good God that which is His chosen dwelling-place. *7

Now the Lord with His precious blood redeems us, freeing us from our old bitter masters; that is, our sins, on account of which the spiritual [powers] of wickedness ruled over us. *8

8. Repentance, then, becomes capable of wiping out every sin. *9

9. Pure speech and a spotless life are the throne and true temple of God. *10

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA

Clement of Alexandria, the famous head of the catechetical school of Alexandria, who lived near the close of the second century, gives the following testimonies. Contrasting water baptism with spiritual cleansing, he writes:

1. Most of all is it necessary to wash the soul in the cleansing word? ... "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" saith the Lord, for ye are like to whited sepulchers; without the sepulcher

appears beautiful, but within it is full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness." And again He says to the same people, "Woe unto you! for ye cleanse the outside of the cup and platter, but within are full of uncleanness. Cleanse first the inside of the cup, that the outside may be clean also." The best bath, then, is what rubs off the pollution of the soul and is spiritual. *11

2. But they who have been perfected in love through the grace of God, hold the place of the godly, who shall be manifested at the visitation of the kingdom of Christ. ... Love permits not to sin. *12

How the Perfect Man Treats the Body

3. Those, then, who run down created existence and vilify the holy are wrong; not considering that the frame of man was formed erect for the contemplation of heaven, and that the organization of the senses tends to knowledge; and that the members and parts are arranged for good, not for pleasure. Whence this abode becomes receptive of the soul which is most precious to God, and is dignified with the Holy Spirit through the sanctification of soul and body perfected with the perfection of the Saviour. *13

4. Wherefore, also, he who holds converse with God must have his soul immaculate and stainlessly pure, it being essential to have made himself perfectly good ... And his whole life is a holy festival. *14

5. Ought we not, then, to be perfect as the Father wills? For it is utterly impossible for any one to become perfect as God is. Now the Father wishes us to be perfect by living blamelessly, according to the obedience of the Gospel. *15

THEOPHILUS

Theophilus, who flourished about the middle of the second century, speaking of the prophets inspired by the Holy Ghost, holds this language:

But men of God, carrying in them a holy spirit and becoming prophets, being inspired and made wise by God, because God-taught and holy and righteous; wherefore they were deemed worthy of receiving this reward that they should become instruments of God. *17

THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS

In the volume entitled "The Apostolic Fathers," we have some clear confessions that sound quite modern. Barnabas says:

I will show thee how, in respect to us, He has accomplished a second fashioning in these last days. The Lord says: "Behold, I will make the last like the first." In reference to this, then, the prophet proclaimed, "Enter ye into the land flowing with milk and honey, and have dominion over it" Behold, therefore, we have been refashioned, as again He says, in another prophet, "Behold, saith the Lord, I will take away from these -- that is, from those whom the Spirit of the Lord foresaw --

their stony hearts, and I will put hearts of flesh within them." For, my brethren, the habitation of our heart is a holy temple to the Lord. *18

Barnabas again testifies:

Now being desirous to write many things to you, not as your teacher, but as becometh one who loves you, I have taken care not to fail to write to you from what I myself possess with a view to your purification ... That the "Black One" may find no means of entrance, let us flee from every vanity; let us utterly hate the works of the way of wickedness ... Let us be spiritually minded; let us be a perfect temple of God. As much as in us lies, let us meditate upon the fear of God. *19

CYPRIAN

Cyprian, born about 200 A.D., made Bishop of Carthage about 248 A.D., in discoursing on almsgiving teaches a second cleansing, though he, erroneously, ascribes it jointly to almsgiving and faith. His words are these:

The Holy Spirit speaks in the sacred Scriptures, and says: "By almsgiving and faith sins are purged." Not assuredly those sins which had been previously contracted, for those are purged by the blood and sanctification of Christ. "Moreover," He says again, "as water extinguisheth fire, so almsgiving quencheth sin." Here, also, it is shown and proved, that as in the laver of saving water the fire of Gehenna is extinguished, so by almsgiving and works of righteousness the flame of sins is subdued. *20 Let us, then, acknowledge, beloved brethren, the wholesome gift of divine mercy; and let us, who cannot be without some wound of conscience, heal our wounds by the spiritual remedies for the cleansing and purging of our sins. Nor let any one so flatter himself with the notion of a pure and immaculate heart, as, in dependence on his own innocence, to think that the medicine needs not to be applied to his wounds; since it is written, "Who shall boast that he hath a clean heart, or who shall boast that he is pure from sins?" And again, in his epistle, John lays it down, and says: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." But if no one can be without sin, and whoever should say that he is without fault, is either proud or foolish, how needful, how kind, is the divine mercy, which, knowing that there are still found some wounds in those that have been healed, even after their healing, has given wholesome remedies for the curing and healing of their wounds anew. *21

This quotation pours a flood of light, historically, upon 1 John i, 7-10. There were persons in those early times who claimed natural purity of heart, ascribing it not to the grace of God, but to native innocence. Accordingly they took the position that they did not need the cleansing blood, inasmuch as there was nothing in them to be purged away. This heresy John, like this author, bluntly strikes down, because it rendered the cleansing nugatory and reduced the atonement to an absurdity. Salvation from all sin implies the prior existence of sin, but not its continuance in a fully saved state. Such is the teaching of the Apostle John.

THE PASTOR OF HERMAS

There is some doubt concerning the authenticity of this book, but none respecting its date and influence in the early Church. It was read in the congregations, and considered by some to be inspired. It is an allegory, a book of similitudes -- the Pilgrim's Progress of those times. The gist of the work may be inferred from these words:

In like manner, also, shall it be with the Church of God, after it has been purified, and has rejected the wicked, and the hypocrites, and the blasphemers, and the waverers, and those who commit wickedness of different kinds. After these have been cast away, the Church of God shall be one body, of one mind, of one understanding, of one faith, of one love. And then the Son of God will be exceeding glad, and shall rejoice over them, because He has received His people pure. *22

The Pastor of Hermas places great stress also upon the sanctity of the body, saying:

Keep thy flesh pure and stainless, that the Spirit which inhabits it may bear witness to it, and your flesh may be justified ... If you defile your flesh you will also defile the Holy Spirit, and if you defile your flesh and spirit you will not live. *23

IGNATIUS

The last words of Ignatius just before he suffered martyrdom were: "I thank thee, O Lord, that thou hast vouchsafed to honor me with a perfect love toward thee." *24

GREGORY BISHOP OF NEO-CAESAREA

Gregory, who flourished A. D. 250, gives us a confession of faith in which he denominates the Holy Ghost, "Holy Fount," "Sanctity," "The supplier of sanctification." In another place he says, "That man belies the fountain of sanctification, the Holy Spirit, Who denudes Him of the power of sanctifying." *25

TERTULLIAN

Tertullian, a great authority among the fathers, under the head of unction, expresses himself in these words:

Thus, too, in our case, the unction runs down our flesh carnally, but profits spiritually, in the same way, as the act of baptism itself too is carnal, in that we are plunged in water -- the effect spiritual, in that we are freed from sins.

Again he says, speaking of the nature of baptism:

We are not washed in order that we may cease sinning, but because we have ceased, since in heart we have been bathed already. Otherwise, if it is only after the baptismal waters that we cease sinning,

it is of necessity, not of freewill, that we put on innocence. Who, then is preeminent in goodness? He who is not allowed, or he whom it displeases to be evil? *26

Though Tertullian fell into the common error of those times of connecting salvation with unction and baptism, yet he clearly teaches that there may be a state of freedom from sin, and upon that assumption directly enjoins an unsinning life, not by constraint, but as a pleasure.

IRENÆUS

Irenæus, one of the most distinguished of the early Church fathers, opponent of the Gnostics, and Bishop of Lyons, who was born about A. D. 130, and became a companion of the holy Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, discourses on full salvation in the following strain, as he comments on the writings of Paul:

And again he says, in the Epistle to the Romans, "For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die. Now by these words he does not prohibit them from living their lives in the flesh, for he was himself in the flesh when he wrote to them; but he cuts away the lusts of the flesh, those which bring death upon a man." And then again he proceeds to tell us the spiritual actions which vivify a man, that is, the engrafting of the Spirit, thus saying: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, goodness, benignity, faith, meekness, continence, chastity; against these there is no law. As, therefore, he who has gone forward to the better things and has brought forth the fruits of the Spirit is saved altogether because of the communion of the Spirit ... But ye have been washed, but ye have been sanctified, but ye have been justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God ... Ye have been washed believing in the name of the Lord and receiving his Spirit. Now we have washed a way, not the substance of our body, nor the image of our primary formation, but the former vain conversation." *27

Irenæus teaches that the lusts of the flesh are cut away, like the excrescent branches or roots of a tree. Not suppressed, but eradicated.

ORIGEN

The illustrious Origen, a teacher in the catechetical school at Alexandria, and afterward a presbyter, a man of great learning and deep piety, deserves to be quoted as a patristic authority on holiness. He has been regarded as the greatest among the fathers, and, although unsound on some points, he exerted a wide influence in the primitive Church. He was born about A. D. 185. In mature life he was the great antagonist of Celsus, the first blatant infidel. His writings on Christian purity, therefore, come to us by indirection as parts of his polemics. Celsus had accused the Christians of inviting the basest sinners into the kingdom of God. Origen responds thus:

Now, in answer to such statements, we say it is not the same thing to invite those who are sick in soul to be cured, and those who are in health to the knowledge and study of divine things. We, however, keeping both these things in view, at first invite all men to be healed, and exhort those who are sinners to come to the consideration of the doctrines which teach men not to sin ... And when these who have been turned toward virtue have made progress, and have shown that they have been

purified by the word, and have led, as far as they can, a better life, then, and not before, do we invite them to participation in our mysteries. For we speak wisdom among them that are perfect ...

And as we teach, moreover, that wisdom will not enter into the soul of a base man, nor dwell in a body that is involved in sin, we say: whosoever has clean hands, and, therefore, lifts up holy hands to God, and by reason of being occupied with elevated and heavenly things can say, "The lifting up of my hands is as the evening sacrifice," let him come to us ...

And since the grace of God is with all those who love with a pure affection the teacher of the doctrines of immortality, whoever is pure, not only from all defilement, but from what are called lesser transgressions, let him be boldly initiated in the mysteries of Jesus, which properly are made known only to the holy and the pure, the initiated of Celsus accordingly says, "Let him whose soul is conscious of no evil come. " *28

Again, the infidel Celsus denied the possibility of a thorough transformation of a bad man. Origen rejects the proposition, but makes an admission in these words: "For apart from the aid of the word, and that, too, the word of perfection, it is impossible for a man to become free from sin." *29 The clear implication is, that a man may, with Divine aid, become free from sin. And such characters, it is evident from the whole scope of the extract, formed a sacred guild in those times. They lived the higher life.

Again, Celsus objects to the Christian doctrine that man was originally created, and may, under the economy of grace, be recreated in the image of God. Celsus understood the word image to apply to the body, and, therefore, as he rightly supposed, God was absurdly reduced to the composition, shape, and visibility of a man. Origen responds:

Celsus, not observing the difference between, "after the image of God," and "God's image" ... And further, not observing to which of the characteristics of humanity the expression, "after the image of God," belongs, and that it consists in a nature which never had to, or no longer has, "the old man with his deeds" ... Every man whose tread is Christ is the image and glory of God.

It remains, therefore, that that which is "after the image of God" must be understood to be in our "inner man," which is also renewed, and whose nature it is to be "after the image of Him who created it," when a man becomes "perfect" as our "Father in heaven is perfect," and hears the command, "Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God am holy," and learning the precept, "Be ye followers of God," receives into his virtuous soul the traits of God's image. The body, moreover, of him who possesses such a soul is a temple of God; and in the soul God dwells, because it has been made after His image.
*30

CLEMENT OF ROME

The book called "The Recognitions of Clement" is a sort of philosophical romance, but being based on the doctrines of Christianity, and thoroughly permeated with its spirit and teachings, it has served as a valuable indicator of the prevailing sentiments of those times.

The following extracts will reveal the spiritual tone of the writer and of the age. Speaking of baptism, he says:

For whether you be righteous or unrighteous, baptism is necessary for you in every respect; for the righteous, that perfection may be accomplished in him, and that he may be born again to God; for the unrighteous, that pardon may be vouchsafed him of all the sins which he has committed in ignorance. *31

Again he says, discoursing of heaven: "The city is the kingdom in which dwells the almighty Father, whom only those can see who are of pure heart." *32 In his remarks on inward and outward cleansing we find these words:

Our Master rebuked some of the Pharisees and scribes who seemed to be better than others, and separated from the people, calling them hypocrites, because they purified only those things which were seen of men, but left defiled and sordid their hearts, which alone God sees. To some, therefore, of them, not to all, he said: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye cleanse the outside of the cup and platter, but the inside is full of pollution. O blind Pharisees, first make clean what is within, and what is without shall be clean also. For truly if the mind be purified by the light of knowledge, when once it is clean and clear, then it necessarily takes care of that which is without a man -- that is, his flesh -- that it also may be purified. But when that which is without, the cleansing of the flesh, is neglected, it is certain that there is no care taken of the purity of the mind and the cleanness of the heart. Thus, therefore, it comes to pass that he who is clean inwardly is, without doubt, cleansed outwardly also, but not always that he who is clean outwardly is also cleansed inwardly." *33

In describing sin and its antidote, he expresses himself in the following strain:

Every cause of sin seems to be like tow smeared over with pitch, which immediately breaks into flame as soon as it receives the heat of fire; and the kindling of this fire is understood to be the work of demons. If; therefore, any one be found smeared with sins and lusts as with pitch, the fire easily get the mastery of him. But if the tow be not steeped in the pitch of sin, but in the water of purification and regeneration, the fire of the demons shall not be able to be kindled in it. But some one will say, "And what shall we do now, when it has already happened to be smeared with sins as with pitch?" I answer, Nothing; but hasten to be washed, that the fuel of the fire may be cleansed out of you by the invocation of the holy Name. *34

Finally, referring to the success of Peter, *35 the subjoined fact is given:

So great grace of His power did the Holy Spirit show on that day that all, from the least to the greatest, with one voice confessed the Lord; and, not to delay you with many words, within seven days more than ten thousand men believing in God were baptized and consecrated by sanctification."

Thus we find the fathers inculcated holiness without qualification, and generally without any expressed limitation, as implying the necessity, of remaining sin. It was the work of purity, or full

salvation, which they deemed both possible and obligatory in this life. While no distinct theory of holiness was defined, the work of grace was so expanded as to embrace salvation from all sin.

And though they early degenerated into the advocacy of a sacramental religion, and absurdly attributed to baptism, unction, and the Lord's Supper, and sometimes to repentance and almsgiving, the effect which it is the exclusive office of the Holy Spirit and of faith to produce, still they expected the same experimental changes and sanctifying results as come from the direct operations of the Holy Ghost and faith in Christ's blood.

CHRYSOSTOM

We add a few later testimonies. The following extract is from the "golden-mouthed" Chrysostom, as he was called. he lived and preached in Constantinople in A. D. 398. he points out the two stages of grace in a unique way when expounding the words: "Of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace."

There was a glory, there is a glory. "For if that which was done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." There was a law, and there is a law. "For the law of the Spirit of life hath made me free." There was a service, and there is a service. "To whom pertaineth the service;" and again, "Serving God in the Spirit." There was a covenant, and there is a covenant. "I will make with you a new covenant, not according to the covenant which I made with your fathers." There was a sanctification, and there is a sanctification; there was a baptism, and there is a baptism; there was a sacrifice, and there is a sacrifice; there was a temple, and there is a temple; there was a circumcision, and there is a circumcision and so, too, there was a grace, and there is a grace. But the words, in the first place, are used as types; in the second, as realities, preserving a sameness of sound, though not of sense. So in patterns and figures, the shape of a man scratched with white lines on a black ground is called a man as well as that which has received the correct coloring; and in the case of statues; the figure, whether formed of gold or plaster, is alike called a statue, though in the one case as a model, in the other as a reality.

For they, even after they had received the title of sons, retained the spirit of slavery, (for while they remained slaves they were honored with this appellation,) but we, being made free, received the honor, not in name, but in deed. And this Paul has declared and said: "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father." For, having been born again, and, one may say, as thoroughly remade, we are called "sons." And if one consider the character of holiness, what the first was and what the second, he will find there was also great difference. They, when they did not worship idols, nor commit fornication, or adultery, were called by this name; but we become holy, not by refraining from these vices merely, but by acquiring things greater. And this gift we obtain first by means of the coming upon us of the Holy Ghost; and next by a rule of life far more comprehensive than that of the Jews. To prove that these words are not mere boasting, hear what he saith to them: "Ye shall not use divinations, nor make purification of your children, for ye are a holy people." So that holiness with them consisted in being free from the customs of idolatry; but it is not so with us. "That ye may be holy," saith Paul, "in body and in Spirit;" "Follow peace, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord;" and "perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

For not only was pardon of sins given to us, but righteousness also, and sanctification, and sonship, and the gift of the Spirit far more glorious and more abundant. By this grace we have become the beloved of God, no longer as servants, but as sons and friends, wherefore He saith, "Grace for grace." *36

AUGUSTINE, BISHOP OF HIPPO, IN AFRICA

This celebrated divine wrote about A. D. 395. He is high authority, especially among the Calvinistic Churches, whose distinctive doctrine of decrees date back to him. He was the most evangelical man of his day. Those tendencies within the pale of the Catholic Church, from which a new Christian life emanated, connect themselves with him. Even the more complete reaction at the Reformation, and the various revivals which the evangelical Churches experienced, may be traced to the same source.

Augustine clearly teaches the possibility of an unsinning life. And if we exclude the error into which he seems to have fallen -- that there is inherent sin or evil concupiscence in the natural desires out of which the parental relations arise -- he taught salvation from all sin in this life.

These are his words found in his sermon on the text: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."

For whatsoever sins there be in words, in deeds, in thoughts, arise not but from evil desire, arise not but from unlawful delight. If, then, we resist this unlawful delight, if we consent not to it, if we yield not our members as instruments, sin doth not reign in our mortal body. For sin first loseth its reign, and so perisheth. In this life, then, as far as the saints are concerned, it loseth its reign, and in the other it perisheth.

Therefore when the apostle had said, "With the mind I serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin;" by not yielding his members to the commission of iniquity, but only by lusting, and yet not surrendering to unlawful lust; therefore when he had said, "With the mind I serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin," he went on and said, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are In Christ Jesus." To them which are in the flesh there is condemnation, to them which are in Christ Jesus there is no condemnation. That you might not suppose that this was to be hereafter, he therefore added "now." *37

Again he says, in discoursing upon the office of the law in contrast with the work of grace:

Therefore was that law given, that infirmity might be discovered; not that it might be discovered only, but even increased, and that thus at least the physician might be sought. For if the disease were slight, it would be disregarded. The physician would not be sought; if the physician were not sought the disease would not be brought to an end. "Therefore, where sin abounded, grace hath much more abounded;" grace which hath effaced all the sins which it found and hath ministered aid to our struggling will, that it sin not. *38

"The law," saith the apostle, "is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." Before, sold under sin, but afterward, freed by grace.

Sing unto the Lord a new song, in opposition to the old song. "Put ye off," saith he, "the old man with his deeds, and put ye on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and holiness of truth." *39

CYRIL, ARCHBISHOP OF JERUSALEM

This distinguished father, who died A. D. 386, advances sentiments in his discussion of the Pentecost which clearly imply his belief in the extraordinary character, and sin-destroying effect, of that great baptism:

"But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be invested with power from on high." Receive it in part now; then ye shall bear it in its fullness. For he who receives often possesses the gift but in part; but he who is invested, is completely enfolded by His robe.

But He came down to invest the apostles with power, and to baptize them; for the Lord says, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." His grace is not in part, but His power is in full perfection; for as he who plunges into the waters and is baptized is encompassed on all sides by the waters, so were they also baptized completely by the Holy Ghost. The water, however, envelops but outwardly, but the Spirit baptizes the soul within, and that perfectly. If the fire penetrating the mass of iron makes the whole of it fire, so that what was cold becomes burning, and what was black is made bright; if fire, which is a body, thus penetrates and works without hindrance in iron, which is also a body, why wonder that the Holy Ghost enters into the very inmost recesses of the soul?

"And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."

They partook of fire, not of burning, but of saving, fire; a fire which consumes the thorns of sins, and gives luster to the soul. This is now coming upon you also, and that, to strip away and devour your sins which are like thorns, and to brighten that precious possession of your souls, and to give you grace. For though His grace had been extended on the fathers also, yet it came at this time exuberantly; for before they but partook of the Holy Ghost, but now they were baptized wholly.

But Peter, who had the Holy Ghost, and who knew what he possessed, says: "Men of Israel, ye who preach Joel, but know not the things that are written, these men are not drunken, as ye suppose." Drunken they are, not however as ye suppose, but according to that which is written: "They shall be drunken with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures." They are drunken, yet sober; their drunkenness is a death to sin and a quickening of heart. *40

MACARIUS OF EGYPT

Macarius, who lived in the fourth century, was a deeply spiritual Christian. He wrote a series of homilies, confining himself chiefly to experimental themes. The following is a specimen of his teaching:

In like manner Christians, though outwardly they are tempted, yet inwardly they are filled with the Divine nature, and so nothing injured. These degrees, if any man attain unto, he is come to the perfect love of Christ and to the fullness of the Godhead ... Indeed, if any one comes to perfect love he is forever after bound and captivated by grace.

By reason of the superabundant love and sweetness of hidden mysteries, the person arrives to such degrees of perfection as to become pure and free from sin. And one that is rich in grace at all times, by night and by day, continues in a perfect state, free and pure. *41

Thus an unbroken line of witnesses to full salvation can be traced from Christ and the apostles to the Reformation. And it was to these advocates of holiness, notwithstanding their numerous mistakes and extravagances, that the Church is indebted for the preservation and perpetuity of pure evangelical religion. Mosheim, who is unsparing in his condemnation of all chimerical Christians, makes this just confession:

If any sparks of real piety subsisted under this despotic empire of superstition they were only to be found among the Mystics; for this sect, renouncing the subtlety of the schools, the vain contentions of the learned, and all the acts and ceremonies of external worship, exhorted their followers to aim at nothing but internal sanctity of heart and communion with God, the center and source of holiness and perfection. *42

LUTHER

A few citations from Protestant witnesses will show the continuity of the teaching on the theme of holiness from the Reformation to the time of John Wesley. Luther's works abound with magnificent utterances on the subject. Indeed, the great reformer was scarcely less positive in his advocacy of personal holiness than bold in his re-assertion of salvation by faith. In defining the Church he says:

The holy are called a Christian people, and have the Holy Ghost, who daily sanctifies them, not only by the forgiveness of sin, but also by the laying aside, expelling and destroying of sin, and hence they are called a holy people.

ARMINIUS

The Arminians wrote much on Christian Perfection. Arminius defines holiness by saying:

"Sanctification is a gracious act of God by which He purifies man, who is a sinner, and yet a believer, from ignorance, from indwelling sin, with its lusts and desires," and imbues him with the

spirit of knowledge, righteousness, and holiness ... It consists in the mortification or death of the old man, and the quickening of the new man. *43

EPISCOPIUS

Episcopus says:

The commandment may be kept with what he regards as a perfect fulfillment in the supreme love which the Gospel requires according to the covenant of grace, and in the utmost exertion of human strength, assisted by Divine help. This consummation includes two things: 1. A perfection proportionate to the powers of each individual; 2. A pursuit of always higher perfection. *44

LIMBORCH

Limborch speaks of perfection thus:

"It is perfection in being correspondent to the provisions and terms of the Divine covenant. It is not sinless or an absolutely perfect obedience, but such as consists in a sincere love of piety, absolutely excluding every habit of sin."

These writers paved the way for Methodism, and Methodism contains the clearest statement of the doctrine of holiness ever given to the world.

ENDNOTES

1 Eusebius, p. 120

2 Epistle of Polycarp, chap. iii. The Apostolic Fathers, p. 71. Antenicene Library. Edinburgh. 1773

3 Divine Liturgy of the Apostle Mark. Antenicene Library. Early Liturgies, p. 47

4 Divine Liturgy of the Apostle Mark, p. 55.

5 Ibid., p. 66.

6 Liturgy of the Holy Apostles. Early Liturgies, p. 78

7 Ibid., p. 59

8 The Prophetic Scriptures. Early Liturgies, p. 120.

9 Ibid., p. 122

- 10 On Confession. Antonius Melissa Early Liturgies, p. 164
- 11 Book ii., sermon 87. By same. Early Liturgies, p. 165
- 12 Clement of Alexandria, vol i, p. 309
- 13 Ibid., vol. ii, p. 191
- 14 Ibid., p. 215
- 15 Ibid., p. 441
- 16 Ibid., p. 472
- 17 Theophilus, p. 14
- 18 The Apostolic Fathers. The Epistle of Barnabas, p. 111
- 19 Ibid pp. 106,101
- 20 Cyprian, On Works and Alms, vol. II, p. 2
- 21 Ibid., pp. 2, 3
- 22 The Apostolic Fathers, p. 422
- 23 Ibid. The Pastor of Hermas, p. 35
- 24 Ibid. Ignatius, p. 293
- 25 Gregory. Syriac Documents, pp. 5, 54.
- 26 Clark's Antenicene Library. Tertullian, pp. 239-268
- 27 Irenaeus against Heresies, pp. 80, 82
- 28 Against Celsus. Origen, vol. ii, chaps. lix, lx. pp. 139, 140
- 29 Ibid., chap. lxix, p. 149
- 30 Against Celsus. Origen, vol. ii, pp. 405, 406
- 31 Clark's Antenicene Library. Clement of Rome, p. 833
- 32 Ibid., p. 207

33 Ibid., p. 334

34 Clark's Antenicene Library. Clement of Rome, p. 407

35 Ibid., p. 476

36 Homilies of St. John Chrysostom, pp. 113-115

37 Sermons by St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, pp. 747,748

38 Ibid, p. 750

39 Sermons by St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, p. 818

40 Catechetical Lectures of St. Cyril, Archbishop of Jerusalem, Pla 226-229.

41 Macarius. Homilies, 5, 14

42 Mosheim, p. 390

43 Pope's Theology, vol. iii, p. 86

44 Ibid., p. 84

45 Ibid.

POSSIBILITIES OF GRACE

By Asbury Lowrey

Chapter 3

A sudden blaze of song
Spreads o'er the expanse of heaven;
In waves of light it thrills along
The angelic signal given.
Glory to God! from yonder central fire
Flows out the echoing beyond the starry choir.

Like circles widening round
Upon a clear blue river,
Orb after orb the wondrous sound
Is echoed on forever:
Glory to God on high! on earth be peace,
And love toward men of love, salvation and release!

THE TREND OF REDEMPTION

We proceed now to show that the whole trend of redemption aims at personal holiness. All redemptive institutions face in that direction, and all their rays of light and streams of blessing converge to that point. The complex type system of bleeding beasts, smoking altars, and bloody baptisms, together with the multiform emblems which, to the Jews, served as object lessons, had that truth as their reigning idea. From the beginning all Divine dispensations successively unfold like the rose, and brighten like the rising sun toward this zenith.

The Jewish ceremonial, the ancient covenants, the prophetic visions, the code of precepts, and the golden chain of promises of both Testaments, center in holiness. Their ultimate intention was the sublime achievement of salvation from all sin.

We do not deny that Redemption had a wide scope and diverse purposes. It began feebly, marched slowly, and occupied ages to ripen its fruit. Even now it lends its stimulus to education, art, and government; but in all its ramifications, redeeming mercies never deviate from their primal design, to "destroy the works of the devil." Like the needle to the pole, redeeming grace points ever to the "blood that cleanses from all sin."

The Church, the Bible, the priesthood, the prophetic order, and the entire Mosaic ritual, were but means to an end. The same may be affirmed of the Christian dispensation. The gift of Jesus, the Gospel revelations, the bestowment of the Holy Ghost, and the Christian ministry and the sacraments, are but instrumental forces designed to effect an ulterior object, and that object is the reproduction of the Divine image in men. In this glorious altitude the plan culminates. There is not a drop of virtue in redeeming grace which does not, by the pre-appointment of God, finally expend its force on the heart, life, and character of men for the elimination of sin. This will appear more and

more evident as we proceed to trace the thread of this sublime doctrine through the pages of sacred Scripture.

PERSONAL HOLINESS -- THE ORIGINAL PURPOSE OF GOD

All the possible exigencies of human nature lay within the scope of the divine knowledge before the human race was created. Consequently God saw that man would reach an emergency, in which he would need, not only forgiveness, but also cleansing. With our prospective sinfulness, therefore, before him as a distinct conception, far back in eternity, God, being moved by his nature of infinite love, devised the ways, and provided in idea, the means of purity.

In harmony with this view, it is written: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." *1

Here is the ideal of human redemption, as it existed in the thought of God from the beginning. Personal sanctification of men was the objective point, while the efficacious agencies, which He proposed to employ, were the Spirit and the blood of Jesus Christ. The practical outgrowth and end of this preordained sanctification, by these virtuous causes, was to be obedience. Thus internal purity and external rectitude, as a result, were distinctly foreseen, and provided for by the intended blood, which now cleanses from all sin through the Holy Ghost, who quietly and efficiently fills His preappointed office of sanctifier. These were integral parts of our Father's original plan and purpose. Both the means and the end were the choice of his love. His love originated, His wisdom contrived, His power executed a miracle and mystery of grace, which was designed from eternity to evolve holiness. To recreate fallen man in righteousness and true holiness was the first-born conception in the heart of Divinity far back in the dateless past. Pursuant to this primal idea, the scheme has been unfolding through the ages. In each successive stage, it has resolved itself into a deeper spirituality and higher life.

It was too subtle and divine to be at once comprehended by the gross capacities of the degenerate. Hence four thousand years were occupied in educating the faith of the world up to the point of receiving a personal Redeemer, who should found a purely spiritual kingdom -- a kingdom that cometh not by observation, but is located within -- a kingdom, not consisting in meat and drink, but in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost -- a kingdom whose fundamental principle should be perfect love to God and men. All the institutions of biblical antiquity were adapted to teach this lesson.

The significance of the whole Levitical code was the need and possibility of human purification, and the sacrificial preparations for it. This was the chief meaning of the multiplied animal sacrifices and sacred offerings among the ancient Jews. This, too, was the import of their ceremonial ablutions, their multifarious sprinkling of blood, as also their priestly uses of holy places, vessels, and garments. All these sacred rites declared God's ancient purpose to open "a fountain" "to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." *2 As Paul says: "Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without the shedding of blood is no remission." *3

Upon this fact, and the virtue of the symbolized blood of Jesus, the apostle founds his conclusive argument, "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

The same may be said of the spiritual purport of the theophanies or sensible manifestations of God to men; such as the burning bush; *5 the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night; *6 the Tabernacle and Temple lights, and the cloven tongues of fire on the day of Pentecost. *7 All these confirm the primitive purpose of God to crystallize his religion into a simple and profound spirituality, whose receptacle, seat, and subject should be the heart.

By these brilliant displays, the Holy One, sitting in the "high and holy place," foreshadowed his design to establish spiritual intercommunication with the human soul, after the cleansing process had passed upon it.

This primordial thought of God, to reproduce perfect holiness in men, is distinctly stated in two other passages: "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." *8 Observe, it is not the arbitrary choice of a person to heaven, but the choice of men to a state of salvation, through a certain process, and that process is the "sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." Again it is written: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in Him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." *9 In this case we are not chosen, so much to any state or place, as to an order of life. And that order is the grade of highest excellence among the redeemed. It is thus characterized: "That we should be holy and without blame" before him in love." *10 To this exalted life we were all comprehensively chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.

It was the initial thought of God concerning the fallen, which ripened into great redeeming measures to re-impress his lost image upon despoiled human nature -- to revive, through Christ, the traces of righteousness and true holiness -- to retouch the faded lines of beauty -- to resuscitate wasted and dead affections -- to re-endow the heart with feeling and power, that it might pulsate with love to God and men -- to re-open the avenues of communication between the soul and its divine source, that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost might be its everlasting benediction.

"Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered." *11

THE DISPENSATIONS FORESHADOW MATURITY AND PERFECTION

Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth. Hosea vi, 3.

The gracious dispensations of God to men, like the unfoldings of redemption, are progressive and ever brightening. Beginning with the twilight of vague, obscure revelation, it steadily advances like the morning light until it broadens into the splendors and perfections of Gospel day. Each successive revelation grows less typical, and more didactic and intellectual -- less national, and more personal -- less ceremonial and outward, and more interior and directly saving -- less prophetic and remote, and more promissory and immediate -- less earthly, material, and sensuous, and more divine, spiritual, and life-giving.

This gradual development of the divine preparations, looking directly to the simplicities of the Gospel, and the holiness which it provides for and requires, finds its correspondences in nature everywhere. It is like the dawn of day coming out of the womb of midnight, and proceeding to high noon; it is like the germ in seeds that begins to swell, and then sends forth plants and trees that cover the earth with verdure and beauty; it is like the recondite process of human existence which begins with the mysterious quickening of the embryonic germ, then develops into the conscious state, then into manhood and maturity, stopping not until it dominates the world and fills the earth with the brilliancy of its genius. So with the specific dispensations. They begin with the bud of incipient preparations, founded upon the prior plans and purposes of mercy and grace in the Eternal Mind, but go on unfolding leaf and flower, until the earth is made gay with the blush of their full bloom. Generically considered, there are but two dispensations -- a dispensation of law, and a dispensation of grace. But under these general heads there are several subdivisions, called covenants, promises, revelations, visions, and prophecies. These have been periodically bestowed to amplify and spiritualize religion.

The beginning of the first legal dispensation was the requirement delivered to our first parents that they should not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. *12 This was adapted to responsible beings in a state of rectitude. In that case nothing but obedience was necessary to secure the continuance of the divine favor, and obedience then came easily within the possibilities of natural ability. It therefore involved no promise of grace.

The next and most prominent dispensation of law was the Ten Commandments, or Decalogue. This was given after the disability consequent upon the fall had smitten the race, but in itself contained no provision for help, nor promise of its bestowment. Yet the compliance required must have necessitated a certain pre-appropriation of the merits of the promised Saviour. In this way the law began early to be a schoolmaster to lead us to Christ, in whom help and healing would be abundant. The spirit and principles of the Decalogue were afterward expanded into the Levitical code and diffused through the preceptive parts of the prophecies, and finally transferred, with increasing stringency and exactitude, to the Gospel. The Gospel, therefore, is no less a code of laws than a covenant of mercy. It requires holiness no less than it provides for it, and the provision being most ample the requirement is absolute. That teaching is most faulty which represents the attainment of holiness as optional, or as a state simply to be aimed at -- a mere privilege which it is well to embrace. It is more. It is a duty, it is heaven's absolute requirement.

It has all the binding force and penal sanction of law. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." *13 And this legal aspect of the divine dispensation has steadily pointed to personal purity. Down through the ages the exactions have multiplied and become

more explicit, rigorous, and comprehensive. It is now the indispensable condition of full acceptance, the necessary endowment to give to service the highest efficiency, and the quality and image without which no man can ever enjoy the beatific vision of God. All who enter heaven must first wash their robes and make "them white in the blood of the Lamb." *14 This gracious dispensation of God received its first enunciation in the obscure promise, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." *15 Here the conflict between holiness and sin was first waged. It was a declaration of war on the part of God and in the name of Jesus. It was also a prediction and assurance that the Seed of the woman should triumph. Thus, six thousand years of the antagonism of sin and holiness was begun. From that day to this the artillery of truth and righteousness has gleamed and pealed along the whole line of the ages against sin. Nor is this a war of mere subjugation -- it is a war of extermination. And there can be no perfect peace until this enemy is swept from the soul by the Divine besom of destruction. As the Lord commanded the barbarous tribes of Canaan to be entirely destroyed, that there might be peace and uncorrupted worship in the land among His chosen people, so God originally decreed, not the abatement, but the destruction of the works of Satan. This purpose he indicated by aiming the blow at the serpent's head, or at the seat of sinful life.

Again, the dispensation of grace was announced more distinctly and full to Abraham: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." *16 This covenant of mercy was enlarged, defined, and diversified in the repeated promises of a Saviour in the Jewish ceremonial, and in the more spiritual and definite promises of the prophets.

Finally, it opened up like a rose bursting into full bloom in the glory of the Gospel dispensation. And as the successive installments of truth were made known, the spiritual element became more and more prominent and pervasive, and the design of focalizing all the fires and forces of religion on the heart, and making it the chief subject of purification and culture, became manifest. But when the great orb of Christianity rose, a transformation took place, which caused nearly all the material and outward in worship to be eliminated. Types and symbols, ceremonials and circumcision, animal sacrifices and bloody baptisms, feasts and offerings, priests and prophets, tinsel and show, all disappear. It was a sublimation that excluded all the grossness and crudity of former dispensations. The whole of religion was resolved into pure truth, simple faith, perfect love, and spiritual worship. Accordingly Christ predicted,

"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." *17

HOLINESS THE NATURE OF GOD AND PROTOTYPE OF HUMAN EXCELLENCE

The Bible abounds with ascriptions of holiness to God. in contradistinction to the bloody and voluptuous deities of Paganism, and all false religions, the Divinity of the Bible is constantly represented as immaculate.

"Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders." *18 "For the Lord our God is holy." *19

His name, also, which symbolizes His aggregate attributes, is pronounced holy: "Let them praise Thy great and terrible name; for it is holy." *20 "Holy and reverend is His name." *21

In his relation and offices to His chosen people it is declared to be holy. On this is founded his peculiar grandeur and supremacy. Unlike the multitudinous gods which reek with historic impurity, he is the Holy One -- the concentration of righteousness. "Unto Thee will I sing with the harp, O thou Holy One of Israel." *22 "The Holy One of Israel is our King." *23 "Great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." *24

The place where he more especially resides, and has fixed the seat of his government, is holy. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place." *25

Angels recognize and celebrate this property in the Divine nature. "And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts." *26 So awful was the vision of this holiness, that these angels veiled their faces, and covered their feet in the presence of it.

Zion, God's earthly home, is represented as a holy mountain. "I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain." *27 Purity in God is so absolute that it creates in Him an uncompromising repugnance to all evil and sin: "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." *28

Such is the essential character of God. His nature and relations are all holy. The chief seats which he has chosen as the centers of His most glorious manifestations are holy. All His judgments and tastes and laws and administrations are holy. His material surroundings, His angelic retinue, His systems of truth, and all His required and accepted service and worship are holy. The acts of His intelligent and responsible creatures, which he graciously acknowledges as praiseworthy and rewardable, are holy acts.

Now what is this quality of holiness in God? Holiness in angels and men is conformity to law. It is to measure up to some moral standard -- to attain to a certain degree of excellence. But God is a law unto Himself. There is no faultless standard of rectitude or rule of goodness exterior to Himself. Therefore His purity cannot be relative and conditional, but elemental and positive. Nor can His be an acquired rectitude, for all such excellence implies prior defectiveness, and subsequent meritorious conduct. Hence we must think of the high and lofty One as possessed of unoriginated holiness. It is a part of His inmost spiritual being. It is what the scientists would call the protos or protoplasm of the Divine existence. That is the first -- the vital -- the essential substance of the Godhead. Immaculate sanctity is so involved in the Christian idea of God, that if the attribute of purity could be separated from His character, the conception of supreme Deity would be banished from the mind.

It is difficult to define this quality, as it appertains to God. Not because it is a figment or an ideal ascription; but because it is so far removed in its eternity and absoluteness from the penetration of the human understanding. It is also difficult of explication and statement, because it is a property so intrinsically excellent, and so vast and manifold in its manifestations, that it baffles the most vigorous comprehension. The attempt to compass it tires thought and wearies the wings of

imagination. And yet there are sweet views of this attribute which come within the range of our perceptions.

Holiness in God is that basal principle of His character, or benevolent force of causation which underlies His divine excellence, and has projected into being, and beauty all His manifold creations. It is that aboriginal and inherent tendency of His nature which prompts Him to devise and do whatever will contribute to the real and greatest good of His rational and irrational creatures. Especially, to devise and do whatever will enhance the happiness and nobility of His intelligent and responsible offspring. It is that inherent principle of right and goodness which governs with infinite exactitude in all His retributive visitations both of mercy and justice. It is that just and upright constitution of His being which makes Him abhor sin and antagonize all wrong.

In its manifestations, holiness in God is that refined sensibility which causes Him to admire purity in men and angels, and take chief delight in its diffusion. It is that love of order which prompts Him to retard and prevent all moral evil and discord, so far as it may be done, without taking away the freedom of any man and repealing his responsibility. It is that delicate susceptibility which makes the contemplation of the existence and possibilities of holiness a real satisfaction to God Himself. It is this which inclined Him to institute holy places, rites, and services -- to make sacrificial offerings and fountains of cleansing to make human hearts seats of purity, and human bodies temples of the Holy Ghost. It is this, too, which has brought from the lips of Divinity frequent laudations of holiness as the acme and diadem of moral perfection, and the ideal of beauty.

Now, in the beginning God was so appreciative of holiness that He resolved to make man after this glorious prototype. "Let us make man," said He, "in Our image, after Our likeness." *29 We learn what this image was by these words: "Christ, who is the image of God." *30 By these also: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." *31 The grand ideas, then, of the creation and holiness of men were synchronical in the Divine Mind. It was a primal thought of God to fashion man after the model of His own image. Nor could he have made him a man and done otherwise. A man means a free, intelligent, and responsible being. Such a being must be holy or unholy. If unholy primitively, God made him so; and as every effect must have a cause, this would prove God to be sinful. For the cause of every creature's moral state, at his origin, must be located in the Creator. God, therefore, of necessity, impressed His own immaculate likeness upon the human workmanship of His wisdom and power. Man was thus a constellation of moral beauties -- a full-orbed perfection -- a cluster of flowers, wet with the dew of his youth, and full of unspent fragrance. He was a divinity limited only by inferiority. O what a wreck and loss and devastation was his fall!

But is there no hope? Bless God, there is! True, his treasures are wasted, his beauty is effaced, and all the bloom of primeval anticipations have faded away. But "who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength?" Hear the response: "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." *32

By the process of redemption it is proposed to restore the primary, but now lost, rectitude of human nature. The original prototype -- the image of God -- is to be used as the standard. Of this we

are fully assured by the words of Paul: "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." *33 The new man, then, is the moral character of God -- the spirituality of His nature -- the similitude of His grandest perfections. With this, all the believers are to be rehabilitated. It is to be done by a re-impression of the primeval type upon our sin-despoiled nature. Every marred feature shall be repaired -- every faded lineament revived -- every lost jewel returned -- and the whole picture of divine loveliness reproduced.

Reader, heed the exhortation: "O, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." *34 And be it said to the whole Church, "Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem!" *35

HOLINESS IN GOD AN INCENTIVE TO PURITY

The mind is so constituted that its moral state is modified by the perception of correspondence or contrast. If the object contemplated is noble, and the discovery is made that we bear a resemblance to it, a feeling of self-respect and complacency is inspired. Immediately a spontaneous reluctance springs up against losing that semblance to the superior. It is the verdict of conscious nobility that honor must never be impeached, virtue never tainted, fidelity never suspected. It instinctively protests against being degraded from the exalted class to which it belongs. A noble nature recoils from any act that would render it unworthy of the holy fellowships into which it may have entered, and revolts at the betrayal of any trust which may have been reposed in it.

On the other hand, if the consideration of the immaculate character reveals that we are shaded and sunk by a deep unlikeness to it, a sense of loathing personal to ourselves takes possession of us. The glaring contrast strikes into the depths of the soul a keen sensibility of self-abhorrence. Thus those emblems of purity, the bright stars, the crystal streamlets, the unstained lily, the innocence of childhood, and all immaculate things will, by sheer contrast, sting the soul of an awakened man with almost insupportable self-reproach. These virgin similitudes are seen to be uncorrupted and spotless -- himself degenerate and foul. This remorse is based in a recognition of freedom and responsibility. An abuse of the Godlike attribute of liberty is discovered to be the first link in the chain of causation which has subverted character, and shot defilement into the core of his being.

Now God has placed before the mind His own holiness as an incentive to purity. He says: "Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy." *36 He makes His own perfection the standard of our relative completeness and rectitude. Hence it is written: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." *37

A vivid conception of the Divine purity is sure to awaken a penitential realization of personal uncleanness. As shadows are deep, in proportion to the brilliancy of the sun, so the depravity of the human heart is more closely outlined, and lifted into view, by comparison with the holiness of God.

To this end God has, in some instances, revealed His awful sanctity to human vision. A crisis was upon the Jewish Church. God needed a qualified messenger to do His bidding -- a messenger qualified by pre-eminent sanctification. Accordingly He lifted the veil, and exposed His own spotless nature and majestic surroundings to Isaiah. The prophet tells his experience in these words: "In the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train

filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the post of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." *38 Note the process. The exhibition of God's holiness flashes light and darts conviction into the prophet's mind. The sacred majesties of Divinity struck him to the earth. The angelic specialty -- the single theme, the thrice-repeated ascription of holiness to the Lord of hosts, made his own corruptions start into view. The contrast was excruciating. It drove him to the brink of despair, and extorted wailing and confession from his lips. Then, and not till then, the six-winged angel dropped down with coal in hand, and placed it upon the suppliant's mouth. Mark, it was a live coal, just from the altar fires of God -- a live coal, full of sin-consuming power, and too hot for angel fingers. Of course, the symbolic coal, which represents the holy Ghost in contact with the heart, did its appointed office. His iniquity was taken away, and his sin purged. Observe, it is thus a ministry, sent of God, is made. Every one thus qualified and accredited is sure to hear the inquiring voice and call of the Lord, as did the prophet, saying: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" *39

Then, too, every man whose iniquity has been taken away, and whose sin has been purged, is sure to respond with Isaiah, "Here am I; send me." *40 Whether it be as minister, missionary, crusader, class-leader, or Sabbath-school teacher; or whether it be to minister to the poor, the sick, the dying, or the remains of the dead, is not material. Being fully cleansed, he is fully consecrated. He has a will subdued, and moving in harmony with the will of God.

Notice again, how the holiness of God operated as an incentive to purity in the experience of David. Turning away from the voluptuousness and carnality of the wicked, he says: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." *41 The felt need of his soul was the image of God. This, indeed, is a universal consciousness. Where the likeness of God is not reimpresed upon the soul, there is no satisfaction. There may be diversion and amusement, but no satisfaction -- no sweet repose. There may be the transport of false hopes, and the temporary stimulus of illusive dreams and visions, but no sweet content, until we can say with David, "Thou art my portion, O Lord." *42 "Thou art my refuge and portion in the land of the living." *43 No position or influence, no hilarity or fame, no festivity or ease, can be substituted for the likeness of God as satisfying attainment. There are infinite voices inviting the soul to rest, but only one that can be trusted. It is the voice that quieted the winds and waves of troubled Galilee. The same voice now says: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." *44

HOLINESS PROMISED UNDER THE OLD COVENANTS

The haste of redeeming mercy was wonderful. From the beginning it was every whit as true as now, that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." No sooner had the shadows of death settled down upon the race, than God entered into covenant engagement to dispel them. No sooner

had sin projected its infection into the soul than God made promise to counteract it, and restore to man the lost image of righteousness and true holiness. To this effect was the very first promise that fell from the lips of Divine commission after the introduction of sin.

The Lord said to the serpent, the agent of man's fall, and through it to the responsible spirit of evil which wrought out our ruin, "Because thou has done this thou art cursed," and "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; and it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." *45

This passage contains the dawn of redemption. It is the prophetic "dayspring from on high" that "hath visited us," and especially the "sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arise in your hearts." *46

These promises are repeated, diversified, and made more explicit, as the ages roll on, and the "fullness of time" approaches. Nor can we understand them to teach and warrant a salvation less than perfect holiness in this life, unless we take the rationalistic position, that they consist in hyperbole and Oriental exaggeration, or adopt the ritualistic idea, that they refer to ceremonial washings and temporal blessings. Either proposition would throw discredit upon the Bible, and take away the spiritual significance of the whole redemptive scheme.

The precious truth is, these promises, as they multiply in accordance with the bright unfoldings of God's gracious purposes, crystallize gradually into expressions of a more simple and unmixed spirituality. Figure and symbol indeed were used, but not to cast a veil of obscurity over the subject after the fashion of heathen oracles, myths, and sybils of ancient times, or the disguises and cheats of Mystics and Spiritualists of later date.

These emblematic signs and personifications, it must be presumed, were chosen by Divine wisdom and goodness, to give increasing boldness to idea, and greater force to inculcation. Hence the repugnance of God to original sin, and his stern purpose to destroy it, is expressed by putting enmity between the woman and the serpent, and between her seed and the seed of the serpent. The work of salvation is set forth as a visitation of violence -- a bruising of the serpent's vital member; the point of attack is the head, because it represents, as we may suppose, the concentration of sinful life on which Christ deals a blow of extinction, that he may utterly destroy the works of the devil. The ravages and havoc of sin and Satan, on the other hand, are indicated by a work of violence; but as these are the malignant deeds of a subjugated and doomed foe, his point of permissive assault is the heel, the extremity. Here we have an assurance both early and precious that "there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." *47

As the luminary of redemption peers up a little above the horizon of this first promise, we find the Lord making solemn covenant with his servant Abraham, and sealing that covenant with the strange rite of circumcision. This rite, also, was typical of holiness. It was an outward and fleshly sign of an internal and spiritual work. Paul plainly states its spiritual significance: "For he is not a

Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." *48 This being the meaning of the original sign and seal of the covenant, it had the effect to spiritualize all its grants and blessings. All converge and find fullness in heart purity.

Still the plan of salvation develops as the ages revolve, and the dispensations change and brighten. In each the spiritual element becomes more prominent and distinctive. The process is like the swelling bud, between whose parting leaves the vermilion, the purple, and the virgin white begin to blush, and more and more appear. Gospel privileges are the bloom of patriarchal buds. But midway between these is the half-unfolded flower of prophetic assurance. A time came when the promised land was less material, Levitical laws and ceremonies less used, types lost their primary meaning and earthly grossness, language was less vague and symbolic, while promises become more simple, explicit, and full. Now the worshipers say: "For thou desirest not sacrifice else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." *49

In this way the transition was gradually made from animal to spiritual sacrifices, from the visible in worship to the invisible, and from outward and material washings to the lustration and thorough cleansing of the heart. The people of God being now prepared for it, by patient education, and the steady influx of light, the Lord brings out the meaning which was latent in every primary promise, and says, directly: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." *50 "Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." *51 "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." *52

These texts, which might be greatly extended, reveal the primitive design of God to exterminate sin. They commit Him to the most essential and thorough transformation and cleansing. Every idol is torn away, every spot and stain of filthiness expunged. It is the Spirit in opposition to the Letter that becomes the governing law, and that law is transferred from the statute-book of God to be imprinted upon the heart, while the degree of purity pledged is symbolized by a whiteness exceeding the whiteness of wool or snow. The Divine Spirit also is put within as an exciting stimulus and energizing force, which shall cause the subject to walk in God's statutes, and to keep His judgments and do them.

"Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." *53

"Faithful, O Lord, thy mercies are,
A rock that cannot move;
A thousand promises declare

ENDNOTES

1 (1 Peter i, 2)

2 Zech. xiii, 1

3 Heb. ix, 22

4 Heb. ix, 13, 14

5 Exod. iii, 2

6 Exod. xl, 34

7 Acts ii, 4

8 2 Thess. ii, 13

9 Eph. i, 3, 4

10 Eph 1, 4.

11 Psa. xl, 5

12 Gen. ii, 17

13 Heb. xii, 14

14 Rev. vii, 14

15 Gen. iii, 15

16 Gen. xxii. 18

17 John iv, 23

18 Exod. xv, 11

19 Psa. xcix, 9

20 Psa. xcix, 3

21 Psa. cxi, 9

22 Psa. lxxi, 22

23 Psa. lxxxix, 18

24 Isa. xii, 6

25 Isa. lvii, 15

26 Isa. vi, 3

27 Joel iii, 17

28 Hab. i, 13

29 Gen. i, 26

30 (2 Cor. iv, 4)

31 (2 Cor. iii, 18)

32 Isa. lxiii, 1

33 Eph. iv, 24

34 Psa. xcvi, 9

35 Isa. lii, 1

36 Lev. xix, 2

37 Matt. v, 48

38 Isa. vi, 1--7

39 Isa. vi, 8

40 Isa. vi, 8

41 Psa. xvii, 15

42 Psa. cxix, 5

43 Psa. xxlii, 15

44 Matt. xi, 28

45 Gen. iii, 15

46 (2 Pet. i, 19)

47 (1 Cor. x, 13)

48 Rom. ii, 28

49 Psa. li, 16, 17

50 Ezek. xxxvi, 25

51 Isa. i, 18

52 Jer. xxxi, 33

53 (1 Thess. v, 24)

POSSIBILITIES OF GRACE

By Asbury Lowrey

Chapter 4

Israel, in ancient days,
Not only had a view
Of Sinai in a blaze,
But learned the Gospel too:
The types and figures were a glass
In which they saw a Saviour's face.

The paschal sacrifice,
And blood-besprinkled door, *1
Seen with enlightened eyes,
And once applied with power,
Would teach the need of other blood
To reconcile an angry God.

The Lamb, the Dove, set forth
His perfect innocence, *2
Whose blood of matchless worth
Should be the soul's defense;
For he who can for sin atone
Must have no failings of his own,

The scapegoat on his head *3
The people's trespass bore
And to the desert led,
Was to be seen no more:
In him our Surety seemed to say,
"Behold! I bear your sins away.

Dipt in his fellow's blood,
The living bird went free; *4
The type, well understood,
Expressed the sinner's plea:
Described a guilty soul enlarged,
And by a Saviour's death discharged.

Jesus, I love to trace,
Throughout the sacred page,
The footsteps of Thy grace,
The same in every age!
O grant that I may faithful be
To clearer light vouchsafed to me!

-- COWPER --

EMBLEMS OF SANCTIFICATION

THE BLOOD SYMBOL

The Bible is full of imagery devoted to the illustration and enforcement of spiritual religion. All nature is laid under contribution to give effect to the lessons of purity contained in the Holy Scriptures. Art and human customs also are made to lend their analogies for the same purpose. The Lord is not only greatly in earnest to make His people understand their obligations, but full of painstaking to reveal their privileges. It is most interesting to notice how all the parts of the Jewish service and institutions point, like finger-boards, in the direction of personal cleansing. It is still more instructive and thrilling to observe how the strong figures and beautiful similitudes of the Word of God directly inculcate holiness. The most efficacious elements in nature are drawn upon to teach the extent of salvation and the altitudes of Divine life. Blood, fire, water, incense, and holy oil are made to express the possibilities and obligations of purity.

If we look into the Levitical code we shall find the blood symbol crimsoned every page. The great business of lawgiver and priest, it would seem, was to sprinkle blood. The altar, the tabernacle, the people, and the priest himself were sanctified with blood. As Paul says, "Almost all things are by the law purged with blood." *5 This typical blood-shedding and blood-sprinkling, which formed so large a part of the Jewish ceremonial, had three chief significations. First, it was symbolic of the necessity of a general atonement for the sins of the people. Nay, more, it was accepted as an actual expiation for sins in its prospective relation to Christ. having no intrinsic efficacy, it was, nevertheless, full of anticipative and promissory purification. It was a relative salvation.

Second, it was the blood of the covenant. It was the seal and ratification of God's gracious engagements with his people. It was also a vivid representation of the loss of purity by man, and the necessity and costliness of its restoration. It told the dismal story of human apostasy, and foreshadowed the painful price of redemption. It is said to a sinful world, "Your Saviour is a lamb that He might bleed, and He must bleed that He may be a propitiation. And, having bled, that awful fact becomes a pledge and a guarantee that God will cleanse those who trust in Jesus from all unrighteousness."

The ancient promise of God was a blood-sealed promise. As it is written: "Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you." *6

The third signification of this symbol respects its cleansing property. All things sprinkled were made typically clean by the blood. It was a ceremonial sanctification. This external application having so great a virtue, by imputation, upon material objects, is made to argue stoutly the purgative quality and power of the blood of Christ when applied to the inner man. Thus: "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" *7

Here is an argument from the less to the greater, from the material to the spiritual, and from the human to the Divine. In place of animal blood and ashes, we have the blood of Christ. In place of altars of wood and stone on which to rest the offering, we have the altar of the Eternal Spirit. Instead of unclean animals, we have the spotless Christ. Instead of only fleshly purification, we have a clean conscience. Wherefore as a continual result, in lieu of presenting to God a gross material service, we become a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. It is this purifying potency of our Lord's sacrificial work that makes the word "blood" so prominent in the New Testament in connection with spiritual sanctification. It is this which has authorized the metonymy by which the blood of Christ is so continually represented as cleansing -- cleansing from all sin -- cleansing from all unrighteousness. It is not merely a basis of reconciliation -- a ground for the cancellation of guilt and the remission of sins. Nor is it merely the procuring cause or price of purity -- the consideration accepted of God as a sufficient reason or motive to work purity and generate life in a dead soul.

The blood of Christ is sacramental and causative. To trust in it is to be cleansed by it. It is an element whose contact with the touch of faith heals a leprous soul. It is the fountain filled, not with animal blood, or with human blood, but with the blood of the Lamb. This Lamb, being offered to God through the Eternal Spirit, has poured forth a crimson stream, which is impregnated with infinite merit and power of purification. In this, robes of character may be, and must be, washed until they are made white. This is the sole qualification for heaven. It is the only essential and indispensable meetness required that we may dwell among the saints in light. It alone gives a valid claim to "an inheritance among all them who are sanctified." All antecedent grace and concomitant relations are comprehended in perfect holiness. It is like the trunk of a tree. If you have that in its integrity, and in a live condition, you have all its roots and branches. The forces of religion are massed by entire sanctification. It secures the maximum of spiritual power. It graduates life and efficiency up to the standard of the highest possibility. And this is most effectually done by the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, who is the great antitype of the paschal lamb, and all the bleeding birds and beasts of the Jewish ritual.

Bless God! we "are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire," but we are come "to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." *8 "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith." There is no presumption in coming even with boldness to this throne of saving grace.

THE WATER SYMBOL

The language of the Bible is that of merciful adaptation. Human conceptions and human needs are both graciously considered and accommodated by an appropriate choice of vehicles of thought which come within the limited comprehension of common minds. As popular instruction was the prime object of Divine Revelation, therefore analogies, which lie on the surface of things, have been freely employed to elucidate truth and duty. It was this principle, no doubt, that led to the early adoption and abundant use of the water symbol. The cleansing properties of this element, together with its large utility and indispensableness in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, were manifest to all, and thereby its value was forced involuntarily upon the notice of the most illiterate and the least observant.

The need of spiritual purity being revealed, that need at once was seen to be analogous to the importance and universal practice of physical washings. The cleansing effects of this liquid upon matter were immediately suggestive of the purifying power of Divine grace upon the soul, while its refreshing and vitalizing qualities become a lively representation of the communicated life of God through Christ. Accordingly ablutions were introduced at an early date into the Jewish ceremonial, and made typical of moral purification. This was connected with the atonement, as the procuring cause, while its chief realization was referred to Gospel times. It was the dew of redeeming grace, the effusion of the Holy Spirit, the baptism of fire, the sprinkling of sacrificial blood, that the water figure of the Hebrews prefigured and pledged. Hence it is written: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you."
*9

Having provided for spiritual purity, the Lord then required man to appropriate the efficacy of that provision, and to make it personal to himself, thus: "Wash you, make you clean." *10 "O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved." *11 "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded." *12 Here the Divine Spirit, and the lustrations of his sanctifying power, are represented under the emblem of water and washings. The heart and hands both are the subjects of purification, and the purgative process must be continued until they are "made clean," "that they may be saved."

Even the faith of David, stimulated by a conception of Divine power, measured up to the gracious and sublime possibilities involved. He, therefore, prayed: "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." *13 It was not a purity mixed and discolored with sin that met his faith and satisfied his aspirations. It was holiness whiter than the spotless snow. To effect this transparent sanctity is the mission of Jesus. The prophet says, "He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap." *14 The grace of God disintegrates and dissolves the compound of sinful nature, and then discharges from the constitutional faculties of the mind and soul all moral infection and alien ingredients. It acts upon our being like "fullers' soap."

Our Lord continues the water symbol under the New Covenant. On one occasion Jesus rose from supper, laid aside His garments, and took a towel and girded Himself. "After that He poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded. Then cometh He to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto Him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." *15 Here the emblematic character of washing flashed across Peter's mind. It was seen to be a ceremony indicating the deep need of spiritual cleansing, a work indispensable to co-partnership with Jesus. Suddenly the alternative stared the impetuous disciple in the face: Be washed of Jesus, or be separated from Him forever. Then Simon Peter, reversing quickly the engine of his natural vehemence, said imploringly, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." *16 By this incident an immutable principle is brought out and re-asserted, namely: union with Christ is conditioned on purity. This purity, it is seriously implied, we have lost.

We have also lost the power to reproduce holiness in ourselves. Therefore, if Jesus wash us not, our fate is sealed, we have no part with Him. Spiritual cleanness we must have, and to effect it help must come from an extraneous and almighty source, or we are weighed in the balance and found wanting. But we need not despair. Christ is our consolation and hope. He "is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." He can give us "the washing of regeneration" and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. He is the pool of Bethesda to our impotent bodies and leprous souls. Even as those who were seen in heaven, arrayed in white robes, so we, also, may wash our robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. Then "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." *17 At this moment lift up imploring hands to Jesus and say:

"Wash me, and make me thus thine own;
Wash me, and mine thou art;
Wash me, but not my feet alone,
My hands, my head, my heart."

THE OIL SYMBOL

The use of oil for religious purposes was very ancient. We find Jacob at the beginning of the dispensations making a dedicatory application of it. When his venerable father had blessed and dismissed him, he went from Beersheba in the direction of Haran, where he reached a certain place in the wilderness in which nightfall overtook him. He tarried there all night, because the sun was set. He was solitary and alone. God was there, but he knew it not. He found no bed, no home -- hill, rock, and sky were his surroundings. As the darkness thickened, the lone and weary traveler "took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillow, and lay down in that place to sleep." There his great ecstasy occurred in the form of a dream, in which the rich covenant of God was unfolded to him. When he awoke he was quite overcome by the dreadfulness of the place. The Divine presence and prophetic revelation, had converted the barren wilderness and oppressive night into the house of God and the gate of heaven. Jacob was full of gratitude. Accordingly he "rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillow, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it." *18 Thus he converted his rest into a monument, which forever thereafter served a double purpose.

First. It commemorated the covenant of God to him respecting his posterity, and the universal blessing through them of the promised Messiah. Second. It ratified the vow which he immediately made, saying: "Then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

It was at this early date, and on this most interesting occasion, that consecrating oil was properly introduced. At a later date Moses was directed to make a precious compound to be called "a holy anointing oil." *19 With this he was commanded to anoint the tabernacle, the altar of burnt offerings, the vessels, the laver, and the ark of the testimony. This was an act of ceremonial sanctification, and by it the objects, receiving an application of the sacred unguent, were esteemed preeminently pure. Hence we read, in the same connection, "Thou shalt sanctify them, that they may be most holy: whatsoever toucheth them shall be holy." Aaron and his sons also were anointed. This was done, not

merely to set them apart to a special and holy work, but also to signify the personal sanctity, required for their high calling. Nor was this character of the priestly office to be concealed. Aaron was ordered to wear a gold plate on which was engraved "Holiness to the Lord." Upon these words Dr. Adam Clarke comments thus: "This we may consider as the grand badge of the sacerdotal office: 1. The priest was to minister in holy things. 2. He was the representative of a holy God. 3. He was to offer sacrifices, to make an atonement for, and to put away, sin. 4. He was to teach the people the way of righteousness and true holiness. 5. As mediator he was to obtain for them those divine influences by which they should be made holy and be prepared to dwell with the holy spirits in the kingdom of glory. 6. In the sacerdotal office he was the type of that holy and just One who in the fullness of time was to come and put away sin, by the sacrifice of Himself." *20

The use of anointing oil finally became general in connection with all important acts of dedication. Things were made sacred, priests and prophets were installed, and kings were inaugurated by it. It seems to have been understood as emblematic of the bestowment of superior qualification. When the ceremony occurred in connection with purely religious services, it seems to have been clearly typical of divine endowments, especially of the gifts and power of the Holy Ghost! According as our Lord possessed the Spirit without measure absolutely, and by it was consecrated to the triple office of Prophet, Priest, and King, He is called the Messiah, and the Christ, i. e., the Holy One -- the Anointed. Being qualified for his mission by the fullness of the Spirit, he is represented by the prophet as saying: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." *21

But under the Gospel dispensation the gift of the Spirit is no longer restricted to office and rank. It has become a common blessing. The purpose of His communications has been so broadened as to take in the personal enlightenment and sanctification of every believer. Hence it is written, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." *22 Also we read: "Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." *23 Again, "The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him." *24 These passages show clearly that the ceremony has been spiritualized and transferred to the whole Church. The Urim and Thummim, that is, all spiritual lights and perfections, belong to the Priesthood of believers. [They thus belong] Not so as to supersede the word and preaching or other divinity appointed guides. Nor is the Spirit given so as to create infallibility or freedom from mistakes in judgment and deviations in life. The Spirit is, now, large light, hallowing influence, mighty power, and abiding comfort. Dwelling within us, He becomes a new teacher, a new faculty of discernment, a rich fellowship, a witness, a sanctifier, a producer of holy fruits, and an abiding Comforter. He puts sweetness into our spirits, wisdom and discretion into our ways, pathos and sympathy into our accents, power into our words, melody into our songs, and often a soft beaming light into our faces.

THE FIRE SYMBOL

One of the most common and forcible emblems of the Bible is that of fire. It is the chosen symbol of the subtle and formless essence of God himself, especially where the aspect of His holiness is to be made prominent. The spectacle of the burning bush was an instance. Moses was far away in the desert, near the mountain of God. In that sacred place, "a stranger in a strange land," he was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian. It was there an angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a burning bush. But, as illustrative of the unwasting substance and tireless energies of Deity, "he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed." *25 The curiosity of Moses was now on tiptoe, and he said, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt." He thought to gratify an idle prurient, [itch, or desire] but the Lord interfered and taught him a lesson of holiness. For the bush became lips of fire and the voice of God. When the Lord saw the tendency in Moses, which has ever been characteristic of men, to misuse and pervert Divine institutions, He arrested him by name, just as he was, "turning aside to see." Right out of the burning bush came audible articulations, saying, "Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I." This may have been a disappointment to Moses; it may have done some violence to his cherished sight-seeing proclivities; but it brought out a Divine explanation of the strange phenomenon, and proved a blessing. Indeed, so prompt a response as that of Moses in this case never loses its reward. Verily the certain sequence of implicit obedience to the Divine behest is merciful interpositions, personal, social, and national. It was so in this instance. The Lord said to Moses, "Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." In this way the Lord prepared Moses to receive His commission to be the great leader and lawgiver of Israel.

But the effect of fire upon combustible and fusible matter is made to represent the refining influence of the Holy Ghost upon the heart. It is written, "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces." *26 Here the forces and the consuming properties of fire are used to indicate the power of Spirit charged truth upon our moral nature.

But the most striking and beautiful similitudes are drawn from the disintegrating effects of fire upon the alloys. As fire purifies the precious metals from all crude and valueless substances, therefore it is likened unto Christ and the Holy Ghost, who, through the mighty processes of regeneration and cleansing, expurgate all moral impurities and dross from our spiritual being.

It was prophetically said, and graphically written, "He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." *27 It is here alleged and promised that such will be the office and work of Christ under the Gospel dispensation. This dispensation, according to the multifarious types and didactics of all preceding economies, was to be preeminently spiritual and holy. Therefore, when Christ came He revised the law, made it more stringent, and lifted up a higher standard. Truly He sits today upon His throne of exaltation as a refiner -- not only to reign over and purify the Church, collectively, in some general sense, but to dwell in and to purify each trustful soul.

The reference is to the process of refining gold and silver in chemical metallurgy by the use of the crucible under the powerful agency of fire. The whole Gospel covenant, with all its efficacious

provisions, is the crucible; the Holy Spirit, the promised Comforter, is the fire; Jesus Himself is the watchful and deeply interested purifier. And, like a wistful and practiced refiner, He notes the sanctifying work until the heart becomes so pure that, like a mirror, it reflects His own image -- an image which is nothing less than the "brightness of" the Father's "glory, and the express image of His person."

In accordance with the Old Testament outgivings, John the Baptist continued the fire symbol, and by it re-affirmed the office of Christ by saying, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." *28 The ministry of John the Baptist was a brief, intermediate dispensation, which served as a vinculum or connecting link between the Old and New Covenants. By it the transition was made. The material, the ceremonial, and prophetic brightened into the spiritual and experimental. The external and gross was superseded by the internal and more glorious. The transition was made on the day of Pentecost, when the last visible representation of fire occurred. It sat a moment upon them in the form of divergent flames of lambent beauty, and then precipitated itself into the heart, and the subjects thereof at once ceased to be crowned with fire, and "were all filled with the Holy Ghost."
*29

ENDNOTES

1 Exod. xii. 13

2 Lev. xii. 6

3 Lev. lvi, 21

4 Lev. xiv, 51-53

5 Heb. ix, 22

6 Heb. ix, 18-20

7 Heb. ix, 13,14

8 Heb. xii, 18, 24

9 Ezek. xxxvi, 25

10 Isa. 1, 16

11 Jer. iv, 14

12 James iv, 8

13 Psa. li, 2, 7

14 Mal. iii, 2.

15 John xiii, 5-8

16 John xiii, 9

17 Heb. ix, 22

18 Gen. xxviii, 18

19 Exod. xxx, 25

20 Clark's Commentary in loco

21 Isa. lxi, 1-3

22 (1 John ii, 20)

23 (2 Cor. i, 21

24 (1 John ii, 27)

25 Exod. iii, 2

26 Jer. xxiii, 29

27 Mal. iii, 3

28 Matt. iii, 11

29 Acts ii, 4

POSSIBILITIES OF GRACE

By Asbury Lowrey

Chapter 5

The holy to the holiest leads,
And thence our spirits rise;
For he that in Thy statutes treads
Shall meet Thee in the skies.

Let us never, never rest
'Till the promise is fulfilled,
'Till we are of Thee possessed,
Pardoned, sanctified, and sealed;

Till we all, in love renewed,
Find the pearl that Adam lost,
Temples of the living God,
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

ANTECEDENTS OF ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION

Light In Its Relation To Spiritual Life

Light is the starting-point of personal redemption. One of the saddest effects of original sin was the extinguishment of the light of the soul. It not only blew out the candle of Divine illumination, but destroyed our capacity to see. Sin both intercepted the Spirit's irradiations and put a film on the spiritual vision. Hence, at the very threshold of redemption, light becomes necessary, both to instruct the conscience, and to quicken and correct the faculty of perception. That light we have. Not the dim light of nature, not the flickering beams of erring reason, not the uncertain and ever-varying light of science, not even the light of general intelligence and civilization, but spiritual light -- light respecting human recovery.

It is that light which quickly broke through the darkness and shadows of the original fall -- the light that gleamed up from the first promise -- the light that radiated from the Jewish ceremonial of bleeding beasts and smoking altars and bloody baptisms -- the light which rose to the prophet's eye as the "Sun of righteousness with healing in his wings;" the light that glimmers in the face of speechless Zacharias, and loosed his tongue to say, "Whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet in the way of peace," -- the Light which blessed the dying gaze of Simeon and taught his feeble lips to say, "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel" -- in a word, the Light which claims itself to be "the light of the world," "the light of life," "the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

It is the Christ-light, the marvelous light of the Gospel. What is the nature of light, and what its effects? The essence of light no man comprehends, no man can comprehend. Paul says, "that which maketh manifest is light;" and yet this is only a definition of the effects of light; and our understanding cannot reach beyond the effects of light whether material or spiritual. In a Gospel sense light is knowledge, Divine science, a revelation of the Divine will. Nay, more, it is communicated truth, invested with a quickening power. It has in it a property of life: "My word is spirit and life." It is that gift which enables us to discover truth, that gracious illumination of the natural faculty that imparts to it power to see things in their real character and true relations.

The chief sources of light are the Bible and the Holy Spirit. These agencies in most cases operate jointly, and in the order of redemption are made mutually dependent. Like confluent streams, they intermix and form a common force. As two or more rays meet to make the perfection of sunlight, so the Holy Spirit and revealed truth combine to give full effect to the Divine illuminations. Personal salvation begins with the penetrations of light into the mind, by which alternately, and with greater or less vividness, the turpitude of sin and the beauty of holiness are revealed.

The office of Christ as the "Light of the World" is a prime office. The eye of prophetic vision swept down through the vista of ages and saw Him in this character, and then exultingly shouted to the Church, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." *1 Light from Jesus is only another name for Life. "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men." Jesus is "the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." That he should be the Light of the world is directly claimed by Christ, and it was, perhaps, the highest prerogative that he ever attributed to Himself. He boldly asserts, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." *2 Again, he says, "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me should not abide in darkness." *3 So it appears that light, life, and Christ Himself, both in name and essence, are synonymous terms. The passages just quoted flash upon the vision the encouraging side of this light. It is the disk of hope and promise. It is that beam from the "Sun of righteousness" which contains the healing quality.

But another phase and strong glare of this light shows the turpitude of sin, begets a feeling of want, and thunders reproof. It is, therefore, written, "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." They recoil from its accusations. "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth [submits to be searched] cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." *4

Here is the nascent state, both of justification and holiness, the breaking in of light, searching light, reprov'g light, and then inspiring light. Light is a powerful stimulus. In the case of a penitent, it unmasketh the heart and shows its guilt. It then dissipates the gross darkness of despair, and lifts the weeping eye to Him whose prerogative it is to forgive sin, cancel guilt, and give peace.

In the instance of a Christian convicted for entire sanctification, it maketh manifest the vileness of sin, exhibiteth the remains of carnality, and enforces upon the conscience the obligation of thorough holiness. At the same time it discovers the hemisphere of privilege by directing the eye to the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," and by fixing attention and faith upon the "blood

that cleanseth from all sin." It is in this way that the Sun of righteousness ariseth upon the soul with healing in his wings. Nor can the sanctified at any time do without this light. It is the element of Christian life. We have day only so long as the sun shines. The admonition of Jesus is forcibly in point: "Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth." *5 If this criterion were applied we should have much less blundering and stumbling and groping among us. It is in proportion as Christ rises upon the purified soul, like the orb of day, that the horizon of experience enlarges, and it is because there is no limitation to the influx and spreadings of light, nor to our receptivity of it, that there is no finality in the growth, and no boundary to the ever-expanding realization of holiness.

Reader "walk in the light as He is in the light," and you are sure to experience that "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Walk in the light! and thou shalt find
Thy heart made truly His,
Who dwells in cloudless light enshrined,
In Whom no darkness is."

SIN IN ITS ANTAGONISM TO HOLINESS

Redemption, in all its stages, is a stern grapple with sin. Sin is an alien element, alike antagonistic to God and the interests of men. It is not original in the sense of being a part of the primordial make up of a man. It is a subsequent inoculation -- a seed of evil projected into human nature at a later date. Sin is deadly. It must, therefore, be destroyed, or it will destroy. Any remedy that does not take primal account of sin, and aim at its absolute abolition, is insufficient, if not spurious. The gist of sanctification is deliverance from sin.

Sin exists under two scriptural aspects. First, as a taint of evil in man. Second, as evil done by man. There is a specific difference between a sinful state and a sinful practice. In practice sin is the transgression of the law. A sinful state implies a corrupt nature, a bent to evil, a heart alienated from God and opposed to holiness. There has been much useless and bewildering speculation about the origin of sin. Heathen philosophers have traced its beginning and prevalence to an evil principle in matter. The Gnostics located sin in the human body. *6 Augustine, and some of "the fathers," regarded sin as inseparably connected with carnal desires, seemingly not excepting those which are natural and necessary to human propagation. *7 High Calvinists, while hesitating to charge the origin of sin upon God, assert their belief in decrees so broadly, as logically to make him the author of it. *8 Arminians say: Man, by an abuse of his liberty and power of choice, brought sin and evil upon himself.

This, undoubtedly, is the only defensible doctrine, the only doctrine that exonerates God and puts the responsibility of sin where it belongs.

Just why God permitted sin, or how its permission can be reconciled with His nature and attributes, are speculations of no great value, and the effort to fully solve such mysteries is an attempt to be wise above what is written. Enough is revealed to show that sin is a monstrous perversion and

defilement of God's original creations; and also to show that God, through Christ, has provided for a complete deliverance from sin, and a perfect reproduction of His image of righteousness and true holiness in this life. Just how the great Atonement, in its double relation to a holy God and to sinful men, effects this adjustment, is another bootless speculation.

One thing is certain, that, under the Gospel system of reconciliation and grace, all the responsibility for the continuance of sin in man, and the practice of it by man, rests with himself. Sin is not imputed where there is no law; and where the law does exist, and may be understood, no degree of sinless perfection is required which the subject is not fully capacitated to reach. No physical or mental weakness, not voluntarily superinduced, is sin; nor any mistakes resulting therefrom, if the helps and cautions given to avoid such mistakes have not been purposely or negligently neglected.

Moreover, those mixed affections of flesh and spirit, inherent in our composite nature, and out of which spring the parental relations, are not, as the monastic life implies, sin. The Creator has implanted these chaste and holy covetings in our being in order to prompt the sexes to form the most sacred unions, that the bliss of "the solitary set in families" might be ours, and that the heart might have an opportunity to center itself upon the purest objects of love, and the sympathies be drawn out by the most tender and exalted companionships. And these cravings are just as capable of entire sanctification as thought or imagination. They become sinful only when the animal is made or allowed to dominate the spiritual; that is, when chaste and natural affinities are converted into base and illicit lust. And the discrimination between the two may be made as clearly as between a just equivalent for labor and merchandise and the extortion of a price which amounts to exorbitance, fraud, or stealing.

Nor is a saint a sinner, as Dr. Pope teaches, because he transmits a depraved nature by natural generation. *9 Holiness is not propagated, but implanted; not transferred by involuntary descent, but inwrought in response to voluntary choice and faith. Grace is not transmissible, except in its effects, and these effects never go so far as to interfere with man's accountability. On the other hand, the entailment of sin is not estopped by sanctification. A sinful nature belongs to the race. But a saint is no more a sinner because he is a part of the race than Christ was a sinner because he was born of the seed of Abraham, and took upon himself our nature. A scholar cannot transmit his learning and culture, but who will say he is an ignorant man because he cannot do that absurd thing?

God holds men accountable, not in the aggregate, but severally, and in detail. Each subject of His sufficient grace is answerable for his own character, whatever biases he may have inherited; and the parent who transmits an evil tendency which might have been avoided, commits a sin which goes into the sum of his crimes, and from which he must be saved, and can only be saved by that "blood that cleanseth from all sin;" and when so cleansed he is not in any sense a "sinner among sinners," but a "saint." If it were not so, there is not a saint on earth, nor the possibility of one; for who has not transmitted evil by example, or in some other way? But, through Christ, "in whom we all have redemption through His blood, according to the riches of His grace," the wholly sanctified are completely exonerated and saved. Having "put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and" being "renewed in the spirit of your mind; and" having "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," he is

recognized and denominated by the Lord Himself, a sinless saint in his own individuality. He is no more a sinner on account of the common depravity of his posterity, than he is a sinner on account of the sinfulness of his ancestry. Under the Gospel, both sin and holiness attach only where there is responsibility. A necessitated state, either good or bad, has no moral character, and carries with it no accountability.

Sins in practice are those avoidable acts which violate the law of God, debase our being, and damage society and the souls of men. According to this definition, a sinful state becomes a sinful life and practice when we do not avail ourselves of sanctifying grace. Nor can we release ourselves from condemnation by giving no thought to the subject.

Three things bring us under guilt: positive sin; neglect of salvation; shutting our eyes to the light. "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin." *10 Some Christians seem to look upon partial or full salvation as elective with them. Others treat it as a luxury which they may dispense with as they dispense with the dessert at their meals. Others again appear to think that the obligation to be holy comes only with involuntary light and conviction on the subject.

But the great mass of Christians confess to the reality and necessity of perfect purity, but put themselves on the pursuit of it in a gradual way, by aiming at all religious achievements in general, and nothing in particular. They are so afraid of riding holiness as a hobby, that they do not ride it at all. They plod along on foot toward it for a lifetime, and then die without consciously attaining it.

Reader, do not soothe yourself with any of these opiates; wake to the fact that "all unrighteousness" is sin, and that the negative sin of unholiness will have the same ending with positive transgression. It will deny to you the vision of God. Let us repent of, and forsake, both our sins and our sinfulness. Do not delay. As you read these words, say to your soul: "It is high time to awake out of sleep." *11 "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." *12 Jesus shall be, and is now, my uttermost Saviour.

REPENTANCE IN ITS RELATION TO HOLINESS

The Gospel kingdom was introduced by John the Baptist, and by Christ himself, by the preaching of repentance. Repentance was not the kingdom, but a work of preparation, and conducive to its reception. Nor is it probable that Christ would or could have inaugurated his kingdom so purely spiritual without that general awakening and contrition in regard to sin.

In like manner the first step toward personal salvation is repentance. Light precedes, but in light there is no Godward motion. But when the heart relents it takes on an attitude of supplication. Repentance is a silent plea for mercy. It is a confession of guilt and unfitness for God and heaven. It is the starting-point of sin's renunciation, a glimpse of its turpitude, and the first throes of anxiety for pardon. Repentance in a sinner consists chiefly in a sense of condemnation, misery, and desert of punishment. It has respect mainly to the penalty of the law which has been incurred. On this account pardon satisfies the earliest want of the sin-sick soul. It quells fear and brings to the conscience the peace of reconciliation. The need of holiness at that time is not felt, and, therefore,

not coveted. Indeed, the consciousness of remaining sin has not yet arisen, nor has the vileness of sin been fully apprehended. A perfective work is required, and repentance as well as faith in a modified form is again called into requisition. But it is with repentance in its relation to holiness that we are concerned in this connection.

It is a mistake to suppose that repentance has applicability to sinners only. Repentance is an element of religion, and cannot be outgrown or superseded. Some phase of the emotion belongs to every stage of spiritual experience, and is a part of it. In a penitent it takes the form of painful sorrow and crushing condemnation, as illustrated in the cases of the publican and the prodigal son. In its relation to a backslidden or fallen disciple, it develops grief and self-reproach; examples of which are found in the bitter relentings of Peter and Judas.

There is a shade of difference between this species of repentance and that of a man who, for the first time, discovers himself to be a sinner. A feeling of self-loathing, a conviction of meanness, enters into the miseries of an apostate; while in a penitent all sensibility is resolved into an apprehension of guilt and danger. An apostate abhors himself because he has proved unfaithful; a penitent trembles under a newborn consciousness of condemnation.

The apostate sees himself black with perfidy; the penitent wakes up to behold himself dead in trespasses and sins. The apostate says: "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood;" the penitent affirms: "I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." The apostate flings down the thirty pieces of silver and goes tragically to his own place; the penitent cries out with swift confession and self-abasement, "Have mercy upon me a sinner;" "I have sinned against heaven, and before thee and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants."

In a Christian, repentance wears quite another complexion. It still exists, but is modified by new light and relations. he who was a servant of sin and Satan has become a child of God. he who was an alien has become an heir. Now the painful conviction of guilt and the distressing sense of danger are gone. But the conception of sin in its inherent vileness, and the view of his own past sinfulness, have become intensified. He sees the heinousness of sin as never before, and he loathes it increasingly, as light floods the mind. The memory of forgiven wrongs continues and augments his humiliation and deep feelings of unworthiness. The remembrance of his past misdoings, which cost the Saviour so much, is ever grievous unto him. Moreover the discovery of remaining sin in the heart calls repentance into requisition, and in a modified form perpetuates it.

This abhorrence of sin does not produce misery, like that of a culprit who regrets wrong because of the impending penalty, but it works a godly sorrow. The Christian hates sin as God hates it. He hates it because it is obnoxious to God and all goodness.

He loves to hate it, and grows happy in hating it. Nor does the memory of the past produce the effect of abjectness or a sense of present self-degradation, for with regretful recollections is mingled the conscious uplift of pardon, adoption, and a new creation. He sees the pit, the mire, and the clay, but feels a rock beneath his feet, and finds a song in his mouth. His sight of sin, and sorrow for it,

is equal to his estimate of redemption. He loves God much, because God has forgiven him much, and saved him from more. "The goodness of God leadeth him to repentance."

We have an instance of repentance in believers in the experience of Paul. He says, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." *13 He did not mean to confess himself the worst of sinners at the then present moment. His words have respect to the past, and yet reveal a continuity of repentance, a humiliating recollection.

Paul says to the Corinthian Christians, "I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of." *14 Such is repentance in believers.

APPLICATION

1. All backsliders and holy persons who lapse into sin have need of repentance the same as other sinners; and there is no restoration to a state of salvation without it.

2. That kind of holiness which takes a mild extenuating view of sin is spurious. Nor can a man substitute friendship and love for repentance where damaging wrong has been committed toward another. True repentance of an act that has done injury to property or character includes reparation and restitution where it is possible.

3. Any teaching of holiness which does not include the enforcement of the law and precepts of repentance is shallow and unscriptural.

4. Holiness can only be cultivated and kept by a growing aversion to all sin.

The spontaneous utterance of true holiness is this:

"I want a principle within,
Of jealous, godly fear;
A sensibility of sin,
A pain to feel it near.

"Quick as the apple of an eye,
O God, my conscience make;
Awake my soul when sin is nigh
And keep it still awake."

Wesley says: "There is also a repentance and a faith which are requisite after we have believed the Gospel; yea, in every subsequent stage of our Christian course ... And this repentance and faith are full as necessary in order to our continuance and growth in grace, as the former faith and repentance were in order to our entering into the kingdom of God."

And again he remarks: "When we first find redemption in the blood of Jesus; when the love of God is first shed abroad in our hearts, and his kingdom set up therein, it is natural to suppose we are no longer sinners, that all our sins are not only covered but destroyed. As we do not then feel any evil in our hearts, we readily imagine none is there. But though we readily acknowledge, 'he that believeth is born of God,' and 'he that is born of God doth not commit sin;' yet we cannot allow that he does not feel it within. It does not reign, but it does remain. And a conviction of the sin which remains in our heart is one great branch of the repentance we are now speaking of." *15

CONSECRATION

The word consecration is not a common New Testament term, and perhaps is never used in close connection with the direct inculcations of the higher spiritual life. We find it twice in Hebrews, but derived in each case from a different original word, and not relating primarily to the life of God in the Son. In Hebrews vii, 28, we have *Avo*, [teteleiomenon,] rendered "consecrated," which means finished, completed, and asserts the perfection of Christ's priestly office. In chap. x, 20, we find it again. Here the original is [enekainisen,] which signifies to dedicate, institute, renovate, and refers to the new and consecrated way of approach to God through the incarnation and sacrifice of Christ.

In the Old Testament the word is often employed to point out the setting apart of things and persons from common to sacred uses. As a Christian duty it imports, not the devotion of some things and some men to God, but the gift of ourselves to Him entirely and forever.

In a proper approach, therefore, to God to be saved from all sin, consecration becomes necessary -- consecration full and particular. While there is no merit in consecration, yet it is the condition precedent, and a preliminary work indispensable to the attainment of holiness. It is that act or disposition of ourselves toward God which puts us in an attitude to receive. It is emptying ourselves that we may be filled. It is ungrasping our hold on every thing, that God may have the disposal of us and ours. It is the assignment of all our possessions, real and fancied, to Him, that our insolvency may be acknowledged and His proprietary right in us recognized. It is that posture in relation to Christ which is aptly symbolized by the upturned cups of flowers whose only office is to unfold and drink. They do not make or merit the elements of their nourishment and life, but simply adjust and expand themselves into a position to drink in the light, the rain, and the dew, without which there could be no vegetable life or floral bloom or beauty. So the Christian only places himself in a state of receptivity by the act of consecration.

It is somewhat unfortunate that both the word and the work which it represents have been misunderstood. By some it has been used as a synonym of all the terms that indicate the "Higher Life." This is a mistake. Consecration is not sanctification, though it is conducive to it, and closely allied with that state in nature and order of accomplishment. It is to full salvation what seeding is to harvest, and bloom is to fruit, and touch is to sensation -- antecedent, but inseparable. It is not cleansing, but coming to the blood to be cleansed. It is not the fire that consumes sin and refines the heart, but a sacrificing disposition of ourselves upon the altar which invites the fire and awaits its coming.

Consecration is a voluntary, unreserved, and irrevocable dedication of ourselves to God, with all that pertains to us. It is in nature a repetition of the surrender we made when seeking justification, only it is more enlightened and comprehensive, and made for the attainment of a different and more specific object. A penitent sinner gives himself to God that he may obtain pardon, the cancellation of guilt, and deliverance from a crushing burden upon the conscience. True, he expects, and has a right to expect, the peace that follows justification, but his absorbing thought is pardon, the suppression of fear, the inspiration of hope. Usually he sees only the penalty of sin, not its deep turpitude. He mourns over acts of sin committed, not over the defilement which sin has shot all through his being. He desires his sins to be forgotten, and prays that they may be blotted from the book and memory of God; but has not risen to the conception of being personally cleansed from all sin.

The Lord gives the penitent sinner all he asks, all he feels the need of, and all he believes for; but that Divine Spirit which regenerates, and witnesses to forgiveness and adoption, also brings light -- searching light. He leads into all truth. He reveals the turpitude of sin and the remains of sin. He lifts the veil which hides the deformities, and cuts away the film that prevents our seeing the inherent vileness of our sin. He sheds and analyzes our whole constitution, and enables us to see and thread the currents of corruption that have penetrated to the depths of our nature. He also reveals that our experiences and life, though converted, are a mixture of sin and holiness; and this because we have not perceived the possibilities of grace, nor recognized our obligation to be fully saved, to be redeemed from all iniquity, and to be purified unto Christ.

Indeed, we now discover that we never gave ourselves to Christ with the distinct object that "He might destroy the works of the devil" in us and "cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Thus the whole work of our consecration was initial and limited. It had a primary and chief reference to a change of relation, while the paramount work of a change of state involving thorough holiness was not taken into account at all. As a general rule, the presentation which a penitent sinner makes of himself to God is indefinite and confused. It is a vague contrition and turning to God for mercy. This defectiveness is not intuitional, but results from the haze and obscurity which yet becloud the mind in its first approaches to God. Penitence is twilight; scales are yet upon the eyes. A seeker of justification sees men as trees walking. He may have given all to the Lord which at the time he knew to be required, but right there lurks the cause of this partial surrender. A want of knowledge created a deficit in consecration. He did not see the broad requirement and necessity of holiness, and hence did not put himself in an attitude to receive it.

Now, it is this primary failure, delinquency, and half-heartedness in giving ourselves to God, that imposes the obligation to repeat and perfect our consecration. We now see that hitherto we have only started toward the "Father's house," and having been met, like the prodigal, by the haste of Divine love and mercy, we were accepted in the distance; but as yet we have not fully entered into the love and service of Christ. Nor have we been reinstated as inheritors among all them that are sanctified; nor are we yet enriched with all the wealth and comforts of home. We must, therefore, come afresh to God in the spirit of yielding all to Him. We must gather up every neglected or misused faculty and article, and place it in the hands of Jesus. The dedication must take place with as much detail as possible. Not that the Lord conditions acceptance upon an itemized count, for that would be impossible; but enough of specialization must be practiced to commit us to the idea of a whole

burnt-offering, and to leave the conviction in our consciousness that there is nothing purposely withheld. Like a deed, the transfer must convey the realty, "with all the appurtenances thereunto belonging." What was done before in bulk and loosely, with only a general aim, must now be done with particularity, and for the attainment of a specific object. It is an act of inventory and solemn transfer. Therefore, as in the case of a legal covenant and sale of merchandise, every article, great and sin all, good and bad, must be taken down and catalogued and assigned. The body, with all its members; the mind, with all its faculties; the soul, with all its affections, tastes, and appetites; the substance, with all its gains and uses, including business pursuits and social relations, recreations, education, thought, and reading, embracing all our advantages, natural and acquired; indeed, our whole life, together with our death, grave, and memory, must be given to Christ, and placed under contribution for His glory. "Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." *16 What a thought! Living, dying, or dead, we are the property of Jesus, given away to Him, accepted and sealed by Him, and appropriated forever to His uses.

Like a flower in the garden, we bloom and shed our fragrance for another. Like the brush in the hand of the painter, which traces the lines and shades of beauty not for itself, but for the artist whose property and instrument it is. In a consecrated state we recognize the fact that we have passed out of our own hands. Having been bought with His price, we are the possession of Jesus, and, therefore, we are under obligation to glorify Him in body and spirit.

Reader! "I beseech you ... by the mercies of God," to "present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." *17

FAITH -- ITS NATURE

A superficial acquaintance with the New Testament will convince any man of ordinary perception that faith is an important element in the Christian religion.

It is one of its distinctive features, since no other type of religion has ever given so great prominence to faith. There are kinds and degrees of faith in all the systems of religion embraced by mankind, but the faith of Christianity is peculiarized by one fundamental principle. That principle is, absolute trust in a personal Saviour to be saved by that Saviour immediately and fully from all sin. This differentiates the religion of Jesus from Judaism, Mohammedism, and all forms of pagan worship. The Bible, so far as the Old Testament is concerned, is largely a history of faith. The New Testament is extensively a treatise on faith -- an exposition of the doctrine, duty, and results of faith. The scheme of redemption is penetrated in every part by the conditionality of faith.

The life of a Christian is a life of faith in opposition to a life of sense and sight. Faith enters into all the heights and depths and complexities of Christian experience. It is not only instrumental, but substantive -- "the substance of things hoped for." It is essential to the nature, vital to the existence, and indispensable to the growth of spiritual life. By it the texture of the inner man is built up, and developed into completeness and maturity.

Faith, as used in the Scriptures, is an equivocal term. With belief as its reigning idea, it has different shades of meaning. In its lowest sense it implies only a cold intellectual assent to religious truth independent of good works. For example, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" *18 that is, can the mere faith of credence, or the foreboding faith of trembling devils save a man?

Faith is sometimes put for the entire code of Gospel precepts, as in this text, "A great company of the priests were obedient to the faith;" *19 that is, they submitted to and accepted Christ and the general requirements of the Gospel. Faith is also used as a symbol of Christianity or title of believers. For instance, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith;" *20 that is, the family of believers, called "the household of faith," are to have the precedence in our charities. Some degree of discrimination in the bestowal of our benefices seems allowable?

Literally, according to the meaning of the original word in, [pistis,] faith imports persuasion, confidence, trust. Dr. Parkhurst, defining the Greek term, says: "It generally implies such a knowledge of, assent to, and confidence in certain Divine truths, especially those of the Gospel, as produces good works." *21 Dr. Dwight says: "The faith of the Gospel is that emotion of the mind which is called trust or confidence, exercised toward the moral character of God, and particularly of the Saviour." *22 We accept these statements as good general definitions. According to them the first thing necessary to evangelical faith is religious instruction. The second is a convinced judgment. The third is a confiding motion of the heart and mind, called trust, by which we renounce every other refuge, and shut ourselves up to the merits of Christ for salvation. As Dr. Bunting justly remarks: "It is such a hearty concurrence of the will and affections with the plan of salvation as implies a renunciation of every other refuge and actual trust in the Saviour and personal apprehension of his merits. Such a belief of the Gospel, and such a reliance on the atonement as leads us to come to Christ, to receive Christ, and to commit the keeping of our souls into His hands in humble confidence in His power and willingness to save." Mr. Wesley, as we might expect, gives a definition strictly evangelistic and deeply spiritual. He writes: "Christian faith is, then, not only an assent to the whole Gospel of Christ; a trust in the merits of His life, death, and resurrection; a recumbency upon him as our atonement and our life, as given for u and living in us. It is a sure confidence which a man hath in God, that through the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he is reconciled to the favor of God, and, in consequence thereof, a closing with Him, and cleaving to Him as our 'wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,' or, in one word, our salvation." *23

Now, faith, in the sense of trust, which is peculiar to Gospel belief, is necessary to spiritual life. For many persons have been sufficiently instructed in religion, and also convinced of its truth, who yet remain unhealed of sin. Perhaps some will read these pages who believe in the being of God, the inspiration of the Scriptures, the Divinity and Messiahship of Christ, the necessity and virtue of the atonement, the possibility and indispensableness of pardon and the new birth, the gift and offices of the Holy Ghost, as well as assent to all the minor propositions of Christian belief.

And yet, with this large and true faith, they remain dead in trespasses and sins. What is the matter? "Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" *24 It is not the want of faith, but the want of that property of faith which

alone appropriates -- the property of trust -- the property of reliance. It is the lack of that desperate self-renunciation and universal abandonment of every other refuge, which, looking up to Jesus, says:

Other refuge have I none:
Hangs my helpless son' on thee:

Or,

"Could my tears forever flow.
Could my zeal no languor know
These for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and thou alone:
In my hand no price I bring;
Simply to thy cross I cling."

Some, however, use another subterfuges in order to quiet the uneasy and painful sensations of the mind, and obscure the fearful events and responsibilities of eternity. They preposterously assert they do trust in Christ, and have no other hope of salvation, and yet they never shed a penitential tear, nor breathe a prayer for mercy, nor quit their cherished sins. They may not be steeped in depravity, but the ungodliness to which they are constitutionally prone, they allow, and love, and practice. Now life and death are not more widely separated and incompatible than this faith differs from that of a true penitent. This is the faith of presumption -- a trust that Christ will save them in their sins, without saving them from their sins. It is a conceit, a delusion which seeks to accomplish an absurdity, a moral impossibility. It makes Jesus not a Saviour from sin, but a mere warrantor against hell and misery in defiance of sin and in harmony with sin. This cannot be, for "what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?"

That faith which is connected with salvation reveals the guilt and corruption of the heart, produces penitential tenderness, creates aversion to sin, and leads to its abandonment. Then it puts us upon the pursuit of salvation by an apprehension of Christ's merits, and the cleansing virtue of His blood. It looks directly to Jesus, takes hold of His promises, pleads His intercessions, and makes fast the fingers of confidence in the words of the Crucified One. Finally, faith resolves itself into a conviction that Christ has become to the seeker, "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." Hence faith is to him "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

"Faith lends its realizing light;
The clouds disperse, the shadows fly;
The Invisible appears in sight,
And God is seen by mortal eye."

ORIGIN OF FAITH

Touching the origin of faith there are two opposite beliefs. Some writers have taken the position that faith is an exclusive and arbitrary gift of God. Others, by consequence, have leaned to the opposite extreme, and represented faith as the independent act of man. It will be easy to show that

both of these propositions involve error, and that the truth lies at the mean distance between these polemic poles. The Scriptures clearly teach that faith is in part the gift of God, and in part the exercise of a free and responsible agent. The power to believe is of God, the appropriation and use of that power is the work of the suppliant, whether a penitent sinner or a seeker of holiness.

That there is a sense in which faith is the gift of God is sufficiently manifest from the following texts: "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." *25 "And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith." *26 These passages evince that God is concerned in the origin, increase, and perfecting of our faith. And it is quite evident that without the inspiration of power giving to the mind believing biases, no man would, and no man could, reverse the unbelieving tendencies of his nature, and repose faith in God through Christ for salvation from sin. He might have the faith of a deist, which is cold as a moonbeam, or the faith of a modern scientist, which is bounded by the icebergs of materialism; but the faith of a Christian, which pulsates with life and love, and mantles itself with the leaves and flowers and fruitage of usefulness, he cannot have without Divine help inspiring him with Godward inclinations and trustful dispositions.

But other considerations clearly show that this exercise is not necessitated. Whether we will believe or not is a contingency that hinges upon our own volitions. The first proof of this position is the fact that we are made responsible for our faith, or want of faith. To believe is a duty positively commanded of all men. Not to believe is a punishable offense. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." *27

All the voluntary acts of men are either rewardable or punishable, according to their moral character. Hence, as believing is to be rewarded with salvation, and unbelief punished with damnation, both must be man's own proper and responsible acts.

Another evidence is founded upon the conditionality of salvation. According to the Scriptures, faith is the sole condition of salvation. Paul says, "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." *28 Now if faith is exclusively the gift of God, then salvation is tendered to us on a condition which God himself performs or necessitates us to perform; that is, He makes justification conditional and unconditional at the same time, which is a bald absurdity.

Ye reach, then, this conclusion, that faith is a joint work. The power to believe is given to us of God; the employment of the power, styled belief, is required of us. And while God freely inspires the power, He will no more believe for us than he will repent or pray for us. And having bestowed the ability, he will not hold any man guiltless, nor suffer any one to go unpunished, who lives and dies in unbelief.

And the assumption is not improbable that we all have vastly more power to believe than we use. It is with us a buried talent, a neglected endowment, a dormant power. in the ease of infidelity it is a misapplication and profane use of liberty and self-determining force.

But should there be a lack of power, it may be supplemented at any time by the recorded appeal to God, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." It is at this point that the utility of prayer comes

in and coordinates with faith. Prayer recuperates the wasted energies of faith, and replenishes the dying embers of belief.

We must recollect, however, that prayer for more power to believe is but solemn mockery, if we do not use what we have. God helps those who help themselves. It was only when the handful of meal in the barrel and the little oil in the cruse were freely used, according to the Lord's direction, that he pledged himself to the poor widow of tried faith, saying, "The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth." *29 The power of belief must be stretched to its utmost tension before he will increase it. When Christ bids you come to him on the water, do it.

The object of faith is God through Christ. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me ... No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." *30

True faith centers in God, the Father, Son, and holy Ghost, through the person, sacrifice and advocacy of Jesus, and comprises a belief in His unity, spirituality, natural and moral attributes, and especially in His redemptive work as the terminal point of faith. God here represents every star of hope, every gleam of light, every healing virtue, every festive joy, every beatific prospect. For it is God, in His essential love and active compassions through Christ -- God laying us under obligations, and commanding us to reciprocate His gushing affection by loving him with all the heart and soul and mind and strength. *31

Faith in God comprises so many points that we cannot notice them in detail. We must confine ourselves to those truths which more especially enter into evangelical faith.

Fundamentally saving faith in God implies trust in the sacrificial and propitiatory offering of Christ. We cannot separate between God and God's Son. Nor can we push aside the atonement and exercise saving faith in God directly and immediately. God does not and cannot allow himself to be approached by the sinner in the sinner's own name and proper person. To do so would involve connivance at sin, and introduce anarchy into the Divine government. The emphatic words of Jesus settle this question: "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." *32 A mediator must come between us and God, not as a mere channel of communication, but as a satisfying sufferer and advocate -- a ransom price to liberate enslaved men -- a propitiation to appease offended justice -- an intercessor to secure the appropriation of redemption to sinful men according to its most gracious terms. Not pleading for pardon on the basis of clemency, but bearing in his hands a full and satisfactory indemnity for the impairment done to the holy orders of the universe by human sin.

Nor is the sacrifice of Christ to be regarded as a mere ceremonial propriety, but as a stern necessity growing out of the desperate exigencies of our case. There was an irreconcilable repugnance and repulsion caused by sin, between the holiness of heaven and the fallen race, which could only be adjusted by satisfaction. "Wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer." *33 It was not only an advocate with eloquent voice and powers of persuasion that we needed, but a Priest as well, to offer gifts and sacrifices -- a priest with bleeding temples, side, and hands, priest all crimsoned with atoning blood. Even the power of Christ to save is confined within

the limits of His mediation and sacrifice. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. *34 Indeed, all the possibilities and hope-inspiring certainties of full salvation spring out of the blood of expiation. In this blood the faith of Paul wax es strong by contrast. "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" *35 There is to be an eternal recognition of the blood as the procuring cause of holiness. Those who have gone to heaven, we are told, "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Those who sing in heaven adopt the chorus, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." It is only when we take fast hold upon the atonement that we get down among the primary rocks of our faith.

"Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Save from wrath and make me pure."

FAITH IN THE PROMISES

Christian faith implies faith in the promises and covenant engagements of God. The Lord has not only provided saving merits, healing virtues, and cleansing fountains; but has pledged Himself to appropriate these efficacies on the most easy and practicable conditions. These unmerited promises are so many, various, and sweet, that they are called "exceeding great and precious." In the same connection it is declared that they are given to us for the express purpose, that "by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." *37

The Lord has entered into a solemn contract with the sinning race -- a contract to save us fully and forever through Christ, on the condition of repentance and faith on our part. And now he condescends to make use of means to inspire confidence and hope, in the fulfillment of these testamental engagements. He has required its continual re-assertion from the pulpit. He has ratified it with two sacraments; and finally confirmed it by an oath, "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to he, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." He has even put His fidelity and justice at stake to assure us that there shall be no failure in the fulfillment of His self-assumed obligations. Therefore it is said, "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." *39 Here the Lord directly commits himself to dispense pardon and generate holiness on the sole condition of what is comprehended in confession of sins. He invites the seeker to put Him to the test, and allows him to conclude, if he fails to the extent of one jot or tittle, that His fidelity and justice stand forever impeached. Such promises, underlaid by the atonement, meet us everywhere, and challenge our faith. If we are not fully saved, then, the sin must he at our own door, and the failure must be charged up to our own account.

Indeed, when we look at the ground and facilities of faith from this standpoint, we cannot be surprised that unbelief has been ranked among the hell-deserving crimes.

But what is it to believe in the promises of God? Is it merely to credit the truth and sincerity of God? Does faith go no farther than to rely confidently on the future indefinite verification of the utterances of God? If this is all, then, impenitent sinners may be true believers. It is not enough to believe Christ is able and willing to save us to the uttermost, and to save us now. It is not impossible for a well-instructed, clever sinner to believe all this. We must advance a step farther and include in our trust the fact that the saving work of God is now taking place in the consecrated and confiding soul; we must accept believing and receiving as coetaneous and inseparable acts. Why not? If I put myself under the treatment of Jesus, according to His directions, for a perfect cure, would it not be, a reflection upon Christ not to allow that He heals. If according to my deepest consciousness I give up all sin, consecrate myself wholly to Christ, trust solely in the merits of His life and death, take His word as the rule of my faith and practice and the standard of character, and invite the Spirit to focalize and expend all his forces and fire upon my heart and life, am I at liberty to question that I am received and saved?

Perhaps it will be said, You may do all this very sincerely, but, through ignorance, fail to accomplish your purpose. Be it so. Is Christ so hard a master that He will take advantage of my ignorance and wantonly hold me off in guilt and sin when I have done my best? Because I cannot go into a psychological analysis of my mind, affections, and feelings with infinite exactitude, will He withhold the cup of salvation, or doom me to years of dark uncertainty and fearful forebodings? Thank God! there is no such severe side to Jesus. His words rather encourage presumption than otherwise: "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." *40 The Lord seems to delight in seeing His children defy impossibilities. All the bold and daring instances of faith on record are most commended by the Saviour. The case of the centurion, whose servant was sick of the palsy, presents a type of faith most pleasing to Jesus. Christ, being solicited, said, "I will come and heal him . The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard it, he marveled, and said ... I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel ... And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour." *41 This was a crucial case. The disease was humanly incurable, the subject a mere servant, the suppliant unworthy, the means to be employed a simple word in the absence of the sufferer. The cure, such was the nature of the disease, must be instantaneous and perfect, or prove a manifest failure. But, as the faith of the centurion measured up to the sublime urgencies of the ease, the mighty work of healing was done in the "self-same hour." The faith was the exact measure of the cure, and the two acts were inseparable. Jesus spake; the man was every whit whole.

EFFECTS OF FAITH

Faith brings just those blessings in kind and quantity which are made its specific object. If it is pardon, it brings pardon and the peace of reconciliation. If it is change of heart, it brings

regeneration. If it is a perfect cure, it brings, under proper conditions, full redemption, a pure heart, entire sanctification.

"Have faith in God." It will cancel your guilt, disburden your soul, put a new song into your mouth, and give you "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

"Have faith in God." It will bring the cleansing blood and the quickening Spirit into contact with thy heart. It will deliver you from sin and all that frets and wastes and burns and rankles and festers and ulcerates within. It will put your soul at rest in God, rest that no storms can break. Though the earth be removed, and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, and the waters roar and be troubled, and the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Yet within is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God.

"Have faith in God." It will graft you into Jesus and send back His life-currents into all the avenues, channels, and capacities of your being.

"Have faith in God," and it will give you to be rooted and grounded in love, and energize the forces of your nature with invincible stability.

"Have faith in God," and it will lift you above the world, above its tumult and strife, above its sordid pursuits and dissipations, above its sins, sorrows, and debasements; and, finally, it will send you "sweeping through the gates, washed in the blood of the Lamb." And there it will set you to singing on and on forever, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, ... to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." *42

JUSTIFICATION IN ITS RELATION TO HOLINESS

Justification is a term of broad significance. The Greek [dikaioo] means to hold, treat, esteem, and approve as righteous -- to accept, not primarily, as subjectively holy, but as guiltless, as free from condemnation and liability to punishment. It is to be made righteous in the sense of being pardoned and taken into a justified relation to God.

Justification, adoption, and regeneration are concurrent works, but in the order of thought justification comes first. The Father cannot adopt and the Holy Ghost cannot regenerate a guilty soul.

Justification is the forgiveness of all past sins by the gracious act of God, done in response to faith, and in consideration of the atonement of Christ. The effect of this gracious act is to put the penitent sinner into a new relation to God -- a relation of friendship and peace, implying the cancellation of all guilt, and the bestowment of all other rights and privileges of perfect reconciliation. Nor is justification an act done once for all. It must be continuous, and to be continuous, all the demands of the Gospel law must be met, and met continuously. Justification is the test of sanctification after the needed light has come into the mind. On the other hand, sanctification is the condition of perpetuated justification. One necessitates the other. Nor can the confession of sin from time to time be substituted for salvation from it. The knowledge of sin puts

us under obligation to get rid of it. Confession of sin, to be worth any thing, must involve its renunciation and removal.

Any theory or teaching on the subject of holiness that excludes justification at any time from the domain of experience is both ex-parte and unevangelical. The grace of justification is a factor in religion that never can be outlived or dispensed with. It is like the unit in arithmetical calculations, which enters into every problem and branch of mathematical science. It is a rudiment that never can be dropped out or displaced by a substitute, because it is an integral part of the science of numbers without which there can be no process or product.

Like unto this is justification in its relation to every other distinction of gracious attainment and form of spiritual life. It is fundamental in every stage of personal redemption. It needs preservation and continued burnishing, like silver-plate exposed to atmospheric action. For this purpose watchfulness, prayer, and steady faith are constantly in demand. No teaching, therefore, is more unscriptural, and no assumption more dangerous, than the conceit that we have got beyond the need of justifying mercy. A thousand frailties, short-comings, and mistakes in the best of men, require, on the part of God, the continual exercise of forgiving grace. These misdeeds, when they really result from infirmity and unavoidable imperfections, are not to be imputed to us as sin in the legal sense involving guilt, and requiring the same sorrowful repentance that attaches to willful transgression; yet their very non-imputation is the precious fruit of an economy of pardoning love that is perpetually administered to us in the name and for the sake of Christ. When a man, therefore, is said to live without sin, we mean he lives by the power of Christ, without committing those avoidable acts which God in His word pronounces to be sin -- those acts for which He holds men responsible, because they involve the concurrence of the will and evil purpose. "Being made free from sin" -- that is, free from its condemnation, power, and defilement -- "he has his fruit unto holiness," in which he receives strength to shun such ways and practices as would either cause new guilt, or so forfeit the favor of God as to make his original condemnation revert upon him.

When, therefore, we take the most comprehensive view of the subject, it would not be incorrect to define holiness to be a state of perfect and perpetual justification. If salvation from all sin is provided for and required, no man, coming to a knowledge of this fact, can be fully justified who does not seek, attain, and live in the possession of it. No doubt the Churches are today largely under condemnation growing out of this very delinquency, while many Christians, who have shut their eyes and flung off conscious obligation, have really vitiated their title to heaven. They are living in willful disobedience, and, therefore, under guilt. If such is the alarming condition of those who disregard holiness, what shall we say of those who antagonize it, and even treat both the doctrine and the experience with infidelity and derision?

Can such persons have any living hope of heaven? What is the difference between the rejection of pardon and the rejection of sanctification? To accept Christ only as a partial Saviour is, to that extent, to tread "under foot the Son of God," and to count "the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and" to do "despite unto the Spirit of grace." *43 It is to ask Christ to spill superfluous blood, by appropriating only a part of its merits.

"O that he would himself impart

And fix his Eden in my heart
The sense of sins forgiven:
How would I then throw off my load
And walk delightfully with God,
And follow Christ to heaven."

ADOPTION IN ITS RELATION TO HOLINESS

Every advance in experimental religion converges to a higher point of spirituality, and is made subsidiary to entire holiness. The elements of inward life blend together in order to make the substance and beauty of full salvation in a manner resembling the combination of colors in a perfect ray of light. Adoption, therefore, can no more be dissevered from the ripe work of sanctification than the violet tinge can be separated from the crimson in the rainbow. It is a stage in grace just as essential to perfection in quality and fullness of measure in holiness as each leaf, tint, and tendril in floral development is indispensable to the completeness of the flower. To use the scriptural figure, which teaches that each member of the physical system is required to complete the integrity of the body, so each grace is necessary to completeness in Christian character.

WHAT IS ADOPTION?

It is the rich relation by which we are taken into a family and affection of God. By justification, God takes us into His favor; by adoption, into His heart. Original sin caused alienation and enmity; justification effects reconciliation and peace; while adoption exalts the forgiven into the rights and estate of children and heirs. In justification, God's face beams with a smile; in adoption, his heart yearns with compassion and pulsates with love. Justification is peculiarly the work of Christ; adoption is directly the patronage of the Father through the Spirit for the sake of Christ.

In regard to the prerogative of Christ to pardon it is written: "When Jesus saw their faith, He said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." He adds: "that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins." *44 But in relation to adoption it is written: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." 45* "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself," but after this reconciliation was effected by the atonement, and by faith is made personal, it is the Holy Spirit's office that is now called into requisition. It is therefore declared, "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." *46 It is the province of the Father to send forth into our hearts the promptings, the evidence of gracious right, and the impulse to address Him as Father. Henceforth He says: "I call you not servants, but sons." Justification puts us into the servant's place, adoption into that of the son. Obedience is the distinguishing trait of servants, love the paramount characteristic of children. It is because we are children that the Lord expects and requires perfect love, and all the sanctities of Divine familyhood.

It is on this ground that the commands to be holy are addressed primarily to believers. They are no less applicable to sinners; but as the commands do not come in all their breadth and wealth and force within the apprehension of the guilty penitent, they are addressed to him through the medium of believers and the Church.

God lifts up men by gradation: First, he ordained that the fallen should come back to Himself and to heaven through holiness or the revival of the lost image; therefore it is written : "Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son;" that is, an image of righteousness and true holiness. But in what order? It is given in the next verse, "Whom he did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified." *47 The same gradations are similarly marked in another place: "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." *48

Now in harmony with this idea of gradation, adoption is not superseded, but rather expanded and enriched, when entire sanctification takes place. There is a Divine union, communion, and interdwelling that belongs peculiarly to the sanctified state. To the justified the Spirit comes in to attest forgiveness and adoption; to the sanctified He enters to fill, to abide, to comfort. God accepts and blesses the justified, but takes full possession of the sanctified. He comes into the inner man, as He came into the holy of holies, to reveal Himself, to show His glory. He comes in to live and walk and dwell where the place is clean.

It is with direct reference to this enlargement of the fruition of adoption that the apostle entreats and reasons with the Corinthian Christians in the following earnest strain:

"O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged. Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels. Now for a recompense in the same, (I speak as unto my children,) be also enlarged. Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols I for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." *49

In this passage there is promised a Divine indwelling, and a fatherhood and fellowship that belongs peculiarly to perfect holiness. it is the enhancement of adoption conditioned upon the most thorough and absolute renunciation of sin and of the world. It is a blessedness contingent upon the attainment and practice of the highest degree of sacredness, separation, and purity.

The same point is made in the wonderful prayer of the apostle: "That he would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." *50

Here the Spirit is more than a witness. he is a strengthener; He reinvigorates with Divine might, according to the immense measure of the riches of the glory of the Father. And this is done to raise our expectations and empower our trust that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith. In this case Christ is represented as transferring His ministry from without to the heart -- the heart becomes His

dwelling-place, and the seat of His kingdom. By this endowment of power, and re-adjustment of relation to Christ, we become the habitation of God through the Spirit.

And this evolution of adoption into the settled occupancy of the soul by the Father and the Son is pursuant to the specific promise of the Saviour. "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." *51 These citations show both the continuance and glorious development of adoption in connection with holiness. The logical sequence is that the witness of adoption is carried into full redemption, and becomes a witness of both. It is the peculiar office of the Spirit to abide and comfort, and where He lives and comforts He witnesses. Bless God! a whole Trinity is ours; such is the meaning of the benediction, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and "the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." *52

REGENERATION

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, be is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

All these precious texts appertain to the new birth, or regeneration, and represent a great spiritual change. To obviate confusion it is of the first importance to understand the true relation of this subject to entire holiness, because the antithesis or distinction, distinguishing one from the other, is not between justification and holiness, but between regeneration and holiness. And as both are internal, reproductive, and cleansing acts, it is highly useful to mark their differences.

Regeneration, or the birth from above, as the original, [anothen,] signifies, is holiness begun, and holiness progressing, if the subject is faithful, but still incomplete. It is imperfect sanctification. Nor does this imperfection consist wholly in immaturity and want of development, resembling the infant state, but results from the remains of inherent original sin. This will appear, from close attention to collateral texts, and the specific meaning of the original word, [gennao,] and its derivatives, which literally import, to be begotten anew, and in this connection from above, by the Holy Spirit. This process so touches each power of the soul that each and all become thoroughly renovated, and yet not cleansed from all sin. For this work of personal redemption, like all the past and outward covenants and dispensations of God, is epochal, periodic, and ever-unfolding. To save the world in general, and each man in particular, God seems to have adopted the method of ever ascending stages, and ever-brightening advances.

Regeneration is a process of quickening which implants a new element in the soul -- an element of life. it differs from justification in that it is inwrought and renewing -- a work of rebirth and quickening. It is a change effected in the soul, while justification is relative and outward -- an act of

the Divine Mind put forth on behalf of the penitent. The effects of the two blessings are also different. Justification relieves from guilt; regeneration begets a new being, starts a new life.

Justification has reference to the disposition and mercy of God toward repentant sinners; regeneration has respect to the offices of the Holy Spirit pursuant to the dispensation of pardon. Justification absolves from condemnation; regeneration takes away death and inspires life. Justification brings liberty; regeneration supplies power.

Hence the new birth, or regeneration, is the Divine life in infancy. It is holiness of heart, but holiness lacking the great and chief measure consisting of salvation from all sin and the perfection of love. Regeneration bears the same relation to full redemption that infancy does to manhood, discipline to culture, feebleness to might, tuition to knowledge, and imperfection to maturity and completeness. Such being the relation of the two states, holiness can no more be separated from regeneration than the full currents of vitality in robust manhood can declare themselves unrelated to the feeble flow of blood in infant veins.

It must be remembered, however, that the language employed by Christ is figurative, and hence cannot be interpreted with strict literalness.

The new creature, or spiritual birth, is not the creation of entity out of a nonentity, but the reproduction of excellence in a living and responsible being, where it had been lost. It is the resuscitation of dead affections and faculties.

The reigning idea of Christ in his conversation with Nicodemus was, that a man must be the subject of a change, real and spiritual, by the Holy Ghost, in order to enter the kingdom of God; and that we do not transfer or emigrate into that kingdom locally, but are born into it; that is, we make the transition by a process of Divine quickening. But this birth is not a new existence implying finality, like the creation of a sun, the world, or a species. Nor is it a renovation so absolute as to admit of no improvement and perfecting, other than advancement resembling animal growth, or vegetative increase. It is simply an advent into a kingdom where life and cleansing are begun, but not completed -- a work, genuine in its kind and degree, but still mixed with elements of evil and sin. It implies power over sin, but not entire deliverance from its taint and remains. The new birth, being incipient holiness, brings power -- power to dethrone and conquer.

Christ says: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit." Here the two essential elements of sanctification are indicated, cleansing and quickening. This may be the origin of the joint use of the words "water" and "Spirit" in this discourse.

EFFECTS OF REGENERATION

Regeneration signifies the subversion of the dominion of sin. Nothing is more obvious from the text quoted than that a real regeneration is incompatible with sinning. This, however, is not the popular view. Generally the noncommission of sin is attributed by the Church to the sanctified state, while some indulgence in sins respect is allowed to the regenerate. But this is a mistake. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed [power to persist, repress, and overcome] remaineth

in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." *53 If a man lives in the practice of sin, it proves the nonexistence of the regenerate state. He has either lost that grace, or he never attained it. There is ground for serious apprehension that there is wide-spread delusion upon this point. Many persons soothe themselves with the idea that, though they are not sanctified, they are nevertheless regenerate, and need nothing but the finishing touch of slight cleansing at death to pass them into heaven. They do not all recognize the fearful truth, that frequent palpable sin invalidates their claim to a regenerate condition. They entirely forget that the index of this state is victory over sin. The Scripture testimony is explicit: "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him." *54

A man always tells what he is by what he does.

"Finish then Thy new creation;
Pure and spotless let us be
Let us see Thy full salvation,
Perfectly restored in Thee."

ENDNOTES

1 Isa. lx 1

2 John viii, 12

3 John xii, 46

4 John iii 19-21

5 John xii, 35

6 Clement of Alexandria. Mosheim's Church History, pp. 29, 30

7 Augustine. M'Clintock & Strong

8 Calvin's Institutes, book i, chapter xiv, section 3. Foster's Objections to Calvinism, page 30

9 Pope's Theology; vol. iii, pp. 47, 59

10 John xv, 22

11 Rom. xiii, 11

12 2 Cor. vi, 2

13 I Tim. i, 15

14 2 Cor. vii, 9,10

15 Works, vol. i, p. 117. Sermon on Repentance.

16 Rom. xiv, 8

17 Rom. xii, 1

18 James ii, 14

19 Acts vi, 7

20 Gal. vi, 10

21 Lexicon en loco

22 Dwight's Works, vol. ii, p. 326

23 Works, vol. i, pp. 14,15. Sermon on Salvation by Faith

24 Jer. viii, 22

25 Heb. xii, 2

26 Luke xvii, 5

27 Mark xvi, 16

28 Rom. iii, 28.

29 I Kings, xvii, 14

30 John xiv, 1, 6

31 Mark xii, 30; Luke x, 27

32 John xiv, 6

33 Heb. viii, 3

34 Heb. vii, 25

35 Heb. ix, 13, 14

36 Rev. 1, 5

37 2 Peter i, 4

38 Heb. vi, 18

39 (1 John i, 9)

40 Mark xi, 24

41 Matt viii, 7-13

42 Rev. i, 5, 6

43 Heb. x, 29

44 Mark ii, 5,10

45 (1 John iii, 1)

46 Gal. iv, 6

47 Rom. viii, 28, 29

48 1 Cor. vi, 11

49 (2 Cor. vi, 11-18; vii, 1)

50 Eph. iii, 16, 17

51 John xiv, 23

52 (2 Cor. xiii, 14)

53 (1 John iii, 9)

54 (1 John iii, 6)

POSSIBILITIES OF GRACE

By Asbury Lowrey

Chapter 6

"I am the way, the truth, and the life." -- John xiv, 6.

Thou art the Way: -- to thee alone
From sin and death we flee;
And he who would the Father seek,
Must seek him, Lord, by thee.

Thou art the Truth -- thy word alone
True wisdom can impart;
Thou only canst inform the mind,
And purify the heart.

Thou art the Life: -- the rending tomb
Proclaims the conquering arm;
And those who put their trust in thee
Nor death nor hell shall harm.

Thou art the Way, the Truth, the Life;
Grant us that Way to know,
That Truth to keep, that Life to win,
Whose joys eternal flow.

HOLINESS DEFINED

To Sanctify -- The Chief Object of Christ's Mission

In all enterprises and creations which are the product of intelligence there is a chief purpose. Earth, air, water, and sunlight are designed to support animal and vegetable life. The complex mechanism of the body is adapted to accomplish the manifold needs of human existence. The eye is made for vision, the hand to grasp an object, the feet for locomotion. Governments are designed for protection; schools for culture; machinery to save labor and expedite manufactures, or to increase the speed, facility, and dynamic force of transportation. These institutions and structures may have many secondary and collateral objects to accomplish, but they all meet and terminate in a final aim. Like the watch, which has a combination of wheels, pins, pivots, and spring, each adapted to some specific use; but the aggregate purpose of all the parts is to measure time.

It is so with the sacrificial work of our Lord on behalf of men. There is one purpose which is paramount to all others. It is expressed in the word save. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." *1

This was the supreme and reigning thought which originated the scheme of human restoration. The Father saw the world unsaved, and doomed to perish. Therefore, being moved by His infinite love, he gave his Son, not only a ransom for all, but specifically for each, that "whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." *2

This rich passage is retrospective. It takes us back into the dateless past, and acquaints us with the affections of God toward our race, when the plan of human recovery was first under consideration. Here the governing note was struck which runs through all the subsequent variations and developments of redemption.

There are other intentions embraced in the merciful predeterminations of God, but they are secondary and subservient; or they are concomitants, and as such form parts of a grand total resulting in the final consummation of perfect love and full salvation.

Isaiah, perhaps more than any other prophet, was gifted to penetrate the mysteries of the atonement, and to declare the saving effects of Christ's priestly office. Looking down the ages and through the vista of bright, and yet ever brightening, dispensations, he speaks of the sacrificial offering of Jesus as an accomplished fact, and describes its vicarious character and sanctifying virtue with marvelous exactitude and evangelical fullness: "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." *3 This text is a forcible climax, which leads us up, step by step, by three propositions, to the last and crowning ascription, "with his stripes we are healed." The whole efficacy of the passion and sacrifice centered in the "healing" work. The intent of every wound and bruise and chastisement found its accomplishment in the curative process, and state of restored health -- health of soul, high health, health in which the spiritual man is made completely sound and every whit whole.

The supreme and definite end of Christ's mission was revealed to the prophet Malachi. It was not to build empires and govern nations. It was not even to found a Church, and establish an external worship; nor even to enlighten the understanding with successive revelations, and lift as up by visions and ideal forms of perfection. The end proposed and revealed for announcement and record was personal purification: "And who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap : and he shall sit as a refiner and Purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." *4

This original design to save fully is declared, with great directness and force, in the New Testament. With exclusive reference to sin the apostle John says: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." *5 From this text it appears that the utter extermination of sin was in the thought of God at the beginning, and He predetermined its absolute overthrow, through the incarnation of the Son of God. It is not the doctrine of general restitution that is here taught, but the primitive purpose of God to extirpate all sin in this life from

the individual soul. With equal explicitness, entire purification is declared to be the purpose of Christ's death: "Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." *6 It was not the object of the personal gift of Jesus to save us from some iniquities, but from all; that is, to make thorough work, leaving no foul residuum. Not only a salvation from the guilt and reigning power of sin, but also from its defilement and inbeing. Nor is this a mere relative purity, consisting in the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us. It is personal and inwrought. Hence the text reads: "That he might purify unto Himself a peculiar people."

To the same great end, according to Paul, also, Jesus consecrated both the love of His heart and the sacrifice of His life. "As Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it, ... that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." *7 Look at Gethsemane and the cross, and then remember that the object of that tragic scene was the reproduction of holiness. He lavished the affections of His pulsating soul, and freely shed His heart's blood for the Church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it. Beloved reader, let us put ourselves in accord with this primary and high design of Jesus. Let us receive His cleansing and adornment, and ever "walk with Him in white," "not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing."

PARTIAL SANCTIFICATION DISTINGUISHED FROM ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION

Before we enter directly upon the solution of this important question it may be expedient, for the better elucidation of the subject, to notice the obvious distinction which the Scriptures make between sanctification in part and sanctification entire; between a work of grace begun, but incomplete, and a work of grace mature and perfect.

The Bible evidently recognizes stages in personal salvation. Experimental grace begins with the penetration of light into a sin-darkened mind. To this succeed, in order: repentance, justification, the new birth, adoption, and, finally, complete holiness. To denote these several degrees terms are used in the Scriptures with sufficient precision to mark a clear distinction, though not employed with theological discrimination and exactness. The same words are often employed where the nature of the experience is the same in essence to represent both complete and incomplete salvation.

Consecrated persons or things, regenerate believers, and wholly saved men are indiscriminately and interchangeably denominated sanctified or holy. Such latitude of expression is not looseness in doctrine, but the freedom that belongs to general instruction and a style adapted to all classes. The Bible is not a body of systematic divinity, nor a code of dogmatic statements. It is a miscellany of moral teaching; a collocation of fragmentary lessons, all divinely inspired, and containing every principle and precept necessary to salvation.

A great variety of terms, including sometimes the words sanctification and holiness, are used to indicate spirituality; such as crucified, born again, free from sin, justified, washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost. These phrases denote holiness, but not necessarily, nor generally, entire holiness. Usually they signify initial, unfinished sanctification. We think the position is

supportable on Scripture grounds that true believers, born of the Spirit, and loving God, may be, and ordinarily are, the subjects of a residuum of inherent sin.

Let us group together the evidence on which the proposition rests. First. It is a fact of which every Christian is conscious, and of which every Christian gives evidence, that regeneration is a mixed state. It is penitence mixed with obduracy, faith mixed with unbelief, humility mixed with pride, goodwill mixed with envy, meekness mixed with anger, the love of God mixed with the love of the world, the love of our neighbor mixed with haughtiness and the spirit of oppression; it is consecration mixed with selfishness, reservation, and a divided service; it is purity mixed with many inordinate appetites and unclean practices. Nor are these evil affections traceable to external causation. They germinate from within. They are a natural product indigenous to the soul; a spontaneous growth of noxious weeds from living roots and seeds yet deeply imbedded in the heart. If this be so, we are shut up to a single alternative. Either we must disallow the religious pretensions of all professing Christians who are not wholly sanctified, stripping from them every shred of holy attire, or we must concede that a man may acquire a true Christian character, and yet be the subject of no inconsiderable sin.

Now which horn of the dilemma shall we take? Shall we invalidate the professions of all Evangelical Churches, and excommunicate the whole body of believers with one cruel stroke of uncharity, or shall we admit that sin exists in accredited Christians?

Secondly. Another presumptive proof is the fact that the presentation of holiness provokes opposition from the regenerate. How is this to be accounted for? I know it is claimed the opposition is not to the subject, but to the mode of propounding it -- not opposition to the experience, but to the special, eccentric methods employed by the over zealous to secure its immediate attainment.

Now, without any intention to impeach the sincerity of these objectors, we must be allowed to suggest they are mistaken. There is a strong presumption that they do not know what manner of spirit they are of. If their opposition is rightly directed against methods, why do they not adopt other and more effectual ways to lift themselves and the Church into a higher life? Do they make any specific and telling efforts to raise the Church into a clear and well-defined experience of personal holiness? Are they not supremely contented when both the ministry and the people are not committed and pronounced at all on this subject? Nay, more, do they not favor suspension of all special efforts to revive this experience? Is not the meekest testimony on this subject distasteful? Does not all this indicate repugnance to the theme itself? If, then, the opposition is to the substantive matter, and not to the manner, whence can it arise but from sin in the heart? Is it not the nature of all sin to oppose holiness? Must it not be said of the smallest residuum of sin that it is "enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

I do not so much blame men for opposing holiness, as for not seeking sanctification. For, as disease wars against health and comfort, so sin stands instinctively opposed to holiness. As insanity makes a man hate and destroy his own life, so sin impels a man to wage a blind suicidal war against the vital blessing of sanctification. If the heart were perfectly cleansed, it would not be so. Holiness puts the soul in perfect sympathy and accord with God, and all immaculate things. A pure heart in

its radiation to perfect love is like the upturned cups of flowers, and the craving lips of vegetation, which gratefully drink in the distillations of dew and rain that come oft upon it.

Vegetation does not reject the dew because it comes in the night; nor does it repel the rain because it drops from black and frowning clouds. Water is its element, and, therefore, always grateful to its nature, whatever be its source or the time and manner of its coming. It is so with a pure soul. Holiness is its life, and that life is sweet and fondly cherished. It gives to the spirit an elective affinity for all that is pure, an appetite for all that is stainless. The acceptance of holiness by such a soul is not contingent on place or time or methods. These are but the wrapping paper and twine of the precious merchandise of full redemption. They are but the bark and shell and chaff of the real substance. All a sincere seeker wishes to know is this: Will the grace presented satisfy my hunger? Is it full salvation? Is it the enduement of power? Is it the fullness of God? If so, it is just as sweet to my taste if drank from a gourd as from a silver cup. It is the experience which alone is coveted, irrespective of men or methods. Let that be given, and it matters not whether it come in a gorgeous temple or is received at a rustic bench at a camp-meeting.

SIN IN BELIEVERS SCRIPTURE TESTIMONY

The question of sin in believers must be settled by a direct appeal to the Scriptures. Paul, in representing the state of regenerate persons, lays down this general principle, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." *8 This language cannot apply to impenitent sinners, because in them the "lusts of the flesh" triumph and reign. The Spirit is quenched and grieved. The words can only apply to converted persons. This exegesis is supported by four considerations.

First. The parties were Christians who had been taken into brotherhood and fellowship with the apostle.

Secondly. They were living Christians who desired and tried to do good of every kind, but were counteracted by the lusts of the flesh, or the unsanctified appetites and desires of the carnal nature yet remaining.

Third. They had a spiritual life, which they were exhorted to maintain. "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." *9 "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." *10

Fourth. They are admonished to press on to full salvation on the ground that the utter extirpation of carnality is a duty involved in the justified relation, and indispensable to the retention of the Christ-life. Thus, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." *11 That is, carnality in those who belong to Christ is doomed, and to be Christ's in any living sense is to accept and discharge the obligation to be holy. For not to do so is an act of disobedience which abolishes our adopted relation to Christ, as it is written, "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" *12

We reach, then, this conclusion, that in recognized Christians there are two contrary and warring principles, the flesh and the Spirit; and that which is denominated flesh must signify the remains of the carnal mind. And it is salvation from this that destroys death and secures the gift of eternal life. "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." *13

To the same point is the declaration of Paul to the Corinthian Church: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ ... For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" *14 All this is predicated of them, not as sinners, but as Christians. They were brethren. They were babes in Christ; and yet they were adjudged carnal for two reasons:

First. "Envy, and strife, and divisions," existed among them, the natural fruit of remaining sin, and a true picture of the great body of believers.

Second. They were "babes in Christ," that is, they had dishonored Christ and imperiled their justification, by living below the provisions of the atonement and the requirements of the Gospel. What is the legitimate inference? It is this: Not to leave the principles of the doctrine of Christ and go on to perfection, is to generate and foster sin in ourselves. It is to make "provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof." *15 It is "laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God." *16

From which it appears that it is not necessary to lapse into positive sin in order to forfeit the favor of God and taint the soul. It is effectually done by simply neglecting the great salvation. As dust accumulates upon the furniture of a neglected home, where every door and window is closed, so impurities settle upon the soul which does not perfect holiness in the fear of God. The continuance of a justified state hinges upon a subsequent thorough work. And to effect this work is the prime object of Christ's mission. "Whose fan is in His hand, and he will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." *17

Another evidence of existing sin in the regenerate may be deduced from the preceptive parts of the Gospel.

All the Epistles assume the incompleteness of salvation in the Churches; and the whole machinery of the Gospel is directed to supply the deficiency, and perfect what is lacking. Paul says, "And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints." *18 That is, the perfecting of holy persons whose holiness is yet imperfect. This, too, was the object of apostolic preaching: "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." *19

Two direct passages from a countless multitude of texts are sufficient to establish the proposition under consideration: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." *20 The implication is that we are cleansed in part, but not entirely; also holy in part, but not perfectly so.

"The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." *21 The necessary implication of such language is, that the persons under consideration were sanctified in part, but not entirely.

All of this class of texts support the scriptural and Wesleyan hypothesis, that one may be a true believer, a justified person, a child of God, a Christian enjoying a regenerate state, and yet not be saved from all sin.

He is greatly blessed, and richly endowed with the entire cluster of spiritual attributes that compose the character of a saint, and make up the sum of Christian experience; yet the remains of the fleshly nature lurk within; the virus of inbred sin is not wholly expunged from the soul. Mr. Wesley says: "The moment a sinner is justified his heart is cleansed in a low degree, but yet he has not a clean heart in the full and proper sense 'till he is' made perfect in love." *22

The work of entire holiness, then, is subsequent to a stage of initial holiness, and essentially the same in quality, but widely different in measure and completeness. The new birth is holiness in embryo and infancy; entire sanctification is holiness in manhood and maturity. But while entire holiness is perfective and crowning, we must not fall into the mistake of supposing it is only a finishing touch. It is a mighty change, both radical and ripening. Manhood, as compared with infancy, is almost a recreation. An infant is a pitiable object of weakness and ignorance -- the body has no strength, the mind seems a blank. Its life is made up of vacant looks and aimless motions. How different is manhood! So the great work of mature holiness involves the renovation, requickening, and development of every attribute of the mental and moral nature. Nor is it a small modicum of sin either which is removed by entire sanctification. The enormous defects in Christian life, as exhibited by the best Churches, show that sin is deep-seated and widespread in those who profess to enjoy religion, and are constantly recognized as persons who have passed from death unto life. A living tree may contain much dead matter.

Dead affections and unclean appetites are the common characteristics of Church members who claim to be justified, and are reputed pious. How vast and profound, then, must be the work of thorough sanctification.

WHY CONVERSION IS NOT ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION

As stated elsewhere, God saves in proportion to our preparation to receive. He wisely adapts his bestowments as regards time, kind, and measure to our capacity and degree of enlightenment. As he has taken his own time and way for the education and discipline of the fallen race, preparatory to the introduction of Christianity, so he has established his own order of sequences in the stages of personal salvation. Viewed as a simple prerogative of sovereignty, he could sanctify wholly in justification, or before, in every case. Indeed, he might, as an act of independent power, sanctify in repentance, or in any preceding point of a sinner's career of sinfulness; but he has not chosen to do so. God has devised and ordained a policy and order in the salvation of men. How far he has been influenced in doing so, by moral consideration and necessities, it is not wise or needful to speculate. It is enough for us to know that God does give the morning twilight before the effulgence of noon; that he does require the cultivation of the soil before casting seed into it; that he does make hunger

an antecedent condition of healthy feeding; in short, that he does move on to the utter destruction of sin in the world and in the heart by successive stages, each progressive, and each instantaneous; progressive, as regards preparation; instantaneous, as regards actual accomplishment. But in neither case is there any thing more done for the subject than he is prepared to receive, both intelligently and cordially.

The justified man is sanctified in proportion to the deepest conscious want and the highest conception of holiness entertained by him at the moment of conversion. He is not entirely sanctified because his new and imperfect vision does not yet take in those high altitudes of Christian privilege and obligation. The light may be sufficient to enable him to see afar off, to introspect and penetrate deeply; but the eye of his soul has not become adjusted to its brilliancy. On this subject he sees men as trees walking. There is a little remaining film on his eyes.

There is a sweep and penetration of view with respect to both sin and holiness to which the young convert is a stranger. He is a child of God, and has eyes to see, but, like those of the natural child, they are somewhat vacant and weak. He will be saved if he dies in this state, because he has graduated his experience up to the light and comprehension of his childhood. Though not saved from all inbred sin, yet saved from all that is reckoned as sin to him by the merciful judgment of God.

This state of acceptance continues until the Spirit reveals to his consciousness the subtle admixture of sin in the affections, the tastes, the tempers, and the governing principles and motives of life and character. When this light comes, and come it will, unless there is a perversion or backsliding, then holiness must be sought, attained, and lived, or justification is forfeited.

It is in this way the three paradoxical propositions are completely harmonized:

First. Justification is a title to heaven.

Second. Justification does not imply actual salvation from all sin, or, as Wesley says, a clean heart, in the full sense of the word.

Third. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

Every regenerate person is saved at the time of conversion from all moral obliquities and evils, which at that moment he sees and feels to be sin. And as no sin is knowingly or willfully cherished or allowed in his heart or life, the incompleteness of his personal salvation is not imputed to him as sin. The time of this ignorance God winks at, and accordingly saves in the event of death for the sake of Christ. But when the revealings of the Spirit and truth, pursuant to their nature and office, shall discover the remains of sin, to his cognitions and consciousness, or to his eyes and conscience, as mixed with the affections of his heart, the tempers of his mind, the acts of his life, and the whole tendency of his nature, then "God commands all men everywhere to repent," and holiness is made a condition both of acceptance with God and of eternal life.

For now the turpitude of sin, and its repugnance to God, are seen as never before. Sin becomes in the estimation "exceedingly sinful." Now this is a new experience, requiring a new and more

extended salvation. It is usually preceded by deep conviction, self-loathing, intense desire and "groaning after it." And such an experience corresponds with our own soul-life and spiritual history. When we sought religion, it was not from a profound conviction of the inherent vileness of sin, or of its prevalence or havoc in our nature, but from a tender and sorrowful sense of our perilous lack and great need of religion; and religion presented itself to us chiefly as something to make one happy here, and to prepare its subjects to escape hell and enter heaven. We believe this to be a common feeling, especially of those who seek salvation in the twilight of religious knowledge; or in the heyday of youth, and the buoyancy and hopefulness of early manhood.

Religion presents itself to the untutored more as an acquisition than a cleansing. But when the light accompanying justification comes, then the heinous nature, the foul aspect, and the pernicious touch of sin is disclosed. He discovers that the vile thing has had the effect to taint the whole being, and to pervert and prostitute all his powers. On the other hand, he sees the standard of evangelical holiness, high and stringent. It is immaculate and authoritative. It addresses itself to him as no less commanding than attractive and inviting. Now, measuring his attainments by this standard, under the new ellipse of light, he finds himself mournfully wanting. Analyzing his affections, tempers, tastes, and governing principles and motives, and tracing each out into practical development, he finds the infection of sinfulness still adhering to his soul. He sees impurities implanted of which he was not aware at the time of his conversion. They have become repulsively visible to his eye, and painfully sensible to his soul, by the influx of light attendant upon regeneration, and other subsequent blessings. Mr. Wesley explains this result by a figure. A room, he says, may appear to be entirely free from dust and impurities, but pass a beam of light into it under certain conditions, and a thousand motes will become visible. It is so with the justified while not fully saved. If he keeps his heart and mind in contact with the Spirit and truth, the impurities must be seen and felt, and thus supplemental and perfective holiness becomes a necessity. And if he withdraw his heart and mind from the Light, he incurs guilt and dies. So in either case it becomes a necessity to "perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord."

WHAT IS IT TO BE ENTIRELY SANCTIFIED?

We may open the definition of the great gift by Asserting that the work of grace, of which the heart is the subject, has its origin, progress, and completion in this life.

There will be advancement, no doubt, in the future state, but it will be advancement in exaltation, light, wisdom, and glory -- a rising to higher types of moral excellence, pursuant to the saving work done here. There can be no progress in salvation proper in heaven or after death. Progressive salvation implies the presence of evil and danger. These belong to this life; in heaven they vanish. "Sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

There will, also, be increase after purity is attained in this life, but it is the increase of Divine life and knowledge and power -- the increase of perfect love, not so much in quality as in measure.

But, according to the Scriptures, there is a point of culmination in grace that belongs to this life -- a state in which, according to Paul, we "stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.*23

This finished work of salvation from sin we call entire sanctification, or perfect holiness. It is known by various titles and phrases in the Bible: such as "perfection," "sanctification," "perfect love," "pure in heart," "dead to sin," "crucified with Christ," "Christ liveth in me," "mind of Christ," "partakers of the Divine nature," "free from sin," "filled with the Spirit," "loving God with all the soul, mind, and strength," "cleansed from all sin, and from all unrighteousness," "cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit," "perfecting holiness in the fear of God," "sanctify you wholly," "that the body of sin might be destroyed," "that He might destroy the works of the devil," "purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver," "from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you."

All these phrases have substantially the same signification. When one is defined in general terms, the definition may be applied to any and all the rest with strict propriety.

Let us look, first, at the negative aspect of the question.

Perfection does not mean infallibility or a perfectly faultless condition.

Infallibility belongs only to God, and it is arrogance, not to say blasphemy, for any mortal to claim it. In like manner a faultless habit can be predicated of God only. Frailty inheres in human nature, and defectiveness in practice is unavoidable. This inability springs not only from the limitations to which finite natures are subject, but also from mental and physical weaknesses entailed upon us by original sin. And these infirmities it is not the province of redemption to repair in this life. But faults are not ins when they arise from hereditary causation, which it is not the purpose of God to remove before death. They are condoned in advance by the atonement.

Nor does holiness signify that far-on approximation toward the perfections of Divinity which constitutes the crown of angels.

Angels are understood to be a superior order of intelligences, who have ever maintained a sinless integrity. No lapse has ever weakened their powers or tarnished their character. They poise on virgin wings, and serve and sing with unimpaired vigor. Hence the fire of their affection must burn with an intensity, and their service and worship must be performed with a delicate precision and exactitude not possible to man in this life. It is a degree of perfection reserved to the day when we shall be joined to the "general assembly and church of the first-born ... the spirits of just men made perfect." A reparation of the damaged spirit itself must take place before the highest altitudes in devotion are reached.

Again: perfect salvation from sin does not comprise such an exemption from physical evil and infirmity as belonged to the parents of our race in their primitive state.

Our first parents were happy strangers to disease, pain, and death, and all the weaknesses consequent upon such disorders. The body was a stimulus to the mind, and the mind a prop and replenisher of the body. They were reciprocal helps and complements of each other. As they acted one upon the other, no exhaustion, as now, was the result, but a continual flow of health and happiness, which made life a luxury. Not so now, nor can it be. That original soundness and strength

which belonged to our primitive condition cannot be regained now by the holiest men on earth. Nay, verily, that religion which lifts us so high, and saves us from so much, does not at present relieve us from suffering and death. Nor does it on this side the grave entirely take off the embargo and counteracting pressure of disabilities put upon the body and mind by original sin.

The body remains a clog to the mind, and the mind is an engine perpetually wearing down the body. Holiness improves the health and grace of the body, and also enlivens and reinvigorates the mind, but it does not bring back universal health to either. Exceptional cases of healing may take place now, as in apostolic times, in response to faith and prayer; but the expulsion of all disease and pain from the earth is not the immediate office of grace. We have no promissory right to expect that such an exemption may be a universal concomitant of holiness, however exalted and empyrean the state.

Another observation is proper at this point. As there is a close connection between the body and mind, the latter may become sluggish and inactive, and the soul heavy and depressed, when no guilt has been incurred. All may be attributed to the disorders of the body. On the other hand, the mind may droop and flag under its own weakness. But this is no sin. It brings no guilt. It may bring sorrow and regret, but no condemnation. What a man cannot help he is not counted a sinner for not helping. It may be a result of original sin, but the atonement of Christ, which intercepted the penalty of Adam's transgression, and all its entailments, prevents its condemnatory application to the helpless and non-consenting subject.

Further, completeness in all the will of God does not involve perfect knowledge and freedom from misjudgment and mistake.

Christian perfection is a great endowment of light, and effects a wonderful readjustment of the mental faculties. It takes the warp and twist out of a man, and makes the crooked straight. It strikes the scales from his eyes, and rectifies his dim and distorted vision. It reveals the true nature and relation of things, and so educates him that he does not any longer call light darkness, or darkness light, or sweet bitter, or bitter sweet.

In short, entire sanctification is that state in which "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." *24

But still we cannot claim for this pre-eminently luminous estate perfect knowledge, much less unerring reason and insight. Angels are not perfect in wisdom. Adam did not know good or evil in his pristine state. What, then, shall we say of man in his damaged condition? The horizon of his vision is very narrow, and all his faculties weak and irresolute. Subtle and insidious error mingles in all his judgments, mars all his works, weakens all his reasonings, limits and misdirects his investigations, and often leads to a faulty and defective practice. Put the lack of perfect knowledge is not sin, for such wisdom is an impossibility. All men must say with David, "It is high, I cannot attain unto it." *25 David did not try it. It belongs only to the Omniscient.

Nor is an erroneous opinion flowing from incomplete knowledge a sin. It is wrong, but not a sinful wrong. So the mistakes which may follow are wrongs, but wrongs which do not induce guilt. But we must guard this point with the recollection that entire holiness is incompatible with voluntary ignorance. A sanctified soul in willful ignorance of the truth as it is in Jesus is a solecism -- a contradiction. What is holiness but light -- light as it shines in the face of Christ, and pours from the Sun of Righteousness? What is it to be sanctified but to be filled with Him who is the light of the world and the life of men? What is it but to know "the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" *26 -- "to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God?" *27

Holiness, being a purified appetite, begets the love of truth, and inspires us to seek it by a diligent use of all the means which Heaven has ordained for the disenthralment of the mind and heart from error and mistake, and the acquisition of unmixed truth as it is in Jesus. It is the nature of holiness, like vegetation, to bend toward the light, to grow in that direction, that, in accordance with its refined taste, it may feed and thrive on sunbeams. It is only by thus "walking in the light as he is in the light" that "the blood of Jesus Christ" can and does "cleanse from all sin."

Put a defective practice resulting from a defective mind or body, or from a mistake in judgment or deficiency in knowledge, will not be imputed to us as sin, so long as the intention is pure, and there has been no culpable neglect of those Scriptures which are able to make us wise unto salvation, and of that Spirit which is given to lead us into all truth.

Does this high state of purity secure exemption from temptation?

It is not in the power of holiness to render its possessor inaccessible to evil assaults. A perpetual liability in this respect is an unchangeable circumstance of probation. If holiness in the highest degree were inconsistent with temptation, then was Jesus unholy, for he was tempted, and Adam was created impure, for he was tempted to evil and carried away by it in his primitive state. Surely if freedom from temptation be a test of entire sanctification, then is there not a holy man on earth, for all have been assailed, and often most sorely when nearest the cross. The apostle addressed his brethren, whom he had just congratulated as heirs of a pure and fadeless inheritance, in the following strain: "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations." From this we must infer that temptation is not only possible, but needful. In our state of trial it may be required, perhaps, as a test of fidelity and patience. It seems to be God's permissive instrument to try and perfect the graces.

This exalted state of grace does not preclude the possibility of a relapse into sin and of final apostasy

Power to sin is a fearful attribute of a free and responsible being. It was this that underlaid the original fall, and made it possible for Adam to swerve; it was this that put conditionality into the state of angels, and allowed their apostasy; and it is this that makes the fate of every man tremble through life, in the scale of contingency. The sanctified state is no absolute exemption from this liability. If holiness does not take away our freedom, nor repeal our responsibility, then the abstract

capability of sinning belongs to the holiest man. It is an element of his constitution. It is not sin, but the faculty to sin, or not to sin, as we may freely choose. And this power is put into our mental structure, not to imperil a pure state, but that we may be meritorious and rewardable creatures. There is no virtue in good acts if they are necessitated. But free power put forth in the voluntary avoidance of all sin is a holy act and rewardable.

But it must be conceded that entire sanctification brings with it a degree of security that does not attach to any lower state of grace. It is a certified assurance and safety, approximating a state in which it is impossible to sin and fall. Holiness is a shield, a coat of mail, a fortress for the heart. The shield may be broken, the coat of mail may be pierced, the fortress may be stormed, and the soul perchance despoiled of its divine graces. But this can never occur unless we first cast away our "confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." A sanctified man is sealed unto the day of redemption; he has "an unction from the Holy One," and knoweth all things; he is "rooted and grounded in love;" he is "established unblamably in holiness;" he is in the condition prayed for in the benediction: "the God of all grace, who hath called 'is unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect stablish, strengthen, settle you."

It was with direct reference to the indissoluble clasp of love, that mutually binds the believer to God and God to the believer, that brought these exultant words from the lips of Paul:

"Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. viii, 33-39.

SANCTIFICATION IS NOT THE DESTRUCTION OF THE PASSIONS

Passion is an element of our nature. It may be denominated a faculty. Webster calls it "Capacity for emotion." It is that impulsive force natural to every man, known as strong feeling, which manifests itself in vehement desire or violent aversion. Man is a compound of such passions. They are natural to him. His religious character neither creates nor destroys them. Love, anger, fear, ambition, are passions, and without these we could not be human.

In animals, no less than in man, they are protective instincts. The animal loves its young and, therefore, protects and feeds it. A sense of self-preservation seems instinctive in all animals. Accordingly they resent encroachments and injury. Animals and men alike fear evils, and thus the passion becomes an admonition to avert them. So of ambition, it prompts its subject to be, and seek the best. It is a proper stimulus and inspiration.

Nor could we be Christian without these passions. The love faculty is the basis of all true worship, the passion of anger is brought into use in hating sin and "every false way." Fear, in the sense of awe and reverence toward God, is the beginning of wisdom, and leads to a circumspect life. Ambition chastened by grace enters into every exalted aim. In the realm of our constitutional nature sanctification does much, but not in the way of eradication. Its office is twofold: First, to expunge sin from every motion and impulse of the whole army of unreasoning impulses. Second, to regulate, restrain, refine, and exalt all impulsive instincts.

It does not extirpate nor cripple a single constituent faculty. Nor does it blunt the sensibilities nor extinguish legitimate desire.

The office of holiness, in the empire of natural appetites and passions, is to subjugate all to the absolute dominion of grace, and keep all within the sphere of lawful indulgence.

In short, holiness does not demolish or upset our being, but safely directs the chariot of our susceptibilities, and serves as a bridle, a check-rein and whip for every blind impulse. It does not take away the inflammability of our dispositions, but precludes strange and destructive fires from breaking out in them. It is at once an insurance against the work of the incendiary from without, and the danger of spontaneous combustion within.

The passions of the soul thus sanctified and subordinated are great and necessary forces of usefulness. A man without passion is a man without energy and a Christian without zeal. But he who is full of sensibility and impulsion, is full of fire and enterprise. His religion takes on a cast of enthusiastic and heroic daring. Collins, the first missionary sent by the Methodist Episcopal Church to China, impulsively proposed himself as a candidate. Bishop Janes wrote him that the Missionary Board had not thought of establishing the mission, nor made any appropriation for it, "And there is no money in the treasury to send you." Collins replied: "Get me a position before the mast, and these strong arms will pull me to China, and support me when I get there."

Nor can grace altogether compensate for the loss of proper tone and temper. Fire cannot produce a blaze where there is no combustible material. It may cause great heat, but no flame. So grace cannot inflame impassive nature to any great extent. It may create intense warmth, perhaps a glare like that of heated iron, but there will be no tongues of fire. Passion serves as grit, and grit, when sanctified, gives edge to character, power to words, and significance to voice and gesture.

But it must not be forgotten that passion lies close along the line of our great peril. More Christians trip and fall through passion than from any other cause. It is an explosive, and may ignite at any time, prove destructive. Like oil, gas, and electricity, which, properly confined and regulated, give a mild, beautiful light, but when carelessly exposed become instruments of ruin and death. The sphere of sanctified passion is God Himself.

"Thou art the sea of love,
Where all my pleasures roll:
The circle where my passions move,

And center of my soul."

Nor will this restraint and regulation of passion be a violent process. It will be spontaneous, natural, easy, and delightful.

"My passions hold a pleasing reign,
When love inspires my breast, --
Love, the divinest of the train,
The sovereign of the rest."

HOLINESS IS NOT TRANSPORT

That is, it does not require as a test of its presence and reality continual ecstasy.

Rapt emotions may frequently arise from a sense of full salvation, but as they are common to a lower stage of grace, we must not regard them as evidences and exclusive fruits of sanctification. The sea of perfect love is not always swept with a tempest of excitement. The life of the sanctified is often a sailing on a placid surface, beneath unclouded suns, where the gentle breezes of heaven produce motion without commotion.

But we must not go to the opposite extreme, and take the position that a perfect work of grace has nothing to do with feeling. Religion is not torpor. Holiness makes a direct appeal to our sensibilities, and locates itself chiefly in our emotional nature. As a general rule, we may say, what a man does not feel he does not possess. It is a contradiction for a person to say he possesses a joyous gift of which he is not conscious. Consciousness is a sensibility of something realized -- a feeling corresponding with fact, and fact producing feeling. The sensibilities are the media through which God makes Himself known to us, and the whole emotional nature responds in gladness to the gift of His presence.

To teach, therefore, that we may have holiness without feeling is decidedly cold comfort. It is making man nothing more than a stoic; or an organism of insensate mind and matter. It teaches that holiness steals upon us unconsciously, like chloroform upon the nerves, destroying sensibility. The truth is, a sanctified man's life is an unbroken hymn of praise and thanksgiving. His feelings are always hopeful and jubilant as connected with Christ, and in their relations to his personal redemption. Clouds may come, but they do not intervene between God and his soul. He may pass a whole life of conflict, trial, and suffering, like Daniel, Paul, Luther, and thousands more whose sufferings never gained notoriety, and yet in the midst of all, and continuously, in spite of all, he sings a psalm of victory. It is not victory in the sense of putting an end to his warfare, for no one fights greater battles than the best equipped soldiers. The victory which the sanctified celebrates is that of a succession of triumphs. He comes out of every engagement shouting, "Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place." *28

Therefore let no devout person suppose he is not in special favor with God because he is visited with affliction. The best gold, in the estimation of the Lord himself, is tried gold. hence he teaches

that the "trial of our faith is more precious than gold that perisheth." And that man is pronounced blessed who "endures temptation," for the reason that "when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life."

Indeed, so far is chastisement from being an indication of Divine disfavor in the case of the sanctified, that it often becomes an evidence that God loves them with a father's love and is dealing with them as sons. It is written: "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" *29

Moreover, we are taught, in the same connection, that the object of these visitations is that we may be partakers of "His holiness." How could the Lord more convincingly demonstrate His paternal affection than by using means for such a purpose? He does not spare us of chastisement, but He makes it "work in us the peaceable fruits of righteousness."

Nor are we at liberty to say that our prayers and faith are not responded to on the part of God, because He does not visibly and at once deliver us from affliction.

God has three ways of answering prayer and rewarding faith according to the object sought and the interests of the subject: First. Instantaneous. When the object is the cure of sin, the answer is direct and immediate, and in proportion to faith. Second. Gradual and by the use of means. When the end sought is deliverance from affliction, and the Lord has a purpose of discipline to accomplish, he may delay the consummation of his work. Third. By an equivalent. When the good sought is the cure of the body, or the immediate removal of some disability or pain, and the Lord sees that the best results can be obtained by prolonged suffering, He may defer deliverance to the end of life. Put in such a case he never fails to supply an equivalent in the form of sustaining grace. But as God is love, we can afford to let Him have His own way with us, and adopt any one of these three methods.

Having made known all our requests unto the Lord with prayer and supplication and thanksgiving, we can afford to nestle down in the lap of resignation and say, "The will of the Lord be done."

HOLINESS IS NOT A NEW RELIGION DIFFERING IN ESSENCE FROM THAT WHICH IS GENERATED IN THE SOUL BY THE NEW BIRTH, OR THE PROCESS OF REGENERATION

The substratum of all experimental grace subsequent to justification is the same. It is love, perfect or imperfect. From the horizon to the zenith, from the twilight to the effulgence of day, the substance is love -- love to God and to our neighbor. Any religion that does not include these two elements is spurious. And yet we must not suppose this concession rubs out all distinction between justification with its concomitants, adoption and regeneration and entire sanctification. There is a great difference between perfect and imperfect love. One is initial, the other completed; one is victory over sin subdued, the other victory over sin exterminated and cast out. One is loving God feebly and often coldly, the other is loving Him with all the soul, mind, heart, and strength. One is love mixed more or less with earthly and forbidden loves, the other is a simple unmixed state of the affections. It is

loving God out of a pure heart fervently: a heart so pure that the possessor of it, with open face, sees and enjoys God in a sense that the partially saved cannot. There is film on our vision until the heart is perfectly pure. Sin acts also as a paralysis on the affections. It clips and weighs down their wings, but the expulsion of all sin disentangles the pinions of the soul, and sets fire to the heart, and puts burning fervor into the devotions. The difference between partial and full salvation is all the difference between a sluggish, turbid stream and the deep limpid flow of crystal waters. It is equal to the difference between a smoldering, half-smothered fire and a grate full of glowing coals.

The regenerate state of grace involves all the fruits of the Spirit which center, grow, and shine in the Christian character; but they are in a weak and crippled condition on account of remaining sin. They are divine forces laboring under disabilities. They are like plants choked and enfeebled by being surrounded with wild and noxious growths, which suck away their life and impoverish the soil. The regenerate soul is not cleansed from all sin, while the fully sanctified man is. The difference, therefore, between the two states is nothing less than the difference between sin and holiness so far as the dissimilarity extends.

Sin may be predicated of persons not entirely sanctified, in three respects:

First. Positive sin remaining in the heart, and sin in the life, whenever the subject allows himself to be under the control of that lurking depravity.

Second. Negative sin, in not loving God with all the heart, and not being cleansed from all unrighteousness, when God has provided for, and now positively commands us to do, these things.

Third. Sin in coming short in the measure of our usefulness for the lack of power by not availing ourselves of that grace which makes even a dull man a flame of fire, and a weak one "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." As it is written, "He that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God." *30

It must not be forgotten that there is sin in living below the costly provisions of the atonement, and the direct requirements of the Gospel. It is not enough to have religion in order to be guiltless, but we must have it in such a degree of usefulness as will measure up to the possibilities of grace in each case, and all the time. The point to be maintained is a pure heart, an unsinning life, and a loving service progressively commensurate with our ever increasing capacity and light.

This rule will show a disparity among entirely sanctified persons. Capacity and circumstances will make the difference. This fact should caution us not to pronounce all persons un sanctified who do not measure up to the highest standard in our estimation in sanctity of life and propriety of behavior. It may turn out that the gifted critic is held to a more exact rule and higher responsibility than the poor subject of his criticisms. The man of five talents may make a greater show and seem more perfect, but he is no more sanctified than the man who serves God with all his might with one talent. "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." *31

The same seed planted in the same soil may produce heads of wheat of different size and quality, and all because one is grown on a weaker straw than the other. This rule will also show gradations in the sanctification of the same individual in successive periods of his spiritual life. A perfect Christian is not a beautiful statue of cold, immutable perfection, but a picture that may be retouched by the Divine hand, and brought perpetually to a higher finish by being "changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

The words and phrases, "Perfecting of the saints;" "Maketh increase to the edifying of itself in love;" "Perfecting holiness in the fear of God," indicate degrees of improvement which stretch far beyond the point of salvation from all sin. It is an endless refinement and sublimation of our moral nature -- an everlasting approach and assimilation to the Divine model, which is God himself.

There is another point of contrast between those who are born again and those who are "cleansed from all unrighteousness." It is possible for both classes to sin. But when the regenerate sin, it is by the force of free determination prompted by whatever of sin remains in the heart, while in those who have been sanctified wholly, sin, if committed, comes to pass by the misuse of freewill, subject to external temptation and such guiltless infirmities as still belong to our yet unrestored condition. The other words, the regenerate are overcome and conquered by the uprising of an internal enemy, confederate with adverse influences from without. But the sanctified, if overtaken in a fault, are captured and slain, by the incursions of an outside foe, who, taking advantage of our infirmities and fallibility, stirs disloyalty and rebellion in a pure heart.

Nor are the words of the apostle John incompatible with this view, wherein he says: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." *32

I am quite sure that the apostle did not intend to teach by these words that the new birth placed its subject beyond the possibility of sinning. Such a proposition would be contrary to other Scriptures and to universal experience. But he did intend to teach that converting grace produces an unsinning life, and in itself can produce nothing else. To be more explicit, he meant to convey the idea that a regenerate man who steadfastly yields himself up to the dominion of renewing grace can no more fail to avoid sin, than a seed can fail to produce its kind when submitted to the conditions of germination. His seed of sin-subduing grace remaining within him produces its natural effect, an unsinning life. As monarch of the soul, it holds our proneness to sin in check, and forbids the commission of sin. But the moment he allows the repressive force of grace to be lifted, he sins; and he sins in consequence of a tendency to sin remaining within him.

Until fully saved there are two masters in the soul of a believer, each seeking supremacy: one is initial holiness; the other, a residuum of sin. And St. Paul clearly teaches that we may alternately place ourselves by the power of choice under either of these masters. He says: "now ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness." To the same effect is the pointed exhortation: "As ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness." *33 The point to be gained is the utter rout and expulsion of all internal foes, and then to keep ourselves under the absolute mastery of

"righteousness unto holiness." Thus we see that, while all experimental religion is a unit, having the same substratum, to wit, love, yet perfect holiness towers like an Andes above all other experiences and stages of grace.

HOLINESS NOT INCOMPATIBLE WITH GROWTH

We may observe again that the most exalted state in holiness does not supersede growth in grace.

Indeed, this great gift can only be maintained by a steady progress in all that constitutes its nature and essence. holiness is life, but life which is not lived is no life at all. And life is not a stand-still. It means either thrift or decay. Holiness is incipient resemblance to God; it is conformity to his will and image; it is putting on God and becoming a partaker of his nature; it is drinking of his fullness and walking with him in white. In such a process it is evident there can be no limit. It is an eternal travel toward an ever-receding boundary.

In this life, also, growth in holiness must be real, perceptible, and constant. It is a condition of its retention. The Christian is a velocipede; he must go ahead, or fall over. Like a bird, with a soaring power and instincts, he must "mount up with wings as eagles," or lose his capacity to fly.

But it is important to examine into the nature of spiritual growth. Perhaps no word has been more misunderstood and misapplied than growth. Some will have it that to grow in grace is equivalent to getting sanctified. Not so. Growth is a figure taken from animal and vegetable life, and on this account can have only a limited application to Christian progress, for the contrasts are quite as marked as the analogies. A vegetable naturally grows to maturity, and then as naturally begins to decay and die. The same is true of animals. Now there is nothing analogous to the Christian life in this natural and necessary dilapidation and death in vegetation and animals. The Christian is an evergreen: "his leaf shall not wither." The well of water in him is perennial, and is ever "springing up into everlasting life." There is no decrepitude attaching to the inner man, and no limit to his growth. Therefore animal growth and vegetable thrift bear only a faint resemblance to the increase of spiritual life.

Again, growth implants no new quality in the growing matter. It only develops the properties belonging to its substance. From year to year and age to age it is but a succession of alternate life and death, or course of waste and decay, followed by the reproduction of its exact kind.

There may be better or worse specimens, but no difference in properties. On the other hand, saving grace produces a new creature: "old things pass away, and behold all things become new." Note, also, growth does not cure disease in animals, nor remove rottenness from vegetables. How often do we see decay and growth going on in the same tree. Wherever there is a bruised spot, or dead bit of integument, growth can never overcome it, nor put the smallest measure of life into it. The same is true of animal substance. Growth and disease progress side by side, with no counteraction of one by the other. By parity of reasoning it is impossible for the process of growth in grace to work corruption out of the soul, or infuse a new element of life into it. It is contrary to the law of grace to change the character of any thing. You may take a cut of crabapple and graft it into an apple-tree of the finest quality, but it will not produce apples; so obstinate and unchangeable

is the law of growth that it will yield nothing but the crabapple. All that growth can do is to act on what it finds, and develop inherent qualities.

Hence there can be no such thing as growth into holiness, for that would imply a change of kind which is contradicted and rendered impossible by the immutable law of growth. Before, therefore, the soul can properly grow in holiness, the cion of holiness must be grafted into it. The conclusion reached is this: As growth in vegetation is simply the germination of living seeds put in the ground, and the development of sound and healthy integuments and branches corresponding with the nature of the seed, so growth in grace is nothing other than the unfolding and the increase of a deposit of Divine life planted in the soul by the sanctifying Spirit of God. Accordingly it is written, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

In coincidence with this view it is important to observe the passage so often quoted and so often misapplied, to wit: "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." This means growth in a state of grace, not growth out of sin into a condition of grace.

The signification of grace, as here used, is indicated by the second member of the precept, "and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." It is a command to increase our knowledge of Christ, which presupposes that we know Him as Lord and Saviour, and enjoy his grace. It is, therefore, progress in what we have, and not the expulsion of remaining sin, and the acquisition of something new and different in kind. The parallel passage in Col. i, 10, supports this view: "Being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." In the second chapter of the same epistle, and nineteenth verse, we have a recurrence of the same idea: "Having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God."

Paul, writing to the Ephesians, explains growth in these words: "Maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." It is increase, therefore, by way of building up in love, which is already attained, and not a transition out of a partial sinfulness into perfect holiness.

Our Lord's vine illustration is to the same effect: "Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit." It is not that they should change the species by growing thorns and thistles into grapevines, but to increase the vintage of the grape. This growth, rightly construed, is a synonym of increase. And growth, in this sense, is applicable without limit to every attribute of Christian character. Justification may be confirmed, adoption may be enriched, regeneration may be brightened, the witness of the Spirit may be intensified, and holiness may become more and more abundant and powerful.

That growth in grace may be predicated of the holiest condition is evident from three facts.

First. Our mental and moral capacities are expansive and improvable. Like two divergent lines which take in more space in proportion to their projection, so the mental and moral capabilities will broaden as the ages roll on. The power to love, to understand, to comprehend and enjoy, will find no limit. The going forth of the mind and soul will be ever as the morning. The compass of thought

and affection will grow wider and clearer, stronger and warmer, as the brightness of redemption shall continue to unfold.

Another fact is the immeasurable range and fullness of grace: "Where sin abounded grace did much more abound." Sin is far-reaching, but grace sweeps around, and oversteps the widest circumference of evil. It was the boast of John the Baptist that Christ was "full of grace and truth, and of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." *34

Paul calls the "riches of Christ" "unsearchable." His love "passeth knowledge." He speaks of our comprehending an indefinite breadth, length, depth, and height. He then perfectly confounds our thought by declaring that God will "do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." *35

In such a range of life and glory there must be room for growth. In the light of such provisions well may St. Paul say to puny Christians, "Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels." *36 And in the presence of such infinite preparation it is not marvelous that our Lord should reprove lean and delinquent disciples by saying, "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." *37

As a third fact we must not forget that holiness is conducive to growth. Indeed, it is the indispensable condition of unobstructed thrift. Holiness is health, and health is necessary to robust life. Sickly persons may grow in what they have, but they will grow in a sickly way. Cure the disease of sin, and remove the decay of formality, and take out all the rottenness of inbred sin, and let the "Sun of Righteousness arise" upon your soul "with healing in his wings," and then "ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall."

"Redemption is the science and the song
Of all eternity; archangels day
And night into its glories look; the saints,
The elders round the throne, old in the years
Of heaven, examine it perpetually,
And every hour get clearer, ampler views
Of right and wrong, see virtue's beauty more,
And daily love with a more perfect love."

ENDNOTES

1 Matt. 1, 21.

2 John iii, 16.

3 Isa. liii, 5

4 Mal. iii, 2, 3

5 (1 John iii, 8)

6 Titus ii, 14

7 Eph. v, 25-27

8 Gal. v, 17

9 Gal. v, 25

10 Gal. v, 16

11 Gal. v, 24

12 Luke vi, 46

13 Rom. viii, 6

14 (1 Cor. iii, 1, 3)

15 Rom. xiii, 14

16 Heb. vi, 1

17 Matt iii, 12

18 Eph. iv, 11-12

19 Col. i, 28

20 (2 Cor. vii, 1)

21 (1 Thess. v, 23)

22 Wesley's Works.

23 Col iv, 12

24 (2 Cor. iv, 6)

25 Psa. cxxxix, 6

26 Col. i, 27

27 Eph. iii, 18,19

28 (2 Cor. ii, 14)

29 Heb. xii, 7, 9

30 Zech. xii, 8

31 (2 Cor. viii, 12)

32 (1 John iii, 9)

33 Rom. vi, 16, 19

34 John i, 14, 16

35 Eph. iii, 20

36 (2 Cor. vi, 12)

37 John xvi, 24

POSSIBILITIES OF GRACE

By Asbury Lowrey

Chapter 7

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Isaiah viii.20.

Be it according to Thy word;
Redeem me from all sin;
My heart would now receive Thee, Lord:
Come in, my Lord, come in!

POSITIVE HOLINESS

Christian holiness, or holiness in men, as a product of redeeming grace, is a pure state of heart and mind, joined with and causing a pure life and character. Measured by the Gospel law, it is a sinless condition. Perfect love being the sum of Gospel requirements, it comes to pass that he who loves God with all the soul, mind, heart, and strength, fulfills that law, and therefore becomes sinless. Not merely unsinning in overt action, a point which a regenerate person is supposed and required to reach, but un sinful in his being. The depravities and saturation of hereditary and contracted sinfulness are expunged. Love, being the opposite and antagonism of all sin, expels every thing contrary to itself, and thus produces a realm of unmixed holiness. The affections, tastes, and tendencies are purified. There remains no love of sin, no hankering for sinful indulgences, no bent or proneness in the direction of forbidden ways; nay, more: sin becomes loathsome and an object of abhorrence. The soul is full of repugnance toward it. It recoils from its presence. There is the whiteness of snow in all its faculties and motions. The appetites of the body, the ambitions and exhilarations of the mind, the affinities and affections of the soul, and all the instincts and impulses arising out of the laws of our sentient being and social conditions are sacred and sinless. Yet there is no violation of any of the attributes of body or mind permitted, no monastic modes of life enjoined, no austerities prescribed, and none of life's comforts subtracted. The whole work of privation is restricted to that which degrades man and dishonors God. The holiness of the Gospel develops a healthy manhood, and never touches but to ennoble. By it the family state and relations become more hallowed and precious, business pursuits more effective and enjoyable, Christian activities and benevolence more luxurious and inspiring, while all social intercourse and fellowships are made by it a thousand times more refined, delightful, and exalting.

HOLINESS ACCORDING TO CHRIST

If present and perfect holiness is taught in the Scriptures at all, it must be found clearly asserted in the sayings of Jesus. The Jewish ceremonial and the prophetic oracles were prospective. They pointed steadfastly, like the pinnacle of the Temple to heaven, to the great Teacher, saying, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him ye shall hearken." *1 On the other hand, the writings of the apostles were retrospective,

and had continual reference to Him, who said: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." *2 The epistles must be regarded in the light of deductions from the Gospel. They are an inspired commentary upon the words of Christ, and furnish in a degree a formulated statement of His doctrine. But the primary source of truth is the Gospel as spoken by the Saviour Himself. That Christ was preeminently a promulgator of thorough holiness none can doubt, except those who have a prejudiced mind, or a creed-bound faith. The angel who heralded our Lord's divine conception indicated clearly what would be the character of the Saviour's teaching. He dictated prior to His birth that His name should be called Jesus, giving as a reason that "he shall save His people from their sins." *3 In the absence of any limiting word the natural and just inference is that He proposed to save His people from all their sins in this life. To say that He designed to save his people in part while living, reserving a final cleansing for death, is not only unauthorized, but irrational.

Again, John the Baptist represented Him prospectively as inaugurating a complete salvation. He says: "Now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, Whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." *4

In this passage there are three figures, all representing the work of grace, and each conveying the idea of the destruction of evil.

The first is the axe laid at the root of the trees, indicating eradication. It is not used to prune or cut down the tree, but to cut it up by the roots. A bad tree only cut down may, from living roots left in the ground, reproduce itself, but when cut up by the roots it has no vitality left. It is so with sin when destroyed by grace. If it reappear, it is from a seed of evil projected into the heart -- not from a germ of sin left therein.

The second figure is that of fire, a consuming element, indicating purgation and refinement. It is by fire that the precious metals are melted and separated from all crudities and alloy. So the heart is purged from all sin by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, whose sin destroying operations are represented under the similitude of fire.

The third figure is that of the fan, a winnowing implement, by which chaff is separated from the wheat. As the fan is in the strong hand of the Saviour, with set purpose to separate, not some, but all chaff from the wheat, we may infer that salvation from all sin is hereby prefigured. Indeed, as giving boldness to the Divine intention, as we may suppose, to destroy all sin, it is significantly added: "He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

According to Christ, holiness is a pure heart, a sanctified condition of the affections, and this must include the whole being, as heart in the Gospel represents character: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." *5 To see God implies three things: 1. That the darkness of sin is dispelled. 2. The film which sin has put upon the spiritual sight is taken away. 3. The mists of error and perversions of evil which obstruct and weaken the moral perception are dissipated. This passage is

one of our Lord's seed thoughts, being pregnant with unexpressed meaning. It is no scientific statement, or theological definition. It is rather a predicate than a premise -- an assumption of a condition of goodness whose essence he does not stop to define, but simply mentions the blessed reality in order to magnify its reward, namely, "They shall see God." Nothing but the absolute absence of all sin could open to its possessor the full orb'd vision of God. To see God is to enjoy Him, and to enjoy Him is to be like Him, to be congenial to Him, to be as free from sin and as much opposed to it as God is. "Because as He is, so are we in this world." *6 "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." *7 No true exegesis of these texts can mean less. It is perfect holiness -- a healthy, mature, and purified state of the entire cluster of Christian qualities.

This view is supported by the highest authorities. "Purity of heart," as defined by Bishop Hamline, "is a simple unmixed state of the affections. It is repentance without obduracy, not a fusion. It is faith without unbelief; love without malice; meekness without anger; humility without pride; charity without selfishness; spiritual mindedness without worldliness or sensuality." *8

According to Wesley, "the pure in heart are they whose hearts God hath purified, even as he is pure, through faith in the blood, from every unholy affection." *9

We cannot, therefore, understand less by our Lord's beatitude on the subject of purity than that the affections are purged of all sin and refined as gold and silver.

Like crystal water, from which all foreign and foul ingredients are removed, the heart is perfectly transparent, incorrupt, and guileless. The whole man is as crystalline and stainless as the light.

From another angle of vision the Saviour makes holiness to consist in being "as perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect." *10 That is a perfection of man through grace as complete when measured by the Gospel standard as the perfection of God when measured by His unlimited capacities. It is not a perfection of the faculties, such as the reason and judgment, but a perfection of the believer's restored condition, according to the fullness of provided grace. For example, the faith, weakened and perverted by sin, is brought back to truth and strength; the affections, alienated and bent down to earth, are raised and focalized on God and our neighbor; the passions, made furious and malignant by sin, are subdued and put back under the dominion of grace. So with all the moral attributes; they are restored to their normal and unsinning offices. The perfection here inculcated is a thorough resuscitation, development, and healthy exercising of the inner man. Every power is not only free from sin and rightly directed, but is continually at its best in the performance of its duty. It is a rounded Christian character, including the integrity of all the fruits of the Spirit in a state of maturity and full consecration to the service of God.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Unmixed holiness is enjoined in the Lord's Prayer: "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." *11 The implication of this petition is that the will of God may be done, and ought to be done, as purely in earth as it is in heaven. Not that it may be as perfectly executed in form and manner as by higher orders of intelligences, but that it should be as free from sin, as deep in devotion, and as unimpeachable in fidelity as the immaculate service of the skies. The will of God is done in heaven

by angels and the spirits of just men made perfect; and we must conclude that they do not mingle any sin with their devout acts of obedience. Their work and worship must ever bear the impress of holiness pure and simple. Not a shade of sin, or tinge of moral wrong, limits their consecration or detracts from their integrity.

Now, the ideal of doing the will of God in heaven is presented by our Lord as the standard of Christian holiness on earth. Who will say it means less than perfect love? Who will say that such absolute acquiescence in the will of God is compatible with the smallest residuum of sin in the heart? Such an insinuation shades the shining retinue of angels, and implies the existence of stain and corruption in the courts of glory. We must remember also that the manner of doing the will of God by saints and angels is not by the suppression of sin, but by a solute freedom from it. It is a purified nature yielding an unsinning obedience. To such a summit level of perfection must Christian holiness lift itself in order to meet the Gospel requirement.

Nor is this crystalline purity inconsistent with the supplication in the same prayer: "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Some elucidation of these words is necessary, because this part of our Lord's Prayer has been the stronghold of those who deny the possibility of all sin in this life. The argument runs thus: "Christ has given this formula for all time and every person. If a man can reach a point where he has no trespasses to confess, and no forgiveness to seek, he has got beyond the Lord's Prayer."

And this is supposed to be a shocking conclusion. But is not the implication infinitely more shocking that we must sin perpetually in order to maintain the appropriateness of the Lord's Prayer?

Dr. Hodge revolts at the absurdity, and yet institutes an argument which involves the whole of the repulsive consequence. He says, in answer to Richard Watson: "No one pretends that men are placed under the necessity of sinning in order that they may be able to repeat the Lord's Prayer. This would indeed be absurd. The argument is this," he says: "If a man prays to be forgiven, he confesses that he is a sinner, and if a sinner he is not free from sin or perfect. And, therefore, the use of the Lord's Prayer by all Christians is an acknowledgment that no Christian in this life is perfect." *12 This strikes us as denying and confessing to an absurd proposition with the same breath. If a man cannot truly use the Lord's Prayer unless he be a sinner, then he is placed under the necessity of being a sinner in order that the prayer may retain its relevancy to him. That is, sin and become guilty, or cease to enjoy the privilege of repeating that part of the Lord's Prayer which contains an appeal for pardon. The argument of Dr. Hodge is specious. It will be easy to show that a man does not necessarily confess that he is an actual sinner or personally sinful by repeating the Lord's Prayer.

1. In all promiscuous congregations every variety of moral character is supposed to be present. It is, therefore, proper in such cases to confess sin and pray for pardon in general terms. It is collective worship, and very often intercessory on behalf of others. The aptness of the several parts of the prayer must depend upon the moral character and special needs of each member.

2. It is also right and dutiful for Christians to confess their forgiven sins and to ask their continued pardon as increasing light shall show more and more clearly the enormity of sin. The memory of sin is never erased, and pardon does not mitigate its vileness in the estimation of the believer. On this

account the remembrance of past sin is always grievous to the best of Christians; and though consciously forgiven, the mind never recurs to them, but with profound contrition and the spirit of sincere supplication.

Indeed, no soul utters itself more frequently or more acceptably to God in the use of the Lord's Prayer than those who are positively forgiven and wholly sanctified.

The supplication, "Forgive us our trespasses," is no more superseded by entire sanctification than the petitions, "Thy kingdom come," "Thy will be done." To a fully saved man the kingdom of God has already come. He is full of "righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost," and this is called the kingdom of God, *13 and yet he fondly repeats the prayer: "Thy kingdom come."

As to the will of God, it is a test of entire holiness that the subjects thereof acquiesce perfectly in it, and sweetly comply with all the Divine behests. And still the supplication is constantly repeated, "Thy will be done." This occurs because these petitions are suitable for all time and every grade of experience. Not because the worshipers are sinners forever, but for the reason that they continually need replenishing grace, and a chastening reminder of their former state.

3. Perfect love does not import perfect faculties. In other words, salvation from all sin does not carry with it salvation from all the effects of sin, whether original or voluntary. Sin affects the soul as wounds do the body. It leaves scars on the moral being after the cure is complete. Original sin has darkened the understanding, warped the judgment, weakened the reason, and made the body the seat of disease, pain, and death. These injuries are not wholly repaired in this life. And from them many faults and shortcomings may arise which fall below the ideal divine law of absolute right.

But these faults and deficiencies are not properly sins, because they are not transgressions of the law of grace by which Christians are judged. The infinite law of rectitude may be aimed at and approximately complied with, but not exactly met. It is the law of grace by which believers are to be judged, and this has been mercifully adapted to fallen powers and limited capacities. Hence the faults and deviations which are the inevitable result of fallen powers are not set down and charged up to the doer as sin. Indeed, they are not sin to him when they come to pass contrary to his will and purpose.

And yet these errors and deviations, being, in part at least, the fruit of original sin, required and received the atonement. The satisfaction was made in advance and unconditionally. On this account it is both a duty and privilege to remember this merciful provision in our prayers and confessions, and humbly and gratefully to ask the appropriation of its benefits for the mitigation and healing of all these unavoidable faults and infirmities which original sin has entailed upon us. For it must be remembered that grace has been provided for the amelioration and betterment of those very weaknesses from which our hurtful, though at present innocent, mistakes and blemishes arise. On this account unavoidable offenses are constantly changing to avoidable ones. If, therefore, we neglect to avail ourselves of all the help put within our reach to reinvigorate from infirmities, these very infirmities cease to be innocent and become blameworthy.

A wide door has often been thrown open for venial aberrations by setting up the plea of ignorance and fallen faculties. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, to close this highway to the indulgence of peccadilloes. Strictly speaking, there are no sins of ignorance. If a man violates a law which he does not know, and cannot know, it is no sin to him. But if a man, even unknowingly, transgresses a law with which he refuses or neglects to acquaint himself, he becomes guilty. According to the Saviour guilt chiefly accrues, and is greatly aggravated, by a refusal to come to the light: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light." *14 The doctrine of this text is that men's guilt is graduated according to the light given to them. Not according to the amount of light which they please to avail themselves of, but the measure of light put within their reach -- the degree of knowledge close at hand, which, if appropriated, will make them wise unto salvation from all sin.

HOLINESS BY SIMILITUDE

Our Lord enjoins personal holiness by the simile of the vine and the branches: "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." *15 Here is the second blessing. The branch is not dead, nor unfruitful, but needs purging in order to greater purity and greater productiveness.

This beautiful figure presents the true relation of entire sanctification to all preceding grace. It is not the cleansing of a soul utterly dead and depraved, but the perfective purification of a nature already pure in a degree. The work is not initial, but crowning. The true object of complete holiness is also revealed in this passage. It is not for display or any selfish end, but that the fruit bearing branch "may bring forth more fruit."

It is not enough that a Christian do some good works; he must do all possible good, run at full speed, stretch every nerve, and be every moment at his best. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." *16 Any service is pleasing to God, but great productiveness glorifies Him. His honor is involved in great achievements, and none else can comport with his plans and grace. Accordingly God demands the contribution of all man's powers and possibilities. The little "turtledoves or two young pigeons" *17 will not be despised; but the Divine requirement is not fully met until the Christian makes a whole burnt offering. The widow's mite was not acceptable because it was a mite, but because it was all she had.

The doctrine of the similitude is that all our capabilities must be fully and constantly appropriated in order to glorify God in the largest degree. And this necessitates the removal of all unproductive branches. Here comes in the doctrine of holiness or salvation from all sin. "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away." Whether we apply these words to delinquent Christians, or to defective graces, the lesson is the same. The teaching is that whatever hinders fruitfulness must be taken away. As the remains of sin necessarily limits our usefulness, Christ declares his purpose to take it away; and we must suppose he means all, unless we adopt the absurd conclusion that some sin will not damage character, or embarrass Christian growth and benevolent activities. If Christians, and Christian ministers, would only be instructed by this simile, we should have bloom and clusters of fruit where now we have barrenness and "nothing but leaves."

But the principal thought of this beautiful allegory is the absolute necessity of continued abiding in Christ, and the equal necessity of having his word to abide always in us. Nine times the word abide is repeated in the delineation of the figure, and twice the abiding of his word in us is mentioned.

The points made are these:

1. Christ stands related to believers as the vine does to the branches. By this we are taught that spiritual Christians enjoy a union with Jesus as real and vital as that subsisting between the vine and branches in vegetation. Accordingly any severance in this union destroys life and fruitfulness, as certainly and quickly as decay follows the cutting off a branch from the vine.

2. To abide in Christ and to have Christ reciprocally to abide in us is to insure great usefulness "He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." *18 The spiritual branch may not be eloquent, or strong, or popular; but he will be productive. He may not always have sweeping revivals or great congregations; but the work of personal salvation will progress and prosper in his hands and charge, if he be a minister; and if a layman, he is sure to act upon society as the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Brilliant talents and great learning are powerful auxiliaries to efficiency, but they are often found in conjunction with a barren ministry and a dead Church.

HOW TO CONTROL OMNIPOTENCE

But the most interesting feature in the passage respects the secret of successful prayer. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." That is, if the abode of the believer becomes fixed in Christ, and continues so, without intermission, and the word of Christ finds a permanent lodgment in the heart and is cherished there, then the promise must be verified. The conditions being met, the Saviour finds himself put under self-assumed obligations to answer the prayer. And "faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." *19

But we must not make a mistake by supposing that this pledge covers all foolish requests and selfish ends. The reference is to those good things which come within the range and purposes of redeeming grace. God cannot answer an unwise, absurd, or wicked prayer. And we must not forget that our asking is limited to those things which are not inconsistent with abiding in Christ and perfect obedience to his words.

The moment we take ourselves out of Christ, or disregard his words, we are shorn of our strength, and the promise becomes a dead letter to us. But being in Christ, and impregnated with his word, it comes to pass that a believer is supreme in the kingdom of privilege. His will is law, his prayer irresistible. He is not omnipotent, but he is the next thing to it. He is one with Christ, who has "all power in heaven and earth." For Christ, therefore, to deny any one who meets these terms, is to deny himself, because he has been pleased to enter into an alliance offensive and defensive with those who dwell in him, and govern themselves according to his words.

The passage, however, that connects this whole simile with personal holiness is this: "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." Here is a clear recognition of the sanctifying office of the Gospel. The same idea is advanced in the seventeenth chapter of John's gospel: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." It is not, therefore, a chosen national sacredness, or ceremonial cleansing, or official sanctity, but individual sanctification. It is being made clean from sin -- a holy-spoken Gospel producing a holy people, and that, too, at the present time: "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." Thank God! "Now is the day of salvation."

IMPORT OF THE GOLDEN RULE

The golden rule, rightly interpreted, teaches holiness. "All things whatsoever ye would that men -- should do to you, do ye even so to them : for this is the law and the prophets." *20 Here we have the tenor of the Law, the Prophets, and the Gospel. The two preceding dispensations form a confluence with the teachings of Jesus and become a unit. The fusion culminates in the golden rule. It is the holiness of the entire Bible concentrated in a single law. The design of the rule is to extirpate selfishness, and to substitute for it the highest style of benevolent action and goodwill toward our fellows. It is to make the best wishes we entertain for ourselves the criterion of dealing with others. Whatever good, material or spiritual, temporal or eternal, we would have others bestow upon us, this rule binds us to confer upon them. To do this is to reach the acme of moral perfection; for no man can leave out of his desire of personal welfare a single interest of time or eternity appertaining to himself. Now it is impossible for any man to measure up to this absolutely unselfish standard with sin in his heart. It is generally believed that the essence of sin is selfishness -- a disposition to have the most and best of every thing. Selfishness was an element of original transgression. It manifested itself in a desire to be as gods, and to gratify a personal appetite. Ever since the fall there has been a universal ambition and tendency in men to seize the uppermost seats, to supplant one another, to depress and rob others, in order to elevate and aggrandize self. And it would seem that the last thing which dies out of a sanctified soul is this unhallowed selfishness. It is a subtle vice that puts on an aspect of innocence. Men persuade themselves that pre-eminence and leadership may be sought at the expense of others for purposes of usefulness. A conceit is cherished, that if they are personally honored in preference to others, they can and would reflect that honor upon God, and use its influence for the advancement of his cause. Even among professors of holiness we do not always find that "charity" that "vaunteth not itself." *21 Nor can this bent of selfish promotion at the expense and disparagement of others be fully overcome until its sinful seed in the heart is exterminated.

Thus we reach the conclusion that perfect holiness is necessary in order to supply the ability to observe the golden rule. There may be an approach to it in a state of partial salvation, and even the semblance of it when it springs from nothing higher than human kindness and generous benevolence. But to bring the conduct up to the rule, so as to make it a habit of life, in the high and hallowed sense of the great Teacher, there must be grace in the heart sufficient to destroy utterly all the countering forces of sin.

When this grace is received, and not till then, Christians will be seen instinctively taking the lower seats, "in honor preferring one another," *22 and doing to others as they would have others do to them. The same gifts and benedictions of which they would desire to be the recipients, they would

make haste to confer upon their fellows. It is worthy of special note that we have in this rule not so much the doctrine of holiness, as the practice of holiness. Our Lord in this case, and according to his usual custom, leaps forward to the application of his great Cardinal principle. The doctrine of holiness is clearly involved in the rule, but it is a doctrine in preceptive form, doctrine enforced, principle applied, theology in life. From this example we may learn a most important lesson, to wit: that our beliefs are but the scaffolding upon which we stand to do our work. It may be safely conceded that doctrine is the foundation of character, but a foundation that supports nothing is worthless. We must build on the foundation in order to make it at all valuable, and according to the art of building and good taste, the superstructure must be more precious and beautiful than the unseen rock upon which it stands.

There is a strong tendency in the human mind to terminate religion in doctrine, and in all ages the Church has been more or less carried away by it. In this respect there has been a great departure from the practical simplicities of Christ's teaching. In a few fragmentary sayings we have the whole of Christ's theology, and all the necessary faith of Christians. How different our ponderous volumes of systematic divinity! In them the truth is elaborated in dry statement, with scarcely a sentence of practical application. The sad result is, the precious lessons of Jesus are buried out of sight, and hid away from the common people. It is a great mistake to suppose that the instructions of our Lord must be formulated into creeds and studied only in the schools and by ministers. We want theology for the people after the pattern of Christ's sayings, which are much more a primer of didactic lessons of duty and pictorial illustrations of privilege than a system of metaphysical distinctions. The great need of the Church, after being pressed into the experience of full salvation, is to be shown how to do holiness. The truth of our doctrine must be tested by the deeds of our conduct. The life must be the exponent of the faith, and the faith must blossom into beautiful doings.

SIN LOCATED IN THE HEART

It is a peculiarity of Christ's Gospel that it locates sin in the heart. Heathen philosophy, Gnosticism, and some of the Patristic writings placed it in matter, especially in the matter of the body; and, therefore, believed it was not possible for a man to be saved from all sin while in the body. But Christ traces sin to the heart, the soul, the spirit.

He does not strip evil deeds of their moral character, but makes them the product of a corrupt heart. He makes even the mouth nothing more than the gateway of the heart's defilements. The disciples being complained of because they transgressed the tradition of the elders by eating with unwashed hands, Christ proceeded to correct their superficial ideas of holiness by saying: "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashed hands defileth not a man." *23 Here the grossest vices that blacken character and defile life are traced to the heart as their source. They proceed from it as streams flow from a fountain. And being of the darkest hue and most heinous nature, they prove the heart to be the seat of all sin.

The same doctrine is taught in our Lord's restatement of the law of divorce and the crime of adultery: -- "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with

her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." *24 In this case sin is not only located in the heart, but in the evil dispositions of the heart. He goes back of the crime itself to the unhallowed desires which an agent may cherish and foster, and finds sin in voluntary propensity and consent to transgress. Accordingly as sin is so deep-seated, elusive; and dangerous, he advocates prompt, severe, and radical dealing with it. "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out." "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off." No tampering policy is here recommended. It is summary judgment and quick destruction. No surface work, but probing down to the core of evil and cutting away its very roots. No mere suppression of strange fires, but their absolute and utter extinguishment. The will, the desires, the feelings, must be pure in order to escape the judgments of God and measure up to the revised Decalogue and more stringent standard of the gospel. If such instructions and requirements do not involve and impose perfect holiness, it will be difficult, not to say impossible, to attach to them any definite sense. No external reformation, or exact compliance with ancient tradition, or Jewish custom, or Levitical law; no high pretensions to pre-eminent sanctity, or broad and impressive badges of sacredness; no long and oft-repeated prayers, or tithes of every kind, or sprinkling of sacrificial blood, or washing in consecrated waters, or service of any sort that does not include a pure heart, a sanctified soul, an immaculate source of outward conduct, can be accepted as meeting the demands of the evangelical law. The cleansing grace must penetrate into the realm of the volitions, and make every sensibility, purpose, and desire as pure and perfect as the most rigid and faultless life of obedience and devotion.

HOLINESS UNDER THE FIGURE OF WASHING

Our Lord said to Peter, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." *25 These words are a part of an incident by which spiritual cleansing was taught both by symbol and action. After supper the Saviour, girding himself with a towel, took water, and pouring it into a basin, proceeded to wash the disciples' feet. Peter, not understanding the significance of the ceremony, inquired: "Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." Impetuous Peter, full of revolt against allowing his Lord to perform so menial a service as to wash his disciples' feet, exclaimed: "Thou shalt never wash my feet." The time having now come to clinch the lesson upon the convictions of his ardent follower, Jesus said, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." That gentle rebuke turned on the light, woke Peter up, and caused him to reverse the engine of his impulsiveness. Discovering that the washing had more to do with the heart than the feet, and was preparatory and indispensable to heirship with Jesus, Peter, with loving haste, interjected the memorable invocation, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." To this fervent entreaty Jesus responded, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all." Peter, receiving the answer to his prayer, was pronounced clean, and the doctrine taught that it is possible to be made clean every whit. here the transition is made from external washings to spiritual cleansing. Having received this, no mere physical washing of hands, head, and feet is necessary, except in accordance with the ablutions practiced by the Jews, which were partly sanitary and partly symbolic. That our Lord did resolve the ceremony into a lesson of moral significance is evident from the exception which he makes in the case of the traitor, "Ye are clean, but not all." He certainly did not mean to say to Peter, "You have

clean feet, but Judas has not." He doubtless meant to affirm, and did affirm, "Ye are morally true and spiritually clean, but this cannot be predicated of all."

Charles Wesley, no doubt, brings out the true sense in his beautiful verse:

Wash me, and make me thus thine own;
Wash me, and mine thou art;
Wash me, but not my feet alone,
My hands, my head, my heart."

INTERNAL CLEANSING UNDERLYING EXTERNAL RECTITUDE

Another instance of the inculcation of holiness under the figure of washing is found in our Lord's stern rebuke of the Pharisees: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also." *26

Luke repeats this conversation substantially, but declares that the reproof was caused by the accusation of the Pharisees, that Christ disregarded a custom of the Jew consisting in a ceremonious washing of hands before dinner. He reports Christ as saying: "Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness." *27 It will be observed that our Lord's charge does not lie against external cleanness, which may represent outward rectitude, but against substituting outside or bodily washing for spiritual purity.

His doctrine is that internal and external purity stand related to each other, as cause and effect. In other words, that the sanctification of the heart is essential to a sanctified life. "Cleanse first," he says, "that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also." Those, therefore, who are constantly talking about holiness as a life, without placing primary and chief emphasis upon holiness of heart as the cause and generator of outward rectitude, reverse the order of Jesus. It is an attempt to gather grapes of thorns and figs of thistles. According to Christ, holiness begins at the seat of sin, which he constantly insists is the heart.

Such, also, is the meaning of the second woe pronounced against the Pharisees: "Ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." Here, again, is no complaint of external beauty, but a denunciation of that hypocrisy which puts glare for godliness, and uses a whited exterior to mask a foul heart.

By all these figures the duty and privilege of maintaining a clean heart are clearly set forth, and to assert that Christ means less than perfect purity or salvation from all sin, is gratuitous and unauthorized. It is a principle of Christ's religion to give no quarter to Satan and no trace to sin.

The prayer of Charles Wesley is in accord with this principle:

"The seed of sin's diseases,

Spirit of health remove,
Spirit of finished holiness,
Spirit of perfect love."

The most comprehensive statement of holiness found in the Gospel is contained in these words: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." *28 Luke is more terse: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." *29 Matthew is still more emphatic: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." *30 The recital of this commandment, with so much particularity by three of the Evangelists, shows its importance, while that which Christ predicates of it, establishes the fact that it contains the sum of all religion. In the estimation of all competent expositors, perfect love is understood to be the equivalent of perfect holiness. John Wesley affirms, over and over, that a compliance with this law is inclusive of all he means by "Christian perfection." Perfect love going out in two directions, toward God, and toward our neighbor, and in both ways according to our utmost capacity, is the acme of spiritual attainment when in its reaction upon the soul, as distinctly stated by Wesley, it involves the expulsion of all sin.

According to Christ, whatever was inculcated by the Decalogue, the Levitical code, or the preceptive writings of the prophets, is comprised in this law of perfect love. We say perfect love, for the almost tautological language of Christ can mean nothing less: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind, and strength." What can this collocation of terms so nearly identical signify except the highest intensification of love by bringing into action every power of our complex being? It is no instinctive fondness common to all animal natures, but a supreme affection, a rational habit, a divine passion. It is not only loving what God loves, but loving as God loves. It is a sinless love.

HOLINESS ACCORDING TO THE APOSTLES

That the apostles command the Churches to be holy cannot be doubted. The only question that can possibly arise is this: Do they require personal holiness to the extent of being now saved from all sin? It is believed that a legitimate interpretation of their own words must always answer this inquiry decidedly in the affirmative. But the texts in the epistles which inculcate holiness are so numerous, and the mode of presenting the subject so various, that nothing elaborate or in detail can be attempted. A few salient passages will define their faith and show the drift of their teaching.

Paul, writing to the Romans, says: "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." *31

It is the moral image of Christ here mentioned, and given in another place, as follows: "Who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." *32 To this image all believers must be conformed in order to meet the original purpose of God, and measure up to the Gospel standard.

Mark, it is not an election to any peculiar relation or place, but to a holy state, a state of assimilation and likeness to the spotless image of Jesus. When this takes place, it must be conceded the subject will be without sin; for such conformity can mean nothing less than the pre-eminent beauty of holiness. It is the holiness of Christ, not imputed to us, but wrought in us.

In the sixth chapter of Romans, Paul treats the subject under five different comparisons:

1. It is the destruction of the man of sin by a violent death in opposition to his suppression and confinement. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." *33

2. It is, absolute freedom from sin, just as real as the freedom of the spirit from the body, in the case of physical death. "For he that is dead is freed from sin." *34

3. it is a twofold salvation, each part involving the utter extirpation of sin. "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." *35 To be dead to sin is to be separated from it, and unmoved by it. To be alive to God is to pulsate and burn toward Him in the absence of all counteracting sinfulness; that is, the whole being flows Godward, with no sinful eddies or refluent currents.

4. It is, a transfer of service from sin to righteousness; that is, from sin, as a master, to righteousness, as a dominating principle and fixed habit. "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness;" *36 "that henceforth we should not serve sin." *37 Where this transfer of service takes place, righteousness becomes supreme and governing, to the dethronement and exclusion of all sin. Any thing less would be a mixed service, rendering the words, "being then made free from sin," inappropriate and wanting in strict truth.

5. It is such a thorough change of nature from sin to purity as to cause the production of another kind of fruit, and fruit the very opposite of that which emanates from unholiness. "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." *38 Now all seeds produce their kind. We can not therefore sow sin and reap holiness. Nor can a holy seed produce the noxious weeds and jungle of an unholy life. There must be identity between the seed sown and the harvest produced. In this case the fruit is "holiness," which proves that the heart has been seeded with the same grace. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

And this exegesis determines the meaning of the phrase, "free from sin," so often used in this chapter. It is not grafting a holy bud into a corrupt tree, and growing a mixture of good and evil fruit, but the extermination of the seed of sin, so that the entire yield is "fruit unto holiness."

How any man can analyze this chapter, and not discover that perfect personal holiness is the reigning idea of the apostle's teaching, can only be explained on the ground that a theological bias is as hard to remove as Canada thistles. To so construe the language of the apostle as to make him teach imputed holiness, or holiness in Christ in contradiction to personal purity, is to make the whole chapter unmeaning, and render the motives and inspirations to holiness contained in it utterly nugatory.

HOLINESS DEFINED IN PRAYER

Taking the prayer of the apostle as a definition, holiness is entire sanctification: "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." *39

This prayer was offered on behalf of one of the best of the apostolic churches. They were saints. The language used implies that they were sanctified in part, but not entirely. The consummation desired and prayed for by the apostle was that they might be sanctified wholly. In other words, that the sanctification begun in their conversion might be perfected in their subsequent and higher experiences.

The sanctification here mentioned is represented as going out to universality in two directions: First, it is sanctification from all sin, in opposition to a partial or inceptive work. It is obvious, a man cannot be wholly sanctified so long as any sin remains in him. Second, it is a sanctification which touches the spirit, soul, and body. That is, it diffuses its saving health through the whole man. And this sanctity, being supposed to enter our threefold nature long before death, is sought and expected to act as a preserving element until Christ shall come. This we believe to be the true exegesis of the passage. Robinson translates the word [holoteles,] rendered in our version "wholly," "quite complete, whole," and then, quoting the passage, adds, that is, "wholly in every part." *40

We must conclude, therefore, that entire sanctification signifies deliverance from all sin, internal and external; that is, from all indwelling sin, as well as from its outward manifestations; not from its up risings and guilty motions merely, but from its contaminations and inherent existence.

The subject of such a work is not only set apart and made peculiar, but so sanctified as to be made positively holy; not sanctified in part, as, for example, sanctified in soul, leaving the mind and body unclean and misused, but sanctified entirely in every part. Every power of the being is cleansed and consecrated, while every responsible motion of the faculties and organs within and without is made sacred to God. In brief, it must be predicated of the wholly sanctified that they are saved fully from all the defilements and taint of original sin, and from the depravities and pollutions which have been contracted by voluntary transgression.

The great prayer of the apostle, offered primarily on behalf of the Ephesian Church, also inculcates positive and complete holiness. With his knees bent to the earth and his mind lifted to the highest conception of spiritual things, he pours out his soul in these wonderful words: "That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." *41 When all the points of this significant prayer are collected together and defined, we have a state of mind and habit of life represented which are absolutely incompatible with the existence of any sin.

1. The measure of blessing promised. "The riches of his glory;" that is, the utmost provisions of grace. "Riches" and "glory" are terms used to indicate the supreme gifts of the Gospel. Whatever therefore the spiritual forces of redemption are competent to effect is here implored. If they are adequate to save from all sin, then the text opens with a gauge which assumes the possibility of its entire destruction.

2. The strength of the Divine Spirit is sought, not for the body or intellect, but for the inner man the soul, the spiritual powers. When these are mighty through God's might, sin is excluded. The invigorator is the Holy Spirit, the sanctifier, who, both by His essence and office, expels whatever is contrary to His nature or antagonistic to the kingdom of Christ.

3. An indwelling Christ implored. "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." The presence of Christ makes a clean place. As an external teacher, He may be present to rebuke sin where it still exists; but in the heart where He dwells, being introduced and cherished there by faith, He necessitates holiness. Is it possible for a place to be cold and full of fire at the same time? No more is it possible for a soul to remain unsanctified after Christ has fixed His abode in it. Such a conjunction is impossible. There may be intermittent visitations of Christ causing happy seasons where entire holiness has not been experienced, but there can be no permanent indwelling of Christ authorizing the subject to say, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," without the prior exclusion of all sin. When Christ comes in, sin goes out, and where He lives sin dies.

4. Establishment in holiness entreated, "That ye, being rooted and grounded in love." The figure is twofold, the first being taken from vegetation, the second from architecture. The element giving confirmation and stability is love. A character rooted and grounded in such soil must be free from sin. In nature the quality of the soil determines the kind and quality of its products. So in grace.

5. A strong and comprehensive perception is implied as a result. That ye "may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." Now such depth of spiritual light cannot coexist with sin. As the light of the sun destroys unhealthy atmospheres, and prevents mildew and decay, so a thorough comprehension of the deep things of God operates as a perfect prevention of sin. It is the nature of Divine knowledge to be subversive of all sin.

6. A twofold fullness asked. First, the prayer craves that the receptacle or capacity may be filled to fullness, in opposition to having something put into it, or being partially filled. Second, the kind and measure of the fullness is to be without limit. It "the fullness of God." In other words, it is God's blessing as to kind, and then all that God can give or man can hold as to quantity. Now, as this is no mechanical measurement, but a moral repletion, it follows that a nature so penetrated and pervaded by spiritual and Divine forces, all antagonistic to sin and expulsive of it, must be perfectly holy. But if there is any lack in the virtue and agencies now in operation, the unlimited power of God is still available, and promised to do for us in any emergency "more than we can ask or think," and all this not according to any external or human instrumentality, but "according to the power that worketh in us."

CHRISTIAN HOLINESS AND THE HOLINESS OF GOD THE SAME

In quality holiness in God and men is the same. There are differences in other respects, but none in principle or essence. When a believer has been rehabilitated by putting "on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," *42 he has to that extent taken unto himself Divine sanctity. By the creative act of grace, the holiness of God is incorporated into human nature. This idea is advanced by the apostle in his tender representations respecting chastisements which the Lord in kindness sometimes inflicts upon His children. One of the sweetest utterances in the whole Bible is in relation to this kind of discipline, and reads as follows: "Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby ... Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." *43 Four points are worthy of special note in this passage: 1. All the visitations of God upon his children are disciplinary in their character and designed for our profit. 2. Chastisements, in which there is no joy but much grief, yield in the end the "peaceable fruit of righteousness. 3. Holiness is an absolute prerequisite of seeing the Lord. This part of the passage seems to have direct reference to our Lord's words, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." *44 4. The kind of holiness so indispensable is the holiness of God. It is here declared to be "His holiness." Not human or angelic holiness, but the holiness of God. Of this it is here revealed He proposes to make His children partakers.

Of the same import are the words of Peter: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature." *45

We conclude, therefore, that whatever essential property belongs to the holiness of God inheres in the holiness of Christians, and may be predicated of it. If the perfect holiness of God is sinless, it follows that the perfect holiness of a believer is also without sin. Entire sanctification, therefore, is the Divine holiness implanted in man.

If we consult the apostle Peter we shall find this view supported. He writes: "But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." *46 This passage, quoted from Lev. xi, 44, contains a part of the old covenant which has never been repealed, and never can be. It remains, and must ever remain, the scriptural law. Two things are taught by it: First, the holiness of God necessitates the holiness of men. "Be ye holy; for I am holy," is the supreme argument why men should be pure. The child must be the counterpart of the Father. The Immaculate cannot be harmonized with the impure. As it is the nature of the eye to preserve its purity by washing away all dust; so it is the nature of God to repel all sin. Every particle and shade of iniquity creates in the soul of God a revulsion.

It is this attribute that sends unholy men to hell. "Depart from me for I know you not;" that is, I am not congenial to you; I have no aptitudes in common with you. My holy nature becomes a consuming fire toward you. Therefore depart and go to your own place -- a place for which alone your sin has given you a moral fitness -- a place of separation "from the presence of the Lord, and

from the glory of his power." *47 Such are the mutually repellent forces of sin and holiness. Second, the text teaches that holiness in men is identical in essence with the holiness of God. God could not make His own Divine holiness a sample of goodness to be acquired by men, unless it were the same in substance. A sample is supposed to be of the same piece from which the new garment is to be made. "Be ye holy; for I am holy," means, incorporate My holiness into your being -- be a "partaker of the Divine nature." It is a great mystery, and yet a glorious fact, that God can, will, and does communicate Himself to His creatures, and when He does so, they become the incarnation of His holiness. Now, the holiness of God is absolutely sinless, and when men become co-partakers of his holiness," *48 they attain unto a state in which they are entirely without sin, which is all we mean by sinlessness. We reach, then, the conclusion that essential holiness is the same in God, angels, and men. There is a difference between the holiness of God and the holiness of Christians, but it arises out of the container, not out of the content.

Holiness in God is inherent; in Christians it is acquired. In God, holiness is infinite and unchangeable; it admits no increase, no diminution; it is an immutable attribute of the Divine nature. Holiness in Christians admits of degrees, and can only be maintained by perpetual increase. Saints on earth and saints in heaven will become more intelligently holy, beautiful in worship, and exact in obedience as the ages roll on. Holiness in men is conditional, and may be lost, at least while probation continues; in God it is integral and substantive, and can no more be lost than God can cease to be. In God, holiness is commensurate with infinite capacity; in man, it is measured by finite and fallen capabilities, capabilities limited and weak, but not involving sin in the entirely sanctified.

VIEWS OF THE APOSTLE JOHN

Saint John is very explicit, both as to the nature and extent of this grace and the identity of Divine and Christian holiness. According to his endearing nomenclature, holiness is love, and God is love, and the sum of Christian duty is to be perfect in love toward God and man. He is the most positive of all the apostles in asserting the possibility and fact of salvation from all sin in this life. Whenever the conditions are met, he affirms the presence and perfection of holiness, and puts God in the soul and grace in supremacy. He starts out in his bold utterances by saying: "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." *49 To "walk in the light, as He is in the light" is to advance in the knowledge of God. If this be done two results follow: First, we shall be kept in sanctifying communion with God and holy fellowship with all saints. Second, the blood of Jesus Christ, representing the virtues of the atonement, immediately cleanses from all sin. It is a current work and coetaneous with walking in the light. It is done at the present moment, and is entire. The tense of the verb and the universal term all conclusively support this exegesis. To the same intent is the ninth verse of the same chapter: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." How any Christian scholar can venture to quote the intervening eighth verse to prove the necessary existence of sin in all Christians at their best estate, in the face of these unequivocal declarations, is not only mysterious, but deplorable. Such reasoning involves the apostle in a flat contradiction. And yet an authority no less than Dean Alford, coinciding with the whole Calvinistic school, attempts such an explication. The dean's comment, however, is so confused that little harm can come of it. Nothing is plain except the statement that the eighth verse refers "to Christians in their Christian state," *50 which may be true enough until entire

sanctification takes place. It is one of the mercies of God that erroneous constructions of his word are necessarily so obscure that the popular mind cannot be extensively reached by it.

It is evident the eighth verse under consideration was thrown in between these two categorical declarations of salvation from all sin to meet an error then existing. All who are acquainted with the early history of the Church, or the writings of the fathers, know that the germs of the Pelagian heresy, which took form in the beginning of the fifth century, were rife in the apostle John's time. There was a partial denial of original sin, or of hereditary depravity, which amounted to an implication that they did not need the entire cleansing from all sin, as taught and promised by St. John. Their notion was that the [pneuma] the spirit, or soul, came direct from God, and not through procreation in the creation of each individual, and, therefore, was pure. This error John bluntly exposes in the eighth verse, and teaches that we all have sin from which to be cleansed; but assures us, in the seventh and ninth verses, that ample provision is made, and infallible virtues are now being applied, by which every jot and tittle of sin is removed.

He also teaches most definitely that this may be a present and continuous experience. He says: "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world." *51 in these passages John seems to recur to our Lord's definition of the great commandment in which he resolves all religion into the perfect love of God and men. It is supreme love excluding all sin, and prompting to all right actions.

ATTAINABILITY OF HOLINESS

We proceed now to prove this grace attainable. But as it is an axiom in Christian doctrine that no man is qualified for heaven without holiness, we have only to prove that the attainment may precede death. If entire holiness is impossible before the moment of dissolution, the impossibility must be created by one of four causes:

First. A lack of power in God to accomplish a work so radical and thorough. This will not be insisted upon, as the Saviour asserts, "With God all things are possible." And the apostle predicates of Christ that "He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him."

If it be admitted that God is able, a second cause, it may be supposed, is a want of willingness to exterminate all sin during the currency of life. But this cannot be assumed without involving the shocking conclusion that the continuance of some impurity in the human heart is the pleasure of God. Moreover, the hypothesis positively contradicts the apostle, who declares, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification."

If it be acknowledged that such is the will of God, it may be supposed, thirdly, that the entire purity of the soul is incompatible with its connection with the body, and that the work cannot be completed till matter and spirit are separated by death.

This position will be abandoned when we consider the anti-scriptural sequence involved in it. It supposes the seat of sin and fountain of vice resides in the flesh, and is virtually a revival of the

heathen philosophy which taught the depravity of matter, and traced all evil and human infirmity to that source. The Bible, however, teaches that the soul is the seat of sin: "The soul that sinneth it shall die."

But, as a last resort, it may be assumed that the covenant of grace, though founded upon the atonement, does not provide for and tender to us entire holiness at so early a date. The question must be settled by a direct appeal to the Scriptures. And, as prima-facie evidence in searching the Bible, one cannot fail to be struck with the absence of all proof that holiness is a concomitant of death. There is not a solitary passage authorizing us to expect sanctification at death that may not be pleaded at any previous period.

But that holiness is attainable at a period anterior to death may be argued, first, from the undeniable fact that God, in the present tense, commands us to be holy in the most unqualified terms: "Be ye holy, for I am holy;" "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect;" "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." If these precepts have any force, they impose a most positive obligation upon us to be holy. If the atonement has not rendered this blessing attainable, could the Lord, with any consistency, make it our duty to live in the enjoyment of it? If indwelling sin is unavoidable, could the command be reconciled with the common or lowest principles of justice? Could you, as a father, command a child to do an utter impossibility?

We may find another argument in our favor upon the promises of Scripture in relation to this blessing. God promises holiness in the most unequivocal terms. He asserts, by Ezekiel, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye may be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you." *52 And by John: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness;" *53 "But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." *54 Does God mean to tantalize man by these promises? And could He be exonerated from such a charge if freedom from all sin and unrighteousness were not attainable? If it be conceded that these were promises of entire cleansing from sin, does it not imply that God is wanting in sincerity and truth to deny the attainableness of the blessing? Could you reconcile it with common honesty to promise a child a benefit which you knew he could not, and you designed he should not, realize at the time it was promised?

Further proof is deducible from the fact that the apostle prayed for the blessing, and the Saviour taught us to pray for it.

Under the infallible guide of inspiration the apostle prays, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly." *55 If you are not prepared to charge the inspired apostle with committing a blunder in praying for the accomplishment of an impossibility, we must concede that this prayer teaches the attainability of entire sanctification; for if to be sanctified wholly is not possible, he might as well have prayed that the God of peace would convert them into the highest order of angels. So a petition in our Lord's Prayer implies the attainability of freedom from sin. He instructs us to pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." Here the standard of moral rectitude and service, as the first blush of the subject indicates, is placed sublimely high. The work to be done is the will of God; the

model service is that of holy angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. This being our lofty standard and pattern of obedience, it follows, if it "is the will of God, even our sanctification," and if angels do not mingle sin with the performance of duty, that our Lord instructs us to pray for and attain unto entire cleansing, and thereafter actually to live without committing voluntary sin. If the attainability of entire holiness be a visionary point, a mere figment that can never be realized, can the putting this prayer into our lips be harmonized with sincerity and truth? To the same point is the prayer of Christ to the Father, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." *56

It only remains to be demonstrated that this high degree of moral sanctity may be enjoyed long before the moment of death.

This can be most triumphantly accomplished by appealing to those passages which represent the production of divine fruits, and the performance of duties as succeeding the attainment of the blessing: "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." *57 In this case the persons addressed are pronounced at the present moment servants to God and free from sin, and yet subsequently to the extermination of impurity they have "fruit unto holiness;" that in a holy life succeeds a holy state. This implies a lapse of time, and consequently proves holiness attainable before death.

Upon the realization of this great gift, heaven is not an immediate fruition, but remains and may continue to remain for years prospective -- the object of faith and hope: "the end everlasting life." That is the end of a holy career is heaven. "Who gave Himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." *58 According to this text, the object of Christ's death is to effect a complete redemption from all iniquity, and purify a people unto Himself. But after this entire redemption they are presumed to sustain a peculiar character, and to be zealous of good works. This will require the run of time, and therefore demonstrates that entire holiness may precede death.

As further proof take the apostle's prayer, already cited in part: "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." *59 The apostle implores two cardinal blessings: First, complete sanctification. Second, preservation in that hallowed state till Christ shall come for the holy subject. This supposes a period will transpire after we are wholly sanctified, during which preserving grace will be called into requisition.

To the same point is the apostle's doctrine to the Romans: "knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." *60 Here the crucifixion of the old man, and the destruction of the body of sin, are mentioned as provided for; not that we may instantly expire and soar to the throne of God, but "that henceforth we should not serve sin." We conclude, therefore, that the time for the realization of entire holiness cannot be referred to death, nor placed beyond the limit of the present life; but it is the precious privilege and imperative duty of all now and henceforth, to be free from sin.

ENDNOTES

1 Deut. viii, 15

2 John vi, 63

3 Matt 1, 21

4 Matt. iii, 10-12

5 Matt. v, 8

6 (1 John iv, 17)

7 (1 John iii, 3)

8 Hamline's Works, vol. ii, p. 147

9 Wesley's Sermons, vol. 1, p. 199

10 Matt. v, 48

11 Matt. vi, 10

12 Hodge's Theology, vol. iii "Argument from the Lord's Prayer."

13 Rom. xiv, 17

14 John iii, 19, 20

15 John xv, 2

16 John xv, 8

17 Luke ii, 24

18 John xv, 5

19 (1 Thess. v, 24)

20 Matt. vii, 12

21 (1 Cor. xiii, 4)

22 Rom. xii, 10

23 Matt. xv, 19, 20.

24 Matt. v, 27-30

25 John xiii, 8

26 Matt. xxiii, 25

27 Luke xi, 39

28 Mark xii, 30-31

29 Luke x, 27

30 Matt. xxii, 37-40

31 Rom. viii, 29

32 Heb. vii, 26

33 Rom. vi, 6

34 Rom. vi, 7

35 Rom. vi, 11

36 Rom. vi, 18

37 Rom. vi, 6

38 Rom. vi, 22

39 (1 Thess. v, 23)

40 Robinson's Lexicon

41 Eph. iii, 16-21

42 Eph. iv, 24

43 Heb. xii, 9-14

44 Matt. v, 8

45 (2 Peter i, 4)

46 (1 Pet. i, 15,16)

47 (2 Thess. i, 9)

48 Heb. xii, 10

49 (1 John i, 7)

50 Dean Alford's Commentary on Greek text, in loco

51 (1 John iv, 16, 17)

52 Ezek. xxxvi, 25

53 (1 John i, 9)

54 (1 John i, 7)

55 (1 Thess. v, 23)

56 John xvii, 17)

57 Rom. v, 22

58 Titus ii, 14)

59 (1 Thess. v, 23)

60 Rom. vi, 6

POSSIBILITIES OF GRACE

By Asbury Lowrey

Chapter 8

"O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles." -- Psalm xliii. 8

I ask Thy heavenly guidance
In all things here below:
Do Thou direct my footsteps
The way that I should go.

HOW TO OBTAIN HOLINESS

Renunciation of Sin

The Gospel requires, as a condition precedent to the attainment of entire sanctification, the total abandonment of sin. It allows no compromise, no connivance, no tampering or dalliance with sin. Until the seeker has made up his mind to renounce all sin, public and private, including imprudence and the appearance of evil, I see no prospect or possibility of his sanctification.

And this renunciation must be voluntary and cordial. God will not coerce the will, or force the affections, or chain the imagination. He will not, absolutely, and without human concurrence, tear idols from our hands and hearts, or compel us to separate from bad associates, or quit places of sport and dissipation. He will not arbitrarily suspend the laws of habit, by peremptorily arresting the capability of the perversion of passion and appetite, without the effort or consent of the subject. God respects the manhood of man. He helps his needy creatures in every respect in which they are helpless; and yet so as to leave their responsibility unimpaired. What a man can do for himself, as naturally constituted or graciously empowered, he is allowed, and even required, to do. Indeed, God makes the destiny of his creatures hinge on voluntary choice and practical obedience. We find an application of this principle in the universal and inflexible requirement of the Bible to give up all sin, and break away from all wrong and wrongdoing, as a preparatory measure and antecedent condition of full salvation. It is true, that sanctification is by faith alone; but sin neutralizes faith. Jesus says: "How can ye believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?" *1

Now let us see how these propositions agree with the written word: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." 2* To forsake sinful ways and thoughts, according to this text, is made a term of mercy. It is not the condition of salvation in the same sense that faith is; but is an act that puts the candidate into a pardonable relation to God's mercy.

The same injunction is imposed upon believers, only it is made more stringent and comprehensive: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath

righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." *3 How sweeping is the prohibition in this case. Let us recapitulate the precepts in a somewhat different form. No companionship with unbelievers, no fellowship with unrighteousness, no communion with darkness, no concord with Belial, no part with an infidel, no agreement with idols. A sacred separation from all these shades of evil is commanded. This withdrawal extends even to the touch: "Touch not the unclean thing." No tangible contact or approach to any kind of uncleanness, however slight, can be permitted. It is only upon this principle of total abstinence from sin that God promises to "receive" us. Until this is done, he declines to put himself into the relation of Father to the penitent, or to recognize seekers of holiness as dear children, entitled to the peculiar honors and immunities of sons and daughters. Nor is it enough to renounce flagrant and positive transgressions; we must be circumspect and prudent. All our peccadilloes and questionable gratifications of appetite and propensity must be given up.

It is worthy of note that the great prayer of the apostle, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly," etc., is immediately preceded by the emphatic precept: "Abstain from all appearance of evil." *4 Indeed, this requirement introduces the prayer, and is made a part of it by the copulative conjunction. A comma only should separate the two sentences.

The apostle could not fill his lungs with the breath of the wonderful supplication until he had commanded the candidates to separate from their souls and life every thing that simulates sin, or wears the look of evil. Initial sanctification, then, is to relax our hold upon all sin -- to abjure, break away from, and wash our hands of all evil, and all resemblance of evil.

The serious urgency of this duty is created by several facts: First, the utter incompatibility of any measure or kind of sin with holiness. Second, there is a spurious kind of sanctification, which, like Antinomianism, allows itself seemingly to palliate sin. Vice may occur, but it is at once neutralized, or somehow loses its character, by faith or the blood, in connection with a sanctified nature. An egregious error. Sin in the saved is the same as sin in the unsaved. It invalidates the profession of holiness, brings condemnation, and necessitates forgiveness. Third, there is a degree of holiness which is made to comport with the milder forms of moral obliquity. Certain appetites, vanities, and fashionable follies are allowed, fostered, and extenuated; and yet full salvation is claimed and professed. This is a delusion. It is morally impossible for God to sanctify, so long as we toy or tamper with sin. Faith can no more grasp the blessing of sanctification while under the embargo of cherished sin, than the hand can perform its functions under paralysis. As it is the first duty of a sinner to repent in order to obtain pardon, so it is the first step of a Christian toward the higher altitudes of grace to "renounce the hidden things of dishonesty." Not to break off from open sin merely, but so to expose, introspect, and shred the inner man as to discover and eliminate every rotten thread of unseen evil and private practice. God requires absolute "truth in the inward parts." *5 Such preparation for holiness is apostolic. It was Paul who commended himself for having "renounced the hidden things of dishonesty," craftiness and deceit. *6

It was he also who said: "We have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man." *7 These abjurations of all sin, and especially those most commonly practiced, were the antecedents of his sanctification. In like manner all who would mount to the sunlit plane of entire holiness must discard and put away all unrighteousness. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." *8

The day of thy great power I feel,
And pant for liberty;
I loathe myself, deny my will,
And give up all for thee.

"I hate my sins, -- no longer mine,
For I renounce them too;
My weakness with thy strength I loin;
Thy strength shall all subdue."

PERFECT CONVICTION OF ITS ATTAINABILITY

Before we can obtain full redemption, it is necessary that we be fully persuaded that such a blessing lies within our reach. It is contrary to nature for any man to make vigorous effort to obtain something which he does not believe is obtainable. No man attempts to walk on the water or fly to the moon. By intuition he knows such feats are impossible. No man will delve into the bowels of the earth for treasure until quite assured the treasure is there. It is a law of our nature to act only on the prospect of success. So no Christian can earnestly strive and supplicate for a clean heart, unless previously persuaded that such purity comes within the range of possibility.

To bring yourself under the conviction, therefore, that holiness is for you, is a prime necessity. How is this to be done? First, consider the power by which it is to be accomplished, the unlimited power of God which reaches you through the unlimited merit of Christ. We admit that to create a clean heart in a sinner is a greater work than to create a world or light up a sun. But we must remember God has imposed upon Himself the task of cleansing us from all sin. And we read, "All things are possible with God." Whatever does not involve sin, nor imply a contradiction, God can do. And, certainly, to save a man from all moral wrong is not committing sin; nor does it contradict any known truth, much less clash with any attribute of God.

Second, consider the fact that the atonement provides for personal holiness. Inspire your drooping spirits by the recollection that this was the chief purpose of Christ's mission: "Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate." *9 He was set forth from the beginning by types and prophecies as the Lamb of God, who should take away "the sin of the world." *10 Repeat to yourself often those texts which reveal the primary design of Christ's sacrifice; such as: "He was wounded for our transgression, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." *11 "If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" 12 "Who

gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." *13

If it was the original intention of the sacrificial work of Christ to heal us by his stripes, to purge our conscience from dead works, to redeem us from all iniquity, and to purify us unto himself, then we must concede the attainability of this grace, or take the ground that Christ is a failure. Surely, no one will assert that; and, therefore, we are shut up to the belief that, by the atonement, salvation from all sin is put within our grasp.

Again, stimulate your faith by the truth that God has promised full redemption in the most positive and explicit manner: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them." *14 "This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days," "saith the Lord, I will put my law into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." *15 "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." *16 "Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." *17 "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." *18 "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." *19

No one can doubt, after deliberately reading this class of promises, that God has committed himself by covenant engagement to save men on certain conditions from all sin. To command and promise holiness, and yet withhold the blessing when the conditions are met, would be to tantalize the seeker.

The only thing necessary now is to bring yourself under the conviction that it is attainable immediately. To perfect this belief, appeal again to the word of God and read, "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world" *20 Read again, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." *21 But it is one thing to read those texts and assent to them as parts of the word of God, and quite another thing to cordially embrace them. Truth must be shot into us until, like a ball, it takes effect.

A persuasion that does not carry conviction to the judgment and inspire perfect confidence is no belief at all. True faith is expulsive of doubt and misgiving. It credits every thing God says. When a man explicitly accepts a declaration of Holy Writ, it takes possession of him and burns into his mind a conviction of its truth.

When such a prepossession rules the mind and heart of a seeker, he is at least on the borderline of full redemption.

SPIRITUAL HUNGER NECESSARY

Our Lord says, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." *22 Here feeding is conditioned on appetite. Those only who hunger and thirst shall be filled. The constant implication is, that those who do not hunger and thirst shall not be filled.

This proposition of the Saviour is equally true in nature and grace. A man who does not relish food cannot receive it. He will grow lean and die in the midst of plenty. The same may be affirmed of the Christian. No appetite means no fatness, and soon no life. He may read and sing about holiness, and hear it preached, and even ask its bestowment in the words of his prayer, and yet if there be no soul hunger for it, not a single step can be taken toward its realization. If the human stomach be charged with food which it loathes, it will be found impossible for the organ to assimilate it. It may be good and nourishing matter, but the absence of a corresponding appetite will prevent the system from taking in and appropriating its nutritious quality.

It is so with the mind. It may be crammed even to satiety with the most exalted truth, and the soul may be practiced in all devout recitals of worship, and still if there be no craving for spirituality, signified by the outward forms, the richest truth and sublimest service will be nothing more to the worshiper than "sounding brass and tinkling cymbals." Unless he "hunger and thirst after righteousness" he will come and go unfilled. Through the protracted meeting, or Lenten service of forty days, be expanded to forty years, still the man that has no keen relish for sanctifying truth and experimental grace, will come to the end of each round of ceremonies and each decade of formal godliness as empty, lean, and starved as when he began. God offers salvation to us, but does not thrust it upon us. He feeds the appetite of spiritual hunger even to fullness and satisfaction; but the man who does not want His grace, and meets the offer of it with revulsion and morbid distaste, He leaves to his self-imposed emptiness and poverty.

Here a question may arise. The reader may say, "I find myself destitute of this indispensable hunger, and consequently, according to the argument, holiness is not attainable to me in y present condition." The fact is admitted, but this does not release you from responsibility. For you can command hunger and thirst. Appetite itself is created by healthy conditions, whether physical or spiritual. Expose a man to malaria, or surround him with an unwholesome atmosphere, or deprive him of proper exercise, and he will become dainty and lose his appetite.

So with a Christian. Let his reading, conversation, habits of life, and associations be irreligious, and he will find in himself a disrelish of spiritual things. On the other hand, let a man betake himself to serious thought about his spiritual state. Let him read the Scriptures, and give himself to prayer; let him read those books and papers which tend to the knowledge and love of God; let him attend such meetings, and associate with such persons, as will be helpful to his religious life. Let any man pursue this course, and immediately he will find deep hunger and thirst for God generated in his soul.

He will soon exclaim, "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth Out for the living God." *23 "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" *24

The want of soul-hunger for the deep things of God explains and accounts for the slow progress of this divine experience in the Churches, and especially in the Methodist Churches, where the doctrine is fully accepted. We have no appetite for the bread which a correct theology has placed upon our table. This lack of appetite is chiefly traceable to two causes:

First. The debilitating atmospheres of worldliness in which the Church has immersed herself She has made herself sick, and become surfeited with unwholesome diet. Her appetite is perverted.

Second. The great lack of explicit preaching and testimony on the subject.

Perhaps the most alarming feature of the modern pulpit is the absence of the Gospel in Gospel preaching.

A thousand sermons are preached every Sabbath, which scarcely relate to the substance of Christianity; whole hours and days are consumed in elaborate discussions on themes remotely connected with religion, but not having in them scarcely a modicum of spiritual food. It is a travesty on Gospel preaching -- an utter neglect or a burlesque and sacrilege of Divine things.

But while such ministrations tend directly to quench the ardors of devotion, and multiply dead Churches, yet they do not excuse any man who is not athirst for righteousness. Each individual is responsible for his own lack of Divine aspirations. It is not in the power of any man, or class of adverse circumstances, to still the throbbings of the heart for holiness. A seeker may burn with furnace heat in the midst of icebergs. he may sit under a barren pulpit and mingle with the coldest worshipers, and yet, rejecting the chaff and wax, feed on the finest wheat and honey from the rock. While others are cold and indifferent, and even repulsive toward holiness, he may be in a frame of mind to say:

"Restless, resigned, for this I wait,
For this my vehement soul stands still."

APPETITE FOR HOLINESS CULTIVATED

The subject of hunger for spiritual food and blessing is so important and indispensable, that we continue the discussion under another head.

Some persons excuse their neglect of holiness on the ground that they feel no interest in the subject. They have no distinct belief in the doctrine, and no appetite for the enjoyment of the experience. For this reason they seem to imagine that no obligation rests upon them to be concerned about the matter.

Their conduct implies that a conviction for purity is exceptional and arbitrarily produced. They are ready to admit that where such conviction exists it is well enough to seek entire sanctification; but where it is wanting, the question may be dismissed with impurity. Now, such a position is founded in error, for the appetite for holiness may be cultivated just as really as a desire for food can be created. In this respect we are largely what we make ourselves to be. Our Lord says: "Blessed are

they that hunger and thirst after righteousness." This benediction implies that to hunger and thirst is a rewardable act, and, if rewardable, it must be voluntary. If voluntary, it may be concluded that, with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, it is completely within our power to revive and nourish aspirations for holiness.

On the other hand, we may, in defiance of the work of the Holy Spirit, repress and extinguish all desire for that state. And, in most cases, I believe a lack of interest in full salvation is traceable to a non-use or misuse of our volitions in regard to the precious theme. If this be so, the absence of a relish for holiness is sin, for it is a self-induced evil. The subject has neglected to cultivate his tastes in the right direction, and perhaps has impaired them by injurious diet.

I do not think it possible for a man to love holiness who loves novels, or craves the staple matter of our secular newspapers. Nor is it possible for a man to find zest in sanctified and sanctifying literature who frequents the theater and other common resorts of worldly men. The same may be said of those who participate in popular amusements or mingle in the hilarities of fashionable society. Such frivolities and vices create revulsions to holiness. And wherever Christians make worldly customs and tainted literature their element, soul-hunger for purity is sure to die out. A candle cannot burn in the foul air that settles in old wells and cisterns. No more can a flame of holy love exist in an atmosphere of non-Christian habits though not grossly wicked.

But one may say, "If I abstain from all such damaging practices, will I find myself groaning after full redemption?" Not certainly; for negative obedience is only a half compliance with the law of God. Positive work is needed to meet the commandment.

Do something or die, is a universal condition of responsible beings. Now, what is that something which, if done, will create an appetite for holiness?

First. Think on the subject. The apostle exhorts thus: "Wherefore, holy brethren, . . . consider the apostle and high-priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." *25 Consider in this connection His office as a Saviour personal to yourself.

Again the apostle says: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." *26 Here the emphasis of the whole climax is placed upon the word think. Thought is like fire -- it burns itself in. Fixed attention on any good idea is like the process of crystallization, where matter sinks, hardens, and takes on forms of beauty. To think seriously and prayerfully on the question of holiness is to transmute the principle into the texture of our inner man. In most cases a man's aspirations are the product of his meditations. I do not think that more than one out of ten of our ministers or members would remain listless on the subject of holiness, if they would but give themselves up to conscientious inquiry touching their duty for ten minutes each day. The prevalent lukewarmness would soon disappear and be succeeded by ardent desire.

Second. Appetite for holiness is cultivated by reading. There is now a rich standard literature on the theme, contributed by different Churches. Added to the books published, there is a liberal supply

of periodical matter of good quality. Now, we are persuaded that no one can read a fair proportion of these works with candor, and not be profoundly impressed with the great truth, and convicted for the experience. Like a man whom we met in Scotland, whose prejudices gradually melted away under a series of simple expositions of the privilege, until, under an apparently involuntary impulse, he rose and said, "I believe the doctrine, and want the experience."

Third. Appetite for holiness is cultivated by attending meetings appointed expressly to advocate the cause, and spread the experience of entire sanctification. It is inconsistent and captions to declaim against meetings held especially for this purpose. For missions, education, and all other objects of great importance we hold special conventions, where only the one interest is allowed to be introduced. Why, then, decry a meeting for the most important object of all? What interest can compare with that of advancing a perfect Divine life in the Churches? More have been sanctified by this concentration of thought and effort than by all other instrumentalities. The songs and testimonies and, above all, the hallowing influence of these meetings have traveled round the world and penetrated heathen homes.

A well-conducted service of this sort cannot fail to give birth to cravings for purity that will extend far beyond the number who, by open confession, attain the gift of full salvation. It will elevate the tone of Divine worship, sharpen the relish for spiritual things, and give a new and sweeter zest to all the means of grace.

Fourth. There should be direct and specific prayer that concern and longing for holiness should be awakened in the heart. However cold and indifferent, let earnest supplication be made. By the force of will and under the conviction of duty continue the pleading. Pursue the course we have indicate, dear reader, and you will soon say:

"My anxious soul cries out, oppressed,
Impatient to be freed;
Nor can I, Lord, nor will I rest
Till I am saved indeed."

FULL SURRENDER

Another step toward entire sanctification is the act of self-surrender, by which we transfer ourselves and all that belongs to us into the hands of Jesus. This act of self. surrender is commonly spoken of as "placing all upon the altar," from which has originated the teaching that "the altar sanctifieth the gift." In this formula there is both a modicum of truth and a liability at least of as much error. If the term altar is used simply to represent the sacrificial offering of Jesus, and the phrase "placing all upon the altar," means nothing more than giving ourselves to Jesus by an act of the will and affections, it is not only harmless, but finds some support in the Scriptures.

In Exodus we read: "Whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy." *27 In Matthew it is written: "The altar that sanctifieth the gift." *28 But these references belong to the Old Testament institutions. Christ is our altar, and contact with him alone now sanctifieth. The glorious doctrine of the New Testament is brought out in these words: "We are sanctified through the offering of the

body of Jesus Christ once for all." *29 "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." *30 It is most emphatically true, "that whatsoever toucheth this altar shall be holy."

We read: "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." *31 Again we read: "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." *32

These passages teach that we have passed out of our own hands. We are rightfully the property of God. We belong to Him by a twofold claim: First, as the product of His creative power. We are His workmanship in Christ Jesus, both as to original creation by power, and re-creation by grace. Second, we are His by purchase. It is said, we "are bought with a price;" that is, a consideration has been given for us. We have been ransomed, not to ourselves, but to God.

Original sin put us under a threefold bondage -- a triple curse. First, it made us aliens to God, and strangers to the commonwealth of Israel. Second, it made us the slaves of sin and Satan. Third, it made our hearts the seat of corruption and death. Now the purchase-price of Christ's blood has been accepted as a sufficient consideration to justify our complete release. But before and after we are actually set at liberty we belong absolutely to the purchaser. It is verily true that he whom the Son makes free is free indeed; it is not, however, the freedom of isolated independence and sovereignty, but the freedom of servants to God. By redemption we simply change masters. We throw off the yoke which is heavy and galling, and bow to that which is "easy and light." It is instructive to note that the original word "doulos," translated servant when applied to Christians, is the only word indicating and rendered slave when used to denote a bondman. It is only to avoid harshness and the unpleasant association of Ideas that the word is not uniformly rendered slave. It is important, however, to note that the word love or slave, is not used in the New Testament as a term of reproach or dishonor, much less to indicate a servile and degrading relation. It signifies an office and fellowship most exalting. It is one of the appellations of apostleship, and as a title of Christians it is a synonym of child, disciple, and saint. The term is retained only for the purpose of asserting God's right of property in us, and to show the reasonableness of presenting ourselves as a living sacrifice to him. It is on the ground of our property relation to God, and His right to our services, that we found the obligation to consecrate all to Him. A more elaborate discussion of this subject will be found elsewhere. Our purpose now is to lead the seeker by a plain path at once into the promised land.

Give yourself, then, to God through Christ. Do this, not only by a mental act and secret purpose, but by actually putting all your powers and resources at his disposal. Nay, more; wait not to be acted upon like a machine, but exercise your will power, and enter visibly upon His service with all your heart and all your means. Give yourself practically away. Do it as far as possible in detail, but do not bother yourself with the conceit that your consecration is incomplete because you are not able to list and invoice every item which may be unknown or forgotten. God is not a hard master. A willing mind to be all the Lord's sweeps in every thing. Such a purpose, formed and fixed in conscious sincerity, will, no doubt, be accepted of God as the sanctification of yourself to Him. When we give

all to God we make a summary transfer of ourselves to Him. It is necessarily done in bulk and not in particularity, nevertheless it takes in all our latent resources and undiscovered possibilities.

It is like making a deed. We first describe the realty, by which all the acres, rods, and inches are mentioned. But as the measurement may not be exact, and questions may arise, the words "more or less" are added. And then to avoid all disputes respecting improvements and things attached to the ground, this sweeping clause is appended: "with all the appurtenances thereto belonging."

In like manner, sign, seal, and deliver yourself over to God. And do it so really that ever after it would strike you as an act of trespass and breach of faith to use any member of your body, or faculty of your mind, or affection of your soul, or portion of your possessions, against God, apart from God, or for any selfish motives that would offend God, and take you or yours in any way out of His hands.

And this dedication must not be compulsory. It must be a freewill offering, for it is not so much a sacrifice as a service; Jesus said: "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me." *33

In the same spirit we must devote ourselves to God. His service is not only perfect freedom, but a real luxury. It must be our meat to do His will. When David was preparing to build the temple, he did not imperiously command the people to give for that purpose, but inquired after their will in the ease, saying, "Who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?" *34

In the same connection it is five times repeated that the officers and people "offered willingly," the emphasis being placed on the word willingly.

David and the congregation then rejoiced, not so much for the sum given, as on account of the spirit of willingness that marked the giving. They did it "with a will" and with affection. It is written, "Because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord, David the king rejoiced with great joy." Reader, go thou and do likewise, and, so doing, thou art not far from the kingdom of heaven.

EXERCISE THE FAITH OF TRUST

"By grace are ye saved, through faith." Eph. ii, 5.

It is the touch of faith alone that brings the healing virtue out of Christ by which the believer is made every whit whole.

Of course true faith is inclusive of all preparatory conditions of believing, such as renunciation of sin, spiritual hunger, consecration, searching the Scriptures, consciousness and confession of remaining sin, and prayer; but they all converge and crystallize in one unmixed self-renouncing all-abounding act of trust. Trust is the last link in the chain of causes, and the only one possessing conditionality. Preceding religious acts are conducive to faith, but faith alone bringeth salvation. Like the link that couples a train of cars to the locomotive, all the preceding links are necessary to make the train a unit, and secure the advantage of the moving force, but it is the last link only that joins the train to the power of transportation. Until this connection is made there can be no motion.

The track may be perfect, the cars laden and all put together, the officers on board, the time for starting arrived, but the train cannot budge an inch until the kingbolt drops through the last coupling and makes the coaches fast to the locomotive. In that moment weakness is joined to power, and immobility to motion.

It is so with faith. It is the concentration of all means, the point of contact with Christ. This is the rod that smites the rock, and turns the sluices of living water into the soul. It is the wire that conducts the Divine lightning from the battery of heaven into the soul.

Faith is to full salvation what the touch is to a jar charged with electricity -- the medium of communication. By the slightest contact it draws virtue out of Christ. See it demonstrated by the woman in the Gospel. She did not get near enough to touch the full garment of the Saviour, much less His person; she only put a finger on the hem of His garment, and yet there was sufficient efficacy in the approach to attract the healing virtue which made her instantaneously whole. That it was her faith and not physical contact which effected the cure, is proved by the words of Christ, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole." *35

Take this case as an illustration of saving faith: First. It was not faith in the general truths of religion, but faith in the personal Christ, and faith in Him as a supernatural healer. Second. It was not faith for blessings in general, but faith for healing in particular. It was specific, having direct and exclusive reference to her plague. Third. It was faith in the power of faith: "If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole." Faith, as a grain of mustard seed, will accomplish the work. To touch His person, hear Him speak, meet Him face to face, to be longer in His presence, or receive a smile of recognition from Him, will not be necessary. If I can only come near enough to Him to touch the fringe of his clothes with the tips of my fingers the work will be done. Fourth. It was faith in a complete work. She did not say, I shall be relieved and put in a way of recovery, but, "I shall be whole;" that is, "perfect health will come into my body." Fifth, It was faith in an instantaneous cure. She expected it, and accordingly she realized a perfect cure. This is proved by the concurrent testimony of the three evangelists. Matthew says: "And the woman was made whole from that hour." Mark says: "And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up." Luke says: "And immediately her issue of blood was stanchèd." Sixth. It was faith carrying with it a convincing evidence of a perfect cure. For it is significantly written: "And she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague." Seventh. It brought not only physical health, but happiness and permanent blessing. The Saviour said to her: "Thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague." This made her a witness and worshiper of Jesus. She came trembling, and kneeling down before Him, she declared unto Him before all the people, for what cause she had touched Him, and how she was healed immediately.

Here we have the nature and consequence of true faith. The nature is, unquestioning trust in Christ for a definite object to be obtained instantaneously. The consequence is, immediate health and happiness, a trembling and yet confiding prostration before Jesus, a permanent blessing and a witnessing life.

CONDITIONS OF FAITH

Faith is the sole condition of salvation, but there are prior conditions of faith itself. Let us examine these two propositions:

From beginning to end we are saved by grace, through faith -- faith being the pivot on which every religious change turns. 1. We are justified by faith. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." *36 "A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." *37 "The just shall live by faith." (*38) 2. We are sanctified by faith. "Purifying their hearts by faith." *39 "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." *40 "Which are sanctified by faith that is in me." *41 "And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." *42 "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." (*43) 3. We receive the witness of our spiritual state by faith. By faith Abel "obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts." By faith Enoch, before he was translated, "had this testimony, that he pleased God." (*44) 4. We nourish and maintain our divine life by faith. "And the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God." *45 "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." (*46) 5. We are adopted into the family of God by faith. "That we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." *47

So every stage of personal redemption hinges on faith. The Spirit, which alone directly quickens and sanctifies, cannot come in actual contact with the heart to do his finished work, except through faith. Beyond enlightenment and conviction for sin, grace cannot become operative until we believe. Therefore the absolute conditionality of salvation resides in faith alone. And yet there are certain antecedent works which are as indispensable to faith as faith is indispensable to salvation. They are not faith, but the conditions of faith. They do not bring life to the soul directly, but put life into faith, and faith kindles the vital flame. Without these accompanying acts faith would be dead, just as a heart that does not beat is dead. Some of these preliminary works are prayer for spiritual hunger, renunciation of sin, submission to God, and a consecration of all to Him forever.

Such deeds of obedience become the feeders of faith after its germ has been implanted by the Holy Spirit and the word. They create a climate and diffuse an atmosphere in which faith can thrive and bear its fruit. First there must be prayer for spiritual hunger. This is the beginning point of practical religious life, "to call on the name of the Lord." Jesus spake a parable "to this end, that men" -- not Christians only, but men -- "ought always to pray, and not to faint." *48 Paul repeats the same lesson, saying: "I will therefore that men pray everywhere." *49 It is the privilege and prime duty of every man to make his appeal to a throne of grace. And the hardest heart will be subdued, and the darkest mind illuminated, if this be done with unfainting perseverance. But without prayer we cannot get into the region of faith. Faith is not a frigid act of the intellect, but an emotion, and that emotion is excited and made strong by supplication.

I sought religion two days with no feeling, or but little, before I found myself in real earnest to be converted. And until my soul was poured out fervently to God, I had no capacity to believe. The same was true when, nine years later, I sought deliverance from the felt remains of indwelling sin. I stopped every thing, retired alone, and made it my sole and decisive business to pray for a clean heart. No previous effort to believe was successful until I met the prior condition, "Ask, and it shall

be given you; seek, and ye shall find." *50 But the moment I cried unto the Lord with all my heart I felt myself spurred on to believe. Then the work was done and the witness came.

If any man, cold and listless, shall stop and betake himself to continual and earnest prayer definitely for a clean heart, he will find two results coming into his experience with surprising quickness; First, a burning thirst for righteousness. Second, a confidence that will develop into a conviction and evidence that the work is done. The process may be a mystery, but the effect will be an undeniable realization that he dies to sin and wakes to holiness and God, with a loathing of all impurity, and a keen and sweet relish for all immaculate things.

Renunciation of sin is a condition of faith. Sin is a mildew, and faith can no more live in connection with cherished sins than grapes can grow and ripen under a blight. Sin as naturally quenches faith as water extinguishes fire. It acts upon the power to believe like paralysis upon the body, enervating the body itself. A man who makes up his mind to allow himself to tamper with sin, even occasionally, finds himself incapable of trusting in Christ for purity. To come out from sinful associations, to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, to "touch not the unclean thing," *51 to "depart from iniquity," is a condition of faith.

Submission to God is a prior requisite of faith. How can self-will, which takes things into its own hands, usurps the place of God, and runs atilt against His commands, at the same time trust in God for pardon and purity? As well trust a forsaken ship to keep you from sinking. The willing and obedient "shall eat the good of the land." A preparation to believe requires us to say, continually and absolutely, "Thy will be done." Not that we are bound to drop our own will into disuse, but to subdue the faculty and put it into accord with the will of God.

To exercise our will-power in choosing what God chooses is the highest act of devotion. It is submission and acquiescence, not slavery nor absorption, that God demands. To have no will of our own is to suspend our volitions and cultivate a sanctified inertness, and treats our power of choice, in which all the virtue of free moral agents is located, as useless, if not as sin. I am persuaded the stronger the will and the more independent its exercise, provided it is operated in unison with the will of God, the greater the virtue involved in it, and the more pleasing will its subordinate use be in the sight of the Creator. It is obvious God likes the similitudes of Himself. And we must conclude that the pleasure of the Creator is enhanced in His creatures in proportion as they approximate His own perfections.

He is better pleased with a tree that has vegetable life, and grows heavenward, than with a stone or particle of dust; better pleased with a beast which has animal life, and governs itself by instinct, than with an unthinking tree; better pleased with a rational man than with an unreasoning animal; but best of all, pleased with a man crowned with a moral character and free-will, who, exercising his power of choice voluntarily, responsibly, and quite independently, selects his Creator as the object of worship, loves him with all his soul, mind, heart, and strength.

Finally, the gift of all to God through Christ is a condition of faith. Any reserve or limitation is a worm at the root of faith. But the moment we are conscious that we are all the Lord's by a solemn act of dedication, confidence will suddenly spring up in the heart.

It is natural to both trust and love those to whom we belong. It is thus that "faith works by love." It becomes more a work of the affections than of the intellect. As it is written, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Faith is a loving embrace of Jesus.

Reader, meet these prior conditions of faith, and you will not only believe, but love to believe. To have faith will become as easy and natural as to breathe. You will live in a world of trust, which, mingling with and producing perfect love, will cast out all fear that hath torment. But without meeting these antecedent conditions you can no more believe than a balloon can rise when weighed down to earth with bags of sand.

PRESENT FAITH

All evangelical faith -- in essence -- is a unit, just as all light in its primary properties is a unit.

But as there are different colors in the same beam of sunshine as seen in the rainbow, so there are different aspects in faith. It may change according to the illumination of the Spirit and the power of truth, just as the moon takes on new phases in proportion to the measure of light received from the sun.

When the sun shines obliquely upon the moon, as seen by us, it is only partially illuminated, and is said to be in her first, second, or third quarter, because there is presented at first only a crescent of the shining surface. But when the great orb of day pours his rays upon the whole hemisphere of the moon at once, then that majestic queen of night is seen to walk the heavens, round, full, and glorious.

These figures may serve to illustrate the diversities of faith. There is a prospective faith which seems to mark the approaches of the soul toward Christ, but does not quite touch Him. He is accepted, and even trusted as able and willing to save to the uttermost. But the adverb of time when is left out. The great salvation is expected, but the exact period of its bestowment is not fixed. And, indeed, the right to claim this salvation now is not fully recognized.

There is a subtle deceit floating through the minds even of believers, that when and after they have done all they can to secure full salvation, they must wait God's time, and with them to wait God's time is to wait indefinitely. They are deluded into the belief that God is pleased with such patience, or relaxation of effort. This lagging, random faith has, in many instances, consumed half a century, and yet not touched Christ for the specific blessing. They have been tacking back and forth, like a vessel at sea, without getting into port. Battling all the time against wind and wave, they never give it up, but never reach the dock, nor make fast to the pier of God's immediate promise. This is usually the fate of those who talk so much about growing into holiness. They seem to expect to infringe upon sin, and crowd the devil, until they force a retreat and gain the field.

This, it will be observed, is a proximate faith -- a faith of gradual approaches. It is good in every particular, save one. It has no grip, no limitation of time within which to accomplish its purpose. It goes up ever so high, but, like an eagle sweeping through ether on discursive wing, lights nowhere.

Aimless it shoots into vacancy, hits no mark, and then, like a spent ball, dies in air and falls to the ground.

Now, there is a better faith; no truer in its nature, nor more divine in its origin, but better directed and more immediate in its effect. It is a faith that converges and focalizes in a definite object. The object may be justification, sanctification, or the enduement of power, but to whichever object it points, the aim is direct and the range short. This may be styled the faith of contact, like that of the woman who touched the hem of the Saviour's garment.

Such a faith renders all the promises which pertain to individual salvation in the present tense, by interjecting the word "now." For example: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean," now. "From all your filthiness, and from all your idols, I will cleanse you," now. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us" now "from all unrighteousness." It is a now salvation -- a present-tense sanctification -- a belief that the event is this moment transpiring -- a conviction that the blood now cleanses, and that the Comforter comes in to abide.

Mr. Wesley says, "To the confidence that God is both able and willing to sanctify us now, there needs to be added one thing more -- a Divine evidence and conviction that He doeth it. In that moment," he says "it is done. God says to the inmost soul, According to thy faith be it unto thee. Then the soul is pure from every spot of sin. It is clean from all unrighteousness."

Now this last degree of faith is vital. As the link that couples the forward car to the locomotive is indispensable to the movement of a train, so this faith of touch, this faith of immediate and effectual contact with Christ, is vital to instantaneous sanctification. We may believe that Christ is able and willing to save to the uttermost, and to save now; but we will not, and cannot, realize salvation from all sin until, committing ourselves absolutely to Christ for a perfect cure, we settle down under the conviction that He heals -- that we now "receive the things that we desire of Him." Then,

O'erwhelmed with Thy stupendous grace,
I shall not in Thy presence move;
But breathe unutterable praise,
And rapturous awe, and silent

ASK FOR IT

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened 'into you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth." Matt. vii, 7, 5.

The gist of the gracious words which we have quoted from the lips of our Teacher is found in the coincidence of these two sentences: "For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth." To ask, then, is to receive. To seek is to find. Asking and receiving, seeking and finding, are coetaneous and inseparable events. It is like breathing and living, and living and breathing. Our Lord evidently repeats and modifies His promise to emphasize this thought. His object is to intensify

the threefold promise of the seventh verse, and to give it a present and personal application. Nay, more; it is to show the utter impossibility of making a fruitless approach to Him. Can there be a sun without sunshine? Can we take nourishment without reinvigoration? No more can we ask without receiving, or seek without finding. There are no qualifying terms, and nothing prospective in the passage. It contains only two simple conditions, asking and seeking. Compliance with these reduces the question of salvation to an absolute certainty, and makes its reception immediately actual.

Of course, asking and seeking are generic terms, including all the steps and states of mind involved in coming to Christ, such as repentance, consecration, and faith. But all these may be compressed into one act of surrender, and one cry for mercy. It is, look and live. Can you look into light and not see? No more can you behold the Lamb of God and not have your sins taken away. As the sight of the brazen serpent brought healing to Israel's dying thousands, so a glance into the face of Jesus sends life and health to the soul. But you must ask and you must seek. Yes, you must ask in words and seek in effort. Here lies the mistake of thousands. They delude themselves into a sort of submissive inertia.

In a false sense they put themselves into the hands of God; that is, they nestle down in a totally passive state like dead matter, and complacently inquire, "Is it not enough that we lie in the hands of God 'as clay in the hands of the potter?'" No, it is not enough, if understood in your absurd sense of moral inactivity and spiritual torpor. You are more than a lump of inert matter in the reckoning and requirements of God. You have a will and power of choice and action. God cannot coerce that will; it would be to repeal your responsibility and rob you of manhood to do so. Unresisting passiveness is a virtue, but that is not the limit of penitential concern, or the maximum of Christian duty. You must actually ask. You must earnestly seek. You must do something or die. You are made a "coworker with God," and unless you co-work you will receive the grace of God in vain. *52 Salvation is the product of two concurrent forces: "God working in us to will and to do," and man working out his "own salvation with fear and trembling." *53 Some persons wheedle themselves into comfortable inaction and sluggishness, by saying, "I have no will of my own; it is lost and swallowed up in God's will." Not so. Does God require us to relinquish our manhood, and discard the divine attribute of liberty? No; God is pleased that we have a will, and that we use it with all necessary independence. He only demands that we operate that will in unison and harmony with His own. The height of holiness is acquiescence on our part in the will of God as revealed in His word. But that very acquiescence implies will in us, and will, too, in responsible exercise. How can I acquiesce in the development of God's plans and purposes unless I put forth my volitions to do so? Sanctification in all cases is the concurrence of two wills. God wills "even your sanctification." *54 We must acquiesce by saying, "Thy will be done." *55 God will make haste to work His will in us, provided we thus ask Him; not otherwise. He will set up His kingdom in us, full of "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." But in order to do this and as a hinge on which the whole realization turns, we must "seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness." *56 In any event, reader, ask. Ask, if you feel like it; ask, if you do not feel like it. Seek, if you find yourself so disposed; if not so disposed, nevertheless seek. Have no reference to your emotions or natural inclinations. Ask, and seek, even in defiance of an aversion thereto. Do it on principle. Do it perforce of your will power. Do it under a solemn conviction of your accountability. But put your whole soul into the work. Compose your mind, gather up all your thoughts, concentrate your attention, and put your entire being upon the pursuit of this one object, Jesus and His salvation. As ships make for the harbor in

storms, so break from sin and steer for safety. As streams converge and run to the sea, so pour out your soul to God, and center all the forces of your nature in Him. Be in earnest, and scorn not to plead. As birdlings bestir themselves in their nest, stretch up their necks, open their beaks, and chatter for the food on which their life depends; so exert yourself and lift imploring eyes and hands and heart for that "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." *57 Do this, and God shall come in loving haste and fill your hungry soul with righteousness. As the mother-bird comes quickly, and cheers her helpless young with the music of her voice and the flutter of her wings, and fills their little mouths with an abundance of far-fetched bounty, so the Lord will come to you in His Spirit, descending like a dove and lighting upon you, as He did upon Jesus, and abiding there. He shall herald His approach, not by the hum of His wings, but by the sweeter peal of His promise, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." *58

Prisoner of hope, be strong, be bold;
Cast off your doubts, disdain to fear;
Dare to believe; on Christ lay hold;
Wrestle with Christ n, mighty prayer;
Tell Him, -- We will not let Thee go,
Till we Thy name, Thy nature know."

FAITH IN A PRESENT CHRIST

Not Christ distant from you; not Christ externally present with you; but Christ in you. Gain this conception, if you would realize His vitalizing presence and power.

The mistake of ages has been to locate Christ at a mysterious distance from the worshiper. We either seek the living among the dead, or in the region of fancy and imagination. In both cases He is conceived of as far away, we know not where. By consequence our faith wanders at random and our prayers seem addressed to vacuity. We think of Christ as having lived a great while ago, on another hemisphere, amid obscure scenes. We accept the fact of His death, resurrection, and ascension; but this last event -- His ascension from Olivet -- is allowed to project into the mind a conception of wide separation and non-intercourse, and the transmission of Himself within the veil is made to involve to some extent the idea, not only of distance, but of unapproachableness. As He cannot be seen He cannot be reached, is the common feeling.

In other words, as Christ can no longer be apprehended by the senses, we doubt that He can be enjoyed by our sensibilities and moral consciousness. Thus we materialize our religion, and locate our blessed Saviour, not only externally to ourselves, but in some remote place. We call that place heaven, or the presence of the Father, or near the throne. But where that is, how contiguous, or how remote, we have no idea.

All the promises to the effect that Christ will come again to His disciples, we refer to death, or the second coming of our Saviour at the end of the world. On the other hand, the sweet assurances of our Lord that He will receive us to Himself, that we may dwell and reign with Him forever, are assigned to a period subsequent to death. It is not, in our estimation, a vital union and joint reign here in the kingdom of grace, but a heaven and glory hereafter. Thus Jesus is put far away and almost out

of existence by a mere prospective faith -- a faith that is practically dead because it realizes nothing and engenders doubt respecting the most precious promises in God's word. Even the pledge that Christ is always present where two or three are met in His name is received more as a part of a narrative and a statement of our Lord's necessary ubiquity than as a truth to be tested and enjoyed by our spiritual susceptibilities.

Now where is the authority for this exile of Jesus from the world -- this banishment of His real presence and glory from the present and the personal? If Jesus is not in the Church and in the hearts of believers, where is He? I say to all such believers and teachers, as Mary said to Peter, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." *59 I say again, If the seat of Christ's kingdom and the place of his residence are not within you, where are they? Jesus said, "Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." *60 Again Jesus said, "If a man love me, he will keep y words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto Him, and make Our abode with him." *61

A true and holy believer worships no God external to himself. Nor does he pray to an impersonal Saviour either within or without himself, much less pay his devotions to an ideal divinity in distant ethereal regions. Nor is it to a God in close proximity to himself that he speaks, but to a real Saviour by whom he is consciously possessed and governed -- a God seated on the throne of his affections, reigning in the realm of the emotions, and dominating every passion and appetite. It is Christ in him "the hope of glory" that he adores. The Holy of holies, where Christ the only high-priest now enters and sprinkles the blood, is the heart. And there the real Shekinah now dwells. The veil that hides these Divine realities and glorious manifestations from our view is our physical nature or the crudeness and limitations of our gross senses.

This location of Jesus in and with the believer does not circumscribe the immensity of God, nor discredit the idea of a supreme heaven where He concentrates His visible majesties; but it does discard and dissipate the vague and perfunctory devotions which are as unmeaning and spiritless as the rites and superstitions of pagans. It also puts an end to those dreams about the future and the far-off fairylands which feed upon the emotions and animal sympathies. It makes our religion reasonable by representing Christ as always within speaking distance of the soul. He walks and talks with the believer; He is one with His children, and makes Himself to them "the way, the truth, and the life." The head and members are a unit, and enjoy a common life. If this conception of the nearness of Christ could take possession of us, it would do away with the spiritless formality of worship by putting us on terms of sweet conversational intercourse with our blessed and felt Redeemer. It would banish doubt respecting the fulfillment of promises, suppress fear and anxiety, and pervade the soul with a sense of confiding rest and safety.

Remember, beloved, we are forbidden to say, "Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy month, and in thy heart." *62

Christ is again incarnated -- incarnated within you. He is formed within you as "the hope of glory." What a Divine sacredness this gives to human nature! What sanctity of body and spirit and

soul this fact obliges us to maintain! How it emphasizes the truth, "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." *63

ADMINISTRATION OF THE HOLY GHOST

As the Holy Spirit is the direct and actual sanctifier, His mission and offices must be considered somewhat at length. We are living under the administration of the Holy Ghost -- a truth not sufficiently understood, nor adequately emphasized. Indeed, the Church has not more than half risen to the conception of this great idea. The Gospel Dispensation, which was not fully inaugurated until after the brilliant scene of the Pentecost, is peculiarly the ministration of the Spirit, the third person in the Divine Unity.

There seems to have been a division of the work of redemption among the three persons of the Godhead. The Father occupies the seat of universal rights, and became the originator of all moral movements which had for their object the recovery of the lost. The Father's love was the primary cause and first impulse toward human rescue.

The mission of the Son was to be the visible manifestation of God to the eyes of men to instruct the world in person, and through the living voice to open the promulgation of His own Gospel. And, finally and chiefly, it was the mission of the Son to atone for the sins of mankind by suffering and death.

But to the Holy Ghost is committed the executive department in the kingdom of grace. His work is that of general administration. Not so much origination as application and distribution. He illumines the understanding, revives the recollection of Jesus and His word, quickens the conscience, renews the mind, attests our acceptance with God, sanctifies the whole being, and then takes possession of the purified temple, making the heart His home, and converting it into a seat of unbroken comfort, and using it as a garden in which to produce His own fruit of "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." *64

This view of a division in the work of redemption is supported by the singular fact that all the Divine persons are not equally prominent in every stage of the redeeming enterprise. This enterprise may be divided into three periods: the first extending from the fall to the birth of Christ. During this long preparatory age triplicity in the Godhead was scarcely recognized, and the cooperation of three persons in the salvation of man was but obscurely indicated. The reigning idea under the Jewish economy was the unity of God. Moses and all the prophets swept the chords to the oneness of Jehovah in opposition to the polytheism of surrounding nations. And because the unity of God was the governing note in the songs and paeans of Israel during the long and shadowy epoch, while the Son was only promised, and the Holy Ghost dwelt among the people in but limited measure, that division may be called the dispensation of the Father.

But from the birth of Christ to His ascension, the Son, the second person in the Godhead, appears as the chief actor in the scheme for saving men. Both the Father and the Holy Spirit contribute to give Him pre-eminent distinction and authority. The Father, by saying at the time of his baptism,

"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" *65 the Holy Spirit, by descending upon Him in the form of a dove. *66

But from the ascension to the close of time the Holy Ghost is presented as the chief revolutionizing agent. He is more frequently mentioned, His offices are more fully defined, and vastly more is ascribed to His agency than ever before. The Jewish institutions had their glory, but they all pale their brightness, and fade away like stars in the light of the sun, before the greater brilliancy of the Spirit's administration.

Paul writes: "If the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." *67

Note the contrasts here: 1. The ministration of law, followed by a ministration of the Spirit. 2. The ministration of death, followed by a ministration of righteousness and life. 3. A ministration "written and engraven in stones," followed by a ministration written and engraven in the heart. 4. A ministration having an inferior glory, but fading out into no glory, in comparison with "glory that excelleth." A ministration dim and destined to pass away, followed by a ministration that remaineth permanent as the fixed stars, and fadeless as the sunlight.

We have an account of the inauguration of this last, best, and most glorious dispensation in the history of the Pentecost. That splendid scene was the beginning of a new era in spiritual religion.

The prophetic order, the priesthood, the sacrificial system, the ceremonial worship, and all symbolic teachings, which had been addressed to the senses of men, passed away, and men were granted "access by one Spirit unto the Father." *68

Christ, having abolished in his flesh the law of commandments contained in ordinances, came proclaiming that "the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." With great emphasis he adds: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." *69

To facilitate and insure this purely spiritual worship, and to enable men to offer up "spiritual sacrifices to God," Christ promised the Comforter, and encouraged His disciples to expect the promise of the Father "not many days hence." Indeed, He affirmed that it was needful that He Himself should go away, in order that the Comforter might come, asserting that if He should not go away, the Comforter would not come unto them, but if he went, He would send Him unto them, that He might abide with them continually, and lead them into all truth. *70

The Pentecost was, therefore, the installment of the Holy Ghost, the transfer of chief power and authority to Him. From this time He stands forth as the exponent of the Gospel ministration in the

Church, and the representative of the Godhead among men. The seal of his appointment was affixed on the day of Pentecost in fire and flame.

From this time it became His prerogative to call and qualify ministers, to furnish them with credentials, to found, vitalize, and sanctify Churches, and to lift up the whole body of believers to be a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that " they "should show forth the praises of Him who hath called " them "out of darkness into his marvelous light." *71

GENERAL OFFICES OF THE HOLY GHOST

The agency of the Holy Ghost in the work of salvation is of transcendent importance. No delineation of the way of life is complete without giving to His offices a lucid exposition. The general prerogatives of the Holy Ghost belong to all times and stages of redemption.

This may be stated as follows:

First. It is the office of the Spirit to awaken, arrest the attention, excite the feelings, and produce conviction for sin.

"And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."
*72

The whole world is in a state of spiritual slumber and insensibility, and no power to rouse the soul, or shake off the stupor, resides in men. Left to themselves they would pass life, meet death, and enter eternity with sleep unbroken. The voice of warning, the promises of reward, the melodies of heaven, and the shrieks of hell would fall alike powerless and ineffectual upon the soul. But the Spirit enters and speaks, reviving a consciousness of danger, a conviction of duty, sensibility of want, and desire for help and salvation.

Second. It is the province of the Spirit to renew.

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." *73 "Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." *74

The carnal mind is the seat of corruption, chaos, and death. The soul is dismantled of the image of God, and alienated from His life. The powers and affections are perverted. The Holy Ghost grapples with these perversities, and reconstructs the human heart into a temple of the living God. He makes the whole inner being a domain of order and a seat of purity. He breathes on the dead affections and they revive. He stimulates the dormant faculties and they spring into activity.

Third. It is the function of the Spirit to enlighten and restore spiritual perception.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." *75

Sin has done much more than to create a haze about men: it has enveloped them in thick darkness, and obscured and marred their moral vision. They perceive not the grandeur and loveliness of a holy nature and a sinless life, nor have they any just conception of the turpitude of sin, and of its repugnance to the nature of God. The "unsearchable riches of Christ," comprising the realities of experimental religion and the sublimities of heaven, they are equally unable to estimate or even discern. But upon this ocean of darkness, error, and misconception rises the broad and brilliant orb of the Holy Ghost. He spreads His light over the expanse of mind, and the cloud of spiritual wickedness is dissipated. His mellow beams penetrate the soul, repairing vision, and revealing truths. Then truth and error, sin and holiness, appear in their true relations.

Fourth. It is the office of the Spirit to implant and nourish the graces of Christian character.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith." *76

When, by the process of regeneration, the soul is cleared of every noxious weed and bitter root of sin, then the Holy Ghost deposits the seeds of truth as the foundation of right principles, true virtue, and correct practice. But these truths are not left to work out their effect independently. The Holy Spirit acts upon them like the nourishing earth and the quickening beams of the sun upon the germ of vegetation. He fructifies the heart and keeps it in a producing state like a well watered garden or a thrifty vine.

Fifth. It is the work of the Spirit to assure us of our acceptance with God and justified relation to Him.

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." *77 "Because you are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." *78

When a true evangelical conversion occurs we are conscious of a happy change; the sense of condemnation is removed, and the stormy soul is hushed to peace and rest. When the graces spring up, revealing their charms and crowding the heart with sweet emotions, we are convinced that some new and precious attribute has been acquired. But we need a witness to attest that this is the work of God involving real salvation. We need a witness to assure us of what we cannot test by sight or feeling, namely, that our "sins are forgiven," and our names "written in the book of life."

We wish to know that God acknowledges and treats us as His children. To supply this lack of evidence the Spirit speaks to human consciousness. He communicates directly with our spirits, and works in us the persuasion that "we are the sons of God."

His authoritative voice, strangely uttered to the soul, or His deep and glorious impression upon our spiritual sensibilities, settles this momentous question. It is the infallible and abiding witness. Let feelings change, let skeptics cavil and circling mysteries rise, let clouds lower and storms spend their force around him, yet the testimony remains unshaken and decisive.

These are the ordinary functions of the Spirit which have been enjoyed by the people of God in all ages. They have been and still are the common heritage of believers. From the hour that the Spirit

began to "strive with man," far back in the twilight of time, down to the Pentecost, the Holy Spirit has been a factor and active agent in the scheme of redemption. Not in the fullness of measure which belongs to post-Pentecostal times and privileges, but not less real and efficacious on that account. Like a silent partner in a business firm, He supplied, though in comparative obscurity, the riches of grace which made the Abrahams, the Enochs, the Elijahs, and all the mighty heroes and martyrs mentioned in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews.

But better things and greater were reserved for the Gospel Dispensation.

The prophets predicted the supremacy and dominion of the Spirit in the realm of the heart and operations of experience. Ezekiel says, as the voice of God, "And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes." *79 Joel says: "It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." *80 Jeremiah says: "After these days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." *81 Malachi says: "He shall sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver:" and shall be like "a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap." *82 Matthew says, more proximately: "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." *83 All this began to be actualized on the day of Pentecost; when the Holy Ghost burst, full-orbed, on the Church and world.

INSTRUMENTS OF SANCTIFICATION

Actual salvation is the sublime effect of four concurrent causes -- the Atonement, the Truth, Faith, and the Holy Spirit. The Atonement is the foundation work, the procuring cause, the outlet of the great deep of God's redeeming mercies. It is the source and embodiment of all the possibilities of grace. Every gleam of light, every star of hope, every pulsation of joy, every beatific vision, is traceable to the Atonement.

The Truth is the channel of communication between God and man, the first point of contact between the infinitely holy and the fallen. The spoken word of God first broke to man the news of His prospective recovery. All along through the ages new and enlarged editions of this word have been published. Patriarch, prophet, angels, and finally the Son of God Himself, have been successively the mouthpiece of an ever-speaking Divine Will. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." *84 By the words of His Son, we understand the Gospel, the "glad tidings which are unto all people." The contents of the gospels are the organs of speech employed by the Holy Ghost in speaking to the heart. Men are only the hilt of the "sword of the Spirit," which He grasps and uses to strike down error and sin.

Truth is the fulcrum on which the lever of the Spirit rests in His mighty effort to lift the world up to God. It is the truncheon on which he balances His gun to get the true range of the heart and conscience. Truth is the telephone of the Holy Spirit. He articulates His thoughts through this medium, and verily, as Esaias saith, "Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." *85

Faith is the instrumental cause of salvation. It is the beggar's hand that takes a gift -- the hand which lifts the cup of salvation to the lips, the hand that grasps the promises and brings them into contact with the heart. Faith is the act that throws its arms around the promises and embraces them. It is the power that brings the soul into that submissive confiding relation to Jesus, where it nestles down on the sweet will of God -- a blessed state in which the once turbulent and fretful spirit behaves and quiets itself "as a child that is weaned of the mother." *86

The Holy Ghost is the proximate cause, the immediate force, the power that comes into tangible contact with the human spirit. His touch is creative, cleansing, quickening, beautifying.

Now to each of these great agents entire sanctification is ascribed.

First. To the Atonement. "Who gave Himself for Us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity." *87 "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." *88

Second. To the Truth. "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." *89 "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." *90 "I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." *91

So of Faith: "Purifying their hearts by faith." *92 "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." *93

But all these forces are tributary to the direct work of the Holy Ghost.

His power alone is palpable and effective. His fire alone purges and refines. "Born of the Spirit." *94 "Washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." *95 "Changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." *96 It is the Holy Spirit alone who goes into a hand-to-hand fight with the man of sin. He grapples invincibly with the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life. He resuscitates dead affections, and revives lost hopes. he restores the faded picture of true holiness.

But while entire sanctification is ascribed and justly ascribed to each one of these four agents, yet it must be remembered that the work is not consummated by either independently. They combine and co-work. There is a blending of offices, a sisterhood of influences, and a grand marshaling and massing of forces.

Who then, can doubt the possibility of full salvation in the presence of such an array of strength. We may doubt the power of nature to bring the seasons around, to quicken and bring up a continent of dead vegetation out of the grave of winter. We may doubt the ability and faithfulness of the sun to rise again in the blush of morning, when he has gone down and left us for hours in the darkness of night, while the world is hushed to silence and put to sleep under the emblem of death. We may question the power of the laws of nature to operate unspent for untold ages to conserve the order of the universe.

But the power of this fourfold grace we may not doubt. It is nothing less than "the power of God unto salvation." Tired nature may droop and die, exhausted suns may turn to blackness, wheeling planets may cease to move, but the power that saves to the uttermost can never fail. "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it."

Thou dying Lamb! thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
'Till all the ransomed Church of God
Are saved, to sin no more."

SPECIAL OFFICES OF THE HOLY GHOST -- BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST

There are certain offices of the Holy Spirit which belong peculiarly to the Gospel Dispensation. They are not so much a new work of the Holy Ghost, as a new and enlarged edition of the same. They begin, not a new religion, but a new epoch in religion. Not a genesis, but a development. Not the outer court, but the Holy of holies.

The baptism of the Holy Ghost is the generic name for all these offices, which ramifies into different titles indicating specific blessings; such as Comforter, unction, seal, earnest, etc.

We hear nothing of the baptism of the Holy Ghost in the Old Testament, except obscure hints that such a gift is in prospect. Ezekiel says: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you." *97 Joel says: "I will pour out my Spirit." *98 Malachi writes: "He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap." *99 But it was reserved for the new covenant to make the distinct proclamation, that the time had come for the actual bestowment of this great gift. The very core of the short preparatory dispensation of John the Baptist was his announcement, that One cometh after him who should baptize the people "with the holy Ghost, and with fire." *100

And the chief significance of John's baptism is to be found in the fact that it symbolized this extraordinary effusion of the Holy Ghost. The whole subject of baptism has been so wretchedly mixed up with the mode of water baptism that its high import has been lost sight of.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the gist of Christianity, the keynote of the new dispensation, the motive power that moves all its machinery. There is nothing to differentiate Christianity from Judaism but the substitution of the Holy Ghost for the cumbrous externalism of the Levitical code. Water baptism, as John the Baptist taught, is comparatively nothing, and its mode, about which the Church has exhausted and disgraced herself, is less than nothing. Let us peel off the husks, and sweep away the chaff, and get at the real meaning of this Divine and glorious baptism.

The original Greek, according to the best lexicographers, Robinson and Parkhurst, has two distinct meanings: to cleanse, and to purge. *101 Robinson defines it: 1. "To wash, to lave, to cleanse by washing." 2. "To baptize in, or with, the Holy Ghost; that is, to overwhelm, richly furnish with all spiritual gifts."

Parkhurst defines it more fully. He says: "It denotes the miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles and other believers as well as on account of the abundance of His gifts, as of the virtue and efficacy of the Holy Spirit, who, like living water, refresheth, washeth away pollutions, cleanseth."

We pass by the mode, as indicated by the original, that we may hold the attention to the spiritual effect of the Spirit's work. The manner implies simply and always contact of the material element or spiritual substance with the subject, whether by immersion, dipping, or effusion.

But we cannot entirely trust lexicographers to give us the sense, for they have become so bewildered and dazed by the foolish controversy touching the mode of water baptism, that they all give us a rendering more or less tinged with, and diluted by, the waterway of the question. The great expounder of the Bible is the Bible itself. The context is our best lexicographer. Let us consult this.

John says: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his Hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." *102

This passage contains a complete exposition of the nature of the baptism under consideration. Let us analyze it. John contrasts the two baptisms, giving to the work of Christ the pre-eminence: "I with water," "He with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." The language clearly indicates that John did not intend so much to compliment and exalt Christ as to explain and exalt Christ's baptism. Nor did he purpose to disparage his own work. The baptism of water had its place, and was valuable in its place; it promoted repentance. But, as compared with the Divine baptism, it was as much inferior to his water baptism as John was inferior to Christ.

The baptism of John was unto repentance. There its efficacy stopped. But the baptism of Christ, while it is inclusive of repentance, goes further, and aims at purgation and the bestowment of power. This is shown by the use of the word fire. It is a baptism that shall act upon its subject like fire on the precious metals, or on combustible matter. The baptism of the Holy Ghost, and of fire, are not, as some affirm, two different baptisms, one of Spirit and the other of fire; but, as Dr. Whedon says, They are "different parts or phases of the same process." He adds, with much force: "The baptism of fire manifested at Pentecost is the severer purgation, burning sin away by the sharper agonies, imparting a severer spiritual purity." *103

That purification is the prime meaning of the text is more fully proved by the words, "Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor." The reference, of course, is to the Oriental method of separating wheat from the chaff; wheat representing purity and value, chaff sin and worthlessness. Christ will have a clean floor, and nothing but clean wheat in it. The chaff of sin will not be left lying around in comers of the heart, but thoroughly winnowed out and burned up. I cannot quite agree with Dr. Whedon and some others, that garner, here, means only heaven, and wheat the righteous gathered into it. Wheat is not garnered for reward but for use. It is not a little keepsake; it is wealth, and wealth is power. God does not make righteous men that they may be quickly huddled into heaven. He takes away sin, and enriches them with grace for purposes of usefulness.

The primary application, therefore, of the promise is to the Church militant. She must be a treasure of clean wheat, and, like that staple article, devoted to the support of life.

This text has been greatly mangled by superstitious minds and unspiritual scholars. Some find in it the fire of hell; others, the fire of the judgment; others again, the fire of afflictions. The Roman Catholics, of course, find in it the fire of purgatory. Even the learned Dr. Robinson, author of the most approved Greek Lexicon, leaves us to infer that fire here means some overwhelming visitation of evil.

It is strange that such perversions should obtain, when a glance at the Pentecost would show a literal initial fulfillment of the promise under the emblem of visible fire.

Dr. Adam Clarke's exegesis brings out the true meaning of the text. He says: "That the influences of the Spirit of God are here designed, needs but little proof. Christ's religion was to be a spiritual religion, and was to have its seat in the heart. Outward precepts, however well they may describe, could not produce inward spirituality. This was the province of the Spirit of God, and of it alone. Therefore, He is represented here under the similitude of fire, because He was to illuminate and invigorate the soul, and penetrate every part, and assimilate the whole to the image of the God of glory." *104

THE COMFORTER

The most endearing title of the Holy Spirit is Comforter, called in the original paraclete.

As Christ neared the end of His incarnate life, He gently reminded His disciples of His approaching departure: "But now I go my way to Him that sent Me;" "A little while and ye shall not see Me;" "It is expedient for you that I go away." These pathetic announcements of his speedy disappearance filled the hearts of His disciples with sorrow, and agitated their minds with painful forebodings. They saw it would be theirs in the near future to feel all the loneliness and grief of a great bereavement. Christ Himself anticipated their hard lot. The idea seemed to be ever-present with Him as He looked tenderly on His disciples in the midst of His own sufferings, "If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"

He saw that immediately after His going away all the hatred and persecution which had been directed against Himself would be transferred to His disciples. They would not only be as sheep without a shepherd, but as children without a Father; as the original expresses it, they would be [orphanos,] orphans.

Our blessed Lord enters into deep sympathy with them, and proceeds to counteract their sadness by telling them three things:

1. That He would not leave them by way of abandonment, but simply transport Himself to heaven, in order to prepare a place for them. And then promises, when matters shall have been duly arranged, that He will come again for them, and receive them unto Himself, and grant them the unspeakable

privilege of living where he lives forever; that is, He would take them into His own family, not as visitors or temporary residents, but as parts of His own household. *105

2. He assures them that His departure would be, not so much a separation, as a disappearance. It would be simply the withdrawal of His bodily presence into the regions of invisibility. So He puts it: "A little while, and ye shall not see Me." *106 And yet the absence was real only so far as His incarnate form was concerned, and even that was not long to be continued, for immediately He adds, "And again a little while and ye shall see Me." In short, His departure was to be nothing more than the substitution of a spiritual presence for a material one. Though unseen, He would still dwell among them and in them, being for every one, and in every place, "the way, the truth, and the life."

3. But He finally and most affectionately quiets their troubled souls with the extraordinary promise that He will send them the Comforter -- the [paracletos] paraclete.

This promise is four times repeated with variations as to His offices:

1. "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever." *108

2. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." *109 "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me." *110 "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you." *111 Again, "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come." *112

We have quoted all these passages because they are invested with a transcendent importance, not well understood, nor sufficiently emphasized. They reveal the beginning of a new dispensation -- a dispensation purely spiritual and of tremendous power.

The Paraclete, or Comforter, is more than a solace for a temporary sorrow. His office is vastly higher than to mitigate grief and generate sweet emotions. He comes to take charge of the provisional work of Christ, and to administer the affairs of His spiritual kingdom. He comes not to supersede Christ, but to represent Him; not to do an independent work, but to carry out and apply the work of Christ already begun. As Dean Alford says: "Not instead of Him, but in regard of Him, and as a means of manifesting Him." *113

All the features of the dispensation of the Paraclete are brought out in the texts quoted. He is a "teacher," an "advocate," a "guide," "the Spirit of truth," "a reminder of the words and works of Christ," an "abiding presence," a "witness," and, above all, and through all, and by the means of all, He is a "Comforter."

Dean Alford's note is valuable. Commenting on the original word, [sumpherei,] *114 rendered "expedient," he says: "This implies that the dispensation of the Spirit is a more blessed manifestation of God than was even the bodily presence of the risen Saviour ... The gift of the Spirit at and since the day of Pentecost was and is something totally distinct from any thing before that time -- a new and loftier dispensation." *115

The mission of the Comforter is threefold: To "reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment;" that is, to convince the world of the turpitude of sin, to lift up a higher standard of righteousness, to make known more vivid ideas of the accountability of man, than belonged to any former revelation from God.

His special work was to lift the world to a loftier plane of spirituality; to breathe into believers a higher life; to purge out all dross and tin from the heart; to array the Church in white robes, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; to clothe her ministry with aggressive power quite irresistible; to advocate the cause of the penitent on the ground of Christ's work and merit; to make truth universal and supreme; to plant the earth with trees of righteousness, heavy and bending with the fruits of His own production; to make the whole earth an orb of beauty, more brilliant than the king of day, whose going forth is prepared as the morning; and, finally and forever, to fill nations, homes, and hearts with a "joy unspeakable and full of glory."

Reader, if you would know all things pertaining to your life and salvation, if you would be sanctified wholly and clothed with the highest measure of power, put yourself under the lead, tuition, and fire of the Holy Ghost. If you would enjoy perfect peace, perfect love, and continual joy, dwell with the Comforter, and open your whole being to His culture and communion. *116

THE SPIRIT'S SEAL

It is a special office of the Spirit under the Gospel economy to seal believers.

The seal belongs to all times and peoples. Perhaps no instrument has been so universally used, or for so long a time, or for purposes so various. Its employment began with the daybreak of time, and continues to the present. Judah, Jacob's son, left his seal with Tamar as a pledge. *117 A peculiar sacredness was attached to the seal, though it has been sometimes used to accomplish wicked designs.

Jezebel sealed letters with Ahab's seal to compass the death of Naboth. *118 But almost always it signifies a good design.

Job says: "God sealeth up the stars." *119 In Deuteronomy we read: "Is not this laid up in store with me, and sea up among my treasures?" *120

The seal has various shades of meaning according to the instrument or subject to which it is applied. It is used to confer dignity, authority, and power, to confirm covenants and testimony, to authenticate documents. But its general purpose is to assure. *121

In the New Testament it means the establishment of any truth beyond all question.

Circumcision is called "a seal of the righteousness of the faith." *122 God's knowledge concerning the permanency of His work is called a seal. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His." *123

Paul calls his Corinthian converts the seal of his apostleship. "The seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord." *124 That put him in the true succession. It is no muddy stream of historic continuity, and no successive manipulation or imposition of sinful hands, but visible instances of saved sinners. Cruden adds this just comment: "Ye are the certain evidence of my Divine call; my apostolic office hath a confirmation in you by the effect, as the writing is confirmed by the seal."

Sanctification by the impression of the Holy Ghost is called a seal. "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." *125

We may note the following points of analogy between the process of sealing and the process of sanctification:

1. The letter written, the character of a believer: "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men."

2. The wax on which the seal is placed. This may represent a broken and contrite heart: "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." *126

3. The seal used. This answers to the word of God: "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth." *127

4. The sealer, or the one who applies the seal of God's word. This agent, or person, is the Holy Ghost: "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." *128 "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak." *129 "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." *130 Thus the Spirit operates through the word.

5. The impression made and left on the heart is the image of God, the image of righteousness, and true holiness. It is the counterpart of the Holy Ghost expressed through the word, and impressed by Himself on the human faculties, features, spirit, and life.

In affixing a seal several things must concur: there must be a contract, two parties, two witnesses, two seals, and two signatures. These are parts answering to these factors in the great transaction of personal salvation. The contract is the great covenant of grace, the most wonderful agreement ever devised in earth or heaven. The parties are, God and penitent sinners -- a strange association, but nevertheless true. The signatures are the promise of God, on the one hand, and the renunciation of

sin and dedication of the whole being to God at once and forever, on the other. It is an exchange by which we give all, and get all.

When the intrinsic worth of the commodities exchanged are considered, the reciprocation strikes one as an exceedingly uneven barter; we give nothing of value, and get infinite treasure. For man, given in his raw and rotten state, we get God -- "the God of all grace and the Father of mercies."

The two witnesses are, as Mr. Wesley would say, "The witness of the Holy Spirit, and the witness of our own spirit." By these two competent witnesses the mutual transfer is authenticated, and the genuineness of the work attested.

Nothing remains now but to affix the seals. The transaction is not complete without two seals, Divine and human. The human seal is faith, unquestioning faith. It is the faith of conviction that God doeth the work, that we are being saved, and that we are safe and secure in the operation. Because, "faithful is He that calleth you, Who also will do it."

That man has a seal to append to this reciprocal engagement, and that faith is that seal we learn from the words of John: "He that hath received His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true."
*131

The new version reads, "Hath set his seal to this, that God is true;" that is, he ratifies by the fullest acceptance the proposition that God is true. And the impression of man's seal must precede the Spirit's seal. But no sooner does faith do its work than the Holy Spirit stamps his magnificent impression on the heart. And it is at once so distinct and bright, that it sets its subject to crying, "Abba, Father."

And He, the Holy Ghost, does His work with so much definiteness and particularity, that the kind, quality, and measure of the blessing bestowed and work done are made known. And then the subject shouts, as he has a perfect right to do, "We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." *132

The supreme office of the Spirit's seal is to assure of eternal life. And this is made an argument to dissuade and prevent us from resisting and frustrating any of His merciful designs. "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." *133

This is confirmation of the assured final perseverance of the saints in the true sense, and in the highest degree possible in this life. It is not confirmation by the imposition of prelatival hands. Nor is it certainty caused by an arbitrary election to eternal life, irrespective of character.

Much less is it priestly absolution, or any mystical virtue imparted by the opus operandum, or mere outward work of the sacrament.

It is a habit of integrity, a confirmed establishment in grace, by the profound operations of the Holy Ghost on the heart and life, and this followed by the sacred sanction of His seal signifying preappointment to eternal glory. He is ticketed through, baggage and all, to the terminus of heaven.

But this is not unconditional. Any seal may be broken. Indeed, the seal is not designed to produce inviolability, but to signify the mind of the sealer. Liability of failure is inherent in a life of probation.

The degrees of assurance may be thus expressed: The possibility of eternal salvation, which belongs to all sinners under the atonement, rises to probability in the case of the converted, with elements of certainty included, but contingent upon his going on to perfection, and not "laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God." *134

In the case of the wholly sanctified and sealed, the probability and contingent assurance of the regenerate rises to the verge of absolute certainty, contingent only upon the maintenance of a holy state. And such perseverance is placed quite beyond doubt, because he has reached the point where the benediction is fulfilled: "Rut the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." *135

Reader, be as wax under the Spirit's seal

THE EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT

Closely allied to the anointing and sealing work of the Holy Ghost is the earnest of the Spirit, which is a spiritual gift having the nature of a Divine essence directly communicated to the heart. We read, "Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." *136 Again to the Ephesians, "Ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance." *137

Anointing, sealing, and earnest are not separate blessings. They coalesce and form a unit. It is only in thought that we can conceive of them as distinct gifts. In experience they are one and inseparable. We cannot be anointed and sealed, and not have the earnest. The reverse is equally true. We cannot possess the earnest and not be somewhat anointed and sealed. And yet the three gifts, when addressed to the understanding, appear different, owing to the material symbol by which each is represented.

Anointing suggests oil; sealing, an instrument by which impressions are made; while earnest refers us back to the Oriental practice of presenting the first fruits as a token and pledge of the coming harvest.

In our conception anointing and sealing are more outward, and convey the idea of an application, while earnest is thought of as something within, and means a largess divinely imparted. Anointing and sealing take on the aspect of qualification, but earnest presents itself as a feast to be enjoyed. Hence the apostle says: "Hath given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." *138

It is located in our emotional nature and has to do with the affections. It is the cash down which we get when we become parties, by faith, to the great covenant of grace. It is the sample sheaf which tells of the kind and quality of wheat that the coming harvest is sure to furnish.

The offering of "first-fruits" required by the Levitical code was designed to inculcate the important doctrine and duty of giving the first and best of every thing to God, but gradually it grew into a festival. There were two feasts connected with harvest among the Jews, one at the beginning, the other at the end. Accordingly, in Exodus we find this direction: "And none shall appear before me empty: and the feast of harvest, the first-fruits of thy labors, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labors out of the field." *139

These two feasts, the one at the first and the other at the last of the reaping time, may have suggested to the apostle the present and the future ideas which he attaches to the earnest of the Spirit. In Corinthians he calls it "the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts," which must mean a present enjoyment. But in writing to the Ephesians he calls it "the earnest of our inheritance," which is to last until the redemption of the purchased possession, and then to redound to the praise of God's glory.

In the New Testament, this ancient custom of offering "first-fruits" is made to represent spiritual things, and especially to indicate the Spirit's work. Paul writes, "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit." *140 Again he says, "If the first-fruits be holy, the lump is also holy." *141

Some, however, think the term earnest has a commercial origin, and signifies the price paid down to bind a bargain, or a deposit made to insure the fulfillment of a contract, or the verification of a promise.

What condescension, love, and compassion there must be in God to usward, to justify such a figure. God leaves a pledge in our hearts that He will be faithful -- leaves a deposit of grace to render it certain that He will give holiness and heaven up to the full measure of His covenant engagement. A man who will not believe on such evidence, it would seem, must be removed quite beyond the pale of hope.

But whatever be the source of the figure, there can be no doubt it represents one of the precious offices of the Holy Spirit. He Himself comes into the heart and gives us grace -- a pledge of glory, or rather gives a part of glory as a pledge of the whole. It is not only the promise of something, but the thing itself.

Why do Christians bother themselves and waste time in reasoning about the possibilities of the supernatural? They have the supernatural within them. Religion is the veriest delusion, or every experienced Christian has in his heart more convincing evidence an hundred-fold than can be derived from prophecy, miracle, internal evidence of Scripture, science, or logic.

If every thing else should be involved in doubt, and given up, what am I to do with the consciousness that I have the earnest of the Spirit within? What shall I do with the fact that it began with my conversion, and has never left me? Am I told that I am deceived? As well tell me that I am deceived in the feeling that I live. Am I told that my consciousness is an unreal or morbid emotion? As well tell me that I do not taste food when I eat, or feel the stimulus of light when the morning dawns, or enjoy the pleasures of health when I am well.

If the enjoyment of religion can be disproved, then not only Christianity falls, but the universe also. Man is a myth, life a dream, and the whole universe an ideality or splendid illusion.

Reader, in your debate, make much of your religious experience. Magnify the argument of "Christ in you, the hope of glory." In every conflict, when hard pressed, fall back upon your ramparts: "The earnest of the Spirit in your hearts."

The comment of Dr. Adam Clarke is so pertinent and good that I here reproduce it: "From this unction and sealing we have a clear testimony in our souls, the Divine Spirit dwelling constantly in us, of our acceptance with God, and that our ways please Him. The word properly signifies an earnest of something promised; a part of the price agreed for between the buyer and seller, by giving and receiving of which the bargain was ratified; or a deposit which was to be restored when the thing promised was given. The Holy Spirit being an earnest in the heart, and an earnest of the promised inheritance, means a security given in hand for the fulfillment of all God's promises relative to grace and eternal life. We may learn from this that eternal life will be given in the great day to all who can produce the [arrabon] *142 or pledge. He who is found then with the earnest of God's Spirit in heart, shall not only be saved from death, but have that eternal life of which it is the pledge, the earnest, and the evidence. Without this [arrabon] there can be no glory." *143

ANOINTING OF THE HOLY GHOST

To anoint with oil was an ancient custom. Samuel anointed Saul and David. *144 Zadok the priest anointed Solomon. *145 Moses anointed Aaron and his sons. *146 The Tabernacle and altar were anointed.

This anointing ceremony, it is quite plain, had two principal meanings: 1. To confer authority and power. 2. To set apart, sanctify, and render sacred. The power bestowed was not merely official recognition and civil dignity, but Divine appointment by an accompanying spiritual influence of which the gentle application of oil was the emblem.

After Samuel anointed Saul he said: "Is it not because the Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?" *147 When David was anointed it is said, "The Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward." *148 After Solomon was anointed God gave him "a wise and an understanding heart." *149

This anointing ceremony was also indicative of sanctification. The direction given to Moses, respecting Aaron and his sons, was thus expressed: "Thou shalt anoint them, and consecrate them, and sanctify them." *150 As further proof that the rite included the idea of personal purification, the oil itself was made ceremonially holy: "Thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, . . . tempered together, pure and holy: . . . it shall be unto you most holy." *151 *152 It may be important to note that the anointing act was preceded by another service especially significant of cleansing, to wit: the washing of water. The following direction was given in relation to mode: "Thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and wash them with water. And thou shalt put upon Aaron the holy garments, and anoint him." *153

This may indicate the New Testament order: First, sanctification; second, enduement. In the New Testament the words anoint, anointed, and anointing are used to denote the direct operations of the Holy Spirit. The material symbol is dropped, and the substance signified, namely, the Holy Spirit comes into tangible contact with the heart. Where the original word is used in connection with spiritual things it always represents the highest Divine enduement and the most sacred character. It stands for high health, great power, and perfect insight into spiritual and divine things. "Anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see;" *154 that is, seek the enlightenment of God's word and Spirit, that your diseased understanding and blurred vision may be cured.

Sin has not only put a film on the eye, but destroyed the capacity to see. It has ruined the faculty of spiritual insight, and struck the soul with blindness. The only perfect cure is the salve of experimental grace. A man may have all the learning in the world, and all the culture the schools can afford, and yet be a mere novice in spiritual understanding.

Learning is exceedingly valuable, but valuable only as an auxiliary. The Holy Ghost is the standard authority, the central orb in the system of truth. He is the schoolmaster whose lessons, put into the heart, and not into the head, makes the humblest Christian often wiser and mightier than the most celebrated scholar.

John says of this class who are Spirit taught, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." *155 This does not mean infallibility, nor is it an assumption of universal knowledge. The context plainly shows that the "all things" here mentioned are the truths derived from Christ-truths which enter as essential elements into Christian experience by the unctious operations of the Holy Spirit.

In support of this view he again says: "The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him." *156

This passage is flung against certain Antichrists who prowled around the Church in St. John's time, and adroitly tried to seduce the disciples away from the true Christ to their false Christs and spurious gospels.

The writings of "the fathers" contain abundant evidence to this effect. But the apostle wisely aims to confirm them in the true faith by throwing their minds back upon their conscious experience -- the personal anointing of the Holy Ghost. Here he advances a truth not sufficiently emphasized and depended upon in systems of theology. It is the important doctrine that experience is the surest anchorage of faith. The decisive appeal is not to miracle, argument, tradition, or history, but to the actual, abiding work of the Spirit within. This is, and ever must be, the strongest evidence of Christianity.

Science and subtle reasoning and satire may cast doubt on every aspect of religious truth, but a real experience is unanswerable. A Christian may be tangled up and utterly confounded in the realm of debate by the "cunning craftiness of men," but a holy experience is a citadel which no enemy can storm. This passage does not teach the vainglorious and conceited idea that we may be so taught of

the Spirit that we will not need education, books, or preachers for our instruction. The Spirit teacheth through the word, and that word intelligently expounded. The text simply affirms that a spiritual Christian is a God-taught and divinely-established believer. He stands on the vantage ground of the supernatural within him.

"What we have felt and seen,
With confidence we tell;
And publish to the sons of men
The signs infallible"

To the same effect Paul writes to the Corinthians: "Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ... is God." *157 The emphasis here is placed upon the source of the unction -- "is God." The anointing comes direct from Him. It is no human qualification. No educational furnishment, no natural talent, no earthly gift of any sort. It descends immediately from God. It drops from the fingers of Divinity and pours from the born of salvation. It is gently applied by the hand of infinite grace.

The anointing spoken of in these passages is one and the same thing with the "promise of my Father," mentioned in Luke xxiv, 49, which culminated in the magnificent scene of the Pentecost.

APPLICATION OF THE SUBJECT

Of what the Gospel teaches on this subject, this is the sum:

1. This anointing is the direct communication of the Holy Spirit to the heart in extraordinary fullness. It is an exact fulfillment of the Saviour's words, that "God giveth not the Spirit by measure." *158 It has no limit except the limit of capacity to receive. It is being "filled with the Spirit" in every faculty.

2. It is an inward, evidential, abiding light, which serves as a sure guide to truth -- a spiritual discernment of spiritual things. It does not discount the word, nor set aside the ordinary means of edification, but it does detect and reject much that claims to be religious thought and instruction. It discriminates between the chaff and the wheat, the form and the power; between the "charity that never faileth," and the "sounding brass and tinkling cymbal."

3. It accompanies entire sanctification, and is one with it, and in a large measure is inseparable from it; and yet there may be, so to speak, re-applications of the anointing oil. Charles G. Finney testifies that while he was conducting a meeting in Boston, "God gave his soul a thorough overhauling, by which he was lifted into a sublimer plane of life and power." Others have had a similar experience. There is such a thing as being anointed with fresh oil, and having it applied more plentifully.

4. This anointing inducts into office, and confers authority and power. It is the gift which invests a man with ministerial rights, and makes him effective. A man who has not by such anointing received the credentials of the Holy Ghost has no right to be in the ministry. The apostles were

commanded to "tarry at Jerusalem" until they received this enduement of power. With a perishing world around them they were held back until thus empowered from on high.

From this historic fact we learn this lesson: Men may run, not only before they are called, but run too soon after they are called. There is a Jerusalem diploma to be obtained, before the duties of the holy office can be rightfully and efficiently discharged. Every candidate stands all unqualified until this unction is poured upon him as it was upon Aaron. The absolute necessity of this qualifying rite is proved by the fact that Christ could not enter upon His public ministry until the Spirit came upon Him at the time of His baptism. It is said the Spirit descended like a dove and abode upon Him.

It was after this that He said, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." *159

John hesitated to be the instrument to perform the symbolic act of baptism, but Jesus said, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." *160 From that time it is recorded, "Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan," *161 and entered upon His public ministry. The importance of this anointing is still further enhanced by the name applied to our Lord. He is called [Christos,] Christ, which means the anointed One. He is also called [Messias, or Messiah,] which has the same import, the anointed. *162

Now, if this anointing was necessary in the case of Christ, who was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," how can it possibly be dispensed with in the case of the human ministry? And as this anointing was added to Christ's natural purity, we may infer that the same anointing is receivable by Christians, and is supplementary to entire sanctification. It is pre-eminently a qualifying grace. Without it a man may be good, but he cannot be strong or pre-eminently successful.

A minister may be inducted into office with all the forms and assumption of external sanctity and deep consecration, and yet be as destitute of revival power as the steeple on his church. Many a man has had to speak down from the dizzy height of ecclesiastical preferment, and say with honest David, "I am this day weak, though anointed king!" *163

The question is often asked by educated and sincere ministers, "Why am I not successful? Why are sinners not converted by my preaching?" The true answer is, You have not the anointing.

God never puts a man into His vineyard who cannot accomplish any thing if properly equipped. Inefficient men shut their eyes to the real cause of their inefficiency. While their unfruitfulness cannot be denied, they account for it in fallacious ways. First, on the ground that they are not adapted to revival work. They are built and trained, in their own estimation, for edification and solid work. They move in higher regions of air than the humdrum evangelist does or can. They are constituted to draw and render religion respectable by the use of learning and the graces of oratory. Their province is to batter down some subtle form of infidelity which good people do not know, and do not care to know, and never would know did not these superior preachers first tell them what some Huxley, Darwin, Mill, or Spencer has said. Thus they often project a poison into the mind, which

their own discussions fail to antidote. With this class of ministers it often occurs that whole years pass, and not a soul is converted through their agency. And the most painful fact is, these men seem content to have it so.

Another method of accounting for the lack of fruit is the assertion that the Church has assigned to certain men some secular duties, such as teaching, writing, and the management of its various auxiliaries, institutions not deeply spiritual, though generally religious. This is true. But it would be just as true to say that they who have been thus turned aside by an election, from the direct and only proper work of the ministry, have sought the places they occupy. It is a melancholy fact that Christian ministers regard these outside official positions as promotions, and the Church has been taught so to view them.

The absence of fruit is again palliated by the half-truth, that we are not responsible for results, but simply for the performance of duty. This opiate has put many an unproductive preacher sweetly to sleep, and filled his nights with pleasant dreams. Now the proposition is both true and false.

God will not hold a man responsible for results when he has possessed himself of all available strength, and does faithfully discharge his duty.

But it is not true that a man is not responsible for the lack of fruit, when the lack is the consequence of his own negligence in not seeking the endowment from on high, which is sure to give success. We are responsible for the absence of power in preaching, and consequently for the absence of fruit. It is not enough to preach the Gospel. We must preach it as Paul did, "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." Judgment, no doubt, will be passed upon the tone and spirit of our preaching.

Paul makes frequent reference to the character of his preaching, and always claims a Divine competency to succeed. "My speech and my preaching," he says, was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." *164 Again he says: "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." *165

Paul is almost boastful of his ability to preach the Gospel: "Who also hath made us able ministers." And yet, though a man of rare learning, he never once attributes his qualification to that cause. he always, without exception, puts stress on the spiritual preparation. He was God-made He was Holy-Ghost taught. And he carried about with him a consciousness of this abiding power. When he wrote to the Romans he did not say, "I shall come to you with an elaborate and well-written sermon;" but he said, "I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ." *166

We may lay it down, therefore, as an absolute rule, that God never called a man to the ministry without proposing and pledging to put him under such an anointing as will make the subject of it efficient in awakening and converting sinners and raising up a holy Church. Of course this endowment is not bestowed unconditionally. We must tarry at Jerusalem and wait for it, as they did

on the day of Pentecost; that is, we must put ourselves in the required attitude toward God and the subject, that we may receive.

Finally, it is important to note that this anointing is not restricted to the ministerial order. It was not at the Pentecost, and is not now. It is a universal privilege. The entire laity may be the subject of it. It is worthy of note that Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, puts the Church in with himself as recipients: "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God." *167

So the passage in 1 John is predicated, not of ministers, but believers in general. Every follower of Jesus should render himself worthy of the sublime ascription: "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things;" "But the anointing which ye have received in Him abideth in you."

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is a great producer. The cultivation of heart and life is committed to Him. He breaks up the fallow ground, destroys the wild growth of sin, sows the seeds of truth in the heart, nurses the germinating plants of goodness in the life, and, finally, grows abundant fruit of the best quality.

It is worthy of note that all His fruit is grafted. There is not a natural growth in the whole orchard. He prunes away the shoots of sin from the mind and heart, and then grafts into the stock of the natural affections the living buds of grace.

It is in this way the natural being is made tributary to spiritual and holy fruitage. It is inoculated with a Divine life which puts an end to the evil productions of our nature, and vegetates in their stead a rich and luscious growth.

It is not a mechanical substitution of good fruit for bad, as a man would pick over a barrel of apples, casting away the rotten and reserving the sound, but such an infusion of new life and health into the natural constitution, as converts a bad tree into a good one, and makes it by a second nature produce only good fruit.

In making a Christian, God does not destroy or modify the mental structure, nor do away with our primitive moral susceptibilities. The faculties of the understanding remain unchanged, and the conscience, affections, and will, continue in full force.

All that religion proposes is to quicken, cleanse, and rightly direct these powers. In getting religion a man does not get rid of himself. He simply gets the crookedness of self taken out of him. All the angularities of character are knocked off, not by a process of outward reform, but by chiseling a man down into a thing of beauty by the chastening of his inmost soul. The cloth is not destroyed, but the spots and wrinkles are removed. The self-life is not extinguished, but made to flow in other channels. It is simply the quality of life that is changed by grace. And this is the process: evil is expunged from us by the expulsive power of superior good put into us. All the elements of natural life and organs of power remaining, but their diseased action prevented, by the spirit of health projected into them by the Holy Ghost.

This explains how the Spirit produces His fruit within us. He puts a holy seed-force within us, which neutralizes the sinful covetings of the flesh and spirit. He "turns back our nature's rapid tide, That it may flow to God."

This is clearly the doctrine of the fifth chapter of Galatians, where the works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit are contrasted.

Both are located within, and both work outwardly. Both produce harvest, and in each case the harvest corresponds with the seed sown. As the same apostle says in another place, "He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." *168 What a huge pile of corruption is here mentioned -- called the works of the flesh, the vile produce of a carnal nature.

But when the Spirit displaces the bad seed, and replants the whole area of the heart with Himself, what a field of golden graces spreads out before us: "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." *169 Love, the perennial spring of spiritual life; joy, the up-gushing of its waters; peace, the restfulness of a holy mind, and the placidity of God's presence that spreads over it; long-suffering, the enduring quality of a sanctified and merciful heart; gentleness, the amiability of external conduct and softness of manner, the politeness of Christian courtesy; goodness, the brand, the label, that tells the quality of the whole make-up of the man; faith, the atmosphere that surrounds the Christian, and works like heartbeats within him, keeping every attribute of soul and body alive and every organ in motion; meekness, the regulator of temper, the veto of anger, the antidote to fits of madness, the cure of a quarrelsome disposition, the power that draws the stings out of external provocations; temperance, the scales that weighs all our tempers, words, actions, and pursuits, and keeps the Christian in a perfect balance.

Now, reader, by their fruits ye shall know them. The Saviour has given us the rule by which we may test ourselves and others, especially ourselves. There is no use in professing holiness if these fruits are not characteristics of our holiness. Men do not "gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles," and the reason is, it is not the nature of these bushes and briers to produce such precious fruit. It is, therefore, not expected.

But how is it with the vine and fig-tree, which make high pretensions to beauty and thrift. The fig-tree says, "Look at my sturdy trunk and spreading limbs." The vine says, "Behold, and wonder at my length and graceful windings, see my green leaves and numerous branches." But have we any right to concede superior health and life to the vine and trees if they produce no fruit, or but inferior fruit? If the fruit is bad, we say, either the tree is not a good species, or it is not planted in good ground, or it has not been well cultivated, or it is worm-eaten and smitten with decay.

It is easy to make the application. If we do not bear the fruits of the Spirit we are mistaken in supposing we are wholly sanctified. And as sinners can judge of the quality of fruit as well as saints, no claims to superior sanctity, no sacred associations, no amount of zeal in attending spiritual meetings, no plainness in dress, or sanctimony of manner, no parading our interest in the subject of holiness in any way, can compensate in any degree for the want of these Divine fruits. And wanting these it will be impossible to inspire a very high degree of confidence either in us or our theme.

Good fruit, Divine fruit, is the most effectual argument to convince the popular mind of the genuineness of our religion. We may hold absurd theories, but if our spirit is sweet and hallowing, and our conduct unimpeachable, our mistakes will be condoned and our religion accepted. Specimens of what grace can do is the want of mankind. The trade of the world is now carried on chiefly by samples. A small piece of cloth will often sell all the goods a manufacturer can produce. One good apple will sell a whole barrel. So with Christianity. It is taken on trust from what they see in one man.

ENDNOTES

1 John v, 44

2 Isa. iv, 7

3 (2 Cor. vi, 14-17

4 (1 Thess. v, 22

5 Psa. li, 6

6 (2 Cor. iv, 2)

7 (2 Cor. vii, 2)

8 Eph. v, 11

9 Heb. xiii, 12

10 John i, 29

11 Isa. liii, 5

12 Heb. ix, 13,14

13 Titus ii, 14.

14 Ezek. xxxvi, 25-27

15 Jer. xxxi, 33; Heb. x, 16, 17

16 Isa. i, 18 17 Matt. iii, 12

18 (1 John i, 9)

- 19 (2 Peter i, 4)
- 20 (1 John iv, 17)
- 21 (2 Cor. vi, 2)
- 22 Matt. v 6
- 23 Psa. lxxxiv, 1, 2
- 24 Psa xlii, 1, 2
- 25 Heb. iii, 1
- 26 Phil. iv, 8
- 27 Exod. xxix, 37
- 28 Matt xxiii, 19
- 29 Heb. x, 10
- 30 Heb. xiii, 12
- 31 Rom. xiv, 7, 8
- 32 (1 Cor. vi, 19, 20)
- 33 John iv, 34
- 34 (1 Chron. xxix, 5)
- 35 Mark v, 34
- 36 Rom. v, 1
- 37 Rom. iii, 28
- 38 Rom. i, 17
- 39 Acts xv, 9
- 40 (1 Peter 1, 9)
- 41 Acts xxvi, 18

42 Phil. iii, 9

43 Eph. iii, 17

44 Heb. xi, 4, 5

45 Gal ii, 20

46 (1 Peter i, 5)

47 Gal. iii, 14

48 Luke xviii, 1

49 (1 Tim. ii, 8)

50 Matt. vii. 7

51 (2 Cor. vi. 17)

52 (2 Cor. vi, 1)

53 Phil. ii, 12

54 (1 Thess. iv, 3)

55 Matt. vi, 10

56 Matt. vi, 33

57 Heb. xii, 14

58 Psalm lxxxi, 10

59 John xx, 13

60 Luke xvii. 21

61 John xiv, 23

62 Rom. x, 6-8

63 (1 Thess. iv, 7)

64 Gal. v, 22, 23.

65 Matt. iii, 17

66 Mark i, 10

67 (2 Cor. iii, 7-11)

68 Eph. ii, 18

69 John iv, 23, 24

70 John xvi, 7

71 (1 Peter ii, 9)

72 John xvi, 8

73 Titus iii, 5

74 John iii, 5

75 (1 Cor. ii, 14)

76 Gal v, 22

77 Rom. viii, 16

78 Gal. iv, 6

79 Ezek. xxxvi, 27

80 Joel 1, 28

81 Jer. xxxi, 33

82 Mal iii, 2, 3

83 Matt. iii, 11

84 Heb. i, 1

85 Rom. x, 18

86 Psa. cxxxix, 2

87 Titus ii, 14

88 (1 John 1, 7)

89 John xvii, 17

90 (1 Pet. 1, 23)

91 Acts xx, 32

92 Acts xv, 9

93 Rom. x, 10

94 John iii, 5

95 Titus, iii, 5

96 (2 Cor. iii, 18)

97 Ezek. xxxvi, 25

98 Joel ii, 28

99 Mal. iii, 2

100 Matt. iii, 11

101 Robinson and Parkhurst, Lexicon

102 Matt. iii, 11, 12

103 Whedon's Commentary, in loco

104 Clarke's Commentary, in loco

105 John xiv, 1-23

106 John xvi, 17

107 John xiv, 6

108 John xiv, 16

109 John xiv, 26

110 John xv, 26.

111 John xvi, 7

112 John xvi. 13

113 Greek Testament, Alford's Exegetical commentary on all the passages quoted.

114 [sumpherei:] To confer, to conduce, to be expedient, to be profitable, to be necessary

115 Alford, in loco

116 [paraclete] is a noun from the verb [parakaleo] to call to one's side, presence, and aid. Hence the substantive paraclete literally signifies in advocate, an intercessor, a guide, a helper. But where it is used in John xiv, 16, 26; xv, 26; xvi, 7, the connection shows the word means more than an advocate or guide. He is a consoler, comforter, affording spiritual succor and profound consolation to the disciples, who like [orphans,] as they are called, bereaved of their parents, have been deprived of the visible presence of their blessed Lord, who was the first Comforter. It is worthy of note that Christ does not say. I will send you a Comforter or the Comforter, but another Comforter, which implies they have had already one Comforter. [paraclete] is twice applied to Christ, once referring to Christ exclusively, and once to Christ and the Holy Spirit jointly. First in the passage: "And if a man sin, we have paraklatos [advocate] with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Here the word means intercessor, mediator advocate, and can mean nothing else. It is Christ pleading his own merits on behalf of the man who has fallen into sin. But in John xiv, 16, we read: "He shall give you another Comforter;" that is, the comfort of Christ shall be supplemented by the comfort of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost, however, is pre-eminently the Comforter, because that is his special mission. He is always represented as in deep sympathy with the fallen, the weak, the afflicted. Even when He acts in the capacity of advocate, it is more as a sympathizer than mediator; for example, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Rom. viii, 26.

117 Gen. xxxviii, 18-25

118 (1 Kings xxi, 7)

119 Job ix, 7

120 Deut. xxxii, 34

121 To note the meanings of the original words, as given by the most approved lexicographers, give enlargement to our view. [Sphragis] a seal, the instrument for sealing a signet. 1. A seal, as impressed on letters and instruments of writing. 2. In a spiritual sense, a token, pledge, proof. [sphragizo,] to seal up. 1. To keep in silence, not to make known. 2. In a spiritual sense, to secure, to any one, to make sure. 3. To set a seal, or mark, upon any thing in token of its being genuine and approved. 4. To attest, to confirm, to establish. -- Robinson.

122 Rom. iv, 11

123 2 Tim. ii, 19

124 (1 Cor. ix, 2)

125 Eph. i, 13

126 Psa. li, 17

127 John xvii, 17

128 Eph. iv, 30

129 John xvi, 13

130 John xiv 26

131 John iii, 33

132 (1 Cor ii, 12)

133 (Eph. iv, 30)

134 Heb. vi, 1

135 (1 Peter v, 10)

136 (2 Cor. i, 22)

137 Eph. i, 13, 14

138 (2 Cor. i, 22)

139 Exod. xxiii, 15,16

140 Rom. viii, 23

141 Rom. xi, 16

142 Robinson gives this definition of the original [arrabon], pledge, earnest, "The Holy Spirit given to Christians as a pledge or earnest of their reception into the kingdom of Christ and its privileges."

143 Clarke's Commentary in loco.

144 1 Sam. x, 1; xv, 13

145 (1 Kings 1, 39)

146 Lev. viii, 12

147 (1 Sam. x, 1)

148 (1 Sam. xvi, 13)

149 (1 Kings iii, 12)

150 Exod. xxviii, 41

151 Exod. xxx, 25, 35, 36

152 There are several cognate words in the original from which we derive the idea of sacred anointing. [Christos,] the Christ, the anointed; [Messias,] the Messiah, the anointed, the Christ; [Chrio,] to rub over, to anoint. In the spiritual sense of the New Testament it means to set apart, to consecrate to sacred work, to fit the subject by the touch and gift of the Holy Ghost for holy uses and effective service. [Chrisma -- Chrism,] the anointing substance which symbolizes the Holy Spirit. In the New Testament it means a spiritual endowment or unction from God by the Holy Ghost which purifies and empowers the subject for extraordinary usefulness.

153 Exod. xl, 12, 13

154 Rev. iii, 18

155 (1 John ii, 20)

156 (1 John ii, 72)

157 (2 Cor. i, 21)

158 John iii, 34

159 Luke iv, 18,19

160 Matt. iii, 15

161 Luke iv, 1

162 (John i, 41)

163 (2 Sam. iii, 39)

164 1 Cor. ii, 4

165 (2 Cor. iii, 5, 6)

166 Rom. xv, 29

167 (2 Cor. i, 21)

168 Gal. vi, 8

169 Gal. v, 22, 23

POSSIBILITIES OF GRACE

By Asbury Lowrey

Chapter 9

"He that doeth righteousness is righteous." -- 1 John iii, 7.

Leave no unguarded place,
No weakness of the soul;
Take every virtue, every grace,
And fortify the whole:
Indissolubly joined,
To battle all proceed;
But arm yourselves with all the mind
That was in Christ, your Head.

PRACTICAL HOLINESS

What is Holy Living?

A definition of holy living, like a landscape picture, admits of diversity in unity. Negatively, it is not to sin, and not to be sinful. Positively, it is a clean heart, and right affections centered in God. Actively, it is perfect love in motion, a habit of loving the Lord with all the heart, with all the soul, and with all the mind; and loving our neighbor as ourself. Practically, it is obedience, doing what God commands, not doing what He forbids; doing all to His glory, and doing it so cheerfully and with so much pleasure, that His commandments are not grievous. Duty is so relished that it becomes an element, a passion, a luxury.

It is a life lived, a fire burning, a sun shining, and filling a whole hemisphere with its light. It is both principle and emotion-principle to govern, and emotion to stimulate and satisfy.

It is character and sentiment in one -- character resulting from a thorough transformation of being by the Holy Spirit; sentiment in that it stirs the sensibilities, and flames up through them in joyous feelings and transporting hopes.

Those, therefore, who talk about character and principle as distinct from emotion, talk nonsense. As well talk about a love that does not love, or a joy that does not rejoice. On the other hand, they who locate holiness in ecstasies, as against character, make a mistake no less absurd. As well speak of having a sensation without a sense, or a house without a foundation.

Character is the pedestal -- a beautiful life, the statue placed upon it. Holy experiences in the heart are the invisible roots of Christian life. From roots in vegetable growth are sent up a vitalizing sap which gives thrift, beauty, and fruitfulness to all the visible parts of the tree.

And without this vivifying and constantly revivifying element, decay and death are inevitable. So in religion, the spiritual work in the heart projects a quickening power into every faculty and force of the life.

Nor can there be any sanctity of character without such a vital element to give it birth and force. A holy walk is a plant springing from a holy seed. A perfect Christian is a tree of righteousness rooted and grounded in love. His primary and most divine life is hid with Christ in God.

He is so pervaded by the Holy Ghost, and so indwelt by Christ, and God so lives and walks in him, that he feels and confesses, as did the psalmist, "All my springs are in Thee." The unseen and the seen in religion are a unit. They are correlated as fountain and stream, as body and soul.

Hence, if the question is asked, Is religion or holiness internal or external? We answer, It is both. It begins internally and works outwardly like pent-up fires. The two parts are inseparable and interdependent. We cannot have the visible beauty without the inward cleansing. All the vernal bloom that makes the earth gay is traceable to a germ buried out of sight in the bosom of the earth. So a life of conspicuous sanctity is begotten and nourished by an invisible principle of vitality divinely implanted in the heart. The heart becomes the secret, but active, generator of a sanctified life. It is charged with hallowing forces. Wherefore in defining holiness it is not enough to say, "We, as passive vessels, are emptied of sin and filled with love;" such a formula represents the work as too mechanical. Sin and holiness are not so loose and detached from the soul as this language would seem to imply. When human nature fell, it suffered more than coil tact with sin. And when it is redeemed, it will be more than touched with external grace. There is an interpenetration in both cases. Sin must be expunged and holiness wrought in. Far better and more scriptural to say, "Purged from sin," and "Created in righteousness and true holiness."

Sin, like a crimson dye, has saturated our whole being. And God seems to think that so fast and deep-set is the scarlet hue that it can only be gotten out by a process of purgation. Hence he says of Christ, "He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver."

John the Baptist and St. Paul use the same word, "purge," to indicate a thorough work of internal cleansing. Sin must be dislodged before it can be cast out. Its tenacity for the soul must be overcome, and its hold upon our life broken, before it can be said we are free from sin.

On the other hand, positive holiness is not an article deposited in the soul, as you would set a piece of furniture in a parlor, or hang a picture on the wall. It is worked into the texture of our being by the Holy Ghost. The whole fabric of character is made over and renovated. Every rotten thread is eliminated, every stain washed out, and every moral deformity repaired. We do not receive any new faculties, but we do receive a renovation of all the old faculties, amounting to a new creation in Christ Jesus. Accordingly, the command of God is, "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." And again, "Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

A Christian is not a statue chipped down into form and beauty by external forces. He is melted into shape, and becomes a new being; a new moral species; a new style of manhood, not carved out,

but born again, "not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

He is not a mummy, dead and musty, but a new and living creature, whose internal life is shown in the health, grace, and activities of visible behavior.

Full salvation, then, is a complete reproduction of every known excellence, not for us, but in us. The cure is equal to the disease. We have been more than overlaid by sin, we must be more than covered with righteousness. As we have been steeped in sin, we must be impregnated with righteousness. The sanctifying leaven must penetrate into the core of our being.

HOLINESS IS THE CHRIST-LIFE

Our Lord seems to take great pains to emphasize the great truth that He is the life. He does not underrate His mission as a Saviour, but magnifies His property as a life. Accordingly we hear Him say, "As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself;" *1 "I am the way, the truth, and the life;" *2 "I am the bread of life;" *3 "Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life;" *4 "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." *5

Two things are involved in personal salvation cleansing and quickening. In the order of time and accomplishment the two works are coincident; in the order of thought the cleansing precedes the quickening. Hence in Ezek. xxxvi, 25, it is first said, "From all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you;" and then, as a second degree, it is affirmed: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." The purification is secured by an appropriation of the atonement; that is, by making the sacrificial work and redeeming love of Jesus personal to ourself, as Paul did when he said, "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." *6 The life-giving process comes by direct contact with Christ; that is, by his actual inhabitation of the soul. As the apostle expresses it, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." *7 Both stages, it will be seen from these citations, are reached by faith. Paul lived by faith, looking steadily to the atonement symbolized by the "blood" which "cleanseth from all sin." *8 Christ dwells in the heart by faith that He may counteract decay and reproduce life. In resisting the impairments of sin Christ had to grapple with death, and make life reappear from the ashes of our ruin. It became necessary for Him to breathe afresh into our nostrils the breath of life. And as in the creative act it was the breath of God, so in the redemptive work it is nothing less than the Divinity of Himself.

But how does Jesus dwell in our hearts? Not by a local and bodily transfer of himself into a believer's soul, but by His spiritual presence. And what is the spiritual presence of Jesus but the Holy Ghost? The Comforter being sent by the Father and the Son is the representative of both.

When, therefore, we become possessed of the Holy Ghost, we are made the habitation of God -- the Godhead -- "through the Spirit." *9 The Spirit in such case is the collective expression and manifestation of the whole Trinity. This will appear from the fact that the indwelling presence of Father and Son are as explicitly promised as that of the Comforter. Our Lord says, "I will not leave

you comfortless: I will come to you." *10 Again, "If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love Him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." *11 In the same connection Christ says, "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever." *12 In these texts the abiding presence of each person in the Godhead is directly promised, and yet the Holy Ghost is mentioned as a witness and herald of Father and Son, who are in some sense absent. The Holy Spirit is the minister at court. Christ declares, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, . . . He shall testify of me." *13 Again, "He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak." How is this seeming confusion to be obviated? It can only be done by supposing that the Father and Son are officially absent, while the blessed Holy Ghost, being the medium of communication and the impersonation of the Divine Trinity in Unity, is administratively present. To Him is committed all executive work in the realm of the inner man. Therefore it is said of the Spirit alone, "He shall teach you all things," "Show you things to come," and "Guide you into all truth."

It is the office of the Holy Ghost to be the channel of fellowship between God and man. John says, in his First Epistle: "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." *14 But how? The apostolic benediction contains the answer, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." *15

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God are expressed to us through the Holy Ghost. In the same manner, Christ communicates His life to the soul. As the vine sends forth its nourishment into all the branches through a thousand little vitalizing channels, so Christ imparts His life to all our affections and faculties through the Holy Ghost. Here is the secret of our life and thrift -- our bloom and fruitage. It is not good resolutions, or self-government, or mortifying discipline, or general intelligence and amiability, but the Christ-life permeating our whole being. It is Christ Himself formed within us the hope of glory. Christ is more than the author and giver of life. He is life itself And when He communicates life to any of our powers He communicates Himself, He makes us "partakers of the Divine nature." *16 It is on this principle that we account for the miraculous changes that take place in a fully-saved man.

Why are the affections, until now, so sordid, transferred instantaneously from earth to heaven -- from base to exalting objects -- from self and idols and things temporal to Jesus, and things spiritual, divine, and eternal? Why are the tastes filled in a moment with repugnance and loathing toward all that is vile, groveling, and pernicious? Why does the imagination, which yesterday was wild, erratic, and full of sinful intoxications, find its element to day only in those fields of fancy which abound in the forms of chaste beauty, and bloom with those flowers that send forth the fragrance of moral excellence? Why are our persons, our homes, our families, our property, and our industries freely dedicated to God, when but yesterday they were made to minister to the "lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life?" Why, in short, is the whole being dead and irresponsive to sin, and all alive to God, to holiness, and to heaven? The answer to all these interrogatories is, Christ has become our life. "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." *17 Hallelujah! "The mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." *18

HOLINESS A HIDDEN LIFE

The apostle says: "Your life is hid with Christ in God." *19 It is not located in external relations and spectacular forms. Nor is its essence any material substance, visible to the eye or sensible to the touch. It is spiritual, and, therefore, roots itself invisibly in that threefold mysterious union which subsists between believers, Christ, and God.

All real life is invisible; its product is manifest; but the thing itself -- the essence -- the principle of life, is unseen. It is an element too subtle, too tenuous, and in its highest forms too divine, to be an object of vision.

We are acquainted with four orders of life -- vegetable life, animal life, human life, and divine life. I am not sure but there is a grade of life existing in that form of matter which we call inanimate. The soil, in absorbing the sunlight and the shower, seems to warm and rarefy itself into life, and becomes a mother, giving birth to plants and flowers. Such earth seems plainly to differ from the dead clay which is hard and unproductive. So with stones even. They have a composition, a strength, an integrity analogous to organization and vitality. Subject these stones to a powerful agent, such as fire, and their cohesiveness is destroyed, their life is gone; and, like the body when the soul ungrasps its hold upon it, they decompose and go into other modes of being.

After the great fire in Chicago there were piles of stone in regular form and order, in the burnt walls, but they were brittle and dead. Their strength was gone, and dissolution had set in. They were no longer "lively" or living stones, in which the apostle Peter found an illustration. Christ is called a "living stone," and therefore "chosen of God and precious." Christians are "lively stones," and consequently are fit for building purposes. The Divine Architect has built them into a spiritual house, that they may become a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

But the fact under consideration is the internal residence and occult nature of all life. Vegetable life, in its growth and bloom and fruitage, is very conspicuous; but in its essence it is totally unseen. The producing principle lies out of sight. No one can doubt its existence, and yet no one can behold it, nor comprehend its mysterious force. It is a hidden omnipotence, a creative energy, a vitalizing potency, that speaks and shows itself in blade, trunk, branches, leaves, buds, and flowers, and finally in rich harvests. So with animal life. It is hidden. We see the form and actions of animals. We know they are living creatures. But the principle of their life lies beyond our observation. It is put out of sight and locked up in their organism. No man questions, no man can question, the reality of what is called life, in their organs and frame, and yet we behold nothing but its effects.

Human life, though of a higher order, is no less invisible. It articulates itself in speech and reason. It comes to the surface in warmth and blushes, in smiling lips and sparkling eyes. It reveals its reality in motions and force of will, and more especially by its resistance of decay in the body. No skeptic is bold enough to raise a question, or project a doubt, respecting the reality of human life, and yet the principle itself is no more an object of vision to him than the electricity in the highest clouds and deepest seas.

Now we come to the highest order of life -- spiritual life -- divine life. Like the lower forms of life, it is not spectacular, it is not an object of vision. Its very spirituality forbids that it should be. Being divine and identical in nature with the invisible Spirit of God, it must be, like Him, unseen and undiscoverable by human penetration. It is therefore said, in the passage above quoted, "Your life is hid with Christ in God." Not that God arbitrarily concealed this treasure; but such was its divine and sublimated nature, that invisibility became a necessity.

Material things are visible to material eyes; but spiritual and divine things require a spiritual and divine lens to make them objects of sight. It was not a whim, or superstitious love of the marvelous, much less a disposition to baffle and tantalize with a vain search for the invisible, that caused our life to be "hid with Christ in God." It was a natural effect of Its essence. Divinity is invisible. I can see forests and cities, men and animals; but I cannot see God nor angels, because they are spirit.

For the same reason I cannot see the life of the soul, for it is the spirituality of God, and essentially like Him. When God breathed the breath of life into man, he became a living soul. When man sinned, God went out of him, and he became a dead soul; but man did not lose his being nor his constitutional make-up. He retained these in their integrity, though in a shattered and polluted condition. When Christ came to rebuild, restore, and cleanse, He provided for, and promised to make us "partakers of the Divine nature."

Divine life is a rebreathing of God into man. A pure man is a shrine of Divinity. God is incarnated in him, God "lives and walks in him," while the man "lives, moves, and has his being in God."

There is an intercommunication and oneness with God. "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." *20 It is in this truth that we find the source of spiritual life. David said, "All my springs are in thee." *21 Paul said, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." *22 So our "life is hid with Christ in God." What a mystery -- what a seeming impossibility; and yet, what a reality!

Why should we doubt the reality of a hidden life? Do we doubt the existence of electricity in earth and air? Do we doubt the flow of sap in the tree or vine? And yet both are unseen. Indeed, our faith allows more than the simple existence of these subtle elements; we admit, in addition, that power resides in electricity, while we trace all the vitality, thrift, and fruitage of vegetation to the nutritious sap that courses through the capillaries into all the extremities of the tree or vine.

Is it not equally true, that a hidden life with Christ in God is the source of every immaculate trait in character and precious excellence in life? A man therefore or Church organization without this hidden life is like a human body without a beating pulse, or like a girdled tree, through which vitalizing sap has ceased to flow. This marks the difference between a religion of dead forms and ceremonies and a religion of life and power. The apostle makes the distinction, when he speaks of certain persons "having the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." He also speaks of a religion which makes a miraculous outside display, while in reality it is but a "tinkling cymbal" and "sounding brass." *23 Our Lord notes the same distinction when He compares certain religionists to "whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." *24

The root principle of all true religion is unseen spirituality. This shoots up into symmetrical character, flowers into beauty of life, and grows, ripens, and yields the rich harvests of practical beneficence and saving results. Reader, let no man beguile you from the simplicities of Christ. "What is the chaff to the wheat?" "Let your soul delight itself in fatness." *25 A conversion or sanctification that does not involve an indwelling Christ, is a cheat, a delusion. A baptism, or other sacrament, which does not put Divine life and holiness into all your affections, tastes, appetites, thoughts, and tendencies, is a sham, a counterfeit, a base alloy. "I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see." *26

But this Christ-life is not invisible because it is a figment, but because of its resemblance to God. Like air and light, like angel spirit, like Divinity itself, it is too refined and divine to be an object of vision. But it is not less a reality or a productive power on this account. The greatest forces in nature are the unseen. Who has seen the soul of steam or the spirit of lightning? And yet, what forces they are. They dominate nature. Who has seen an idea? And yet all idea is the most powerful thing in nature. It will break its way through armies, and navies, and governments, and systems of philosophy, being quite irresistible. Forts and laws, gunpowder and steel are cobwebs before a naked thought.

So with the Christ-life. It walks the earth unseen. And yet it holds in its grasp the institutions of men and the destiny of the world. In governments, marts of trade, legislation, social customs, and individual character and conduct, thought is omnipotent. And yet it is a hidden force, a current of invisible life; it dwells and spreads in the heart, like the concealed sap in the green and growing leaves of trees.

What constitutes their real life? Not the delicate web of small fibers which you see and trace with the touch. Nor does it consist in the harder substance of the roots or trunks; but in that secret vitalizing liquid that circulates through the trunk and limbs and twigs and leaves in ten thousand imperceptibly small tubes. It is this that builds up the integuments of the wood, and shoots forth the leaf, and crowns the branches with bloom and fruitage. So with the Christ-life. It insinuates itself through all the avenues of our being. To this every excellence is traceable. It builds character and gives beauty and usefulness to life. It makes the Christian like a "tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season;" and whose "leaf also shall not wither." *27

But though the principle of Christian life in the abstract is so deeply hidden, yet in its practical working and sublime effects it is eminently visible. If the sap in the tree is unseen, yet the trunk, the branches, the flowers and fragrance are very perceptible. So with life in Christ. There is a soundness of principle, a beauty of example, a sweetness of temper, a sanctity of manner, a benevolence of action, which is charmingly manifest to all.

CONFESSION JUSTIFIED WITH THE WORD OF THEIR TESTIMONY

Is it not strange that we should be called upon, far on in the second century of Methodism, to defend the right and propriety of confession. Has it not been a distinctive practice of our people from the beginning to testify of an internal work of grace? And did not that practice, more than any thing

else, create the line of demarcation between the Established Church of England and the societies raised up within her bosom by John Wesley. It would be the height of uncharitableness to suppose that all, or even a majority of those who belonged to that venerable Establishment, were not as correct in their outward conduct as the Methodists. Nor did that exterior correctness consist in mere habits of morality; they had all the semblance of godliness, and no one except the persons themselves could know that they did not possess a corresponding heart-work.

The difference between these devout formalists and the converts under Wesley and his coadjutors was caused by a spiritual change: a change wrought silently and invisibly in the mind by the Holy Ghost, and yet so sensibly certified to their consciousness by the same Spirit, that they had an indubitable conviction of its reality and genuineness. And as it is the nature of such a work to reveal itself, they continually testified of conversion and sanctification. They not only proclaimed the necessity of justification, and of the new birth and holiness, but added that it is a thing to be consciously enjoyed, and when so enjoyed it should be confessed. Through it instinctively declares itself, and can no more be kept ablaze in the heart and life without thankful acknowledgment than fire can be made to burn without ventilation, yet it is a privilege and duty to magnify the saving grace of God by a circumstantial testimony. And it has been the experience of Methodism from the beginning, that the ebb and flow of the spiritual life of the Church are measured by the prevalence or suspension of experimental witnessing.

It has been the general belief of our people, that when reputed Christians cease to speak of the dealings of God with their souls, they are in the condition of the man, who, being asked, "Have you got religion?" replied, "None to speak of." It is the nature of religion to tell itself.

Next to the preaching of the word, spiritual testimonies, personal to the witnesses themselves, have been the most potential revival agencies used by Methodism. Simple, insinuating, and sympathetic, they have in a thousand instances penetrated the shield of infidelity, broken down prejudice and animosities, and subdued the most obdurate hearts. Like a vernal sun, they have done a fourfold work -- shed light, melted, warmed, quickened. In every society where the narration of Christian experiences becomes general, "the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." *28 Hence the meetings among us devoted to prayer, testimony, and song, are the most attractive, enjoyable, and often most numerous attended.

There is a philosophic reason for the peculiar power attending these revelations of interior life. Men will listen with listlessness to doctrine, prophecies, and promises, when they see no point of contact between them and their own miserable and dead souls. Brilliant history, illustrious characters, and ample provisions, paraded before the eyes, are nothing to a poor sinner who does not apprehend their availability as applicable to himself. Every depraved soul feels the need of a medicine that will cure, and nothing helps his faith so much as a giving instance of healing in the case of a man who was diseased as he himself is. If there be efficacies without us, and above us, the irrepressible and ever-recurring wants of men demand their personal appropriation. Nothing short of this will give satisfaction, and yet the unsaved, in spite of the infinitely gracious nature of religion and proofs of its divinity, is full of doubts respecting the possibility of his own present and complete salvation.

Every example, therefore, becomes to him a matter of surpassing interest. A minute and tender recital of the time, place, mode, and results of such a deliverance from chains which were clanked for years, is a jubilee sound to his ear, especially if it mounts to the height of confessing to a perfect cure. Nor is confession of any real work of grace, in its nature, ostentatious or vain. It is simply an ascription of praise to Jesus, an acknowledgment before men that He has power to forgive sins and has done it; or that is blood cleanseth from all sin. Is it boastful to declare that Christ is not a failure, and that we know whereof we affirm by our personal realizations? Does it detract from Jesus to say that we know that His blood is more efficacious than "the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer," because we have experienced that the blood of Christ has purged our "consciences from dead works to serve the living God?" May we not say without self-laudation, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given?" *29

THE TWO WITNESSES

A holy state is made known by the life and the lips. These evidences are concurrent and inseparable. A man may have a correct outward conduct, and yet possess an unsanctified soul; but he cannot have a pure heart conjoined with an irregular sinful or undevout life. A full and perfect testimony must always include these two factors -- a verbal confession and an exemplary life. And it is a fallacy bordering on fanaticism and delusion to suppose that either of these elements can exist independently of each other, and separately constitute a valid testimony. And in relation to this point of joint declaration, so vital to holiness, it must be confessed that there is a serious and widespread mistake. There is a party not very friendly to high experiences, who decry and disparage what they are pleased to call "professions." And so general and indiscriminate are their animadversions, that all witnessing to full salvation, as a matter attained and enjoyed, is placed at a discount, while odium in no slight degree is cast upon the witnesses themselves. On the other hand, there are persons, and well-meaning persons, too, who magnify and overestimate verbal assertion. With such, life is not rigidly scrutinized and depended upon as a test of spiritual attainments. In a thousand little ways, wrong is connived at and extenuated. The utter incompatibility of culpable and delinquent lives, with any accepted pretensions to holiness, is not at all comprehended. The result is, the precious cause of sanctification suffers often, and sometimes almost irreparably, from the manifest clash of high claims and faulty behavior. Perhaps nothing had done so much to discredit all declarations respecting personal cleansing as the want of exact harmony between life and profession.

Now a true and scriptural proposition on this subject may be thus stated: Genuine evidence of a sanctified state comprises a dual testimony -- the utterance of the mouth, and the rectitude of the life. This is God's order. He requires His children to make known the glory of His grace by both speaking and shining. Hence it is written: "Ye are my witnesses." A witness is presumed to know something, to have something to tell, and he is considered bound by all the solemnities of an oath to divulge whatever he knows touching the pending case. Accordingly God has placed every renewed man on the witness stand, and He now bids him proceed with the story of His redemption. It is also recorded, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Faith, which works by love, or interests the affections in the exercise of confiding trust, brings the blessing of righteousness; but salvation, full and continuous, is made to hinge upon confession from the lips. Smothered fire goes out, but live coals, exposed and swept by the winds of heaven, will glow and kindle into a flame. It is so with experimental grace. Lock it up in the heart,

seal the lips, palsy the tongue, repress emotion, and the inevitable consequence will be the extinguishment of the Spirit's fire. The necessity for verbal confession is apparent from two considerations: First, God is jealous of His own glory. He gives to the penitent believer the whole of salvation; but the glory of that costly provision and gracious bestowment He has reserved for Himself. He will not give His glory, any more than His supremacy, to another. And to show forth His glory He has laid our organs of speech under contribution. A second reason is the fact that the work of the Holy Spirit is subjective and invisible. He reports His saving offices, not primarily to the world without, but to our consciousness within. This silent testimony and hidden work cannot be known to the Church or world, except inferentially, until the lips declare it. It must be voiced by the tongue, by anointed lips, by inspired and consecrated speech.

But confession of holiness will be justly impeached and thrown away if the life does not correspond. God has required that a blameless practice should corroborate the words of the mouth, and such is the divinely-established connection between purity within and purity without, that a man always and necessarily tells what he is by what he does. Hence our Lord affirms, "By their fruits ye shall know them." The great want of the world in order to its speedy evangelization is an exemplary holiness -a holiness that will commend itself to our wives, our husbands, our children, our domestics, our business partners, our creditors, our customers, our patrons, our brethren and companions; a holiness that will carry conviction to the conscience of the sinner, and that will shake the nations and convulse the world.

WESLEY ON THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT TO SANCTIFICATION

There is a manifest disposition in some quarters to deny the witness of the Spirit to entire sanctification. As such denial is both unscriptural and un-Wesleyan we quote a copious extract from Mr. Wesley's Works bearing directly upon this point. We trust it will prove as refreshing to the souls of our readers as it has been to our mind.

Q. 16. But how do you know that you are sanctified, saved from your inbred corruptions?

A. I can know it no otherwise than I know I am justified. "Hereby know we that we are of God," in either sense, "By the Spirit that he hath given us."

We know it by the witness and by the fruit of the Spirit. And, first, by the witness. As, when we were justified, the Spirit bore witness with our spirit that our sins were forgiven; so, when we were sanctified, he bore witness that they were taken away. Indeed, the witness of sanctification is not always clear at first; (as neither is that of justification;) neither is it afterward always the same, but like that of justification, sometimes stronger and sometimes fainter. Yea, and sometimes it is withdrawn. Yet, in general, the testimony of the Spirit is both as clear and steady as the former.

Q 17. But what need is there of it, seeing sanctification is a real change, not a relative only, like justification?

A. But is the new birth a relative change only? Is not this a real change? Therefore, if we need no witness of our sanctification, because it is a real change, for the same reason we should need none, that we are born of or are the children of God.

Q. 18. But does not sanctification shine by its own light?

A. And does not the new birth too? Sometimes it does; and so does sanctification; at others it does not. In the hour of temptation Satan clouds the work of God, and injects serious doubts and reasonings, especially in those who have either very weak or very strong understandings. At such times there is absolute need of that witness, without which the work of sanctification not only could not be discerned, but could no longer subsist. Were it not for this, the soul could not then abide in the love of God; much less could it rejoice evermore, and in every thing give thanks. In these circumstances, therefore, a direct testimony that we are sanctified is necessary in the highest degree. "But I have no witness that I am saved from sin. And yet I have no doubt of it." Very well: as long as you have no doubt, it is enough; when you have, you will need that witness.

Q. 19. But what Scripture makes mention of any such thing, or gives any reason to expect it?

A. That Scripture, "We have received, not the spirit that is of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we may know the things that are freely given us of God." *30 Now surely sanctification is one of "the things which are freely given us of God." And no possible reason can be assigned why this should be excepted, when the apostle says, "We receive the Spirit" for this very end, "that we may know the things which are" thus "freely given us." Is not the same thing implied in that well-known Scripture, "The Spirit itself witnesseth with our spirit, that we are the children of God." *31 Does He witness this only to those who are the children of God in the lowest sense? Nay, but to those also who are such in the highest sense. And does he not witness that they are such in the highest sense? What reason have we to doubt it? What, if a man were to affirm (as indeed many do) that this witness belongs only to the highest class of Christians? Would not you answer, "The apostle makes no restriction; therefore doubtless it belongs to all the children of God?" And will not the same answer hold, if any affirm, that it belongs only to the lowest class?

Consider likewise 1 John v, 19: "We know that we are of God." How? "By the Spirit that He hath given us." Nay, "hereby we know that He abideth in us." And what ground have we, either from Scripture or reason, to exclude the witness, any more than the fruit, of the Spirit, from being here intended? By this then also "we know that we are of God," and in what sense we are so; whether we are babes, young men, or fathers, we know in the same manner.

Not that I affirm that all young men, or even fathers, have this testimony every moment. There may be intermissions of the direct testimony that they are thus born of God; but those intermissions are fewer and shorter as they grow up in Christ; and some have the testimony, both of their justification and their sanctification, without any intermission at all; which I presume more might have, did they walk humbly and closely with God." *32

WHY AM I TEMPTED?

It is impossible to answer this question infallibly. The reason of those things which lie back of man's constitution and the world's creation is not made known. They are God's secrets, and there is a text which seems to imply that it may be somewhat impertinent to inquire into them: "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." *33 The sphere of inquiry, according to this passage, is limited to things revealed, while the only legitimate object of our questioning pertains to the acquisition of light and power to "do all the words of this law." The Bible is exceedingly practical. It is not devoted to ontology and speculation, but strictly confined, in its revelations of truth and treatment of life and character, to the moral condition and duty of men. Many ideal things which do not concern practice, or decide tiny, have a veil of obscurity flung over them. The permission of temptation belongs to this class of subjects. Why does God allow his children -- his most faithful and pure children -- to be tempted? We cannot tell. We only know what is revealed, and that is the simple fact, that different orders of holy beings have been subjected to temptation. Adam, in his primitive condition, was tempted; Christ was tempted; and we must presume that the angels who lost their first estate were also tempted. So far as we know, all free and responsible intelligences have been tried and tested by temptation. And this fact may involve the real motive in the Divine mind in permitting such exposure. Virtue, to be virtue, must be proven. Necessitated goodness is no goodness; untried integrity is not integrity. A rewardable being must be capable of right and wrongdoing at the same time; and the complexion of his character must be determined by his resistance of the wrong, and his choice of the right.

Moral excellence becomes more conspicuous, bright, and beautiful when it has passed through a severe ordeal of solicitation, and come out untainted. The continence of Joseph, and the faithfulness of Caleb and Joshua, are instances. Even the incorruptibility of Jesus under temptation is confirmatory of this position. Spiritual goodness, like gold, is refined by fire. And its value is increased when its genuineness and superior qualities are made to appear. A soldier whose heroism had never been demonstrated does not stand, in the estimation of his comrades and country, where the man does who has been under fire, and showed undaunted pluck and manly courage.

Hypothetical bravery is nothing compared with that which has been exemplified and severely tried. The same may be said of general fidelity in its relation to all the trusts and relations of life. Until it has been placed in circumstances where it may have been violated, but was not, it cannot claim the highest appreciation and fullest confidence of men.

It is so with moral character. It is only a bundle of possibilities and unknowable contingencies until the day of trial brings out its grit or pliability.

USES OF TEMPTATION

But while we may not be able to comprehend and explain the occult reasons of temptation, we may hint certain motives tending to reconcile us to the severe visitation.

1. God loves to see the counterpart of his own absolute goodness and grandeur in men, and these, too, up to the point of the highest finite possibility. He cannot duplicate or multiply himself. That would destroy the unity of God -- undeify Deity. But He can create beautiful resemblances of Himself; and He can cause these resemblances to make grand and far. on approaches toward Himself. In order to do this, He must make man as nearly independent and self-sufficient as possible. Accordingly He has constituted man free, that he may be responsible. He has gifted him with the power of choice, that his good or evil may be the product of his own act. He has exposed him to temptation, that his integrity may not turn out to be accidental, for the want of tests, much less necessitated by compulsory circumstances.

2. Temptation is disciplinary. It is the Lord's gymnasium by which he hardens bone and muscle, and puts activity and suppleness into the spiritual organism. Moral qualities, like the physical members, are invigorated by exercise, but weakened and finally destroyed by disuse. And as our Father loves, and has need of a sturdy and well-developed family of children, he has been pleased to put them into the training school of temptation. He takes them through this preparatory drill that they may grow and become invincible to solicitation. The Lord delights in and requires manifest merit and trustworthiness. It is thus He brings out the nobility of our nature, and utilizes its forces in conjunction with the helps of Divine grace.

3. Temptation has the effect to burnish up experience. It is like the grit of dust used to brighten the surface of gold and silver plate. It makes the heart a mirror so polished that Jesus can look into it and see himself. Every one knows the pre-eminent sweetness of rest and victory after a fiery trial. It is the great calm after the winds and the waves subside. The same may be predicated of our talents. They are furbished by temptation. It gives versatility to invention, purgency to thought, fervency to prayer, and omnipotence to faith. As gold and silver come are kept free from dullness and discoloration by the abrasion of constant circulation and handling, so our spiritual gifts and grace are made to shine most perfectly by the continual resistance of evil enticements and provocations to wrong. In view of this, Peter congratulates the tempted, saying, "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." *34

4. Temptation develops sympathy for those who are tempted. This seems to have been the chief object of our Lord's temptation -- to put himself into thorough sympathy with the frailties and trials of men. To this end it is written: "For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." *35 The inference seems legitimate, from this proposition, that sufferings and temptations were necessary to empower Christ with ability, in a qualified sense, to succor those who are subject to temptation.

Again it is written: "For we have not a High priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." *36 In this passage the competency of Christ, as a priest, is made to rest upon His susceptibility to human weaknesses, while his exact and thorough subjection to the temptations common to men, and his actual experience of them, are reported as a ground of hope. It is immediately and urgently added on this very basis: "Let

us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Now if temptation perfected the endowments of Jesus, and rounded off his character as a compassion ate Redeemer, will not the same experiences put "is into greater sympathy with our frail and tempted fellow-men? Impossible men lifted above the trials and weaknesses of their race, like placid angels and un pitying divinities, have no sentiments in common with a nature all bent and fractured and rotten. A man, to make the woes and weaknesses of others his own, must be tempted and touched to the core of his being with corresponding emotions. He must literally weep with those that weep, and mourn with those that mourn. Nothing but this will make him tender toward a bruised reed, or careful not to quench the smoking flax. It takes the softening realization of the Man of Sorrows, as delineated by Watts in these lines, to make a philanthropist, and soul. saving evangelist:

"Touched with a sympathy within,
He knows our feeble frame;
He knows what sore temptations mean,
For He hath felt the same.

"He'll never quench the smoking flame,
But raise it to a flame;
The bruised reed He never breaks,
Nor scorns the meanest name"

KINDS OF TEMPTATION

Distinguished by their sources, there are four kinds of temptation. There is a form which may be said to come from God. It is written, "God did tempt Abraham." *37 And we are taught to pray, "Lead us not into temptation." This must imply that, in some qualified sense, the Lord may lead us into temptation. As the administration of God is sovereign and all-controlling, we must allow that nothing can occur outside of His established chain of causation, or wise permission. As His power is infinite, and as it has pleased Him to concede influence to second causes it is easy to see how He can dispose the events of any man's life in a thousand different ways. he may do this by immediate interposition in every case, or by indirection through various media, responsibly independent, and yet subordinated to his control. In this disposing work, God is influenced by human conduct, by fervent prayer, and by strong faith. Hence, the propriety of praying, "Lead us not into temptation." We may be rushing headlong into disaster, but God, in answer to prayer, may cause our path to deflect this way or that, and graciously avert the evil. He did so in the cases of David and Saul of Tarsus. They were both saved on the brink of ruin. God may also tempt us, in the sense of trial, by proposing tests to our faith and fidelity. This was the nature of Abraham's temptation, when required to offer up Isaac. Such, too, was the ordeal of Job. The sterling man so understood it, and therefore said: "he knoweth the way that I take: when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." *38

This crucial process is never designed to ensnare, or project sin into the mind; "for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man." *39

Our Father tempts for the same purpose that He chastises his dear children. Earthly parents, we are told, chasten for their own pleasure; "but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness." He gives us the philosophy of this disciplinary treatment in the next verse: "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." *40 How many have been burnt out and refined in this process! How many have lost all their worthless dross in this kind of a crucible! And how many waste and barren fields -- fields all overgrown with briars and thorns and noxious weeds -- have been cleared and cultivated, mellowed and seeded, dressed and pruned, until they have yielded a rich and abundant harvest! It is true, the work of felling trees, burning logs and brush, grubbing up roots and stumps, plowing through thorns and thistles, breaking up the hard, fallow ground, pulverizing clods and removing stones, and, finally, sowing the seed, and harrowing it in with no immediate return, and on the verge of winter; it is true, we say, this tedious and exhaustive preparation is not joyous, but painful and wearisome. But when the harvest comes the golden yield is a full compensation. So the "peaceable fruit of righteousness" is more than a reward for all our trials. To be chastened a lifetime is a luxury, if it only makes us "partakers of his holiness," and fills us with "the peaceable fruit of righteousness."

But the chief sources of temptation are Satan, the world, and carnal appetites. These may be resolved into two kinds, external and internal. The Scriptures do recognize temptation as arising from two causes -- external solicitation, and internal, self-caused propensity. James says: "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." *41 Here is temptation springing from unsanctified carnal inclination, or created by an abuse of natural feelings, which are innocent in themselves. In either case it is born of self-caused stimulation and illicit indulgence. For all such temptations we are culpable, because they are voluntary. They are superinduced by the free and responsible acts of our will. They are fires of our own kindling, and pits which our own hands have dugged. And if we are drawn away by such forces, the guilt attaches to us as directly as if we had committed some flagrant deed of overt sin. It is the crime of self-seduction. We become our own purveyors. And this offense against nature and the law of God is as clearly recognized, and as categorically forbidden in the Scriptures, as any crime mentioned in the Decalogue. Hear it: "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." *42 "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." *43 "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" *44

Much of the gross vice which reeks in our cities, and breathes its malaria over the whole land, is generated and hatched in this ovarium of illicit thought and feeling. If the bodies of men were transparent, and the brooding of meditation were an object of vision, what a nest of unclean things the mind would reveal! The passions, it would be seen, are being used to give being to desires and proclivities, which afterward find their birth in crime, sudden and surprising; and still later reach a fatal maturity in habit uncontrollable and ruinous. And these serpents would be discovered to coil and breed in Christian hearts. Lawful and unlawful affections would disclose themselves as cohabiting in the same soul, and producing the mongrel life of sin and holiness, which most Christians exhibit. Even in the home, and the church, and on the holy Sabbath day, and in defiance of the restraints of truth and worship, and the monitions of the blessed Spirit, the unclean creations

of the mind would often be most revolting and loathsome. O, how subversive to character is this state of things!

There is only one remedy for these unseen evils, and that is, entire sanctification. A compliance with the precept, "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit," will interject an effectual antidote. And when we are sanctified wholly, according to the imploration of Paul, this form of temptation will have no existence, except in possibility. Its very root will be dead and cast out. Repugnance to all sin, seen and unseen, will take its place.

Another kind of temptation is external. Its cause is Satan or the world, or both. Its form is that of solicitation to sin from without, through the medium of the senses; or a direct instigation to sin by some subtle action upon the mind, or inflammation of the passions. If the gospels are not, as the infidel Renan stigmatizes them, a legend, there is a personal devil. And one of the most serious circumstances of our probation is, that we are subject to his malign agency. Our minds are involuntarily open to his foul suggestions. Though his power is not necessarily determinate, yet the actions of our will and the whole tenor of our conduct may be shaped and directed by his influence. He may gain such a mastery over us that it will be literally true, we are "possessed of the devil." He will live as a dominating force within, and reign as a prince over us. He will control our volitions., excite our passions, and aggravate our weaknesses In harmony with this view, sinners are represented as walking "according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." *45 Nor is this a fiction or myth. The existence of a personal evil spirit, who has access to human minds, and who acts as a chief of a host of malignant, intelligent spirits, cannot be repudiated without the adoption of a premise that would generally invalidate the testimonies of the Gospel, and go far toward discrediting the whole Bible.

All the attributes of personality are ascribed to that being commonly denominated Satan, or devil. According to the Scriptures he is: 1. Fallen, and therefore malignant. 2. Responsible, and accordingly awaits a day of judgment. 3. Possesses the organs of speech, and in the use of them solicited our Lord. 4. Is incorporeal, and, as such, is capable of an existence independently of men, which was shown by his transition from man to the herd of swine. 5. Wise, though not omniscient, and hence, by the use of his craftiness and knowledge of human nature and conditions, is competent to originate devices. 6. Is a Spirit, and consequently operates unseen and insensibly. His touch is like the contact of impalpable dust, or the subtle breath of malaria, or the poisonous insinuations of invisible and deadly gases. His avenues to the soul are our infirmities, our besetting sins, and our various trials. he is so adroit and cunning, and so bent upon the seduction of mankind, that he transforms himself into an angel of light, and sometimes quotes Scripture to us, as he did to Christ. He no doubt often stimulates conscience to make unreason able and superstitions exactions, in order to bring about a reaction against all religion. When he can no longer restrain a holy man he reverses his infernal enginery, and labors to drive him into presumption and fanaticism. In case sin is presented, his first effort will be to call attention to any extenuating aspects it may put on, to fix the eye on some line where wrong seems to shade off into righteousness; as, for example, anger taking to itself the soothing unction that it is not anger, but only manly aversion and holy hatred. He will tell the covetous man that his avarice is not the sordid love of money, but prudent forecast, which he must practice that he may provide for his own household, and shun the monstrous crime of becoming worse than an infidel. He will suggest to the vain, the volatile, and the sportive that popular vices

are innocent amusements, necessary recreations, wholesome hygienic exercise, and even parts of culture and moral discipline.

But when repugnance to sin proves invincible to his arts of perversion, his next device may be to stupefy conscience and hush the inward monitor, and then, taking advantage of the torpid moral sense, decoy the soul, or lead the hapless man "captive at his will," into the commission of some gross misdemeanor. But now, when the moral sense reasserts its authority, and becomes again true to its office, the strategy of Satan will be to emphasize the reproaches of conscience, and drive the guilty to confession, exposure, and despair. Such are, or may be, examples of the arch-enemy's temptations. Paul says, "We are not ignorant of his devices."

Nothing is in more out of place and self-seducing than the flippant talk which we often hear in regard to Satan and his temptations. Much of the skepticism and blasphemy now prevalent probably is traceable to this cause. It is a kind of trifling which disarms the soul and invites attack. Satan is not an apparition, but an active foe; and his enticements are not a fancy, "but a perilous reality. It is quite possible that many thoughts and inclinations, attributed to his agency, are due to other lines and forces of causation, but still it is a scriptural truth, pregnant with solemn admonition, that our inmost nature is accessible and open to the wiles of an unseen adversary.

Another source of temptation is the world. And the seductions that come from thence are both direct and indirect, personal and impersonal, mental and physical. Both words and deeds are made instruments of solicitation, while the physical senses are the great highways of their travel to the soul. Nay, more; the misused and prostituted corporeal senses, which were designed by the Creator to be the windows and organs of the mind's communications with the external world, are made procurers of illicit indulgence, and the channels of unholy intercourse. The world now chiefly tempts by its corrupt schemes for political preferment and civil rule; by its literature, which injects baleful thoughts and biases; by its dissipations, which gradually undermine the habits, subvert good character, and finally debauch the whole being; and last, but not least effectually, by personal pride and social customs. These four whirlpools, as with a fatal suction, are drawing the Church, the innocent youth of the land, and the virtuous and honest part of society, stealthily into a dire vortex of general ruin. These four outlets of contaminating power subdivide and ramify, like the serpent's forked tongue, into multifarious practices, which place the world in direct antagonism to holiness, and make it strictly true that "the friendship of the world is enmity with God," and that "whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." *46

HOW TO RESIST TEMPTATION

First. Keep out of temptation's way; that is, avoid presumption. Many professing Christians provoke temptation. They put themselves into such relations to companions, places, dissipations, as to invite an attack. They "set on fire the course of nature," superinduce conflict and the mastery of some giant vice, and then complain of the trials of life. They eat tainted food and breathe a malarious atmosphere, and then pray for health. They break down their principle, undermine their tastes, and inflame their passions, and then deprecate the dangers of this wicked world. They plunge headlong into evil associations, and then imploringly ask God not to lead them into temptation, but deliver them from evil. What would you think of the consistency of a boy who would throw stones through

a hornet's nest, until the air is filled with humming exasperation and flying wrath, and then ask his father to keep the hornets away, appease their anger, neutralize their sting? Such ventures would be pronounced folly, because it is the nature of such aggravation to punish interference. Can we place any higher estimate upon the sense or sincerity of a man who chooses to live in continual proximity to sin, and voluntarily invites seduction, by placing himself in direct contact with the allurements, fascinations, and corruptions of the world; and yet deplures the perverseness of society, and prays for Divine interposition, that he may not be overcome and destroyed by it? As well might he put his hand in the fire, and pray for grace to keep it from being burned. The time will come, no doubt, when "the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den;" but the millennium has not yet dawned; and it is quite probable that a good many hard day's work and fierce conflicts are between us and its rosy light and splendid deliverances.

One of the most delusive tricks of the devil, or fallacious conceits of men, as the case may be, is the supposition that Satan may be foiled, and sin abated, by compromise with evil. Under the influence of this sophism there is a perpetual attempt in society to make vice simulate virtue. The natural blackness and deformity of sin are made to shade off into the beauty of the vermilion, the purple, or the immaculate whiteness of snow. It is dressed up in the livery of innocence, and introduced into the home, the church, and the social circle, under an assumed name. It is made to travel incognito, and wear a false, but beautiful and bewitching, face. Hence, our youth, and our Church members, are told that they must not play faro-bank, but they may play faro; that is, they must not gamble, but they may indulge in euchre, chess, and other games of chance, as a pastime. You must not become a party to the vulgar, Midnight dance, but you may go the whole figure in the parlor; the place and company make a difference. Besides, the goddess of fashion has a wonderful metamorphic power. You must not drink whisky as a common beverage; especially you must not drink it in a saloon or public place; but you may sip the pure juice of the grape at the dinner table or wedding. When you make the tour of Europe, you may drink the light wines of France, not because you love to stimulate, but because the water is bad, and the universal habit is to use such liquids as a beverage. You must not debauch your feelings by the sight and contemplation of obscene exhibitions, but you may visit operas, theaters, and circuses, as spectators, and even participate as amateur actors, for purposes of amusement and culture. The motive decides the ethics in the case, in spite of some things that may be a little outrageous. You must not deprave your taste and taint your affections by perusing noxious literature; but you may read whose classic and vivacious works of tale and fiction which continually tread the verge of unchastity.

The absurd meaning of all this is obvious. Educate yourself in the arts of vice, but do not practice your profession. Train under the most pernicious masters, but do not muster in their ranks. Stimulate the worst propensities, but do not indulge them. Bosh! it is a contradiction. It is an attempt to handle putrefaction without defiling the touch. All who allow themselves thus to tamper with sin manufacture temptation for themselves. They stroll with foolhardiness into the wilderness where the viper of sin lurks. They put the poison of asps under their own lips. They project a bleeding hand into the loin's mouth and provoke his ferocity.

The right course, and only safe way, is the reverse of all this. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, ... and touch not the unclean thing." "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." Obey implicitly the threefold precept: Walk not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stand

in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful. If you have an appetite for strong drink or other narcotic stimulants, banish them from your premises, and never go where they are made or used. If you have a fondness for novels and romance, and have felt their taint and enervation in your mind, hurl them from you, and never allow them a place again in your hand, or home, or thought. If your weakness has been an inability to resist the influence and contagion of bad associates, forsake them at any cost. Break their bands, extricate yourself from their meshes at once, and depart from their haunts and walks, never to return. By the grace of God, keep out of temptation's way.

Second. Depend on Divine grace. The Scriptures evidently encourage the expectation that God will interpose directly, and in various ways, to deliver from temptation; or to increase the strength to bear it. And to this high and unfailing power must be the final resort in every time of need. No vigilance or circumspection, no effort or resolution, can supersede Divine help. The very indulgence of a feeling of self-sufficiency will superinduce weakness and invite temptation. God has reserved the whole chain of causation and gracious aid to himself. "By grace ye are saved." *47 The whole scheme of salvation is summed up in these graphic words. The source of all spiritual resistance and aggressive force is located in the bowels of Divine mercy -- the heart of infinite love -- the arm of limitless potency. To depend on God, is to come off "more than conqueror through Him that loved us."

Besides, there is an expulsive power in grace. A heart charged with it becomes a natural repellent of temptation. As heat resists the penetration of frost, and expels the chill of winter, so the baptism of fire, and of the Holy Ghost, makes the heart proof against the incursions and havoc of temptation. It is chiefly by gracious repletion that we are enabled to say, "Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place." *48

To blockade the bays and rivers of a coast line is the usual method adopted to keep a foreign belligerent at bay: to shut the doors, and lock and bolt all the openings of a house, are the common precautions against burglary and other violent incursions. So, the most effectual way to debar the encroachments of evil influence is to close all the avenues of temptation. Bating only the direct touch of the evil spirit, if indeed the merciful Lord ever does allow the soul to be tried by tangible contact, the heart is never tempted except through media. It is through the intervention and malign use of second causes that the enemy invades our spiritual nature. He comes in through a thousand inlets. He profanes every channel of the soul's intercommunication with the outer world. He even penetrates the hallowed sanctuary of the mind through the instruments of the soul's communion with God, such as faith, prayer, and the divine word; but the ordinary ways and means of approach are thought, feeling, conversation, reading, association, and the physical senses. But it must be remembered that the opening and closing of these channels are subject to our volitions. We carry the key, we hold possession, the ways of ingress and egress are placed under our control. The right of discrimination and choice, as regards the guests and company of the soul, has been conferred upon us. We can fix or divert attention; command or dismiss feeling; open, close, or regulate conversation; read, or not read, and make our selection of authors; walk alone, or choose our companions and places of resort; and, finally, we can control almost absolutely our whole sentient and moral being. There are fearful facts and dread responsibilities, true to nature and the word of God, expressed in these trite lines:

"A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify;
A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky."

Every ruined man is self-destroyed; every lost soul is a suicide; and most persons who are severely tried, or overcome by temptation, are self-seduced. There is a large amount charged up to the devil and the world which should be placed to the account of self. It is a false entry -- a delusive fraud.

Many items will change sides when the balance-sheet of the day of judgment is prepared. We are left much more separately and unconstrained to shape our course and destiny than is generally supposed. Satan is active, but there are restraints upon him. There are limits to his range and power. He is "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." *49 So with the world; it can allure, but not compel. Under all possible inveiglements our freedom and responsibility remain intact. Hence, by our will power, invigorated by Divine grace, we can intercept, repel, and banish temptation. A decided condemnation of sin, and a cultivated aversion to it, by an act of the judgment and reasoning faculty, will have the effect to weaken temptation. A firm resolution or covenant to avoid forbidden ways, and to conform life and character to the criteria of the holy Gospel, will also neutralize the force of evil incitements. President Edwards entered most solemnly into such vows, and the act contributed very materially, in after life, no doubt, to the high and saintly character which he bore. A sturdy purpose to frown away all sin, and tread the paths of truth and virtue, often secures a cessation of hostilities. It is an armistice for the soul. Nor can we reasonably conclude that God will ever, as a general rule, interpose a deliverance which will supersede an active repulsion and fostered antipathy to sin on our part. God's policy is to help those who help themselves -- to give two talents to the man who has made a good use of one. The Lord's promise is to put the crown upon such as prove themselves faithful and trustworthy. Hence it is written: "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." *50 Satan will pass on when he sees no doors ajar, or windows raised, or shutters open. And well he may, for in the majority of homes and hearts he is an invited guest. He will gravitate, of course, to those places where his affinities reside, and will make it convenient to drive the heaviest business with those parties among whom he meets with the least hindrances, and is furnished with the best helps to the accomplishment of his purposes.

How shall we resist the evil, or close the inner world against his raids and vandalism?

1. Let the mind be actively employed. It is an old adage, and true as old, that "Satan is sure to find some mischief for idle hands to do." But when a man is diligent "in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," the adversary is not apt to waste much time upon him. The most effectual way to keep the devil's trumpery out of the heart is to fill every nook and corner of the soul in advance with the furniture of pure religion. There can be no darkness, or dark machinations, in a room which is filled with intense light.

2. Watch. There is no degree of holiness that can supersede watchfulness. Sin can be reproduced in the purest heart through temptation, or by an abuse of will power. And the encroachments of evil influence are often so stealthy and insidious as scarcely to be perceptible in their initial stages. Sin and Satan makes oft and noiseless approaches, like a thief in the night, who enters your rooms with

muffled feet, light fingers, and bated breath. In view of this our Lord said, "What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch." *51 This is a general proposition, and alike appropriate and needful in every degree and period of the Christian life. Our blessed Lord says in another place, with direct reference to the peril under consideration, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." *52 Our physical infirmities are weak and dilapidated places in the soul's defenses. And these gaps and exposed places in, our feeble nature cannot be so built up and repaired as to be invincible to the enemy. They must, therefore, be guarded by sleepless vigilance. Reader, mass all the forces of Divine grace upon your weak points.

SANCTIFIED IMAGINATION

The Gospel provides for the control and sanctification of every power in our complex and mysterious being. It not only enlightens the understanding, regulates the judgment, disciplines the reason, moderates the emotions, and rightly directs the affections, but also puts the wild erratic imagination under law and government. Paul writes: "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every wrought to the obedience of Christ." *53 By this high authority we are taught that all sinful imaginations must be deposed, and that every secret thought must go into captivity to Christ. There must be a complete subjugation of the invisible kingdom of the mind and heart. It must be noted that neither the imagination nor any other natural faculty is to be destroyed, but cast down whenever it or they exalt themselves "against the knowledge of God." God's knowledge or revealed will must be accepted as the standard, and Christ must dominate every thing within and without. "Thy kingdom come, and Thy will be done," is the prayer of submission and acquiescence that makes a Christian, providing always that the ruling principle extends to the inner realm of activities no less than to the external conduct. The doctrine of the text is that sin must be as fully eliminated from our imagination as from our more sordid and less-hidden affections and lusts. Imagination is a power behind the throne. It lies back not only of the external conduct, but back of our purposes, and supplies the fuel for incipient and even latent intention. No force in our being is more active or more creative of good and evil results than the imagination, and yet none so neglected. We select our words, control our actions, govern our looks, chasten our feelings, and circumscribe our thoughts; but the imagination is allowed to run lawless and unrestrained upon any subject. There is no limit to its range, no place too sacred for its entrance, no associations too vile for its companionship. Like the invisible spirits that throng the air, it flits unseen among angels and devils, and sips at will at good and evil fountains. It dominates the sensitive nature, and often tyrannizes over its convictions, overriding the reason, trailing the affections in the mire, and violating conscience.

The imagination frequently makes shams and cheats of us, by living and acting contrary to fact and appearance. The body is in the house of God, the eyes fixed on the preacher, the ears open to song and the words of life; the posture is that of a pure worshiper, but the imagination is careering off in forbidden paths. We are in the circle of devotion and prayer; it is in the haunts of vice and pages of fiction, mingling in illicit company, and reveling in dark places and deeds. Thus we are reduced to the mere semblance of Christians, and made to profess to be what we are not. If the companionships and conversation of the imagination could be known, it would crimson the cheeks of thousands of Christians with shame; and, could its unlawful deeds be investigated and pronounced upon, expulsion from every holy church and virtuous family would be the result.

What avails, then, sanctified exterior, or even sanctified principles, desires, and purposes, if the wild imagination is not bridled, broken, and put under holy law? What avails a general discipline of our faculties and mortification of our members in the forefront of character, if an enemy is left in the dark background to prowl at large, and prey upon the vitals of our religion? What avails a common superincumbence of purity in affection, feeling, and thought, if a subtle substratum of corruption is allowed to remain at the bottom in contact with the roots of our spiritual life. In a foul imagination is the doom of death. Her wrecks are on every sea. The graveyards are full of her victims. Satan has gloated over the destructive processes of an unclean imagination for ages, and laughed to see his own hell peopled with its blackest ruins. Nor can the mischiefs of the imagination be entirely concealed. This faculty when vitiated sets the whole carnal nature on fire. It disfigures the face, putting illicitness in the eye, insincerity on the lips, incontinence into the features, and tingeing the whole countenance with a false and treacherous expression. The habits, also, tell a tale on the imagination. Man is governed by his tastes, and taste is engendered by imagination. A man's walks are where his tastes lead him, and his tastes elect those places and subjects where the imagination has been and prepared the way. No man goes to a theater, or circus, or dance, or drinking-saloon, or any den of vice, until the imagination has preceded to the spot, and got fired up by the fascinations and orgies of the place. An evil imagination is the purveyor of a morbid appetite -- the willing servant that travels in advance to advertise and paste up the delusive pictures -- the thief in the night, and murderous assassin, that prowls around the unsuspecting soul and sleeping conscience.

There is no thorough holiness that does not arrest, subjugate, transform, and cleanse the imagination. And, therefore, there is no safety for character, and no protection for the soul's life, until there is an absolute casting down of imagination, and of every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God. Our inmost thoughts must bow to the obedience of Christ, and our whole being find its liberty and glory in positive and perpetual captivity to His law and love.

When the imagination is thus subdued and cleansed, it will serve as wings to the soul, snow-white, and stainless as the lily.

HOLINESS IN ITS RELATION TO THE SPIRIT OF REFORMATIONS AND THE CONVERSION OF THE WORLD

Holiness has been the inspiration of every great reformation in the history of religion.

The progress of Christianity has divided itself into successive epochs, and each advancing epoch has been marked by a higher type and richer unfolding of spirituality and Divine life.

A rapid degeneracy followed apostolic times, both in doctrine and experience. But He who established the Church, and pledged Himself that the gates of hell should not prevail against it, has checked these downward tendencies from time to time by great periodic revivals. The first of special note occurred at the time of and largely under St. Augustine, in the fourth century. As Augustine was the first who proclaimed the doctrine of decrees, which since has become the distinguishing feature of the Calvinistic school, his evangelical experience and teaching have not received due prominence. The Confessions of St. Augustine contain an account of a second blessing received by him, which sounds very much like the testimonies to entire sanctification which we are accustomed to hear at

the present time. Even Pelagius, who was condemned as a heretic because he opposed the Augustinian doctrine of the transfer of Adam's guilt and corruption to his posterity, took the ground "that as men have plenary power to do all that God requires, they may, and in many cases do, live without sin." To this latter proposition Augustine assented, and said, "Let Pelagius admit that a man can live without sin by the grace of God," and not by natural power, "and I am at peace with him." *54 Augustine prepared the way for the Reformation under Luther.

The revival under Luther had four leading features:

1. He exhumed the Bible and gave it to the people;
2. He revived the doctrine of salvation by faith;
3. He exposed the vices and superstitions of the Church of Rome;
4. And chiefly, he expounded and enforced the doctrine and obligation of personal holiness.

Dr. Sprecker, President of the Wittenberg University, states the position of Luther on the subject of holiness in these words: "The holiness promised to the Church is not an impersonal, unethical quality; not the holiness of the Church as an organism, but personal holiness; holiness that must be professed and confessed by the individual Christian." *55

We are often reminded that Luther, while ascending the *scala santa* on his knees at Rome, was struck with the passage, "The just shall live by faith;" but how seldom are we treated to his sublime words on the subject of holiness. Luther inculcated holy living almost as positively as Wesley. We have made so much of his re-assertion of the great doctrine of salvation by faith, that we have neglected this feature of his teaching. The historic connection of Luther with the theme of holiness is given in the Introduction to this work, but we quote his words more fully here to show that the spirit and underlying principle of Protestantism was personal purity, as against the sham and vaunted holiness of pope, priest, and Church, which lived in wedlock with the deepest corruptions.

That this fact was not made prominent, nor even mentioned in connection with the recent anniversary of Luther, showed no profound insight into the genius of the great Reformation. Luther says: "The holiness of common Christianity is this, That the Holy Spirit gives the people faith in Christ, and sanctifies them thereby -- that is, makes a new heart, soul, body, work, and being, and writes the law of God, not on tables of stone, but in fleshly hearts. This the Holy Ghost effects, and sanctifies and awakens the soul to a new life, which will be perfected in that other life. And this is Christian holiness." Hear him again, more explicitly. After complaining of Romanism, because by it holiness was no longer considered a personal quality, but an attribute of the Church and her orders, he says: "For he that does not believe on Christ is not a Christian, and he that does not have the Holy Ghost against sin, is not holy. The Church is to be called the holy Christian people, not only in the times of the apostles, who are long since dead, but until the end of the world. We are to know that there is always on earth, in life, a Christian holy people in whom Christ lives, operates, governs (per redemptionem,) through grace and forgiveness of sins; and the Holy Ghost (per vivificationem et satisfactionem,) through daily cleansing of sin and renewing, so that we do not remain in sin, but can

and shall lead a holy life, in all good works, and not live in old wicked works." *56 It is true Luther did not quite reach the idea of salvation from all sin, though his reasoning implied it and his limitations are expressed with caution and seeming doubt. He says: "It is indeed true, that the Holy Ghost lets Christians occasionally err, stumble, and fall, and lets sin remain and does it even for this reason, that we may not have complacency in ourselves, as if we were of ourselves holy, but that we may learn what we are, and from whom we have our holiness, else we would become proud and rash." *57 Had the Lutheran Church not degenerated from those principles, Germany would have been more renowned today as a treasury of spiritual religion, than she now is as the seat of ancient lore.

In this principle of holiness we find the animus and power of the Reformation. And for the want of this same spirit the Old Catholics, Hyacinthe, and others, who have revolted from Rome, are manifest failures. The same may be said of all secessions which do not evolve a higher spiritual life. Holiness must undergird every successful revival. Such is the verdict of history.

When Lutheranism had declined, Spener, the founder of Pietism, arose about the year 1595. Pietism was a revival of holiness. See Introduction.

THE ARMINIANS

A great reaction took place in the Netherlands about 1650 against the Calvinistic doctrines of decrees and kindred beliefs. In this reaction Arminianism took its origin. It was a reformation, and therefore involved a revival of holiness. The definitions of the Arminians are very nearly identical with those of Wesley, Fletcher, and others.

EPISCOPIUS

Episcopus defines sanctification to be: "Keeping the commandments of God with a perfect fulfillment; or, loving God as much as we ought to love Him, according to the requirements of the Gospel, or according to the covenants of grace."

"By a perfection of degrees is meant that highest perfection which consists in the highest exertion of human strength, assisted by grace." This perfection includes two things: 1. A perfection proportioned to the powers of each individual. 2. A desire of making continual progress, of increasing one's strength more and more." *58

Limborch's definition of sanctification is: "Keeping the precepts of the Gospel after such manner and in such degree of perfection as God requires of us, under file denunciation of eternal damnation. This obedience is perfect as being correspondent to the stipulations contained in the Divine command. It is not a sinless or absolutely perfect obedience, but such as consists in a sincere love and habit of piety, which includes all habit of sin with all enormous and deliberate actions." *59

This perfection has three degrees: 1. That of beginners; 2. That of proficients; 3. That of the truly perfect, who have subdued the habit of sin, and take delight in the practice of virtue. *60

ARMINIUS

Arminius gives a clearer and more systematic expression of his views. He says: "When we treat of man as a sinner, sanctification is a gracious act of God, by which he purifies man, who is a sinner, and yet a believer, from ignorance, from indwelling sin, its lusts and desires, and imbues him with the spirit of knowledge, righteousness, and holiness; that, being separated from the life of the world, and being made conformable to God, he may live the Divine life. It consists in the mortification or death of the old man, and the quickening of the new man. The author of sanctification is God, the holy Father Himself, in His Son, who is the Holy of holies through the Spirit of holiness. The external instrument is the word of God; the internal is faith in the word preached.

"The object of sanctification is man, a sinner, and yet a believer: a sinner, because his sin has made him unfit to serve the living God; a believer, because he is united to Christ, dies to sin, and is raised in a new life. The subject is properly the soul of in an; the mind first, and then the affections of the will, which is delivered from the dominion of indwelling sin and filled with the Spirit of holiness. The body is not changed; but as it is a part of the man who is consecrated to God, and removed by the sanctified soul from the purposes of sin it is employed in the Divine service. The process lies in purification from sin, and conformity with God in the body of Christ through the Holy Ghost." *61

Here we find the seeds of Wesleyan holiness. It shows the trend of thought and motive power in connection with the great revival.

Another great reformation took place in Scotland about 1559, of which John Knox was the exponent. Here we have a marked instance and proof of the proposition which we are laboring to illustrate, namely, that the substratum of every great reformation in religion has been personal holiness. John Knox was more an iconoclast than a reformer, though "his piety," according to the historian, "was deep and fervent, while the zeal which consumed him never knew abatement." But the work of John Knox was chiefly a protest against the great papal degeneracy -- a righteous remonstrance against the substitution of Romish idolatry, imposition, and solemn trifling for the scriptural worship of God. It was a revival of stern adherence to the Gospel, pure and simple, as a standard of authority, and reverence for the sanctity of its institutions; but it did not take a sympathetic hold upon the affections and sensibilities, and, therefore, the Calvinistic Churches have never been demonstrative or emotional. Nor has the work of holiness been generally popular among them. But in recent years the leaven has diffused, and many noble utterances have been recorded.

GEORGE FOX

In 1650, about eighty years before Wesley began to preach sanctification, George Fox, the founder of the Society of Friends, held this language: "Justification is the forgiveness of sins that are past, through Christ the alone propitiation, and the sanctification or purgation of the soul from the defiling nature and habits of sin present." He then adds: "From hence sprang a second doctrine which they (the Quakers) were led to declare as the 'mark of the prize of the high calling' of all true Christians," namely: "Perfection from sin, according to the Scriptures of truth which testify it to the end of Christ's coming, and the nature of His kingdom for which His Spirit was given." He adds: "But they

never held a perfection in wisdom and glory in this life, or from natural infirmities or death, as some with a weak or in mind have imagined or insinuated against them." To this genesis we trace the power of that singular people, who have impressed their peculiarities so deeply upon society in Europe and America. The decline of this grace has marked the decline of the denomination. The revival of this experience in more recent years and at the present time is their resuscitation and hope.

PRESBYTERIANS

When we come to the Presbyterian family we find two men who peer up above all others as representative characters, President Edwards and Dr. Chalmers. Perhaps no two men since the days of Calvin have so deeply impressed their personal type and teaching on these cultured denominations. But it was not Calvinism that has enabled them to lead and dominate the Church for centuries. Calvinism is soporific and deadening. It was their severe sanctity.

Listen to the keynote of Chalmers, as he distinguishes between justification and sanctification, or, as he terms it, their "forensic relation and personal state." You will note the Wesleyan distinction between justification and sanctification, though in Presbyterian parlance. He says: "We know that the impression which in any have of the disciples of the Gospel that their great and perpetual aim is that they may be justified -- that the change of state which they are ever aspiring after is a change in their forensic relations and not in their personal state. That if they can only attain delivery from wrath they will be satisfied, and that the only use they make of Christ is through his means to obtain the erasure of the sentence of their condemnation. Now, though this be undoubtedly one great design of the Gospel, it is not the design in which it terminates. It may, in fact, be only considered as a preparation for an ulterior accomplishment altogether. Christ came to "redeem us from all iniquity," and to purify us "unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." It were selfishness under the guise of sacredness to sit down in placid contentment with the single privilege of justification. It is only the introduction to higher privileges." *62

To the same effect is his celebrated sermon on "The Expulsive Power of a New Affection." This was and is the vital force of the Free Church of Scotland -- not their freedom from state domination in the appointment of their pastors; not their magnificent church buildings and colleges; but the vein of spirituality that permeated their preaching and literature.

JONATHAN EDWARDS

It is well known that personal sanctity was the great power of Jonathan Edwards. The revival under him was a revival of holiness of the Wesleyan type, though cast in a Calvinistic mold. He personally experienced what we sometimes call a second blessing. He records this testimony: "Holiness then appeared to me to be of a sweet, pleasant, charming, serene, calm nature, which brought an inexpressible purity, brightness, peace, fullness, and rapture to the soul." *63

His book, "Thoughts on the Revival in New England," is a vigorous plea for holiness and a resistance of the charge of fanaticism. As Wesley said, in after years, in relation to the revival of holiness under George Bell and others, "Give us a recurrence of the revival without the extravagance, if it may be so; if not, give us the revival with the extravagances;" so Jonathan Edwards says, "Now,

if such things are enthusiasm, and the fruits of a distempered brain, let my brain evermore be possessed of that happy distemper; if this be distraction, I pray God that the world of mankind may be all seized with this benign, meek, beneficent, beatifical distraction." *64

It is this inoculation of holiness into the Presbyterian system that has given it perpetuity and aggressive force to the present time. Not their educated ministry or learned literature, and certainly not their five points of doctrine, but the revival of holiness among them from time to time, by such men as Lyman Beecher, Finney, Mahan, and Hodge. It is interesting to note how closely we come together in our general teaching when we forget our shibboleth. Dr. Hodge, in defining sanctification and the means of its attainment, says: "We are saved by faith. But salvation includes deliverance from sin. If, therefore, our faith does not deliver us from sin, it does not save us." *65 Now deliverance from sin by faith without limitation, as here stated, is all we plead for as the privilege and duty of Christians in this life. We need not say all sin, for that is implied in the reasoning of the grand old Nestor, and no doubt his experience was correspondent.

THE SPREAD OF HOLINESS

Who must be sanctified? How shall holiness be made universal and perpetual? What agents shall do the work, and by what means?

These are momentous questions, vital to all the churches, and not less so to each individual. All other ecclesiastical propositions dwindle into utter insignificance compared with them. Orders in the ministry, sacraments, rituals, rubrics, church government, attractive architecture, social position, patronage from the state, and high consideration in political circles, numerical greatness, teeming Sunday-schools, plethoric churches, popular literature, educational institutions and culture, oratory and song, all pale and shrivel before the question and answer, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? and who shall stand in His holy place? he that hath clean hands, and a pure heart."

How to extend holiness is not a question, but the question. It takes precedence of all other inquiries. Like the Mississippi River, that drinks up a thousand tributaries, this theme absorbs all collateral interests. Like the great ocean, whose office it is to embosom all waters and exhale them again for the life of the world, so this grace embodies and treasures up all the parts and virtues of religion, and then in turn becomes the supreme source of blessings, and deals them out for the redemption of the race.

We have assumed throughout these pages that holiness is the absolute and indispensable condition of individual salvation. If this be true, then this grace must become a common experience, or the world is lost! Either this state must be depressed to meet the ordinary condition of the great body of believers, or the Church, including all its units, must be brought up to this standard, or the infinite peril implied must follow. We are certainly not at liberty to subtract one jot or tittle from the condition of salvation, on the one hand, and, on the other, we are not responsible for any logical sequences that may follow a Scripture premise. We stand face to face with the question, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? and who shall stand in His holy place?" The answer is absolute. It is not said he that hath tolerably clean hands, and a heart purer than it used to be, but, without qualification, he who is clean outwardly and pure inwardly. Of the same import are the words of

Jesus, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." The implication is that the impure in heart shall not see God. The correctness of this implication is supported by the language of St. Paul: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." It is settled, then, that the passport into heaven is personal holiness. Explain the subject as we will, make it a higher or lower sanctity, make it receivable soon or later, it is enacted beyond repeal that we must possess it, we must put on this wedding garment, or never be admitted into the marriage supper of the Lamb. This court-dress must be worn, or we never can see the King in his beauty.

In the next place, how shall we make this experience current and common? We are satisfied this end can only be reached by adopting holiness as the central idea of the pulpit, and the reigning thought of public worship. And this will have to be done explicitly. The subject will have to be put before the people as a distinct stage in soul-life. General discursive preaching, though on the subject of holiness and kindred topics, cannot take the place of definiteness. There may be a great deal of talk, and good talk also, about more religion, a deeper work of grace, entire consecration, life and power of godliness, and even the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and yet all amount to nothing so far as receiving the experience of entire sanctification is concerned. There is an opiate in that kind of goodish preaching. It does not sting any man's conscience. The dead, lukewarm, and worldly vie with the most spiritual in praising such sweet and glittering generalities. Such preaching places no goal before the hungry and thirsty soul, or if it does, it fixes no time when he can reach it. It is a "harp of a thousand strings," but not definitely keyed up to any note. It is necessary to present holiness to the people as a specific, present, and supreme experience. It must be so clearly outlined before them, so frequently dwelt upon, and so urgently enforced, as to produce a vivid impression upon the mind of the hearer. It is further necessary, in order to great and immediate success, to preach holiness as a matter of personal experience. The most elaborate sermons on holiness have often failed to produce any practical results, for the want of a connecting link between the rich theory and the heart of the speaker. The people go away feeling that a mountain crowned with eternal snow is a grand object to look upon, but a poor thing to warm by. Let that same preacher, provided he enjoys the blessing, Parenthetically throw in gems of his own experience Occasionally, and he will arrest attention and melt hearts which otherwise would remain unmoved. People like seasoned food.

In social worship, if we would diffuse this experience, holiness must be allowed the question right of way. Nay, more; it must have the first Place. It must wear the purple, and be crowned and sceptered and enthroned in every song, prayer, testimony, and Scripture exposition. It should not be so narrowly dealt with as to exclude variety and give to the services a vapid sameness or tiresome monotony. Much less should there be any thing savoring of lightness and vainglorious flippancy. Wisdom should govern. Every Propriety should be observed. Deep seriousness and hallowing reverence should prevail. But nothing should be done to quench the spirit of holiness or check its advocacy anywhere. Nor should the subject be tabooed because some extreme nonsensical or flighty persons express themselves imprudently. Such Pharisaic rigidity would drive religion out of the world. There never was a kernel of wheat produced in the richest harvest field without its chaff. Every forest has its feeble undergrowth and crooked saplings. So every revival has its extravagances. Holiness is for the people, and we must accept and guide its development among the wise and the unwise alike. And then we must remember that green apples, if not plucked from the tree, get ripe after awhile.

Who are the proper agents to extend the revival of holiness? On whom must we rely to make this experience general and dominant? The answer will be anticipated. We must depend upon the general ministry, including especially our chief ministers. No great advance in the life of the Church can be maintained for any considerable length of time without the support of the pastors. The pastor comes between the evangelists, special outside meetings, and other agencies, and his charge. The pastor can neutralize the teachings and impressions received elsewhere, either by neglect or by antagonism. He is a screen, if he chooses to be, between the fire of perfect love from without, and the heart of his people. He has charge of the keys, and can turn the light on or off at pleasure. It is a fearful responsibility, and yet all pastors, consciously or unconsciously, bear it. Many churches are not spiritual, simply because their pastors are not so; and, what is worse, they are not discontented, for the reason that they are not sensible of their condition. Death is not a conscious state, and sleep is delusive. It is a great mistake to suppose a non-complaining church is in a safe spiritual condition. Opiates suspend sensibility and kill pain. This treatment is often continued until life becomes extinct.

But if a pastor is in no way opposed to holiness, nor hostile to its advocates, still his negative attitude toward the subject bars its revival and progress. The pastor's type of religion is sure to impress its features and complexion upon his flock. This may be done little "by little, quite imperceptibly, but moral correspondence will be the inevitable result. It is common place to say, "There shall be, like people, like priest ." *66 but what a serious commonplace it is. Had all, "or even a majority, of our ministers a few years ago bent before the wave of full salvation, like men bathing in the sea, the confiding Church, following their example, would have been ablaze today, and heroically engaged in sweeping into the embrace of Jesus the lost millions of our race, more as nations than as individuals The greater number stood aloof and lost their opportunity. The supreme moment passed. Now many years of plodding effort must be spent in order to bring us to the point of victory and sublime achievement which it is possible we might have compassed in a single decade. Viewing the revival from this standpoint we see more reason for humiliation, fasting, and prayer, and even repentance in sackcloth and ashes, than for jubilation. It must be confessed, also, that the friends of the great inspiration and advancement made serious mistakes and lost much of their power. But this cannot excuse the general ministry. We have said, we must rely especially upon our chief ministers. By this remark, we will be understood, and rightly understood, to personate the representative men of the body, and especially our honored Bishops.

Holiness among Methodists had a unique origin and singular history. The founder of the denomination was the first and most intense advocate of the doctrine that has ever appeared within the pale of any Church. For fifty years he presented every aspect of the subject to his people, as if it were a kaleidoscope, and enforced the privilege and duty of holiness with a persistency that knew no abatement till he died. Fletcher, Clarke, Benson, Watson, and all the great men connected with the genesis of this peculiarly spiritual form of Christianity, including its peerless bard, Charles Wesley, took up the subject, entered into the experience, and proclaimed it with equal vehemence and love, until they also went to their reward. Of course, entire holiness became the signet and patrimony of the new Church, raising up a cloud of witnesses and producing a rich literature on the subject. Entire sanctification has been the Urim and Thummim of Methodism to the present time, being put into all our theologies and largely composing our psalmody.

But one change the whole Church cannot fail to note. Our Bishops and leading men, with few exceptions, seldom or never discuss the subject in the pulpit or write on it in the periodicals in the definite Wesleyan style; that is, it is not expounded and urged upon the people as a necessary experience to be obtained not by faith. If discoursed upon at all, it is rather represented as a consummation to be reached gradually by growth or a ripening process. Such is the general treatment of the theme now by the Methodist pulpit, excepting those who are accused of making holiness a hobby. And on account of this unkind accusation, many who feel a deep interest in the matter are deterred from giving it prominence, lest it should interfere with their popularity.

As a result, holiness today is not the theme of the Church, as such, but the topic of special meetings, and the watchword of pronounced individuals. The great subject, by neglect on the part of the regular ministries in the Church, has been relegated to outside and, in some sense, irregular agencies. It must be conceded that the promotion of holiness today depends almost exclusively upon extemporized instrumentalities. This amounts to a complete transposition of the Wesleyan method; that is, the advocacy of holiness is transferred from the official head to the non-official foot of Methodism. And so marked is this reversed order of things, that the rising men in the Church are deterred from becoming connected with any extraordinary means to revive the special experience. And has not this neglect of this great peculiarity of the Church gone so far as to create a virtual proscription of its abettors. Where is the official character who ventures to identify himself openly with any express meeting or organ on t his line? And is it not the impression that such a step would militate against, if not spoil, the prospects of any young aspirant who may desire preferment?

Now, is such a state of things healthy? Can we thus depress and eclipse our peculiar doctrine and retain our ancient glory and effective force? May we not, therefore, plead for a return to the primitive order of things?

HOLINESS IN ITS RELATION TO THE AUTHOR

It was my good fortune to hear much about experimental religion, including holiness, from my childhood; not so much as a doctrine as an experience. I was cradled in the atmosphere of spiritual Christianity. Holiness, sanctification, perfect love, and kindred words were among the first articulations to which I listened from the lips of my parents.

As might be expected, I early received a bias toward this type of religion, and as my opinions ripened I more and more imbibed and assimilated the thought. Consequently I discover it has tinged all my religious productions, whether from the pulpit or pen.

I do not wish to convey the idea, by referring to these propitious beginnings, that my life has been preeminently good and satisfactory. Far from it. Through too many years of my life I was obliged to say in regard to full redemption: "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." *67 And sometimes in my discouragements and conscious imperfection, as a Christian, I have felt like saying, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." *68 Through all my religions career my only hope has been that I am personally interested in Christ and He in me, who speaketh "in righteousness, mighty to save." *69

But I do wish to record the testimony that whatever of goodness I may possess, or whatever good results I may have achieved, all is traceable in the last analysis to this peculiar grace.

It is probable that the remote cause of my early bent toward holiness was a painful providence which drove my parents to seek relief and rest in the deepest consolations of religion.

When three children gladdened the home of my parents, and they were full of worldly hope, the great sorrow of their life came upon them. During a brief absence of both from home, the house took fire and burned to the ground, consuming the three children in the flames. This awful event broke my mother's health and spirit. Not long after that event she went into a decline, and for seven years was the prey of consumption. From the time of this mysterious visitation her chastened spirit seemed to say, in the language of Hezekiah, "What shall I say? he hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it: I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul." *70 But happy for her and her children, and especially for me, she learned the lesson and tested the truth, that while "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." *71 She learned from that hour that God had chastened her for her profit, that she "might be partaker of his holiness."

MOTHER'S DEATH AND MY COVENANT

The day before my mother died I was sitting in the room alone with her. She fondly cast her eye upon me and tenderly said: "Asbury, my son, in a few days you will have no mother, but follow me to heaven." I was silent and sorrowful, and she too feeble and choked with emotion to utter another word. It was our last interview, for the next day the Lord took her. But her last words, though never responded to by me, were graven on my young and susceptible heart; and they have ever since kept her life and memory vivid and sacred in my remembrance. But the hallowed turn which her last expostulation gave to my thoughts and purposes is the priceless benefit which I derived. While yet my mother lay lifeless and cold in our home I went out to a fence, in front of the house, and there mournfully stood alone and said to the Lord, "If you will spare my life till I am sixteen years old I will seek religion." I was so serious in making this vow, and so anxious to commit myself to it, and to convince the Lord that I meant it, that I took my knife from my pocket and cut a notch in a rail as a seal of my covenant.

In proposing this delay my thought was to gain a better time; being under the impression that I was then too young to seek, obtain, or live religion. Children had not then been organized into Sabbath-schools, as at present, and but little confidence was expressed in the conversion of children. I am satisfied now that I ought to have sought my soul's salvation at once. But being ignorant of the power of grace, and yet sincere, the Lord accommodated his mercy to my mistake, and evidently accepted my pledge, as the sequel will show. I have no recollection of any serious conviction from that time till I reached the age of sixteen. A chasm divided the dates.

When the period arrived to redeem the pledge I found myself in a strange neighborhood, with none of the means of grace accessible to which I had been accustomed in my childhood. My pledge came vividly to mind. I felt bound by a promise, as binding as an oath, to seek religion. Accordingly I went into a grove two days in succession with but little feeling, except the conviction that I must

seek my soul's salvation according to promise. At the close of the second day of prayer, penitence, and thought, my feelings and fear of failure so increased that I went to a neighbor's house to ask counsel. But the neighbor, being ill, had retired, and I had not the courage to make known my sorrowful errand to his wife.

The next day I returned to the grove desperately in earnest. I prostrated myself upon the ground, in self-renouncing helplessness. I threw myself upon the mercy of God for every thing, light, repentance, conversion, and the witness of conversion. About ten o'clock in the morning of the third day my resurrection came. Conscious salvation streamed into my soul. I was blessed with peace, joy, a tender, loving sense of the presence and favor and love of God to me. It was a jubilee. But my strongest emotion was that of devotion. I loved to pray. Accordingly on my way out of the wood I passed through a ravine, and quite spontaneously I kneeled down and lifted my grateful soul to God in prayer. And such a sluice of glory as then came into me I never knew before; such communion with God and blessing from him.

I could not doubt my conversion. Another corroborative evidence I received in reading a chapter in the Gospel as I retired at night. The whole chapter seemed so sweet that I wondered I had not happened to notice it previously. I suppose I had often read the precious truth, but the secret was that, until then, I had no corresponding relish for it. The sweetness was not just then put into the Gospel, but into my heart. I then proved, for the first time, that the word of the Lord is "sweeter ... than honey and the honeycomb," and that man does "not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

NEGLECTED DUTY

I made a serious mistake at this point. I did not identify myself immediately with the Church, nor make confession of my conversion, except to one person, for more than a year. As a result I lost much and fell into great doubt. Infidel books being put into my hands, I was plagued with skeptical thoughts. The reasonings of Universalists also cooled the ardor of my devotion. I left myself out in the wilderness, and, therefore, was naturally the prey of wild beasts. And it was not until I united with the Church of my fathers, under Rev. Wilbur Hoag, of the East Genesee Conference, and commenced a witnessing and active Christian life, that I regained my enjoyments. And here I must record most gratefully my indebtedness to Cyrus Sawyer, afterward Rev. Cyrus Sawyer, and pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Delaware, O., where he lived a holy life and died a glorious death in 1848. He was my chum at the Penn Yan (N. Y.) Academy. A more devout and pure young man I never knew. O how he did walk and talk with God! What divine communion by day, and ecstatic visions by night, did he enjoy! His conversation was literally in heaven. Through him I was induced to pray vocally and to begin speaking in public.

About this time I commenced teaching, a profession which I supposed I might follow through life. But, as Providence evidently willed, a strange gentleman, of intelligence and piety, Robert Henry, of Hector, N. Y., became interested in me, and one day kindly presented me a pamphlet and offered to give me the benefit of his scholarship in the Genesee Wesleyan Seminary. The pamphlet proved to be Wesley's "Plain Account of Christian Perfection." Shall I say I read it? I did more; I devoured it, and it saturated me, and then set me on fire, and has proved, in my convictions, at least, an

unquenchable fire. As a doctrine, if not fully as an experience, the subject burnt itself into me. Whatever may have been my own lack or shortcomings, one thing is certain, it became the formative principle of my character and life, the nucleus of my studies, and the reigning idea of my public ministrations, and I have not been able to accept any other type of religion, as measuring up to the Gospel standard. Nothing short of salvation from all sin in this life has appeared to me from that hour to be consistent with the purpose and power of God in undertaking the recovery of a lost world; and nothing less has seemed to reflect due credit upon Christ as a Saviour, or to account adequately for the cost of redemption, and the elaborate preparation for its accomplishment. Since that day no aspect of religion has appeared so beautiful, and no theme so sweet, and no experience so entirely satisfactory.

CALL TO PREACH

The Church recognized my call to preach before I did myself. For some time my conviction of duty and sense of incapacity were about equally balanced. When it was proposed, I positively declined to be licensed to exhort. Knowing this, the late Rev. John W. Nevin, of the East Genesee Conference, brought up my case in my absence, and without my knowledge, and then in closed a license to me in a private letter. From that time I shaped my course toward the ministry. Before I went to the Genesee Wesleyan Seminary I had taken a limited course in two academic institutions of high order for those times, both under Presbyterian control. From this last school, in Lima, N. Y., I was induced to enter the itinerancy. Not being fully convinced that I was Divinely called to preach, I resolved to take nothing but the actual conversions of souls through my own instrumentality as a satisfactory proof. Accordingly I commenced a protracted meeting in an obscure neighborhood on my first Sunday on the circuit. I held two such meetings in succession, during which seventy-five souls were converted. This I took as an evidence that I had not made a mistake in supposing I was called to be a minister. Several clear witnesses to entire sanctification came to that meeting from other localities, one an exceedingly intelligent and gifted lady. From this source I received much light and inspiration, and my interest in the subject was augmented. The utter subduction of sinful anger was stated to be the Christian's privilege and duty. This teaching became profoundly interesting to me because of an incident which occurred about that time, revealing angry tempers as unsubdued in me, and capable of being excited by slight provocation. I was riding a skittish horse from one appointment to another on the Sabbath day. Having but few sermons and insufficient preparation to preach, I was developing my text by the way. The horse, however, broke the continuity of my thought by darting from one side of the road to the other. I found myself exasperated at the animal. At once my conscience rebuked me, and I said, "Is this consistent? Is this all that grace can do for a man?"

Other sinful affections I soon discovered in my heart. I was not backslidden, nor was I without the conscious blessing of God, and much happiness and good fruit. The service of God was a luxury. I had a perfect passion for saving souls, and yet I found these latent propensities within me. The power of sin was broken, but not destroyed. I was justified by faith, and had "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," *72 but "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" had not yet "made me free from the law of sin and death." *73 I was, in my own eyes, a contradiction. I was saved, and yet unsaved; holy, and yet unholy; happy, and yet unhappy. I was successful as a revivalist, and yet unable to lead the young convert and Church up to a higher plane, where they

would be established unblamably in holiness. The (ultima thule) of religion in my immature condition was the rapture of pardoned sin. If I could keep believers up to the point of testifying that they had been converted and still enjoyed religion, I had reached my goal, and was quite satisfied. Indeed, I seemed to have expended all my resources when I compassed that end. As might have been expected, from the deep impression I received in reading Wesley's Plain Account and other kindred works, I began early to preach on the topic of holiness, though I did not, and could not, confess its attainment. It was, however, even then a sweet theme, and presented itself to me as the marrow of the Gospel and the quintessence of religion. I had the experience of Jonathan Edwards, who testified: "Holiness then appeared to me to be of a sweet, serene, charming nature, which brought an inexpressible purity, brightness, peace, fullness, and ravishment to the soul." In the fall of 1842, nine years after my conversion, and after having traveled eighteen months under presiding elders and three years on probation, the first year in connection with the East Genesee Conference, the other two on trial in the Ohio Conference, I was ordained and received into full connection with the latter Conference, and appointed to Piqua, my first single station. I had lived a devout and holy life during all these preparatory years, and especially so during the year preceding my ordination, and yet I had not obtained the evidence of entire sanctification. Indeed, I was painfully conscious of remaining sin, and strove against it all the year by fasting and prayer. Still I went to Conference, and finally stood before the altar of ordination somewhat unhealed of sin. But notwithstanding all my defects, I am persuaded a more sincere and conscientious soul never stood before such an altar. As every candidate is required to do, I answered all the disciplinary test questions in the affirmative: "Have you faith in God? Are you going on to perfection? Do you expect to be made perfect in love in this life? Are you groaning after it?" When this last question was put and answered, I remember to have felt some misgiving respecting my positive response.

The question raised in my conscience was, whether I so intensely desire this knowledge as to justify the strong phrase, "groaning after it." The language of my soul immediately was, "If I do not, I will until that great grace is obtained. I will pursue it with travailing pangs. I will never relax my efforts, nor ungrasp my hold." The words best suited to my case, and often sung, were these:

"But who, I ask Thee, who art Thou?
Tell me Thy name, and tell me now.

"In vain Thou strugglest to get free,
I never will unloose my hold:
Art Thou the Man that died for me?
The secret of Thy love unfold:
Wrestling, I will not let Thee go,
Till I Thy name, Thy nature know."

About three months after this date God, in His love, gave me the evidence of full salvation. Observe, I did not approach it gradually by any sensible increase of joy or power. My soul did not flower up into it by successive blessings. I was being blessed, sometimes more and sometimes less, as I had been for years, but remained as far from the actual grasp of the great salvation, an hour before it came, as I had been for nine years. And I suppose it would have continued so, but for one mighty resolve, and that was to bring on a crisis. I found I must fix a time, and limit my faith to it.

My course had been like that of a man traveling on and on to reach a beautiful horizon. It was always lovely, always in sight, but always receding. Therefore, under the conviction that it must be now or never, I dismissed every other subject, suspended every pursuit, and retired into a room, bowed all alone before God, and pleaded for immediate redemption, immediate deliverance, immediate cleansing from all sin, the fullness of the Spirit, and perfection in love. I soon realized the unfailing truth of these words: "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." Somehow I was moved and inspired to trust: first, that it would be done; second, that it was being done; and, third, that it was done. Not that my faith was actually divided into three stages. Not that I stopped in mental action at either of these three points; but these three elements seemed to conspire and come together in my belief. It was all very summary and unmethodical. In conjunction with this process of trusting and praying, a joyous impression, evidently a divine conviction amounting to an evidence, came upon my mind to the effect that God had graciously granted my request. -- that I was healed of all sin; that I had entered into rest from sin; that its corrodings had ceased.

I was happy, but not ecstatic. The prevailing feeling seemed to be that of rest, satisfaction, great peace, and a consciousness of cleansing and sanctity. My joy was more solemn and sacred than ever before. My soul seemed hushed into silence before the Lord on account of his nearness and realized indwelling, and the overshadowing presence of the Holy Spirit.

My experience was not only that of victory over sin, but absolute deliverance from it. Its indwelling had ceased. The love of sin and the tendency to it were gone. I had been saved from the guilt and reigning power of sin before, but now I felt that the lurking, hostile, and warring inbeing of sin had been taken away. The usurper had been dethroned and cast out, and perfect love had been enthroned in his stead. The prayer was answered,

"The seed of sin's disease
Spirit of health remove."

I did not feel that I could not sin, but that I would not, on the principle, that I would not put my hand in the fire, or besmear myself with filth, though so unnatural a thing were possible. It was a deliverance from the internal existence of sin, though not from the capability of sinning. The inherent quality of sin and bias to it were gone, but the will-power to originate it again, and the susceptibility to its re-entrance remained. My whole being became averse to sin, so that I could not enter upon its commission without doing violence to my renewed nature. Principles of fixed purity and abhorrence of sin would have to be broken down, before the habit or being of sin could re-assert itself, or receive the slightest indulgence, if by any temptation, infirmity, or surprise, I might be betrayed into it.

The difference between my regenerate and sanctified state seemed to be this: 1. In regeneration my soul was alienated from sin; in sanctification it became hostile to it, and was set as a that against it. 2. In regeneration my hopes were a mixture of assurance and fear; in sanctification my soul rested in unmixed quietness and assurance forever. Perfect love did actually cast out all fear that had torment. The physical suffering in death or other afflictions might be dreaded, but no fearful forebodings found place in the soul. 3. In regeneration the enjoyments of religion were temporary, fitful, and evanescent; in sanctification they became uniform, abiding, deep, rich, and supremely controlling. 4. In regeneration there was a constant obtrusion of worldly, ecclesiastical, or spiritual

ambitions, personal to self; they preyed upon the soul and ate out the vitals of its spirituality and power; in sanctification these unholy ambitions became dead and unattractive as a faded autumn leaf. Prominence, official position, and preferment, coming as a spontaneity from esteemed brethren, still seemed desirable, but only so far as they were an expression of confidence, a tribute of respect, or a means of usefulness.

PUBLIC EFFECT

As a result of this experience one of the best revivals that ever occurred under my ministry immediately followed, which, in my view, ever after stamped holiness as a revival power. I have to this day continued to inculcate holiness as the central truth of Christianity, the marrow of experience, and the great need of the ministry and Church, in order to the real and speedy conversion of the world; but for many years I did not interlard my sermons with my experience nor testify explicitly to its reception. This, I think, was a mistake, and it had two bad effects:

First. It limited my usefulness in spreading the experience. Instances of entire sanctification did occur under my ministrations, but they were not numerous, until I began to press the matter upon the people as a present need and an experience of which I had personal knowledge. As I was then presiding elder, my definiteness and hortatory expositions had the effect to convert the love-feasts and communion services into occasions for the promotion of holiness. This prepared the way for the first and second great National Camp-meetings, at Urbana, Ohio, within my district, and held there pursuant to my invitation. From them and subsequent meetings influences radiated through Ohio and to the ends of the earth. Revivals were frequent, and a good spiritual state was maintained previously, but the cloud of witnesses which has been raised up in recent years under more explicit testimony did not appear.

Second. My own evidence became often eclipsed, and my experience at times was much like a succession of cloudy and clear days. This continued until I committed myself more fully before my Conference and the Church as an exponent of the doctrine. From that time I preached doctrine experimentally and told my experience doctrinally. The new method, I am persuaded, is the correct one, as it has been blest to many souls. What the Church needs, in regard to every great Gospel truth, is doctrine supported by experience, and experience undergirded by doctrine. The root of experience is doctrine, and the end of all doctrine is experience.

ENDNOTES

1 John v, 26

2 John xiv, 6

3 John vi, 35

4 John v, 40

5 John x, 10

6 Gal. ii, 20

7 Eph, iii, 17

8 (1 John i, 7)

9 Eph. ii, 22

10 John xiv, 8

11 John xiv, 23

12 John xiv, 16

13 John iv, 26

14 John i, 3

15 (2 Cor. xiii, 14)

16 (2 Pet. 1, 4)

17 Gal. ii, 20

18 Col. 1, 26, 27

19 Col. iii, 3

20 (1 John iv, 16)

21 Psa. lxxxvii, 7

22 Gal. ii. 20

23 (1 Cor. xiii, 1)

24 Matt. xxiii, 27

25 Isa. lv, 2

26 Rev. iii, 18.

27 Psalm i, 3

28 Song of Sol. ii, 11, 12

29 Eph. iii, 8

30 (1 Cor. ii, 12)

31 Rom. viii 16

32 Wesley's Works, vol. vi, pp. 515-517

33 Deut. xxix, 29

34 (1 Peter i, 6, 7)

35 Heb. ii, 18

36 Heb. iv, 15

37 Gen. xxii, 1

38 Job xxiii, 10

39 James i, 13

40 Heb. xii, 11

41 James i, 14, 15

42 (1 Peter ii, 11)

43 Rom. xiii, 14

44 (1 Cor. vi, 9)

45 Eph. ii, 2

46 James iv, 4

47 Eph. ii, 8

48 (2 Cor. i, 14)

49 Jude 6

50 James iv, 7

51 Mark xiii, 37

52 Matt. xxvi, 41

53 (2 Cor. x, 5)

54 Hodge's Theology, vol. iii, p. 54

55 Ground of Lutheran Theology, p. 94

56 Sprecker's Theology, p. 93

57 Ibid., p. 97

58 Hodge's Theology, vol iii, p. 253

59 Theological Christianity, 5. lxxix, 2, 8, 14. Edit. Amsterdam, 1715; pp. 658, 659

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