

THE KING'S STANDARD

JONATHAN DUNGAN

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The King's Standard

BY
JONATHAN DUNGAN

INTRODUCTION BY
HENRY A. BUTTZ

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as
your Father in heaven is perfect."



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NEW YORK CINCINNATI

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INTRODUCTION

THE Christian life, what it is and how to reach its highest possibilities, has ever been a matter of interest to the people of God. The numerous works which have been written and the controversies which have taken place attest their profound desire to learn as to what is the truth concerning this important subject. The highest form of Christian attainment has been called by various names, "holiness," "sanctification," "the higher life," "full consecration," "full salvation," each term intended to express, in the main, the same thing. The point of divergence arises in the attempt to express, or, rather, to define, what is meant by the higher Christian life.

The difficulty lies in the very nature of the case. It is by no means easy to put in the concrete form of linguistic expression spiritual experiences and spiritual states. The phrase which is often heard from plain people in meetings for Christian experience, that religion is "something better felt than told," is equally

expressive of the view of those who have reached the higher states of grace.

Several things are requisite in a work designed to instruct and lead the church along these lines of Christian life and experience.

1. It should be scriptural. All that we know about the possibilities of grace must be found in the Word of God. The writer of such a book must, therefore, be a careful expositor of sacred truth, and he must have a clear insight into its spiritual meaning, which is not possible without the influence of the Holy Spirit. Any exposition of the doctrine of holiness, or sanctification, which does not have its foundation in a fair and full interpretation of the Word of God cannot be accepted as reliable.

2. It should be free from a spirit of controversy. If the author attempt a correction of the views of others, with whom he differs, he should do it without any disparagement either of the integrity or the ability of the person whose errors he desires to correct. He who would promote holiness must ever write in the spirit of holiness, which is always a spirit of brotherly kindness. "The fruit of the Spirit is love." One of the greatest hindrances to the

promotion of holiness has been the tendency of some of its advocates to speak uncharitably of those with whom they do not agree. Harsh epithets and the imputation of unworthy motives, even to the bitterest antagonist, must not be employed by those who would advance in others the "higher life."

3. Accuracy and completeness are necessary, without attempting too precise definition of the terms employed. There is danger always in attempting an exhaustive definition of spiritual truths. There is no Christian grace that will yield to strict analysis. There is always some element which language fails to express. Herein lies the importance of keeping as close as possible to the precise language of Scripture. The Holy Spirit, who inspired the sacred writings, has left much to be unfolded in human experience. We shall do well in all our efforts to disseminate the doctrine of holiness, if we do not spend our time in overrefined exposition of terms which the Holy Spirit has left for the interpretation of the heart.

4. It should be written in such a manner as to win the reader to the experience, rather than to the doctrinal formulations of the author. The aim of all true religious teaching

is life. It is the business alike of the preacher and of the writer of religious books to inculcate holiness, and to lead others to its attainment. The clearer and the more accurate the conception of the truth the better, yet it is not so much the doctrinal statements or the mere discussion of a subject that leads men to seek that which is thus set forth. These often repel rather than invite. One who is interested in a subject is often led to an abandonment of its pursuit when he learns how difficult and intricate is its definition. On the main point all true believers agree, namely, the duty of Christians to live a holy life; and the sermon or the book which keeps them too long in the vestibule before they are permitted to enter the sacred temple is not the wisest teaching of the doctrine of holiness. By this it is not meant that there should be no definitions; we mean only that the definitions should be simple, without overrefinements, either metaphysical or psychological, and should, above all, be scriptural. They should as far as possible be based upon those passages which are clear in their meaning, and on whose interpretation there is little division; and not so much upon those concerning which differences of

judgment widely prevail. In this way earnest souls seeking the truth will be led to holiness and not repelled from it.

An examination of this work will show that it meets all these requirements. While we may not indorse all the positions of this book, we believe that it is based on a careful exposition of the passages of the Holy Scriptures which are related to this doctrine. The spirit in which it is written is permeated with the principle of Christian love. The author does not attempt overdefinition, and his work is calculated to win the reader to the attainment of Christian holiness. We bid it Godspeed in its mission of usefulness.

During the pastoral life of the writer of this introduction it was his custom to give encouragement to everyone seeking a higher Christian life, whether under the name of "sanctification," or "holiness," or whatever term he chose to employ, not seeking to divert the one in search of this great gift from his high purpose by minor questions or by controversial issues. So we earnestly bespeak a wide circulation for this book, and for every book that is calculated to lead men into that state of heart without which "no man shall see the Lord."

We believe that the author has this sole object in view and that alike in its spirit, its teachings, and its method it is wisely designed so as to lead men in the way of the Lord.

It will also, we believe, be a valuable contribution to our devotional literature. The rich experiences of devout souls constitute the choicest treasures of the church. Though much has been done in this direction, there is abundant room for further contributions.

It is this spiritual life, this deep Christian experience in divine things, that is the essential condition of true spiritual prosperity, and every work that promotes this nobler life and more exalted experience is a valuable contribution to the wealth of the church.

HENRY A. BUTTZ.

Madison, New Jersey.

PREFACE

THIS book is the product of more than two-score years of observation, solicitude, study, and hope. Extended observation through these years shows that among Christians generally there has been and still is much bewilderment or confusion of thought as to the true standard of Christian life and experience. Nor is this state of mind to be found simply among those less favored as to natural endowments or educational advantages. Christians of rich experience and of marked intelligence and not a few religious teachers of sterling piety and of recognized ability have very indefinite conceptions of this great subject. While this may be attributed to various causes, it is not unfrequently the result of impressions made by crude and exaggerated presentations of the truths involved, together with unwarranted assumptions as to experiences and attainments, which have occasioned prejudice against, indifference toward, or even opposition to the truth thus unfortunately misconceived.

Every thoughtful believer will recognize the fact that because of the incalculable importance of the subject in its bearing upon human character, life, and destiny, this state of mind so prevalent among Christians is truly lamentable. In view of these circumstances, with the resultant attitude of indifference, of perplexity or of opposition, into one or another of which so many have been misled, governed by the precept "to do good and to communicate," the writer has long cherished the desire some day to contribute, under the divine guidance, whatever service he might be able to render toward clearing away these untoward misconceptions. This he desired to do, not in the spirit of controversy, which engenders strife, but in the spirit of love, which the Christian life in its very nature demands. Error cannot be overcome by denunciation. The only way in which it may be dispelled is by means of the introduction of truth. The divine plan for the dispersion of the vapors which cause the objects of the natural world to appear as mere shadows, is that of pouring upon them the full light of the sun. Correspondingly, the divine method of clearing away the mists of error in the spiritual world is by shed-

ding upon them the clear light of the Sun of Righteousness.

The light of divine revelation alone can scatter the fogs or dispel the shadows which obscure the partly disclosed truth. Human discernment is so imperfect as commonly to lead to the serious misapprehension of even the most important truths, so that we are compelled of necessity to have recourse to the divine for instruction and illumination in all that pertains to spiritual enlightenment. The truths we consider are not new. They are as venerable as their divine Author, emanating as they do from his perfections and finding their expression in his written Word. All that is new is in their setting. The order of their arrangement has reference to placing them in their true and relative positions, so that the sincere inquirer may easily discern their features and the conscientious teacher may more clearly portray them to those whom he would instruct. The aim is to present the truth clearly and in the plainest and most unequivocal terms; to exclude all that is irrelevant and to embrace all that is clearly related to the theme. Not one sentence has been written without serious, conscientious thought. Years

have been diligently and gladly spent in preparation for as well as in the actual writing and frequent rewriting of its pages. Every position that has been assumed is the result of careful, painstaking, and long-continued study both of the letter and of the spirit of the Scriptures, in which the guidance of their Author, the Holy Spirit, has been sought. The central thought has been so to focus the rays of revealed truth that bear upon the subject and throw their convergent light upon it that it may be clearly and unmistakably distinguished, both in itself and in its relation to other Scripture teaching. The ultimate design of every chapter is that of leading the spiritual Israel into the true promised land, the highland of noblest character, richest experience, and most exalted life, which lies on this side as well as beyond the mystic Jordan, by whose waters the nearer and more distant portions of the goodly land are separated. The King's standard means nothing less than heavenly character on this side and heavenly bliss after the crossing.

THE AUTHOR.

CHAPTER I

GREATEST THINGS

PERSONALITY

THE greatest thing in the universe is personality. The noblest state of being, involving the highest form of life, of character, and of experience, is that which is characterized by consciousness of selfhood or separateness of existence and of the possession and exercise of the rational and voluntary powers which constitute a person. In personal beings alone is even the conception of greatness possible.

The greatest Being conceivable is the eternal, self-existent, independent, infinite Personality whom we call God. Nearest this Being in nature, and hence in greatness, are those beings whom he has constituted personalities, who in a limited, yet in a supremely important, sense are like unto him, endowed with certain powers like unto his, and are thereby rendered capable of being sharers with

him in the possession of moral principles and qualities which inhere in the divine character. All objective things, as distinguished from subjective or self-conscious beings, are inferior to them by contrast rather than by comparison. Yet even the material universe in its immensity and grandeur transcends the farthest reach and the utmost compass of human thought. Any structure, no matter how grand, is infinitely inferior to its builder. How, then, shall we conceive the greatness of the Architect who is incomparably greater than these his works, though they be immeasurably great?

The vastness of the difference is in this: he is the supreme Personality, while they are his grand, though comparatively inferior and largely preparatory workmanship. For this illimitable domain is not the greatest of God's creative works. It is but the place of residence, the realm for contemplation, the field for activities and the storehouse filled for the sustenance of divinely endowed personal beings. So far as human knowledge extends by means of consciousness and through the agency of revelation, besides God, who is of underived personality, there are but two or-

ders of beings, who as individuals are favored with that marvelous and most precious of possessions, the consciousness of personal being, which is directly derived from him. These are angels and men. The greatness as well as the dignity of angelic and of human personality is unmistakably witnessed by the marvelous fact that it is a possession held in common with God.

CHARACTER

The greatest thing in personality is character. The highest endowment is that of the moral nature, which gives to human beings "power to become the sons of God," by means of obedience to and cooperation with him; power to possess, cultivate, and develop principles and qualities which accord with those of the moral attributes of the Creator. This endowment is exceedingly precious because it renders its possessor capable of attaining to the ultimate perfection of the personality and to consequent blessedness and felicity through likeness to and fellowship with God.

The noblest of divinely given powers is that of freedom to choose in all things that pertain to moral and spiritual life, power to deter-

mine as to loyalty or disloyalty to the Creator and his government. Herein lies the golden mean of freedom. Less than this would be a farce, more would mean lawlessness and anarchy. There can be no such thing as moral quality or moral character without freedom. Freedom carries with it alternative choice between good and evil, right and wrong; between inferior and temporary good and that which is superior and eternal. It involves largest opportunity, highest privilege, greatest responsibility, since choice in these things determines character and character decides destiny.

LOVINGNESS

The greatest thing in character is love. It is the principal of all principles. Like all other natural endowments, the capacity for the possession, exercise, reception, and reciprocation of this principle is divinely given. Character is formed and established through voluntary choice in the exercise of the power to love in the midst of divinely appointed relationships and in meeting the needs and requirements incident to those relationships. The attitude assumed as to its entertainment and putting forth toward the Divine Being,

together with the disposition manifested toward fellow men, determines as to the goodness or badness, the elevation or debasement of character. The degree of accord with the divine nature, or with the divine law, which is practically the same thing, is the measure of excellence of character, while the degree of departure from this standard is the measure of its defilement. Accord with God naturally and surely leads to right attitudes toward men in all the relationships of life. The result of such accord and of such attitude is the dominance and reign of pure love, while departure from these must issue in the control and regnancy of illicit and debasing affections. The principle from which all divine law has emanated is that of love. The ultimate purpose of all the laws recorded in the Scriptures for the government of men, whether civil, ceremonial, or moral, was to lead to the development of mind and heart. If this be true even of the temporary laws enacted for the guidance of God's ancient people, how greatly is it emphasized in the moral law as embodied in the Decalogue and as finally crystallized by our Lord in the all-comprehending law of love! The one object sought is the elicitation, in-

crease, and prevalence of divinely inspired love for the forming, establishing, and perfecting of character.

MORAL COMPLETENESS

The greatest divine project relating to man is that of character-building with a view to the perfecting of the moral nature. The greatest of human pursuits is also that of the construction of character, with precisely the same supreme object in contemplation. This cannot be accomplished by either divine or human agencies separately. Hence the exhortation, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure."¹ The Saviour says, "Without me ye can do nothing."² Paul affirms, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."³

Everything that is associated with the building of character is of vital interest. It is the great lifework to which all minor pursuits should be, and happily may be, auxiliary or tributary. It calls for and should elicit the

¹ Phil. 2. 12, 13.

² John 15. 5.

³ Phil. 4. 13.

most serious thought, the steadiest aim, and the most earnest effort in order to a successful issue. Attention to it or neglect of it is determinative of destiny; as to what it shall be, whether glorious or ignoble. Surely, the greatest work on earth is that of the building of character after the King's standard. There are many occupations and many pursuits. There is but one calling.

CHAPTER II

THE AUTHORITATIVE STANDARD OF CHARACTER

THE ENTIRE PERSONALITY INVOLVED

IN the Scriptures the entire personality is presented as consisting of "spirit and soul [mind] and body."¹ Too frequently these are regarded as though coordinate or of equal rank, as symbolized by the equilateral triangle. These natures are strikingly unequal and when thus symbolized the moral side should be regarded as golden, the intellectual as of silver, the physical as of iron, as representative of their respective and comparative values. Nevertheless, they are equally God-given, and the lowest is by no means lacking in dignity and importance. Each is to perform its particular part, not as separate or independent, but in its relation to its associates, so as to subserve the best interests of the entire per-

¹ 1 Thess. 5. 23.

sonality and enable their possessor to meet the requirements of his relations to other beings, first of all to his Creator, and then to his fellow men, and even to the inferior beings created for his service. Only by the proper exercise of each, and the wise and orderly adjustment of all the powers can he successfully fulfill his mission, perfect his character, and glorify his God. The King's standard neither requires nor sanctions any form of asceticism such as that of enforced celibacy or that of the cloister. It seeks to foster and exemplify everything that is true, right, pure, and good in personal, family, social, and civil life. The desire and prayer of the King is not that his followers should be taken out of the world, but that they should be kept from the evil; that they should be in the world but not of it; not only teaching but showing men by example how to live, rather than presenting an impracticable or unnatural standard of life.

At the other extreme the King's standard excludes every form of illicit, unnatural, or excessive indulgence of the appetites or natural physical desires. Hence the great and urgent need of the observance of the benign and universal law of temperance. This law

has no reference whatever to harmful things, such as tobacco, opium, and alcohol. Instead of sanctioning their misuse even in great moderation, it excludes them as not only needless but harmful in their very nature, tendency, and effects. It requires moderation in whatever is lawful, right, or good in itself or in its tendency or effects, such as in the use of nourishment to strengthen and sustain the body and in the almost sacred function of procreation, both of which are so frequently and so sadly degraded by excess, to the great injury of the entire personality. Shall the pleasures of sense be permitted to go beyond their proper bounds and dull or deaden the pleasures of thought or the still higher pleasures of the spirit in its relation to God and to the things that are sacred and heavenly? Every worthy consideration, involving stern necessity and noblest choice, together with the exalted privilege of setting a true example, prompted the saintly Paul to say with reference to the constant ordering of his own life, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest . . . I myself should be a castaway."² If it be true with reference to the highest physical achieve-

² 1 Cor. 9. 27.

ment that "every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things,"³ that a fading crown of laurel possibly or probably may be won, how greatly should that declaration be emphasized when referring to those who strive for the highest moral achievement, with the certainty that if faithful in striving they shall win a fadeless crown of noblest selfhood or exalted personality and hear the "Well done" of the Ruler of the universe! In view of possible consequences, it is not too much to say that every movement on the part of the body looking toward mastery should be instantly and steadily checked, since this servant, so excellent when under control, once fully gaining the mastery, will inevitably play the tyrant and degrade or ruin itself, together with the superior powers which it has been permitted to dethrone. Moreover, the law of temperance demands that the mind shall not be so engrossed, either with the material or the purely intellectual affairs of life as not to give ample attention to the needs of the moral and spiritual nature. Above and beyond all this, mental activities should be subservient to and permeated with a true moral and spiritual

³ 1 Cor. 9. 25.

tone. Indeed, the divine design contemplates nothing less than "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."⁴ While the King's standard involves complete self-mastery, self-mastery requires the yielding of self to the indwelling and guidance of the Divine Spirit.

In his prayer the apostle includes the entire man together with his divine Helper. "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. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."⁵

A CHRISTIAN LIFE AND THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

It is a matter of common observation that, through lack of adequate knowledge or through the absence of deep conviction, one may lead a Christian life while not really, or very imperfectly, comprehending the Christian life as presented in the Scriptures. Some Christian lives are barely Christian; others are distinctively Christian, while others still are truly and wholly Christian. In other

⁴ 2 Cor. 10. 5.

⁵ 1 Thess. 5. 23, 24.

words, many lead a Christian life with more or less consistency and devotion and yet do not meet the requirements or fully embrace the principles or enjoy the privileges of the Christian life as presented in God's Word. A Christian life, therefore, may be or may not be the Christian life. If it is not, it may be far removed from it or a near approach to it. This shortcoming is not always a fault, but it is always a misfortune. Not unfrequently it is occasioned by the fact that when introduced into the church many entertain superficial views of the nature and spirit of Christian life.

In addition to this, far too often they find little in the life and example of many of the Christians into whose fellowship they have entered to lead them to see, desire, and enter upon the divinely appointed life. An unauthorized standard has been set before them. Such have not heard, or have failed to heed, the warning, too seldom given, against unwisely "measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves,"⁶ instead of measuring themselves by or comparing themselves with the King's standard.

Two great dangers are there met, namely,

⁶ 2 Cor. 10. 12.

that those thus situated should become permanently dwarfed instead of attaining first to purity of heart and eventually to fullness of stature, through the absence of a true and hence lofty conception of the Christian life; and that of becoming so disheartened for lack of a deep and satisfying experience, as to be led possibly to the abandonment of the effort to lead a Christian life, either of which is no less than a calamity.

Such need to be wisely, gently, and faithfully instructed and patiently and lovingly encouraged to aspire to and enter upon the Christian life as the divinely intended unfolding of spiritual life and experience.

NOT A STANDARD, BUT THE STANDARD

The consensus of opinion in any church or community or denomination of Christians, that which is commonly, whether formally or tacitly, regarded as a proper Christian life, becomes thereby a standard for as many as so regard it. Such a standard may be far removed from or a more or less near approach toward the true standard. It may represent a merely nominal, a strictly formal, or a real though imperfect type of Christianity. The

existence of these imperfect and unauthorized standards unfortunately has led to the introduction and common use of the phrase, "The higher Christian life," which, while evidently intended to impress the fact that these standards are partial, imperfect, or insufficient, has unintentionally led to the understanding that there is more than one scriptural standard—at least a lower and a higher—and to the unwarranted assumption that Christians properly may elect as to which of these they shall choose to regard as their standard. There is no lower, nor higher, nor highest Bible standard of Christian life. There is but one, and that is not simply a standard, but emphatically and exclusively The standard.

NOT AN IDEAL, BUT A REAL STANDARD

There is nowhere in the divine Word the slightest intimation that the standard it embodies and sets forth is an ideal standard to be striven after and never attained. It is always and everywhere assumed to be a real standard that may be and ought to be realized. Gentle precepts, far-reaching commands, gracious invitations, "exceeding great and precious promises," bearing upon it and converg-

ing in it, cannot be otherwise than true and sincere. God does not mock his children by commanding them and urging them to the performance of impracticable duties or to the reaching of impossible attainments. It is true that the standard which he presents cannot be reached without divine aid; that "with men it is impossible, but not with God, for with God all things are possible." "All things are possible to him that believeth." The King's standard, instead of being too ideal to be realized, is too real to be idealized.

MISTAKING AN IDEAL FOR THE REAL

Much of the inattention and apparent indifference that exists with reference to the actual standard of the Christian life is the result of the confounding of that standard with the ideal standard more or less clearly conceived and apprehended as the sum of moral excellence and as being so exalted as to be beyond the possibility of attainment. The general requirements of this ideal are purity, symmetry, and maturity. It demands the possession of all the virtues and graces of Christian character and life in their purity and in symmetrical proportions, and in addi-

tion their development into fullness and ripeness—a perfectly rounded and exquisitely balanced whole, with harmonious movement in every part, manifesting all the phases of supposed perfection. How many foolishly and needlessly stumble or fall over the words “perfect” and “perfection,” insisting upon their extreme meaning as absolute, and how many are seriously disabled or paralyzed as a consequence! As compared and almost contrasted with this ideal, impossible of attainment, how simple is the actual standard, which has no direct reference to size or symmetry, but to quality or genuineness. The shapeless nugget of gold may be as really gold and as pure in quality as the shapely coin. Its character as gold is determined apart from its bigness, its roundness, its smoothness, or its polish. The gold dollar is as good as the ten-dollar gold piece, though only one tenth as large. Pure nuggets of equal weight with these, equal them in value, though far less attractive to the eye. If practicable it is well to have them coined for the sake of their greater usefulness, but let us not depreciate them because of accidental or incidental imperfections. The actual standard, however, not only does not

supersede an ideal standard, nor yet in the slightest degree hinder it from exerting a greatly helpful influence, but, rather, demands it, or its equivalent, for the harmonizing, expanding, and maturing of the purest and most vigorous life. In one solitary instance the ideal in its highest form has been fully realized. The one sinless, faultless, unerring man is Jesus of Nazareth. Fallen and restored man may not attain unto the altitude of his perfect life, yet his disciples may steadily advance toward the realized ideal, for it is written: "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."⁷

THE KING'S STANDARD

Careful study reveals the fact that to a truly scriptural, and what in the light of the Scriptures is at the same time a strictly logical and an entirely reasonable conception of Christian character and life, three things are absolutely essential. These are, conformity to the divine law, to the divine nature, and to the divine disposition.

⁷ 2 Cor. 3. 18.

The fruit of conformity to the divine law is righteousness; of accord with the divine nature, holiness; of harmony with the divine disposition, lovingness. These divine principles, the very essence of Christian character, constitute a spiritual trinity in unity, in whose possession alone men become "partakers of the divine nature."⁸ These three divine qualities, in inseparable unity, constitute the triple crown of character. In this conception of the crown of character as composed of these three elements we must carefully distinguish between the crown itself and the jewels with which it is adorned. Any number of separate sapphires, rubies, diamonds, or other precious stones, though they be of priceless value, do not constitute a crown. They form no part of it and sustain no relation to it unless they are imbedded in it. This is especially true of the moral virtues, the precious gems which adorn the triple crown. In other words, every moral excellence that pertains to character never finds its proper setting or its true value until it is embedded in or based upon the fundamental elements which find their expression in the beautifully simple yet marvelously com-

⁸ 2 Pet. 1. 4.

prehensive words, "righteousness," "holiness," "lovingness." Apart from these divinely imparted principles "All our righteousness are as filthy rags,"⁹ all our self-abasements with a view to the purification of the soul, even to the giving of our bodies to be burned, and all our benevolences, as meritorious performances, though we bestow all our goods to feed the poor, profit us nothing.¹⁰ This triple diadem of character with its settings of rarest jewels in pleasing diversity and in exquisite harmony, is "a crown of life," a diadem of heavenly royalty of which the material crown is but a very imperfect symbol.

⁹ Isa. 64. 6.

¹⁰ 1 Cor. 13. 3.

CHAPTER III

WHAT IS REVEALED AND WHY THE REVELATION

“WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE?”

SINCE the Scriptures constitute the sole basis of all authoritative teaching in the realm of religion and morals, we must first of all inquire as to what they teach concerning human character and life, and as to what their Author designs to accomplish with reference to the formation of the character and the unfolding of the life through their publication.

MAN REVEALED TO HIMSELF

Not only is it true that “the world by wisdom knew not God,”¹ it is equally true that human wisdom has utterly failed to account for, comprehend, or discover a remedy for man’s moral ailments. The history of all the past, as well as the universal experience and observation of the present, furnishes unmistakable evidence of the really unnatural

¹ 1 Cor. 1. 21.

and entirely unsatisfactory condition of man's moral nature, which is manifest in his consciousness and becomes the occasion of personal and inner disharmony and conflict and consequent unrest of spirit and unhappiness, ever tending toward degradation and ruin. Driven by this ever-present consciousness of inherent and undefined evil, all the powers of intellect, reason, imagination, and will have been aroused and united in the ceaseless search for relief and a painful effort to construct some form of belief or devise some method of activity or institute some means of self-forgetfulness, or even of self-torture, in the vain hope of discovering or inventing a remedy for the innumerable ills which may be traced to man's moral disorders. In God's written Revelation alone man discovers the mirror which clearly reflects his moral state and experience, and learns fully and conclusively at last that his nature has been sadly perverted by disobedience and sinfulness.

SELF-REVELATION AS THE RIGHTEOUS KING, THE HOLY GOD AND THE LOVING FATHER

As underlying all subsequent and consequent disclosures of his relations to man, the

Supreme Being reveals himself first of all as the self-existent Creator of all things. As thus revealed he is the absolutely righteous King, whose law and government, according with his character, are founded in righteousness. "Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne."¹ He is, in his nature, most exalted, the perfectly holy God and the sole object of man's worship. "Who is like thee, . . . glorious in holiness?"² Having created man in his own likeness, he is as to his disposition toward his child, the infinitely loving Father. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love."³

THE STARTLING CONTRAST

The revelation of man to himself, most wonderfully interpreting his deepest self-consciousness of unrighteousness, unholiness, and unlovingness, and on the other hand God's revelation of himself to man declaring and exhibiting his perfect righteousness, his infinite holiness, and his boundless lovingness, plainly show by the most startling contrast

¹ Psa. 97. 2.

² Exod. 15. 11.

³ Jer. 31. 3.

the unnatural disharmony existing between the subject and his Ruler, the worshiper and his God, the child and his Father.

MAN'S RELATION TO GOD

Here alone man clearly and fully discovers that it is sin that has wrought most deplorable changes within him, affecting his legal relation to God as his Lawgiver, his moral conformity to God as his Creator, and his filial attitude toward God as his heavenly Father. He finds that as a transgressor of the divine law he is a sinner, that in his disharmony with his moral Governor he is an alien, and that in his unloving attitude toward his heavenly Father he is an enemy. As a sinner who has transgressed the divine law he needs forgiveness; as an alien "from the commonwealth of Israel,"⁴ he needs repatriation or restoration to citizenship; as an enemy against his loving Father he needs to be transformed into a loving child.

IRRECONCILABLE FOES

In the Scriptures, righteousness, holiness, and lovingness, primary elements of moral ex-

⁴ Eph. 2. 12.

cellence, are everywhere presented as in contrast with unrighteousness, impurity, and enmity, which constitute the essential features of sinfulness in all its forms. This triple alliance of divine qualities and this trinal league of moral degeneracies are irreconcilable foes between which there cannot be even the semblance of a truce. Wherever they coexist, in their only possible abode, an intelligent, responsible creature, there is a state of perpetual warfare. Each relentlessly seeks and is content with nothing less than the utter destruction of its respective antagonist.

THE DIVINE PURPOSE

The revelation of the lamentable change wrought in the relations which man sustains to God as consequent upon the introduction of sin into his nature and consciousness opens the way for and necessitates the declaration of the divine purpose to restore perfect harmony between himself and his children of earth. As absolutely necessary to accomplish this purpose he demands and desires nothing less than a willing, loving obedience to the divine law, complete accord with the divine nature, and a perfect reciprocation of the

divine love. All else that he reveals is essentially the unfolding of his infinitely wise plan, by means of which this stupendous and supremely important work is to be accomplished.

CHAPTER IV

ACTS OF SIN AND THE STATE OF SINFULNESS

UNFORTUNATE MISUNDERSTANDINGS

VERY unfortunate misunderstandings often arise in the discussion of the question as to whether the Christian may or may not be without sin or live without sinning in the present life. These misunderstandings most frequently grow out of the fact that the argument on the one side is based upon one definition of sin, while that of the other is founded upon another and a very different meaning. Not unfrequently a long and very unprofitable controversy ensues, when a simple understanding as to the different senses in which the word "sin" is used would have led to substantial, if not perfect agreement.

THE NATURE OF SIN

The nature of sin may be determined by the nature, character, and disposition of the Law-

giver whom it disregards, as well as by the character of the law which it violates. "The Lord is righteous in all his ways."¹ "He is a holy God."² "God is love."³ Correspondingly, "The law is holy and the commandment holy, and righteous, and good."⁴ God is the loving Father as well as the righteous and holy Ruler. His subjects are his children, hence his law contemplates their supreme well-being. Sin, therefore, is disregard for and opposition to the righteous, holy, loving God and his righteous, holy, and beneficent law. The most concise and comprehensive definition of sin found in the Scriptures is given in a single word—"Sin is lawlessness."⁵ The state of lawlessness, or sinfulness, is manifest in the act of sin, whether it be in the harboring of thoughts, the utterance of words, or the performance of acts, which violate the law of God as written in his Word. The transgression of his written Law is at the same time an offense against his righteousness, his holiness, and his love.

¹ Psa. 145. 17.

² Josh. 24. 19.

³ 1 John 4. 8, 16.

⁴ Rom. 7. 12 (R. V.).

⁵ 1 John 3. 4 (R. V.).

THE ACT OF SIN AND THE SINFUL STATE

Underlying this lawlessness is unbelief; hence the declaration, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin."⁶ But whence this unbelief which leads to lawlessness? Still deeper and underlying unbelief is that state of the soul which is known as sinfulness. Sin, therefore, as a quality (sinfulness) is that moral condition which manifests itself in unbelief, or disbelief, or distrust of God, and leads to disregard of his law. Sin, as an act, is the manifestation of that state of sinfulness which leads to its commission.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE SOUL

Any particular act of transgression must be committed either with or without a knowledge of the law or of the application of the law, as related to such act. In either case it is a transgression of the law. The Scriptures, however, make a very broad and important distinction between the act performed with and that done without a knowledge of its relation to the law, because of the wide and very essential difference in the attitude of the soul in the performance of the two acts, or

⁶ Rom. 14. 23.

even of the same act under these entirely different conditions. In the one case it is done with the knowledge that it is an act of disobedience; in the other, without such knowledge. In the former instance it is unqualifiedly a sin; in the latter it is a sin in a qualified sense only. In the deeper and truest sense it is not a sin when there is nothing of the spirit of "lawlessness" or disobedience in the doing, though there be the form of it in the deed. This very important distinction is fully recognized in the special provision made under the Mosaic law for such as transgressed "through ignorance."⁷ Still more clearly is the same distinction made by our Lord: "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."⁸ "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no excuse for their sin."⁹

CONFORMITY TO THE SPIRIT OF THE LAW

Perfect conformity to the law in every act requires perfect knowledge of the law, and

⁷ Num. 15. 27; Lev. 4. 2, etc

⁸ John 9. 41.

⁹ John 15. 22 (R. V.).

what is still more difficult, the exercise of perfect judgment in all its possible applications. Such completeness of knowledge can be claimed for no man. No man is infallible either in the interpretation of the divine law itself or in reaching right conclusions in all its diverse and manifold applications. Every man is liable to err; nay, more, certain to err through imperfect understanding of the law and imperfect judgment concerning its application in performing the duties and meeting the responsibilities of life. Yet no man who receives divine grace in the fullness in which it is freely offered need err, that is, go astray or turn aside from the path of rectitude, through moral depravity. The humblest, though very imperfect as to fullness of knowledge and with reference to accuracy of judgment, may still meet all the requirements of the principles underlying the written law, and may live in true and full accord with its spirit, though not in strict harmony with its letter.

This truth is most beautifully set forth by "the evangelical prophet," and especially with reference to the gospel era: "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not

pass over it; but it shall be for those: the way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein."¹⁰

"FORGIVE US OUR SINS"¹¹

But even in the case of those who are completely transformed by the operation of divine grace, human frailty is such that we may never, while in the present life, get beyond the necessity of offering the petition of the Lord's Prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses." While in the broadest sense "there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not," in the narrower and equally scriptural sense, "whosoever abideth in him sinneth not."¹²

SAVED, NOT IN, BUT FROM SIN

The seemingly contradictory statements in the first chapter of the first epistle of John,¹³ which have occasioned much perplexity and controversy, are easily understood when the circumstances under which and the object for which they were written are considered. The apostle is combating heretical teachers, who,

¹⁰ Isa. 35. 8.

¹¹ Luke 11. 4.

¹² 1 John 3. 6.

¹³ 1 John 1. 6-9.

as is well known, sought to introduce into the Christian system the doctrine of heathen philosophy, that all evil resides in matter. They, accordingly, taught the preposterous falsehood that Christianity does not require that the outward life as manifested in "the deeds of the body" need correspond to the inner spiritual life, and consequently that one may be pure in spirit while abandoning the body to all manner of uncleanness. It must be borne in mind that, as indicated by the form in which they are presented, as well as by what they contain, verses six, eight, and ten have direct reference to the claim of the class of persons who held this utterly false and perverse doctrine, while verses seven and nine constitute a complete antidote to this antinomian poison, which was afterward known as "the doctrine of the Nicolaitans."¹⁴ To counteract, effectually, this insidious and destructive error the apostle presents as in striking contrast those who profess to be children of the light and yet walk in darkness, and those who truly walk in the light. The phrase, thrice repeated in introducing the three verses alluded to, refers directly to what is therein

¹⁴ Rev. 2. 6, 16.

presented as embodying what they who have imbibed this grievous error are accustomed to say. At the same time the true character of those who thus falsely lay claim to fellowship with God and to freedom from sin while doing the deeds of darkness, is clearly presented. "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: . . . If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. . . . If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." On the contrary and as opposed to the monstrous assumption that they are saved in their sins, the apostle presents the true doctrine of salvation from sin, in words that are clear, unequivocal, and unmistakable in their meaning. "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 confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

NOT SUBJUGATION, BUT ERADICATION

Thus far we have been considering sin chiefly as an act. We have been thinking of a

sin or of sins. Whence these acts of sin? Their birthplace and residence is in the disposition of the soul to transgress the divine law. They proceed from a spirit of disharmony with and of disloyalty to God. In accordance with this truth, the psalmist makes his confession: "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned."¹⁵ The prodigal exclaims, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight."¹⁶ The disposition to sin clearly proves a state of sinfulness or "lawlessness." The Scriptures set forth the nature of sinfulness, as also its repulsiveness, by that loathsome and deadly disease, leprosy, regarding which so many provisions are made in the Levitical law. The corruption of the physical nature in this dread malady most fittingly represents the pollution of the moral nature when permeated by sin, so that it presents the sickening spectacle of a soul having "no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores."¹⁷ The Scriptures contemplate, not simply the subjugation, but the complete eradication of the moral disease thus presented. In them ample provision is made, not for the partial

¹⁵ Psa. 51. 4.

¹⁶ Luke 15. 21.

¹⁷ Isa. 1. 6.

cure only, but for the entire removal of this morally diseased condition in the present life. The plan for its removal and for the restoration of the soul to a state of purity, with all that pertains to its accomplishment, is fully set forth. The immediate aim is "the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."¹⁸ Men are to be radically changed "by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost."¹⁹ They are to be cleansed "from all defilement of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."²⁰

SINS FORGIVEN, SINFULNESS DESTROYED

To accomplish this work two things, quite distinct but very closely related, must be done. Sins (acts of sin) must be forgiven, and sin (sinfulness) must be removed. "We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins."²¹ "Knowing this that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed."²² Sinful acts are not "de-

¹⁸ Col. 3. 10.

¹⁹ Titus 3. 5.

²⁰ 2 Cor. 7. 1 (R. V.).

²¹ Eph. 1. 7.

²² Rom. 6. 6.

stroyed," they are forgiven. A sinful nature is not "forgiven," it is changed from a state of sinfulness to a state of holiness. The displacement of sin by holiness involves the cleansing of the heart.

CHAPTER V

RIGHTEOUSNESS THE RESULT OF JUSTIFICATION AND REGENERATION

MAN A SINNER

VIEWED from the standpoint of the divine law, man is a sinner; that is, he is guilty of the actual and willful commission of specific and frequent acts of disobedience against that law. "For all have sinned."¹ In consequence of his transgressions he is subject to the penalty which the law attaches to acts of sin. "The soul that sinneth it shall die."²

FORGIVENESS AND REMISSION OF PENALTY

Under the atonement made by his Son, God, in answer to the prayer of penitence and faith, graciously forgives the sins which have been committed against his law. At the same time and in the nature of the case, the penalty

¹ Rom. 3. 23; 5. 12.

² Ezek. 18. 4, 20.

attached to such acts of disobedience is freely remitted.

THE SINNER JUSTIFIED

Having received the pardon of his sins, and having been granted the remission of their penalty, the released sinner is recognized as justified under the divine law, and is regarded by the Lawgiver as though he had never sinned. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."³

DECLARED RIGHT OR RIGHTEOUS BEFORE THE LAW

By the judicial act of God in the administration of his government, the repentant, believing, forgiven sinner is declared to be righteous in the sense of standing in right relation to the divine law. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are

³ Rom. 5. 1.

forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.”⁴ “Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses.”⁵

A COMPLETE AND A COMPLETED WORK

The divine act of forgiveness and the consequent remission of the penalty of sin constitute at once a complete and a completed work. All past sins that were recorded against the sinner are blotted out of the book of remembrance, and the dreadful penalty attached thereto is forever revoked. “Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.”⁶ The only possible forfeiture of the claim which this divine favor gives to him who is declared to be righteous before the law is that which would be effected through his reentrance upon a sinful course. “If the wicked will turn from all his sins which he hath committed, . . .

⁴ Rom. 4. 5-8.

⁵ Acts 13. 38, 39.

⁶ Isa. 38. 17.

all his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him. . . . But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, . . . all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned.”⁷

A PREPARATORY WORK

While the work of forgiveness and remission is a completed work, it is yet a work performed for the sinner with direct and special reference to and in immediate connection with the performance of even a greater work within him. His sins are forgiven in order that his sinfulness may be taken away.

The penalty is remitted that he may instead gain the reward of righteousness. His legal relation is changed so that there may be effected a corresponding change in his moral nature.

ITS TRUE MEANING

In its true and deeper meaning, as distinguished from the judicial sense in which it is often used in the Scriptures, righteousness is a purely moral quality. It is that attribute

⁷ Ezek. 18. 21-24.

of the Divine Being or quality of his nature which renders him perfectly just and true both in his nature and in all his dealings with his intelligent, responsible creatures.

As relating to human character and life, it is the conformity of the moral nature to the divine and eternal standard of right as resident in the divine character and as published in the divine law. It is the spirit of rectitude which corresponds to the divine righteousness and leads to a willing and obedient conformity to the divine law. It involves a change wrought by the Holy Spirit so marvelous as to constitute its subject "the new man which after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth."⁸

"NONE RIGHTEOUS"

In their fallen or unrenewed condition all men are unrighteous. That is to say, in their legal as well as their moral relations to God they are not right in his sight. The psalmist's confession, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me,"⁹ is but a personal expression of a universal fact

⁸ Eph. 4. 24 (R. V.).

⁹ Psa. 51. 5.

frequently declared and constantly assumed in the Scriptures. "It is written, There is none righteous, no, not one."¹⁰ The mission of Christ was to prepare the way for the restoration of men to righteousness in order to their complete redemption. "For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous."¹¹ All are divinely called from a life of sinfulness to a life of righteousness, but the righteousness to which they are called is impossible of attainment without a full compliance with certain simple, plainly stated conditions. "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."¹²

THE SINFUL REGENERATED

Along with the work of justification, there is wrought by divine grace through the agency of the Spirit, a great change in the moral na-

¹⁰ Rom. 3. 10.

¹¹ Rom. 5. 19 (R. V.).

¹² Isa. 55. 7.

ture known as regeneration. The spirit of righteousness is imparted, disposing and enabling the believer to love righteousness and live righteously. He has undergone a mysterious transformation, which is so marked as to be called by the Lord being "born again."¹³ "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him."¹⁴ Righteousness is the result of what is done for the soul through pardoning grace and what is done in the soul by the Holy Spirit. In other words, the soul becomes righteous by "being justified by faith"¹⁵ and "born of the Spirit."¹⁶ The legal and the moral change are coincident.

NOT A FICTITIOUS BUT A REAL RIGHTEOUSNESS

Along with the imputation of righteousness there is not a fictitious but an actual and real impartation of that which is imputed; while in God's sight, before repentance and renewal and as separate from him and his righteousness, "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags,"¹⁷

¹³ John 3. 7.

¹⁴ 1 John 2. 29.

¹⁵ Rom. 5. 1.

¹⁶ John 3. 8.

¹⁷ Isa. 64. 6.

when pardoned by his grace and transformed by his Spirit, he is pleased both to impute and to impart his righteousness unto the trusting and obedient soul. As to imputation, "The Lord" is declared to be and is "our righteousness,"¹⁸ since he alone can declare us righteous under his law and as conformed to it through repentance and pardon; and as to impartation, his righteousness being imparted unto believers, becomes their possession in deed and in truth. In point of fact, righteousness is never imputed without being imparted. The trusting soul is declared to be righteous because made so by his power and grace. "He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous."¹⁹

RIGHTEOUSNESS MUST PRECEDE HOLINESS

Of the three primary constituents of the crown of character, logically and from the legal point of view, righteousness takes precedence simply because, in addition to the change wrought in the moral condition which it represents, it also stands for that which is effected in the legal relation of the believer

¹⁸ Jer. 23. 6.

¹⁹ 1 John 3. 7.

in consequence of which he is brought into right relation to God from the standpoint of the law, and thus prepared to become righteous in the moral and spiritual meaning of the word. Only the righteous man can be a holy man.

CHAPTER VI

HOLINESS

ALL-PERVASIVE OF THE SCRIPTURES

THE testimony of the ages as to the most distinguishing characteristic of the Bible is embodied in a single word and is instinctively and by common consent inscribed upon its cover and upon its title page—*Holy* Bible. With regard to the appropriateness of this title there is not the slightest whisper of dissent in all Christendom. This word and other words derived from it or intimately associated with it in meaning, such as “pure” and “clean”; in substantive form such as “holiness” and “sanctification”; in verbal form such as “sanctify” and “cleanse,” appear upon its pages with great frequency. So deeply and thoroughly is the Bible permeated with the idea of holiness that should all these important words be wholly expunged from its

pages, it would still be found frequently, fully, and clearly presented thereon. Passages of this character abound and, like pure fountains springing up, flow into and greatly swell the perennial stream of holiness that courses through the entire length and breadth of God's Garden of Truth, making it both fruitful and beautiful. In other words, holiness is found to be an all-pervading presence, interwoven in the warp and woof of the Scriptures and inseparably and everywhere associated with the Revealer and his revelation.

A BASAL PRINCIPLE

It is not uncommon practically to assign holiness to a place among and coordinate with the various Christian virtues, such as temperance, patience, meekness, and gentleness. It is not so presented in the Scriptures, and the absence of such presentation is by no means accidental. Nor can it be otherwise than highly significant, especially since the words "holy" and "holiness" as translated from a common original are so commonly used, that nevertheless neither of them is found in any enumeration of such virtues, either in the larger or smaller groups in which they are

discovered. There can be found but one seeming, though not real exception. It is significant also that the words "purity" and "pureness" appear in such groups but a single time each. In these instances, as in the former, the reference is clearly to the exemplification of piety and only indirectly or by inference to the state of holiness. It is plainly seen that instead of being recognized as coordinate with the Christian virtues to which reference has been made, holiness is regarded as underlying these excellences of Christian character and life. Hence the Scriptures assume that those who are exhorted to cultivate those qualities are already possessed of the spirit of holiness and are thereby prepared for their cultivation, as will be seen in the following passage: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another."¹ Then too the solemnity with which holiness is presented and regarded, together with the intimacy of its association with the name, the nature, and the worship of God, speaks loudly and unmistakably of the ex-

¹ 1 Col. 3. 12. 13.

alted position it occupies among the principles of revealed religion and in the economy of grace.

ITS TRUE SIGNIFICATION

Our search for the meaning of the words "holy" and "holiness" is greatly simplified by the fact that there is practically but one word² in the original from which these words are translated. Tracing this word through its many forms and in its greatly diversified connections as used in the Scriptures, there is little difficulty in finding its true signification or in discovering its great significance.

The first and most easily perceived meaning is that of *separateness*. That thing, place, time, or person that is set apart or separated from other of its kind by or for the Lord and for his special use or service, is called holy. Hence we read of holy vessels, holy places, the holy Sabbath, holy persons.

The second meaning is that of *cleanness*. The thing separated must be cleansed, the place set apart must be kept from defilement, the person performing holy offices must be physically and ceremonially clean and is ex-

² In the Hebrew קֹדֶשׁ (*quodesh*); in the Greek ἅγιος (*hagios*).

horted to purity of character and life. "Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord."³

The third meaning is that of *wholeness*, and is twofold. It signifies wholeness in the sense of *entireness*. That which is set apart and cleansed must lack nothing as to its completeness as a whole and in its several parts. It means also wholeness in the sense of *soundness*. A diseased animal may not be presented for holy purposes, a cripple may not enter the court of Israel, a leper may not officiate as a priest nor even enter the sacred inclosures.

These various meanings lead unerringly to the true signification of the great moral principle called holiness as being *separateness from sin; moral cleanness; spiritual wholeness, or entireness and soundness*. Very similar in meaning to the word "holy," though from an entirely different word in the original, is the word "pure." Indeed, in its use in the Scriptures the signification of purity is practically the same with that of holiness; its essential meaning when relating to the moral nature being freedom from the taint or corruption of sinfulness, which is regarded as spiritual uncleanness or as a morally diseased

³ Isa. 52. 11.

condition. Purity, like holiness, is spiritual cleanness, moral soundness.

POSSIBLE ONLY TO PERSONALITY

Holiness is possible to personality alone. Things, localities, appointed times, forms, ceremonies, and observances are called holy only in an accommodated sense and solely because of their relation to and the recognition and service of "The Holy One," or because of their designation and use in promoting the principle of holiness.

Holiness is not a negation, not simply a state of the soul in which sinfulness is dormant or even absent, but a positive, vital, active principle. As an attribute of the Divine Being it is perfect moral wholeness or absolute separateness from all impurity. It is that principle of the divine nature which leads to the utter detestation of sin and finds infinite delight in moral excellence. In man it is likeness to God in the possession, enjoyment, and exercise of the very same principle, which is to extend its sway over the entire being, entering into and permeating all his thoughts, feelings, words, and actions. Strictly speaking, holiness does not inhere in words or acts,

though it may and often does—nay, must—manifest itself through them. It relates directly and primarily to the moral character, to the state and disposition of the soul.

OBJECT OF ITS PRESENTATION

Like all other disclosures of the divine revelation, those that pertain to holiness are to man and for man. All its teachings, by means of fact, precept, object, symbol, and observance converge in the one evident and only design, that of the restoration of the divine image in man. How clearly in the light of the later or New Testament revelation do these things show their objective point to be “the new man which, after God is created in righteousness and true holiness,”⁴ and set forth “the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world,”⁵ “Who gave himself that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people.”⁶ And, furthermore, how deeply significant the fact that God has chosen that his Spirit shall be known as the Holy Spirit, his very name indicating his mission “to convict of sin and of righteousness

⁴ Eph. 4. 24.

⁵ John 1. 29.

⁶ Titus 2. 14.

and of judgment,"⁷ to the intent that all who believe may be "washed, . . . sanctified, . . . justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God,"⁸ so that they "might walk worthy of the Lord," and be made "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."⁹

⁷ John 16. 8.

⁸ 1 Cor. 6. 11.

⁹ Col. 1. 10, 12.

CHAPTER VII

LOVINGNESS

ITS FORMS AND THEIR EXPRESSION

IN its nature and expression love assumes various forms as growing out of different relations. In its exercise toward men God's love assumes three distinct and successive forms, according to man's moral condition and the differing attitudes he assumes toward God. In view of man's most pitiable condition of moral bankruptcy the Divine Being is moved with the spirit of compassion or loving pity toward him. Contemplating man's capacity for the possession of moral and spiritual good and his susceptibility to the highest and noblest enjoyment in its realization, he is disposed to the exercise of benevolence or loving kindness in his behalf. When restored to the divine favor, likeness, and fellowship, the divine attitude toward him is that of complacency, or loving satisfaction in its contempla-

tion. Love in God's children as directed toward him, first of all takes the form of gratefulness, in recognition of the gift of life, the bestowal of all providential good, and most of all for "the gift of . . . eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord,"¹ with all its attendant redeeming, quickening, and transforming grace. Another form which love to God assumes is that of complacency or the satisfaction which in human experience is the result of the realization of communion with the all-loving Father on the part of his trusting children. Apprehension of God as Father and as revealed in and through his Son and by his Spirit, calls forth the spirit of devotedness to him and to his work of saving the world. These forms of love will be present and manifest in accordance with the degree in which the believer apprehends the God of love, appreciates his love, and becomes partaker of its spirit. As men are restored to the divine favor and become "partakers of the divine nature," they, in consequence, come into unity with God in the unfolding of the divine plan for and into cooperation with him in the work of restoring the race to the same state of

¹ Rom. 6. 23.

blessedness. On the other hand, in view of their former sinful state and the realization of their former spiritual peril, which but for divine grace would have resulted in eternal loss, they are possessed with the spirit of sympathy for their fellow men, who are lost to present blessedness and in danger of entering eternity without being restored and without hope of restoration to the divine favor and likeness.

Two forms of sympathy, first with the divine human Saviour in his beneficent effort to save, and then with those who so urgently need his salvation, constitute a divinely human and a humanly divine solicitude in behalf of those who are not, but may become the recipients and possessors of that which because of its divine quality and of its infinite duration is called eternal life. Sympathy with the Saviour and with the subjects and objects of his love, and the corresponding solicitude to which it leads, culminate in the spirit of benevolence or well-wishing, together with the work of beneficence or well-doing, which is its sequence, in behalf of those whose condition and danger call for the utmost of interest and helpfulness.

God's love being unerringly right and spotlessly pure, is, therefore, absolutely perfect as to its quality. Being infinite in all his attributes, his love is correspondingly infinite or boundless in its scope and embrace. Man's love is perfect in its quality when his affectional nature is completely permeated with and governed by the principles of righteousness and purity, notwithstanding his limitations as to knowledge and judgment in meeting its requirements and performing its functions.

ITS PROVINCE

The province of love embraces personality alone. The boundaries of this province are fully established and set forth in the twofold commandment in which the law, the prophets and the gospel are summarized: "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."²

First of all, in point of importance, it has to do with the relationship of the individual to God, as entitled to the highest place in the

² Luke 10. 27.

affectional nature by virtue of his position and relation as Creator, and of his nature as manifested in the gift of his Son and of eternal life through him. The first and simplest form of love, that of the child for the parent, is the bud which is to blossom and come to fruitage in supreme love for the heavenly Father.

As the unfolding of brotherly love in the family relation, together with the contemplation of the heavenly Father's love toward his children of earth, it is related to the love of brother men and is intended to lead toward and expand into universal brotherhood. It involves all human relationships—individual, family, social, civil, commercial, and political—so that these, one and all, are to be regulated by the principle and permeated by the spirit of love. Love for one's neighbor is the principle underlying and leading to the fulfillment of the Golden Rule, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."³

The Scriptures everywhere assume that self-love is not only natural but proper and necessary. Indeed, though incidentally, it is authoritatively presented as a standard by which

³ Matt. 7. 12.

to determine the character and the degree of love toward one's brother man necessary to meet the requirements of the law of love which demands a love like unto love of one's self: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as [thou lovest] thyself."

Selfishness is intemperate and perverted self love, occasioned by a mistaken or false idea of self-interest, or of the true end and aim of life, which demand, not the mere gratification but the moral and spiritual edification of the personality, or the production of noblest selfhood. Selfishness, under the form and with the design of self-gratification or self-exaltation, is both a strange illusion and a sad delusion, which always results in loss to the personality, the real loss often being in proportion to the supposed gain. As idolatry, in the case of those who are enlightened, is the love of the world and of the things of the world rather than of God, so selfishness is the love of the world and the things of the world rather than of men. True self-love precludes selfishness as being not only negatively unlovely and unwise, but as positively hateful and foolish in its very nature and as harmful in its tendency and destructive in its effects.

The world of humanity is plainly included in the province of love, since "God so loved the world" as to give his Son to redeem it. But as his love includes only persons, the world of material things is as plainly excluded from it. His goodness and kindness extend to inferior beings, but his love extends not to these, much less does it embrace lifeless material things, no matter what their nature or value.

We are, indeed, instructed to love truth, righteousness, and other principles and qualities that belong to the moral nature, but these have no existence apart from personal beings. To love them is to love the Divine Being in whom they dwell in perfection, and to love those who possess them or are capable of their possession. God's world, or the earth, as a habitation, with the material provision he has made for its inhabitants in the form of tangible and sensuous things, which he bestows upon them through its agency, should indeed be duly—that is, highly—appreciated, but they should not, at any time or in any degree, be permitted to divert love for their Creator and Giver to themselves. They may and should be richly enjoyed, but never otherwise than in recognition of his original ownership

and as expressions of his loving-kindness. They are to be appreciated for the divine wisdom shown in providing them, the beneficence manifest in their bestowal and for their resultant marvelous usefulness, along with the pleasure they afford while rendering service and subserving the vital interests of those who receive them, appreciated as from God, and not in themselves and apart from him, but as divinely bestowed and gratefully received benefactions.

To love the gifts rather than the Giver is to make idols of God's bounties; to love things rather than men is to deprive and defraud them of what is due them and intended for them. How plain, positive, and exclusive is the admonition, and how sad the spiritual destitution of those who disregard its warning, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him"!⁴ There are seeming exceptions to this sweeping exclusion of the material world from the domain of love, as for instance in the case of patriotism or the love of one's country. In reality, however, patriotism is but the expan-

⁴ 1 John 2. 15.

sion of the love of home, and these are essentially love of the persons who now compose and of those who formerly composed the home, rather than of the house or location of the home; or of those who in the present and those who in the past comprised the nation, rather than the soil inclosed within its territorial limits. As the term itself indicates, patriotism is the love of forefathers and of their descendants. The divinely intended evolution is not to stop here. The love of the family and of the larger community or nation is to be expanded into the love of humanity—the world that God loves—as having one Fatherhood and as composing one great family. Regard for home and country because of tender ties and associations is like reverence for so-called holy things and holy places because associated with the heavenly Father and his children in blessed fellowship. With reference to love for the house of the Lord, the psalmist says, “I have loved the habitation of thy house,”⁵ which is equivalent to saying, “I have loved to serve thee and to commune with thee and thy people in the place which thou hast appointed.” The love of things is

⁵ Psa. 26. 8.

excluded from the province of love because love for them leads to and is manifest in the spirit of lust, of greed, and of vain-glory, all of which are antagonistic to right and pure love and basely usurp its place. All created things were declared to be "very good." Money is good in itself and as a standard of value. It is representative of and exchangeable for almost all material things. Yet "the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil."⁶ The subtle, deceptive "spirit of the world," called worldliness, leads to all sorts of excursions into forbidden and dangerous territory, and to all forms of dissipation, not, indeed, always to coarseness, rudeness, or vileness, for it not unfrequently assumes the air of culture and refinement, even to the disdaining of that which is coarse and vulgar. How often, alas, is this form of worldliness substituted for the love of God and his cause, even by such as decorously observe the forms of religion! Moreover, "the spirit of the world" is the love of the evanescent and transient in contrast with the love of the substantial and permanent, the temporal rather than the eternal. "For all that is in the world, the lust of the

⁶ 1 Tim. 6. 10 (R. V.).

flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.”⁷ “Love not the world.”

ITS PREEMINENCE

The more exalted other moral graces or virtues are shown to be, the more is love correspondingly exalted, since it still rises above them all. Paul, in comparing two of the more prominent of these graces, faith and hope, with love, fully recognizes the mightiness of the one and the preciousness of the other, yet emphatically accords the supremacy to love. How could it be otherwise, since faith and hope are essentially human, while love is essentially divine? Faith, the golden key, is indeed priceless, yet not in and of itself, but because of its relation to the surpassingly rich treasures of the vast storehouse of love which it unlocks. Likewise hope, the “sure and steadfast” anchor, is indeed precious, but for the reason that it holds to its moorings the stupendous vessel that is freighted with the untold wealth of everlasting love.

⁷ 1 John 2. 16, 17.

Of faith and hope as living experiences love is the parent to which they owe, not only their sustenance, but their very being. Because it exists they exist. Not only of these, but of all other principles and forms of Christian grace, it may be confidently affirmed that if love does not actually precede, it certainly accompanies and crowns them all. The highest possible place is given to love by "the beloved disciple," when exhausting the possibilities of human language in the assignment, he not only affirms that "love is of God," but declares and repeats the declaration that "God is love,"⁸ thus identifying love with God, and making these terms interchangeable. This is the nearest possible approach toward a full revelation of God and the chief explanation of redemption. It is because "God is love" that he "so loved the world."

In all that pertains to man's redemption all other attributes of the divine nature appear as being under its supremacy. Under its guidance wisdom plans, justice warns, mercy pardons, and goodness dispenses, not only in accordance with it but under its direct inspiration. The great difference between the

⁸ 1 John 4. 8, 16.

written law, civil, ceremonial, and moral, as summarized in the Decalogue, and the law of love toward which it is intended to lead and in which it is to be fulfilled, is that the former, in large part, is an authoritative restraint from the practice of every form of evil, while the latter is wholly a gracious principle of constraint leading to the practice of every kind of good. The written law is powerless to change the sinful nature which necessitates its restraints, while the principle of love, when possessed in its purity and in full exercise, is so powerful as to enable and constrain its possessor so to regard and so to practice the Christian virtues as practically to supersede that law by making it unnecessary in such case. The letter of the law restrains men from dishonoring God and from harming their fellow men; the spirit of love constrains them to honor God and to be in every way helpful to their fellows. The transition from that which is to a great extent the repression and restriction of a life of sin, to that which is mainly the expression and expansion of a life of righteousness, is possible only in and through Christ. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak

through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”⁹ Hence the force of the following and many other passages of Scripture. “The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ.”¹⁰ “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness.”¹¹ “For the love of Christ constraineth us.”¹² “Love is the fulfilling of the law.”¹³ The preparatory law declares, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.” “Thou shalt not kill.” The ultimate law proclaims, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God—Thou shalt love thy neighbor.”

He who came to effect the great transition from the many laws of restraint and discipline to the one law of inflowing, indwelling, and outflowing love, declares concerning the Godward and manward expressions of the law of love, “Upon these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”¹⁴

⁹ Rom. 8. 3, 4.

¹⁰ Gal. 3. 24.

¹¹ Rom. 10. 4.

¹² 2 Cor. 5. 14.

¹³ Rom. 13. 10.

¹⁴ Matt. 22. 40.

ITS PRECIOUSNESS

The power to love, with the susceptibility to the enjoyment of its experience, exercise, reception, and interchange, crowns all other endowments. It opens to its possessor all the possibilities of the noblest fellowship with kindred spirits and the most blessed intercourse and communion with God. Its divinely directed movements tend to every form of good, and eventually lead to the possession and enjoyment of an endless heavenly life with God and with those who bear his image and share his glory. All history demonstrates the wisdom of following the divine instructions with regard to the exercise of this power and the great folly of turning aside from or disregarding it. Most of the unhappiness and misery experienced and endured in human life is either caused or occasioned by the diversion of love in its mission of universal beneficence, from its divinely appointed channels, its consequent perversion to the unlawful and unworthy things of the world, and what is even worse, to its prostitution to wrong attitudes and attachments subversive of the sacred rights and relationships of life. In direct and striking contrast with this, most

of the happiness, joy, and blessedness enjoyed by mankind has its birth and life in the experience and exercise of love that to a greater or less degree retains or is restored to its normal state of purity.

Nothing is more certain than that the purer the love and the nobler its object the richer is the experience and the more blessed the life. The beginning of the manifestation of this most blessed, far-reaching principle in each human life is in the form of filial or child love toward the parent. The tender relationship and the affection it calls forth, in accordance with the divine plan prepares the way for instruction concerning, and an introduction to "the Father, from whom every family [Gr., "fatherhood"] in heaven and on earth is named."¹⁵ The family life among brothers and sisters likewise opens the way for the larger conception and realization of the brotherhood in Christ and the cultivation of the spirit of universal brotherhood. Here in the bosom of the family are found the divinely planted germs of godliness and of manliness, which, properly nurtured and cultivated, lead to nobility and beauty of character and blessed-

¹⁵ Eph. 3. 15 (R. V.).

ness of life, experience, and usefulness. The happiest home on earth, with its utterly unselfish heart experiences in the outflow, interflow, and overflow of all the beautifully varying, diverging, and converging streams of affection incident to the interrelationships which they sustain one toward another, is a beautiful type of the heavenly home, the eternal abiding place of our Father and his ransomed children. The Son is at once the revelation and the Revealer of the Father and of his love. "Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."¹⁶ "For in him [the Son] dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."¹⁷ Out of all God's chosen people living at the time of his ministry on earth the Son of God chose and set apart twelve men to publish his gospel and establish his kingdom. Of this larger company Peter, James, and John drew nearer to him than the rest, forming an inner circle and accompanying him on important occasions, as on the mount of transfiguration, in the absence of the rest. Of these three John was the most susceptible to the

¹⁶ Matt. 11. 27.

¹⁷ Col. 2. 9.

divine touch, the apprehension and appreciation of the deep things of God. He delighted to conceal himself within the shadow of the Master and there quietly enjoy the consciousness and blessedness of fellowship with him as "the disciple whom Jesus loved. . . . Which also leaned upon his breast."¹⁸ That he was not mistaken in the assurance of the depth of the love of Christ toward him is beautifully and tenderly shown in the words uttered by his dying Lord while on the cross, in which he committed his broken-hearted mother to the future care of the loving and beloved John. How tender and touching his words addressed to his mother, "Behold thy son!" and to John, "Behold thy mother."¹⁹ It was fitting that the sublimest and most precious of all truths, disclosing the nature of the Divine Being, ever embodied in human language should be intrusted to the beloved disciple and by him published to the world. It was his privilege under divine illumination to crystallize the very heart of revelation within the narrowest possible compass of human speech. Of all the forms which language may be made

¹⁸ John 21. 20.

¹⁹ John 19. 26, 27.

to assume, so much has never been nor can be expressed within such narrow bounds as the simple though most profound words, "God is love," twice written by his Spirit-guided hand. No other three words combined have been or can be found so lofty, so deep, so all-embracing, so marvelously significant, so exceedingly precious.

"Mother," "home," and "heaven" are justly regarded as among the most endearing words that language affords. These, however, are not ultimate words. They point backward to other words which antedate and embrace them. Who ordained the relationship between mother and child and implanted within them the principle of maternal and of filial affection? Who instituted the family and the home? Who conceived and constructed the heavenly abode? One little word answers all—"God." What makes the name of mother so dear? Whence the sweetness of the thought of home? Why the preciousness of the conception of heaven? Again one short word conveys the complete answer—"Love." Even the connective "is" is expressive of the profound mystery of being and forever unites these inseparable entities. What wondrous words and what a marvelous

combination—"God is love"! And as immediately following and growing out of this comes the great and wondrous announcement and the ever-blessed assurance, "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him." God's love is strong father love and tender mother love combined and infinitely sweetened, deepened, and expanded. Aggregate all the pure divinely implanted and divinely inspired love of the race and of the ages, it is still but the outflow, in finite measure, of our Father's infinite heart. "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious,"²⁰ or as in the Revised Version, "is the preciousness."

²⁰ 1 Pet. 2. 7.

CHAPTER VIII

RIGHTEOUSNESS, HOLINESS, AND LOVE ENTHRONED IN REGEN- ERATION

A DETHRONEMENT

THE entrance of the believing soul into the new or regenerate life involves the dethronement of unrighteousness, unholiness, and unlovingness, the essential principles of moral evil which previously were regnant in the heart.

AN ENTHRONEMENT

The vacant throne from which these spirits of evil have been driven is now occupied by the relentless foes of the former occupants. Righteousness, holiness, and love have ascended the throne and the entire territory is subdued and placed under their control.

OBSTRUCTIONS TO BE REMOVED

While the territory is all reclaimed, the enemy has left obstructions in the highways

of travel and commerce which impede the operations of the new government. In order to facilitate the necessary adjustments to the new conditions and prepare the way for needed improvements, these obstructions must necessarily be removed, else there will be perpetual trouble in the administration of its affairs. The warfare against the giant evils which seek to regain the throne will continue all along the border and from every side, hence the urgent need of the easy and harmonious movements of the forces within and the erection of impregnable fortifications against all assailants from without.

THE ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF REGENERATION

As the term "regeneration" implies, its essential characteristic is the introduction of a new life. In Scripture phrase, the subject of regenerating grace is "born again" or "born from above."¹

This new life is distinguished by the presence and dominance of those principles or qualities which underlie all moral excellence. With a view to the introduction of this life certain necessary and desirable things have

¹ 1 John 3. 3 and margin.

been graciously offered on condition of repentance and faith on the part of those who desire them. These include pardon, peace, adoption, and sanctification or cleansing. They are apprehended by those who seek them with greatly varying degrees of clearness. One is wholly absorbed with the idea of forgiveness from God and peace with him.

Another, in addition to these, may clearly apprehend and seek adoption into the divine family. A third may include, besides all these, the sanctification of the moral nature. In answer to the prayer of faith each will receive pardon and enjoy peace, and to each the elements of the new life will be imparted.

The first rejoices in the realization of pardon and peace; the second exults in the experience of adoption, "crying, Abba, Father";² the third rests in the assurance of the removal of the dark stains of sin. These respectively have received according to the degree of their enlightenment and the measure of their spiritual receptivity. If prepared to apprehend the Scripture teaching that he may not only be freely and fully forgiven but as freely and fully cleansed, he may at once rest his claim

² Gal. 4. 6; Rom. 8. 15.

upon the assurance that "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,"³ and become at once the recipient of full forgiveness and the subject of complete cleansing. Ordinarily, however, those who seek to enter the new life entertain no apprehension or anticipation of entire sanctification.

In the New Testament church at first, as at the present time, this was by no means a common experience, because of want of enlightenment and lack of preparedness on the part of the individual.

AN UNWARRANTED ASSUMPTION

It is not unfrequently assumed that any incompleteness in the work of grace by which the new life is introduced would be a reflection upon him by whom it is graciously imparted. The fact is God has chosen to limit the operations of his grace to meet the various degrees of preparedness for such gracious work. His work is limited only by lack of the necessary susceptibility, as for want of greater light or because of imperfect consecration. The move-

³ 1 John 1. 9.

ments of his grace are never arbitrary. He, in every instance, does all that can be consistently and wisely done, up to the full measure of the enlightenment, apprehension, and susceptibility of those who seek his grace.

AN ALMOST UNIVERSAL EXPERIENCE

With very few exceptions the regenerate soul soon awakes to the realization that, though the new life is dominant, it is not all-pervasive, and that the old life, though in subjection, is not extinct. All is not entirely right, pure, and loving within. There is more or less impediment in the way; of hindrance to spiritual advancement and activity.

A WARRANTED ASSUMPTION

A matter so important cannot be determined even by a common experience alone, much less by preconceived opinion. We must now, as ever, have recourse to the only infallible guide, the Scriptures. They assume nothing without divine warrant. We find that they constantly and everywhere assume that moral evil is still present in the hearts of many believers; that they are not as right, pure, and loving as they may and ought to be. Moreover,

they declare that gracious provision has been made for its removal. They teach and exhort all such as recognize its indwelling to receive the richer grace and thus measure up to the only Bible standard of character and life.

CHAPTER IX

ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION

AS RELATED TO SANCTIFICATION

THE words "holiness" and "sanctification," as found in the English New Testament, are translated from the same word in the original Greek. The English word "holiness" is from the adjective "holy," which is derived from the Anglo-Saxon.¹ It therefore partakes of the nature of the adjective and more especially expresses the quality of moral purity. The English word "sanctification" is from the verb "sanctify" and is of Latin origin. Partaking of the nature of the verb, it emphasizes the act of making pure or the process of being made pure. Each of these words equally with the other means the state of moral purity. As representing the same original word they are very properly used as interchangeable, as meaning the same moral state. The New

¹ *Hal* (whole, safe, sound).

Testament Scriptures assume that all true believers are sanctified.² The whole body of believers in the churches are repeatedly spoken of or addressed as "saints," which literally means holy ones. They are designated as "them that are sanctified."³

Christ and his apostles insisted upon a radical moral change. Church membership originally presupposed a great spiritual transformation, so great as to be regarded in a spiritual sense as passing "from death unto life."⁴ It certainly should imply at all times either such a moral transformation or at least a positive, earnest, and evident desire for its immediate realization. Those who profess to be followers of Christ and yet have not entered upon this experience of a marked spiritual change are not all blameworthy in consequence. Many have failed to do so because of the failure of their religious teachers to give them sufficiently definite and clear instruction on this all-important subject. If such be the case, and they are honestly endeavoring to live up to the light which they possess, they may be regarded as belonging to the class of

² *Sanctificare* (*sanctus*, holy, and *facere*, to make).

³ 1 Cor. 1. 2; Jude 1.

⁴ John 5. 24.

persons alluded to in the following scripture: "In every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him."⁵ How insufficient, after all, are honest convictions without spiritual enlightenment, and how urgent is the need of that enlightenment! The divine command, "Be ye holy, for I am holy,"⁶ is of universal application. This requirement is limited nowhere in the Scriptures. Nowhere is it declared or even implied that the holiness required is to be partial or incomplete. That the Scriptures contemplate that the state of entire sanctification should be entered into by all believers is clearly implied in numerous passages where it is not specifically stated. They are to be "pure in heart,"⁷ "partakers of the divine nature,"⁸ "partakers of his holiness,"⁹ "filled with all the fullness of God."¹⁰

The doctrine of entire sanctification is, however, not only clearly implied but positively and plainly presented, as in the following passages: "Having therefore these promises,

⁵ Acts 10. 35 (R. V.).

⁶ 1 Pet. 1. 16; Lev. 11. 44, etc.

⁷ Matt. 5. 8.

⁸ 2 Pet. 1. 4.

⁹ Heb. 11. 10.

¹⁰ Eph. 3. 19.

dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”¹¹ “Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.”¹² “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 confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”¹³ This doctrine is set forth very clearly in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians. The spiritual state of the body of Christians addressed is plainly indicated by the apostle’s words, “We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know

¹¹ 2 Cor. 7. 1.

¹² Titus 2. 14.

¹³ 1 John 1. 7, 9.

what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: so that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing. . . . For what is our hope or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy.”¹⁴ Could there be a clearer recognition of true Christian character and life than that which is here presented. It is plainly assumed that these earnest, fervent, faithful believers are living in a sanctified state. It is for these, whom he so highly commends, that the apostle so earnestly prays at the close of the epistle in language that cannot with fairness be construed to mean anything less than entire sanctification. “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

¹⁴ 1 Thess. 1. 2-8; 12. 19, 20.

Lord Jesus Christ.”¹⁵ The word translated “wholly” is in the original a compound word composed of two words,¹⁶ the first of which means whole, in the sense of entire; the second, an end attained, consummation, realization. Their sanctification is to be entire, and it is to be a completed work. It is the apostle’s desire that they should be “unblamable in holiness before God.”¹⁷ “Spirit and soul and body” unquestionably mean the entire personality. As in the word “wholly” so in the word “whole,” two words¹⁸ are combined in the original, the former meaning entire, the latter, portion or part. It is as though the apostle said, “May the whole and every part of your spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless”; not made blameless at the coming, but preserved, kept continuously in a wholly sanctified state “unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Already they had heard and heeded the call to a holy life; now they are called to a wholly sanctified life. It is a present call, it is the call of God, who himself gives the assurance that should they heed the

¹⁵ 1 Thess. 5. 23.

¹⁶ ὅλος and τέλος (*holos* and *telos*).

¹⁷ 1 Thess. 5. 23.

¹⁸ ὅλος and κληρος (*holos* and *kleros*).

call the great and glorious work shall be accomplished. "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."¹⁹

AS RELATED TO CHRISTIAN PERFECTION

With very few and unimportant exceptions the word "perfect" as found in the New Testament is translated from one or the other of two Greek words, in their varied forms. In the several connections in which the English word is found it has no less than four distinct and important meanings. The first of these significations is derived from one²⁰ of these Greek words, the other three from the other,²¹ which is by far the more important word. When translated from the first of these words the word "perfect" signifies prepared or thoroughly fitted. For example: "All Scripture is given . . . that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."²² The phrase "thoroughly furnished" is from another form of the same Greek word as that which immediately precedes it and is

¹⁹ 1 Thess. 5. 24.

²⁰ ἀρτιος (*artios*).

²¹ τελειος (*teleios*).

²² 2 Tim. 3. 17.

translated "perfect." The evident meaning therefore is, "that the man of God may be perfect" in the sense of being "thoroughly furnished unto all good works." "Now the God of peace . . . make you perfect in every good work to do his will."²³ The second and more important Greek word mentioned primarily means ended or complete. The different applications of the idea of completeness by this word in its varied forms and connections will be clearly seen in the following definitions and corresponding passages.

Sometimes it means to be fully matured, or full-grown. "Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man [R. V. full-grown man], unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, . . . but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."²⁴ "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."²⁵ "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of

²³ Heb. 13. 20, 21.

²⁴ Eph. 4. 13-15.

²⁵ Col. 1. 28.

Christ, let us go on unto perfection.”²⁶ Again it relates to the finality, to reaching the goal. “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: . . . I press toward the mark for the prize.”²⁷ “But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy.”²⁸ “I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.”²⁹ The words “might finish” and “have finished” are from the same word that is rendered “perfect” in the preceding passage.

Finally, and most important of all, it signifies moral completeness, perfection as to the moral nature and as to the disposition of the soul. This moral completeness involves two distinct things. It relates first to the condition of the moral nature. It is to be wholly sanctified or entirely pure. “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.”³⁰ It relates, secondly, to the disposi-

²⁶ Heb. 6. 1.

²⁷ Phil. 3. 12, 14.

²⁸ Acts 20. 24.

²⁹ John 17. 4.

³⁰ 2 Cor. 7. 1.

tion of the soul. It is to be made perfect in love. In the Sermon on the Mount Christ unfolds his law of love, exhorting his followers to love their enemies, to bless those who curse them, to do good to those who hate them, to pray for such as despitefully use them and persecute them, that they may thus be the children of their Father in heaven. It is in this immediate connection and in order to this state and disposition of heart that he utters the most blessed of all commands: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."³¹ So also in his conversation with the young man who, with all his excellences, was disposed to love his possessions more than his God, the Saviour told him how he might gain moral perfection, which is the very essence of the "eternal life" concerning which he was making anxious inquiry. "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."³² That is to say: Thou hast not kept the spirit of the law, though thou hast striven to follow the letter; thou hast not

³¹ Matt. 5. 48.

³² Matt. 19. 21.

loved thy neighbor as thyself; thou lovest thy goods more than thy God. If thou wilt be perfect, it is necessary on thy part to give thyself and all that thou callest thine own unreservedly to me and to my service. This alone will prepare the way for thee fully to possess and exercise the spirit of "love [which] is the fulfilling of the law,"³³ and which is at the same time "the bond of perfectness."³⁴ The other forms of perfection require time and effort. To be "thoroughly furnished unto all good works" implies the gaining of knowledge from the Word of God and from experience in Christian life and labor. This requires much time diligently improved. To "grow up into him in all things," "unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," is impossible without ample time for the successive stages of growth. To "finish the course" necessitates a continuous pressing "toward the mark for the prize." These all imply long-continued personal effort. With entire sanctification the case is entirely different. To be morally complete, to be "pure in heart," to be "cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and

³³ Rom. 13. 10.

³⁴ Col. 3. 14 (R. V.).

spirit," to be "made perfect in love," there is simply needed the application of "the blood of Jesus Christ . . . [that] cleanseth from all sin." Christian perfection in this sense is wholly a divine work wrought in the soul in accordance with its earnest desire, urgent request, full consent and hearty exercise of faith. The work itself does not necessarily imply the lapse of time even beyond a moment. "Everyone that asketh receiveth." One who is spiritually "a babe" in Christian life may not be "perfect, thoroughly furnished," as for example, with Scripture truth; he may not, nay, cannot be perfect in the sense of being mature in Christian experience; he may not be perfect as having finished the Christian course and as thereby ready to enter into the full fruition of the heavenly life; but he may be perfect as having been "cleansed from all unrighteousness" and as experiencing the "perfect love [which] casteth out fear."

Paul distinctly disclaims perfection in one sense, while in the same connection he positively assumes and declares it in another sense, using the very same Greek word. In the first instance he refers to the finality, in the second to a present moral state and disposi-

tion. How plain his words: "I count all things but loss . . . that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, . . . if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect . . . but this one thing I do, . . . I press toward the mark for the prize. . . . Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded."³⁵ Why exhort only such "as be perfect [to] be thus minded"? Is it not implied that only such are fully prepared to forget the things that are behind and reach forth toward the mark and the prize? The complete renewal of the moral nature resulting in entire sanctification and perfection in love constitutes the King's standard of Christian life, which may be entered upon at once, and hence become the true starting point from which to advance toward and after a time enter upon those forms of Christian perfection which must be preceded by and are the result of an indefinite period of religious activity spent in the acquisition and use of religious knowledge, experience, and wisdom, accompanied by a constant, healthy, and vigorous growth. Entire sancti-

³⁵ Phil. 3. 8-15.

fication and perfect love prepare the way for the greatest efficiency and the highest usefulness, together with the exercise of the maximum influence for good. The length of time spent in the attainment of the other forms of Christian perfection will depend upon the measure or lack of diligence on the part of the aspirant.

Blessed indeed is he who is thus enabled to give many years of such service to the King and for the extension of his kingdom as can be rendered only by such as are "pure in heart," "thoroughly furnished" and "full-grown." When their work of faith and labor of love is done, how surpassingly sweet will be the recognition and welcome of the Master, "Come, ye blessed of my Father."³⁶

AS RELATED TO SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Growth always implies increase. It primarily means increase through the agency of life. Spiritual growth as presented in the Scriptures is the increase or development of a divinely imparted life. Through sin "death passed upon all men,"³⁷ so that, by nature, all

³⁶ Matt. 25. 34.

³⁷ Rom. 5. 12.

are "dead in trespasses and sins."³⁸ The dead cannot grow. Before growth is possible they must have "passed from death unto life."³⁹ They "must be born again, . . . born of the Spirit,"⁴⁰ "born of God."⁴¹ Then, and not till then, may they "grow in grace." Growth into a state of grace is impossible. To lead one who has not become "a new creature,"⁴² or "put on the new man,"⁴³ into the belief that he may grow into a state of grace is unwarranted by the Scriptures and is well calculated effectually to prevent his entrance upon a true Christian life. To encourage such to unite with the church, receive its sacraments and observe its ordinances and expect by virtue of these acts to grow into a Christian life is to substitute the forms of Christianity for the offices of Christ and the Holy Spirit and lead the misguided soul into a nominal instead of a real Christian life. Spiritual life is never imparted through the mere observance of the divinely appointed ordinances of the church. The utmost they can do is to call attention to

³⁸ Eph. 2. 1.

³⁹ John 5. 24.

⁴⁰ John 3. 7, 8.

⁴¹ 1 John 3. 9.

⁴² 2 Cor. 5. 17; Gal. 6. 15.

⁴³ Eph. 4. 24; Col. 3. 10.

and lead toward a true Christian life or aid in the nurture and growth of a life previously imparted by the Spirit.

It was while eagerly and diligently "seeking" that the "one pearl of great price"⁴⁴ was found. How blessed the experience of the finder when he knew of a certainty that this inestimable treasure was his own. The exhortation to "grow in grace," according to the scriptural idea, should at once follow, but never precede, the first consciousness of indwelling spiritual life. Hence the apostolic injunction, "As newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."⁴⁵ Such exhortation, in substance, should be oft repeated, so that all the subjects of divine grace "may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."⁴⁶ It is, however, after laying broad and deep foundations for the erection of a magnificent superstructure that Peter exhorts those who "have obtained like precious faith" and have received "all things that pertain unto life and godliness," that "beside this, giving all dili-

⁴⁴ Matt. 13. 46.

⁴⁵ 1 Pet. 2. 2.

⁴⁶ Eph. 4. 15.

gence," they should "add to"⁴⁷ or build up upon these foundations a strong, symmetrical, and beautiful Christian character. And likewise, it is only after the seed sown in their hearts is supposed to have sprung up into a pure and vigorous life that he adds as a final exhortation, "But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."⁴⁸ The Word lays great stress upon spiritual life, since without it there can be no spiritual growth. It as strongly insists upon fullness of life, so as to prepare the way for healthy, vigorous, and symmetrical development. It is not at all strange, then, that we find scores of references to holiness to every single allusion to growth. The Divine Word places "Be ye holy"⁴⁹ before "Grow in grace,"⁵⁰ both as to position and as to time. As sanctification is not the result of growth, neither is entire sanctification. Each is purely the work of the Holy Spirit and is wrought in answer to the soul's desire and the prayer of faith. That the growth of the spiritual life may and often does, incidentally, lead to increase in holiness up

⁴⁷ 2 Pet. 1. 1-9.

⁴⁸ 2 Pet. 3. 18.

⁴⁹ 1 Pet. 1. 15.

⁵⁰ 2 Pet. 3. 18.

to the measure of the desire and faith of the believer, instead of being denied is earnestly and emphatically affirmed. It must, however, be as positively and strongly declared that such advance is not the result of good works nor of faithfulness, but in every instance the work of the Holy Spirit alone and in answer to the simple faith of the believer. But such delay is by no means necessary. What is needed is the full apprehension of the truth that sanctification, whether in part or entire, is never conditioned upon the lapse of time or upon anything that requires the addition or multiplication of days for its accomplishment. All the time needed is that which is sufficient to gain the knowledge of the doctrine of entire sanctification and of its immediate availability. These, together with earnest desire and unfaltering faith, will secure the immediate completion of the Spirit's work of purification. Hence to exhort believers to grow into an entirely sanctified state is to reverse the scriptural method. The divine order is not "Grow in order that you may be holy," but precisely the reverse: "Be holy in order that you may grow." Indeed, sanctification is the very basis of spiritual growth, and the fullest,

freest, and most perfect growth is possible only to such as are wholly sanctified.

AS RELATED TO CHRISTIAN MATURITY

There is a very intimate relationship between growth and maturity, the latter being the result, the former the process through which that result is reached. Maturity in the Christian life implies the previous and continuous acquisition of knowledge, and especially such knowledge as is gained by instruction given by religious teachers or received through the careful and prayerful study of the Scriptures. It presupposes conscientious and faithful activity in spiritual things, along with a deepened and enlarged Christian experience and a corresponding increase in spiritual wisdom. These advances are made under the inspiration and guidance of the Spirit. These agencies and activities lead directly, steadily, surely toward and to Christian maturity. The process contemplating this end is clearly indicated and provided for in the following passage: "And he gave some to be apostles; . . . prophets; . . . evangelists; . . . pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, . . . unto the building up of the

body of Christ: till we all attain . . . unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we may be no longer children, . . . but . . . may grow in all things unto him, who is the head, even Christ.”⁵¹ Entire sanctification, on the other hand, is consequent, not upon the process of growth, but upon the direct and immediate work of the Holy Spirit, by whom the believing soul, having consecrated himself unreservedly to the service of God, is entirely cleansed from sin. How strongly and beautifully is this truth presented in the following passages: “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.”⁵² “Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.”⁵³ “He is like a refiner’s fire, and like fuller’s soap. And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver.”⁵⁴ “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly.”⁵⁵ “The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”⁵⁶ Christ’s command, “Be ye therefore perfect even as your

⁵¹ Eph. 4. 11-15 (R. V.).

⁵² Isa. 1. 18.

⁵³ Psa. 51. 7.

⁵⁴ Mal. 3. 2, 3.

⁵⁵ 1 Thess. 5. 23.

⁵⁶ 1 John 1. 7.

Father which is in heaven is perfect,"⁵⁷ relates to completeness of purity and love and not to fullness or completeness of spiritual development. An infant, as to its physical nature, may be a perfect though not a perfected human being. It must increase in stature in order to be full-grown. As an intellectual being all the faculties of the child may be complete yet it must advance by successive steps in knowledge and experience before it can be mature. In both instances the rapidity, and especially the healthfulness, of its growth will depend greatly upon its entire freedom from physical or mental disease. A son may be the very image of his father and yet be very immature and almost infinitely inferior to him in knowledge and wisdom. His love may not be as full and strong as that of his mother, yet it may be just as pure. So a child of God may bear the moral image of his heavenly Father, may be complete in holiness and perfect in love while very immature in knowledge and experience.

AS RELATED TO PERFECTION IN LOVE

Underlying all the divine commands to do

⁵⁷ Matt. 5. 48.

is the command to be. Scripturally, logically, and chronologically it is "first pure."⁵⁸ "Be ye holy," properly and necessarily precedes "Thou shalt love." We may fear and reverence God, but we cannot love him until our hearts are regenerated and sanctified. We cannot love him with unalloyed or perfect love until we are wholly sanctified. Hence perfect love is impossible without entire sanctification. Holiness is essential to Christian character. Love is the actuating principle of the Christian life. Entire sanctification and perfect love are twin sisters in the family of Christian virtues. The former takes precedence, not as superior, but as first born. The moment the heart becomes pure the principle of love becomes pure also. Then holiness is permeated with love and love with holiness. It is holy love, which is equivalent to holiness and love, that is exalted by Christ as the power that enables his followers to meet all the requirements of the divine law. He who seeks to be made perfect in love will seek in vain if he ignores or is indifferent toward entire sanctification. The angel of perfect love never precedes but always accompanies the

⁵⁸ James 3. 17.

angel of purity when he enters the human heart.

AS RELATED TO ENTRANCE INTO THE HEAVENLY ABODE

It is a universal belief among Christians, whether Protestant, Greek, or Roman, that entire sanctification, and by implication perfection in love, are absolutely essential qualifications for entrance into the heavenly abode. The Scriptures neither teach nor imply the existence of purgatorial fires, either literal or figurative, in the future state, much less their actual employment for the completion of the work of purifying the souls of men who are yet, in greater or less degree, impure at the time of their death. It ought not to be, but it is necessary to add that the Scriptures nowhere teach, either directly or indirectly, that there is any quality, power, or influence, inherent in or delegated to death, which is "the last enemy"⁵⁹ rather than the latest friend of man, that has the remotest bearing upon or relation to the purification of the human soul. The one positive and exclusive teaching of the Scriptures with reference to the purifying

⁵⁹ 1 Cor. 15. 26.

of the spiritual nature is that the work is wrought by virtue of the atonement made by Christ and by the direct and immediate agency of the Holy Spirit. "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."⁶⁰ It is conceded, by reason of the very nature of the case, by virtue of the nature and character of God, and most of all by the proclamation of his Fatherhood, as well as by the strongest possible implications of the Scriptures, that in the event of the death of children before they shall have arrived at the age of accountability, they, as belonging to his kingdom, are saved through the atonement and purified by the Spirit and thus fitted for the abode of the holy. "For of such is the kingdom of God."⁶¹ "Even so it is not the will of your father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."⁶² Had Cornelius, with his imperfect knowledge of spiritual things, died before Peter's visit to Cæsarea, or had any one of the little company of the disciples of John the Baptist, who knew nothing of the baptism of the Holy Ghost or

⁶⁰ 1 Cor. 6. 11.

⁶¹ Mark 10. 14.

⁶² Matt. 18. 14.

of an advanced state of grace, passed from the earth before the arrival of Paul at Ephesus, who can doubt that in either of these instances the Lord would have finished "the work and cut it short in righteousness,"⁶³ since "in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him"?⁶⁴ Neither is there any reason for doubt in the case of one who, having become a subject of regenerating grace one day, should pass away the next, without even as much as knowing that there is a still more exalted spiritual state than that into which he had just entered. In all these and similar cases we are warranted in the assurance that they are entirely cleansed and eternally saved. But what God may do in certain exigencies as those just supposed, or in the case of those who through lack of opportunity have no knowledge or, at most, very imperfect conceptions of the Christian life, in no wise indicates his plan or determines his will with reference to believers who have enjoyed years of clear enlightenment and of enlarged opportunity. While it is unreasonable as well as unscriptural to assume that he will

⁶³ Rom. 9. 28.

⁶⁴ Acts 10. 35.

hold those who are wholly or measurably shut out from the light as alike and in the same degree responsible with those who are fully enlightened, it is conversely at variance with reason and Scripture to presume that he will not require far more of those who are blessed with a clear knowledge of revealed truth than of those who do not possess such knowledge.

It is to be feared that many who believe in the attainability of entire purity and unalloyed love do not seriously desire to enter into that state and live in accordance with its requirements, presuming that God will accomplish at the time of their death what they practically refuse to have him do for them during their lives. Can there be any doubt that such "shall suffer loss," even though they themselves may "be saved so as by fire"?⁶⁵ There is far too much at stake with regard both to the present and the future life for one who hears the call to the King's standard of life to defer entrance upon it and presume upon the completion of the Spirit's work in the closing hour of life, for the highest exaltation and the greatest blessedness possible to God's children while on earth or when in

⁶⁵ Cor. 3. 15.

heaven consist in their being “partakers of the divine nature,” and are realized only when “His love is perfected in us,”⁶⁶ and all of our thinking, saying, and doing accords with and springs from “love out of a pure heart.”⁶⁷

⁶⁶ 1 John 4. 12.

⁶⁷ 1 Tim. 1. 5.

CHAPTER X

REASON FOR AND REASONABLENESS OF THE KING'S STANDARD

MUCH SCRIPTURE TRUTH TRANSCENDS REASON

THERE is much in Scripture truth that transcends reason because of the simple fact that it is beyond the province of reason. That which is incomprehensible to the human mind is above reason and not contrary to it. The teaching of the Scriptures, in view of its divine source and the nature and needs of the being to whom it is directed, is eminently reasonable. "Great is the mystery of godliness,"¹ yet, considering the nature and power of God, nothing is more reasonable than godliness.

LOYALTY TO THE KING, UNISON WITH THE FATHER

That would be a very peculiar king who would not desire the perfect loyalty of his

¹ 1 Tim. 3. 16.

subjects. He would be a most singular father who would not seek to have his own children in perfect unison with himself. The supposition that the perfectly holy King and the infinitely loving Father should desire even the most subdued spirit of disloyalty to remain, even temporarily, in the hearts of his children, is utterly unreasonable, not to say preposterous.

THE DIVINE HATRED OF SIN

Sinfulness is "a root of bitterness"² which brings forth the fruit of defilement. It is the principle of "the carnal mind [which] is enmity against God."³ It is that which he characterizes as "this abominable thing that I hate."⁴ Is it therefore reasonable to suppose that he can be pleased to have remain in the hearts of his children, in any degree whatever, that sinful nature out of which "this abominable thing" emanates?

HUMILIATION NOT HUMILITY

A familar refuge for such as claim that he does not contemplate the entire removal of all

² Heb. 12. 15.

³ Rom. 8. 7.

⁴ Jer. 44. 4.

moral evil from the human heart in the present life is found in the subtle fallacy that the presence and realization of remaining sinfulness is designed to keep the believer in a state of humility. It may be admitted that such an experience is exceedingly humiliating to the soul, but it cannot for a moment be conceded that it does or that it can by any possibility produce the spirit of humility in the soul. As a reply to this strange supposition the following questions are suggested: What degree of sinfulness (impurity and enmity) does the production and maintenance of this supposed humility require? And if thus promotive of humility, will the humility be in proportion to the degree of sinfulness? If when the early Christians were accused of saying, "Let us do evil that good may come,"⁵ they were "slanderosly reported," what shall we say of the implication that God designs that his children should "be evil that good may come"? Though Christ, the great Exemplar, was absolutely sinless, he is the perfect pattern of meekness and lowliness. He proposes for and promises to his followers, not the unrest of humiliation, but the rest of

⁵ Rom. 3. 8.

humility. "Come unto me . . . and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."⁶ Most assuredly the infirmities and limitations of the believer and, most of all, his utter dependence upon the power and grace of God, are quite sufficient to keep the soul humble before him.

THE SUPREME AND ALL-SUFFICIENT REASON

We turn from the most unreasonable assumption that a certain or uncertain residuum of sinfulness, if not a good thing in itself, is at least productive of good, to the divinely given reason for its complete eradication and expulsion. Our Father tells his children why he desires them to be holy and loving, and strongly affirms the reasonableness of holiness and lovingness. The supreme and all-sufficient reason is given along with the great commandment, which is the foundation that underlies the whole superstructure of Christian character: "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy. . . . Be ye holy, for I am holy."⁷ On precisely the same principle, because "God is love,"⁸ he issues the broad

⁶ Matt. 11. 28, 29.

⁷ 1 Pet. 1. 15, 16.

⁸ 1 John 4. 8, 16.

command that is all-inclusive of the spiritual superstructure thus founded: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, . . . and thy neighbor as thyself."⁹ In the sense in which the foundation and the superstructure constitute one building these commandments are one; and as the superstructure implies the foundation the latter commandment presupposes the former. Complete conformity to the divine will as expressed in the commandment is nothing less than complete conformity with the divine nature.

THE OBJECT OF THE LAW AND OF THE GOSPEL

What is the object of the law? "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts."¹⁰ "The end of the commandment is charity [love] out of a pure heart."¹¹ How is the fulfillment of the spirit of the law possible? "Love is the fulfilling of the law."¹² Why the atonement and its announcement in the gospel? "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."¹³

⁹ Matt. 22. 37, 39.

¹⁰ Jer. 31. 33.

¹¹ 1 Tim. 1. 5.

¹² Rom. 13. 10.

¹³ Matt. 1. 21.

“The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”¹⁴ “According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness . . . whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature.”¹⁵ Strange it is that the most obvious and rational meaning of these and other similar passages should ever be unrecognized, or that such meaning should be ignored in the interest of any preconceived theory.

“ABLE TO SAVE COMPLETELY”

But if God wills that men should be holy, and issues his command accordingly, why, then, is the work of purifying to so great an extent unwrought, even among his children? There is no conflict between his will as Redeemer and Saviour and his will as Creator. By his will as Creator they are constituted rational, free beings, and, accordingly, though responsible to him in all his plans with reference to them he regards them as rational and free. Hence unwillingness or unbelief on their part will positively prevent the completion

¹⁴ 1 John 1. 7.

¹⁵ 2 Pet. 1. 3, 4.

of the gracious work. On the divine side there is absolutely nothing to prevent its immediate accomplishment. The atonement certainly lacks nothing, and consequently He who made it "is able to save to the uttermost [margin Gr., "completely"] them that draw near unto God through him."¹⁶ The stain of sin which is found to be ineradicable by human effort, may rationally be expected to yield to the divine process. "Come now, and 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."¹⁷ "But now [in contrast with the yearly sacrifice offered by the high priest] once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."¹⁸

THE LAST BARRIER REMOVED

And now also, on the human side and in contrast with the presentation of the animal sacrifice, let him who approaches the altar bring a rational sacrifice, not the dead body of an animal, but his own living body, himself as

¹⁶ Heb. 7. 25 (R. V.).

¹⁷ Isa. 1. 18.

¹⁸ Heb. 9. 26.

the true offering, not indeed to merit, but to obtain purification through the divine mercy. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."¹⁹ A complete consecration, together with a corresponding faith, takes away the last barrier to the full cleansing:

¹⁹ Rom. 12. 1.

CHAPTER XI

CONSISTENT WITH MANY INFIRMI- TIES

PREDISPOSITION TO CERTAIN STATES, IM- PULSES, TRAITS

MAN is a physical and intellectual as well as a moral being. Every individual enters the world with certain marked physical characteristics. The material organism is rarely so evenly balanced as to preclude the predominance in a greater or less degree of certain peculiarities so as naturally if not necessarily to predispose their possessor to certain definite physical impulses or states and particular mental traits, leading, as for example, in the direction of excitability or apathy, cheerfulness or despondency, courage or timidity, firmness or yieldingness. Such physical characteristics and mental states, which are largely determined by the physical form and its peculiar organization, will in their essential features and in the nature of the case continue

through life. Overexcitability inclines to impatience, while its undue absence tends to indolence. Excess of cheerfulness is liable to become frivolousness, while lack of it may merge into melancholy.

THE SCRIPTURES NOWHERE CONFOUND INFIRMITY WITH DEPRAVITY

These and other characteristics of similar origin are not sinful in their nature. They are not marks of moral depravity. The Scriptures nowhere confound infirmity or weakness with depravity or sinfulness. In no single instance is either of the former words used as the equivalent of either of the latter. That the border land between them is sometimes very narrow is very true, but it is none the less true that they are distinctly and positively different in their nature.

“A THORN IN THE FLESH”

The question is not as to the removal of infirmities, but as to the prevention of sinful indulgence through their agency. Paul’s “thorn in the flesh” is not extracted. Divine Wisdom decides that it is better that it should remain, but its power to poison the wound is neutral-

ized. Self is brought low, but divine grace is exalted. The spirit of humility is increased and the apostle's character is more fully adorned while the power of Christ is magnified in him. Through that power he is enabled to bring his lower nature into "subjection"¹ and "every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."²

GLORYING IN INFIRMITIES

Finding that divine "strength is made perfect in weakness," he joyfully exclaims: "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, . . . for when I am weak, then am I strong."³ It is hardly necessary to say that it is inconceivable that the apostle should "glory" and "take pleasure" in depravity.

PURITY NOT IDENTICAL WITH STRENGTH, LOVE NOT ONE WITH WISDOM

The morally complete life primarily and specifically includes two things, entire purity and perfect love. Conversely, it as definitely

¹ 1 Cor. 9. 27.

² 2 Cor. 10. 5 (R. V.).

³ 2 Cor. 12. 9, 10.

excludes two things, impurity and enmity in every form or degree. But perfect purity is not one with perfect strength. While it cannot coexist in the same character with moral depravity or sinfulness, it may and does dwell in the same personality with many weaknesses and infirmities. So likewise perfect love is not identical with perfect wisdom. While it cannot abide in the same heart with the spirit of enmity in any degree whatever, yet it may and does coexist with many defects or infirmities of intellect or judgment. As relating to instinctive affection, a father may love his son without the slightest admixture of enmity, yet there may exist with that love an abruptness and harshness of manner which to the observer may even seem at times to indicate positive dislike. He is not lacking in love, but he is of a peculiarly rugged nature and hence is deficient in gentleness of voice and manner. A mother's love may in itself lack nothing. It may be manifested toward her child in great gentleness of tone and manner, yet she may greatly lack wisdom even in the very expression of her love, owing to want of discernment and judgment. So in one who possesses and manifests love in its highest form there may

appear various weaknesses. These may mar its expression but do not change its quality; it is none the less perfect. The advance from a Christian life to *the* Christian life will not necessarily produce sweetness of tone or mildness of manner in the rugged father, neither will it give perfect discretion and excellence of judgment to the gentle, tender mother. It will, however, prepare the way for and strongly tend toward marked improvement in either case. It does not involve a physical or intellectual transformation, a change of temperament or of mental conditions, but a complete moral accord of the believer with the spirit of holiness and love, together with the fulfillment of its demands up to the measure of his (not another's) fullest and latest enlightenment. This is the highest possible requirement consistent with the divine Fatherhood, since "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."⁴ He in whom "verily is the love of God perfected,"⁵ is still "compassed with infirmity."⁶

⁴ Psa. 103. 13, 14.

⁵ 1 John 2. 5.

⁶ Heb. 5. 2.

REGARDING SINS AS WEAKNESSES

There are three distinct forms of error into one or another of which the believer is liable to fall. The first and greatest danger is that he should be content to call his sins weaknesses and vainly imagine that there is no practical difference between having an infirmity and yielding to it or being governed by it, and, accordingly, that such a one when assaulted by the tempter where least fortified, and overcome, should excuse himself by saying, "I cannot help it; it is my weakness."

REGARDING WEAKNESS AS STRENGTH

The second danger is that the believer may even come to regard his peculiar weakness as a mark of strength. As, for instance, it is quite possible that harshness should be accounted as courage, that prodigality should be recognized as generosity, that covetousness should be mistaken for prudence, or that anger should be regarded as "righteous indignation."

REGARDING INFIRMITIES AS SINS

The third danger is that he who is possessed of an extremely sensitive conscience should fall into the error of looking upon his infirmi-

ties as sins. He feels and deplores his weakness, he is deeply conscious of some "thorn in the flesh." Yet he finds God's grace so keeping him that he harbors no thought, indulges in no act that is contrary to the spirit of purity and love. How broad, how radical the difference between feeling and deploring a weakness while unyieldingly trusting in the all-sufficiency of God's grace, and tamely yielding and excusing oneself on the ground of peculiar personal infirmity.

ENJOYED YET DISCLAIMED

It is quite possible even for the highly intelligent and devout believer, who has really entered upon this life, to regard himself as not having reached its standard, and even to deny the possibility of doing so, simply because he has not with sufficient clearness distinguished between intellectual and physical infirmities and limitations and moral depravity, and has consequently mistaken the former as being one with the latter or as positively indicative of its presence. That this is the case with not a few noble Christians who are princes in Israel there is little reason to doubt. Just as truly as that not all who claim to have reached the

more advanced spiritual state have in reality attained unto it, many who have made no such claim have really entered into that life and are faithfully fulfilling its requirements and richly enjoying its blessedness. While avoiding with the utmost care the danger of a "fall into reproach and the snare of the devil"⁷ by considering sinful thoughts or acts as infirmities, or regarding weakness as strength, it is by no means necessary that we should fall into the error of looking upon infirmity as depravity. The ever-blessed Christ, "who knew no sin,"⁸ "himself took our infirmities,"⁹ and "is touched with the feeling of our infirmities."¹⁰ He it is who declares, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness."¹¹

⁷ 1 Tim. 3. 7.

⁸ 2 Cor. 5. 21.

⁹ Matt. 8. 17.

¹⁰ Heb. 4. 15.

¹¹ 2 Cor. 12. 9.

CHAPTER XII

NOT DETERMINED, BUT CORROBORATED BY EXPERIENCE

TRUTH OBSCURED BY PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS

THAT which is positively and clearly presented in the Scriptures is frequently obscured or hidden from the mind because of the presence of preconceived and erroneous conceptions of Christian life and experience. This is not unfrequently the result of mistaken views entertained and expressed by religious teachers.

EXPERIENCE TO BE MEASURED BY THE WORD

By far the most prolific source of error in this direction, whether in him who imparts or in the one who receives instruction, is the naturally strong and most insidious tendency to modify the Scripture standard of Christian life so as to bring it into conformity with the personal experience, no matter how imperfect that experience may be, when, without the

shadow of a doubt, the only true method to be pursued is that of measuring ourselves and our experiences by the standard of the Word. Nevertheless, how prone we are to measure and determine that standard by ourselves and our preconceived notions or perhaps sadly defective experience. This often occasions the most unfortunate attempt to modify the teaching of the Word by so construing it as to meet the supposed requirements of man's fallen nature while that nature is still unrestored or but partially restored from its sinfulness.

The church member or the theologian who has not experienced that great change which Christ characterizes as being "born again" is in danger of attempting to explain away the essential meaning of the doctrine of regeneration by regarding it as being simply a change of mind as indicated by a determination to unite with the church and lead a Christian life, instead of being what it really is—the change of mind on the part of the individual in the form of a fixed purpose to be a follower of Christ, together with a radical change wrought in the moral nature by the Holy Spirit. He seeks to modify the meaning of the passages bearing upon this truth, strangely

and without the slightest warrant and perhaps quite imperceptibly to himself, basing his supposed explanations upon the sad fact that he and other sincere members of the Christian Church have experienced no such great change as these passages certainly and plainly imply. In a similar manner those who have experienced this great change, finding that though sinfulness no longer reigns in their hearts, it still in some measure dwells within, are most liable to fall into the error of lowering the Scripture standard, measuring it by their own experience, or, on the other hand, declaring that the Bible standard is ideal in character and therefore unattainable in the present life.

It will be at once admitted that if there be any disagreement whatever either in the conception of the truth or the experience that it demands, with the plain teaching of the Word, in the very nature of the case the view thus entertained or the defect in the life thus discovered should be promptly corrected so as to be in full accord with its teaching and its spirit. While such questions as "How does this passage accord with my conception of this or that doctrine?" may be entirely legitimate and proper, they should in every instance be re-

garded as secondary or subordinate inquiries. We may not, save at our own peril or to the detriment of the cause of true religion, "wrest the Scriptures" so as to make them conform to any theory, no matter how plausible. With every soul, whether the humblest layman or the ablest and most learned theologian, both the primary and the ultimate question should be, "What saith the Scripture?" Of all the various causes of error in the interpretation and exposition of the Scriptures that is perhaps the most common which is the result of the disregard of the plain duty of thus determining our beliefs and measuring our lives.

POSITIVE COMMANDS NOT TO BE IDEALIZED

The divine command, "Be ye holy, for I am holy,"¹ was evidently given with a view to its realization in the life of each and every Christian, and not for modification by or to suit the theory or the experience of any individual. The Son of God, speaking specifically of love, as the context plainly shows, presents, not a lofty and unattainable ideal, but issues an unequivocal and positive command when he says, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father

¹ 1 Pet. 1. 16.

which is in heaven is perfect.”² Yet how easily and imperceptibly do Christians fall into the hidden snare of Satan and presume to lower or idealize the divinely given standard of character, life, and experience, in order either to eliminate its force and meaning sufficiently to bring it down to the level of their experience or to justify their failure to meet its requirements.

INFERENTIAL TESTIMONY RULED OUT

Our civil courts never call for witnesses to give testimony as to the things which they do not know. In them the positive testimony of “two or three witnesses” as to what they actually know will outweigh any number of denials on the part of those who give any amount of inferential testimony without positive knowledge. Indeed, such statements of inference would not be regarded as testimony or as having any bearing on the case and would be promptly and unhesitatingly ruled out. In like manner the clear and positive testimony of even a few credible witnesses, capable of a correct interpretation of their religious experience, affirming the perpetual

² Matt. 5. 48.

enjoyment of unalloyed love to God and man, properly and necessarily outweighs ten thousand declarations as to the absence of such experience on the part of others and as relating to their own lives. These would be utterly insufficient to disprove or in the slightest degree invalidate the claims of the Word or the testimony of those who bear witness to its truth.

AMPLE TESTIMONY

Most fortunately, there has been and there ever is "a great cloud of witnesses," not indeed to determine this doctrine, for that can be done only by the Scriptures themselves, but strongly to corroborate their teaching. The testimony of these witnesses, in largely increasing numbers, has been and is being confirmed by the nobility of their characters and the beautiful consistency of their lives. The only way to invalidate the doctrine of the life of holiness and love is by the invalidation of the Word of God in which it is embodied. "The word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."³

³ 1 Pet. 1. 25.

CHAPTER XIII

NOT FOR A FAVORED FEW

IMPARTIALITY OF GOD IN REDEMPTION

THE Scriptures most emphatically declare the impartiality of God in providing and administering redemption. Their declarations are most explicit and unequivocal. The salvation offered is for the entire race, and specifically for every individual belonging thereto. Christ "gave himself a ransom for all."¹ He assumed our nature "that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man."² He declares, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."³ "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him."⁴ "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let

¹ 1 Tim. 2. 6.

² Heb. 2. 19.

³ John 10. 10.

⁴ Heb. 7. 25 (Margin R. V., completely).

him take the water of life freely.”⁵ While in the broadest sense “there are diversities of gifts,”⁶ and of providential conditions and environments, both as relating to believers and unbelievers, personal salvation in all its fullness is to be enjoyed on precisely the same marvelously simple and easy conditions, by the rich and the poor, the learned and the illiterate, the king and the peasant.

A COMMON CONSCIOUSNESS

The expression of a common consciousness on the part of Christians indicates the same great truth. This is plainly to be seen in the very general concession on the part of Christians with reference to themselves as well as to their fellow Christians, that they “live beneath their privilege,” and that there is “a state of grace to which they have not attained.” These and other similar expressions tell of a deeply felt spiritual want. They plainly tell also of a feeling of obligation to live upon a higher spiritual plane and clearly imply and assume that the state of grace necessary for such a life is attainable. This sense

⁵ Rev. 22. 17.

⁶ 1 Cor. 12. 4.

of spiritual need, if properly understood and wisely directed, will lead to and into that state and experience toward which it looks and which its necessities demand.

BOUNTIFUL SUPPLY FOR THE HUNGRY AND THIRSTY

He who in the beginning filled earth's storehouses with material supplies for man's inferior nature, sufficient for past and present and for all future ages, has not failed to make the amplest provision for all his spiritual needs. Assuredly there is a bountiful supply for all hungering, thirsting souls, and such are already pronounced blessed by the Master and encouraged by his assurance to anticipate the fulfillment of their divinely inspired desires. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."⁷

THE "MORE EXCELLENT WAY"

The same blessed Spirit who inspired these spiritual longings makes known through his servants, the sacred writers, the divine provision made for all who would enter and walk

⁷ Matt. 5. 6

in that "more excellent way,"⁸ which rises superior to all gifts of eloquence, and the understanding of all mysteries, and the possession of all knowledge and all faith, and the exercise of all benevolence, and of self-immolation; the way of patient, kind, believing, hoping, enduring, never-failing love."⁹ This "more excellent way" of love is at the same time "the way of holiness,"¹⁰ which the prophet foresaw.

THE SPIRIT-INSPIRED PRAYERS OF THE APOSTLE

Hence the Spirit-inspired prayer embracing every individual in the church at Thessalonica: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly."¹¹ And that comprehending the entire Ephesian church: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, . . . that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God."¹²

CAN ANY ONE SAY, "I AM EXCLUDED"?

Had any believer, among those to whom the epistles containing these prayers were ad-

⁸ 1 Cor. 12. 31.

⁹ 1 Cor. 13.

¹⁰ Isa. 35. 8.

¹¹ 1 Thess. 5. 23.

¹² Eph. 3. 14, 19.

dressed, the slightest reason to exclude himself as having no part in that for which the apostle prays? What follower of Christ, contemplating these passages, can find any excuse whatever for failing to appropriate to himself their plain teaching as to his duty and privilege in the gospel? "God is no respecter of persons."¹³ "The righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ [is] unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference."¹⁴ Will any enlightened believer have the temerity to say, "I am excluded from the privileges or excused from the obligations of 'so great salvation'?"¹⁵

¹³ Acts 10. 34.

¹⁴ Rom. 3. 22.

¹⁵ Heb. 2. 3.

CHAPTER XIV

THE MISTAKEN ATTITUDE OF MANY CHRISTIAN TEACHERS

GOD'S GRACE MAGNIFIED THROUGH HOLY LIVING

THE more exalted the state of grace or the life and experience of the Christian, the greater the glory reflected upon him who has provided for and administers "so great salvation." The true and thoughtful Christian, whatever his personal spiritual attainments, will rejoice in the exaltation of his Master through the entire consecration and holy living of his fellow Christians. He will at once see the necessity of a high standard of piety and a faithful exercise of a divinely inspired and a divinely sustained love for God and for the souls whom he has ransomed. He will see the impossibility of being too closely conformed to the nature and will of God.

A NEUTRAL ATTITUDE UNTENABLE

Even a neutral attitude (if that be possible) is greatly to be deprecated as showing indifference and lack of appreciation of the great importance and inestimable value of the teaching and life involved. To be content with anything short of the divine standard is unworthy of such as are called to teach and exemplify, not simply a, but what is emphatically *the* Christian life.

INCONSISTENCY OF OTHERS NO EXCUSE

It is a fact to be lamented that the cause of Christianity not unfrequently suffers at the hands of persons who claim to be among its adherents and friends. This is the case with those who declare that they are children of God and that they live in the consciousness of acceptance with him, while at the same time they lead such lives as are manifestly inconsistent with such claim. Equally injurious is the attitude of those who, witnessing such inconsistency, not only deny that such persons are really what they claim to be, but not realizing in themselves a consciousness of pardoned sin and the witness of the Spirit of their adoption into the divine family, assume to deny

that such an experience may be enjoyed by believers.

What has been said of this sadly mistaken attitude toward the public avowal of the more common Christian experience is true also with reference to a similar attitude with regard to the life toward and to which that life properly leads. There have been and there are still such as claim to have been cleansed from all sin and to have entered into the experience of perfect love, who practically deny and disprove their declaration by their inconsistent lives. Should any one assume in consequence of such inconsistency that such a state and experience are unattainable? The counterfeit, instead of disproving, proves the genuine by assuming the form of an imitation. Moreover, it should be remembered that by no means all even of the few who seem to be are in reality assuming a false position. The supposed inconsistency may be, and often is, the result of imperfect training or of defective judgment, or of these intellectual imperfections combined.

IMPERFECT OR MISTAKEN PRESENTATION

The public avowal or presentation of the

Bible standard of life, like the attestation or setting forth of the initial Christian life, is sometimes crude in manner and extravagant in language. It is conceded that some who have assumed to instruct others with reference to the former are by no means "apt to teach," are, indeed, far from being qualified to give instruction, especially by public address. Should any, because of the intellectual (or even the moral) imperfections, or the unintelligent zeal, or the mistaken methods of such as lay claim to high spiritual attainments, assume an attitude of opposition to or even indifference toward what is assuredly the Scripture standard of the Christian life? Shall the exalted teachings of God's Word be denied or ignored because of their imperfect or mistaken presentation? As well might we oppose the initial state and experience of the Christian life because of the imperfect or erroneous manner in which it is frequently presented.

ATTITUDE OF TEACHERS OF TRANSCENDENT IMPORTANCE

While the attitude of Christians generally with relation to this subject is of great im-

portance, yet because of the commanding position and enlarged opportunity of regularly constituted religious teachers, their attitude is of transcendent importance.

Sometimes a position of indifference or inactivity is assumed because of supposed or really mistaken methods or of ill-advised teaching on the part of those who assume to impart instruction on the great subject which so engrosses their thoughts. Let it not be forgotten that not unfrequently imperfect instruction, and unattractive and even decidedly erroneous presentation of these lofty themes, are occasioned by the refusal or failure of properly constituted religious teachers to give the needed instruction and encouragement. Because of this mistaken attitude, incompetent and visionary persons, who along with the best intentions "have a zeal for God but not according to knowledge," feel impelled to move forward and actively engage in the work. The necessity, whether seeming or real, for irresponsible persons to lead in these movements should not exist, hence there should be no dearth of instruction, no semblance of indifference to these essential things on the part of religious teachers.

UNWITTINGLY FIGHTING AGAINST GOD

A goodly number of those who once were not merely indifferent toward, but actively opposed the supposed pretensions and unauthorized claims of the possession of heart purity and perfect love, have entered into the same experience and now frankly admit their former error. Let the opponent of these doctrines beware, "lest haply," like these honest but mistaken believers, he "be found even to fight against God."

Whatever the mistakes of its friend or the misapprehensions of its opposers, the doctrine itself is both scriptural and reasonable, and greatly magnifies the wisdom, power, and grace of our infinitely holy and boundlessly loving heavenly Father.

CHAPTER XV

THE ATTITUDE AND SPIRIT OF ITS ADVOCATES

THE SCRUTINIZING GAZE OF THE WORLD

THE eyes of the Christian, as well as of the unchristian world, are steadily fixed upon those who are recognized as having entered upon what should be always and everywhere known as *the* Christian life. They are under the scrutinizing gaze of all observers. The expectations and demands concerning them are often very unreasonable. Yet it must be conceded that it is neither unnatural nor unreasonable that they should be expected constantly to manifest the spirit of purity and of love. On the part of all who are the followers of Christ, but more especially of those who are in the enjoyment of this "great grace,"¹ there is urgent need of the possession and exercise of "the wisdom what is from above [which] is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to

¹ Acts 4. 33.

be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.”²

AUSTERITY AND SANCTIMONIOUSNESS

Purity does not require austerity or sanctimoniousness. These are very unattractive and unnecessary substitutes. There should be great carefulness to shun the slightest appearance of an approach toward the attitude of the ancients who said, “Stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou.”³

“FOOLISH TALKING”

While carefully avoiding even the semblance of this unsaintliness, it is equally necessary to shun the opposite extreme of “foolish talking or jesting, which are not befitting,”⁴ and forever to avoid the abomination of “filthy communication,”⁵ for impure lips and a pure heart cannot coexist in the same person.

SPIRIT OF CHEERFULNESS

This will not exclude chaste pleasantry or innocent mirth. A spirit of cheerfulness and

² James 3. 17.

³ Isa. 65. 5.

⁴ Eph. 5. 4 (R. V.).

⁵ Col. 3. 8.

even of joyfulness should be earnestly cultivated as both consistent and attractive, as at the same time conducive to spiritual healthfulness and helpfulness.

EFFEMINACY AND AFFECTATION

Love does not seek to make itself manifest through effeminacy of manner or of expression. Though gentle, it is strong, while effeminacy is both soft and weak. Purity begets simplicity, and real love excludes all affectation.

CENSORIOUSNESS

Censoriousness is utterly unchristian and consequently far removed from this life. Great hesitancy should be exercised in passing judgment upon such as are slow to acknowledge the full claim of the gospel upon them, or even upon such as actively oppose the doctrine of pure and perfect love. Many of these are truly honest in their convictions and in the untenable position which they have assumed. Some are closely fettered by the requirements of the misconceptions of divine truth which are not unfrequently found in traditional theology. Among them are such as have been

very imperfectly or even erroneously instructed and have thus been led into serious misapprehensions of the truth. With reference to these and all others who fail to see or acknowledge the truth as seen by the advocates of spiritual wholeness, the injunction of James is the dictate of divine wisdom: "Let patience have its perfect work."⁶

UNWISDOM OF SCHISM

While the great Head of the church still cherishes the principle and sentiment of his own prayer concerning his followers, "that they all may be one," and earnestly desires the cultivation of the spirit of unity, the undue and unnecessary multiplication of independent churches or of new denominations is a very serious error and naturally and strongly leads to prejudice not only against those who thus separate themselves but against the doctrine which they seek to advance. Hence the unwisdom of those among its advocates who have chosen to separate from the several churches or denominations with which they were connected and formed new organizations

⁶ James 1. 4 (R. V.).

in the hope of more rapidly advancing their cause. It is freely admitted that many churches are not in full sympathy with this important and vital doctrine; it is nevertheless true also that there are few churches which will not permit their members to live the most devoted life possible, neither will they be prevented from giving all needed testimony, and especially the highest, that of a pure life and a loving spirit. Moreover, it is a very unfortunate mistake on the part of such as advocate this life, in any way to foster or occasion the spirit of separateness within the body of believers. If truly possessed of the spirit of purity and lovingness, the few or the many, by means of judicious and loving testimony, first of the life, then of the lips, and their devotion to Christ and his church, may leaven the whole body of believers with the same spirit.

CONFESSION PREFERABLE TO PROFESSION

Opposition is sometimes unnecessarily aroused by unintelligent or extravagant declarations concerning spiritual attainments and experiences. Like many good things which have been perverted and led out of their

proper channels, the word "confession," because of the use and abuse of the "confessional," has very unfortunately fallen into disrepute and been substituted by the less desirable word "profession." While it cannot be said that the latter word is unscriptural, it may be safely affirmed that it is there used most frequently in an unfavorable sense; as, for example: "They profess that they know God but in works they deny him."⁷ "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."⁸ "Which some professing have erred concerning the faith."⁹ These, it is true, are false professions.

The Pharisee of whom the Saviour tells us¹⁰ made a very loud profession of what was perhaps really true, yet his profession was but vain boasting. The word "profess" is used once by our Lord and then as a simple declaration: "Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you."¹¹ In the Revised Version and in the American Standard Version as well, the words "confess" and "confession" are very

⁷ Titus 1. 16.

⁸ Rom. 1. 22.

⁹ 1 Tim. 6. 21.

¹⁰ Luke 18. 11, 12.

¹¹ Matt. 7. 23.

properly substituted for the words "profess" and "profession" in the Authorized Version, which are here quoted from the Revised Version. "They glorify God for the obedience of your confession unto the gospel of Christ."¹² "And didst confess the great confession in the sight of many witnesses."¹³ "The High Priest of our confession."¹⁴ "Let us hold fast our confession."¹⁵ "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope."¹⁶ The only passage in the New Testament not already quoted containing the word "profess" in the Authorized Version, as in the other versions, is the following: "Which becometh women professing godliness."¹⁷ The true testimony, as thus clearly indicated by the Scriptures, is that of confession rather than profession. It contemplates the grateful acknowledgment of the saving grace of God. The believer is to tell the world, not what he is or what his attainments are, but what divine grace has accomplished for him and in him.

The true spirit of confession is that of the psalmist, when he exclaims, "Come and hear,

¹² 2 Cor. 9. 13 (R. V.).

¹³ 1 Tim. 6. 12 (R. V.).

¹⁴ Heb. 3. 1 (R. V.).

¹⁵ Heb. 4. 14 (R. V.).

¹⁶ Heb. 10. 23 (R. V.).

¹⁷ 1 Tim. 2. 10.

all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul!

THE RELATION OF EXPERIENCE

It is greatly to be desired that every possessor of this experience should covet the wisdom and prudence so to relate it as to arouse the least possible antagonism and at the same time attract others toward and lead them to the same life and experience.

Let a believer say "I am holy," or "I am perfect in love," and he at once makes an unfavorable impression or arouses antagonism as being presumptuous or boastful. Let him humbly say, "I love God; I love my brethren, I love everybody; I know of nothing in my heart contrary to the spirit of love," and not only is no antagonism aroused, but a favorable impression is made. If there is nothing in the life or experience that is not in accord with the spirit of love, one may properly infer that the heart is free from impurity. One should carefully avoid attempting to tell what he is and relate only what he believes, knows, or experiences. Entire sanctification is a state or condition whose best evidence is the experience of "perfect love." One cannot be

“perfect in love” without being “pure in heart.” The apostles, in their writings, make no personal profession of entire sanctification. Paul, indirectly and incidentally, claims moral perfection for himself and others in a single instance, when exhorting those of the Philip-pians who were perfected in love, to press on in the hope of the completion of the whole work of their salvation, in these words: “Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded.”¹⁸ The Master’s admonition, “Be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves,”¹⁹ indicates the spirit in which every form of Christian work should be done.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY NOT TO BE UNDULY URGED

While it may be proper and desirable, and even necessary, to endeavor to induce those who have entered into this richer experience to make known the fact and thus magnify the grace of God and encourage others to enter into the same happy experience, it is a serious mistake unduly to urge such public expression. Especially is this the case with regard to seekers, who should rather be carefully

¹⁸ Phil. 3. 15.

¹⁹ Matt. 10. 16.

guarded against a premature testimony as to the experience of perfect love, for the simple and most important reason—that a premature testimony is really, though not intentionally, an untrue testimony. The discovery of this unintentional error will greatly discourage the one who most unwisely has been led into it, and not unfrequently lead others into or confirm them in unbelief.

AN UNWARRANTED TEACHING

So also to teach those who have entered upon this life and hesitate to make a public statement of the fact that unless they do so they will lose the evidence and fail to retain the experience growing out of it, is utterly unwarranted and productive of much evil. For if one should become convinced in judgment that he will forfeit the experience by such failure, then the attitude of the conscience being determined by the decision of the judgment, he will indeed feel condemnation if he refuses to do what his mistaken judgment presents to the conscience as a positive duty, while if not so convinced in judgment, he would have experienced no condemnation and would have retained his advanced position.

CONTINUOUS TRUSTFULNESS NECESSARY

It is true that, since man is a free moral agent, there is no state of grace from which he may not fall. Indeed, it is only by following the divinely given instructions that he can be saved from falling. But while faithfully following these his fall is impossible. The "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, . . . are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation."²⁰ There must be a continuous state of trustfulness and of spiritual activity, together with a similarly constant spiritual development in order to become and continue to be "built up in him, and established," "being rooted and grounded in love." How full the provision, how simple the instructions, and how comforting and blessed the assurance with which they close: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious

²⁰ 1 Pet. 1. 2, 5.

promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”²¹

NOT ALL TO TEACH OR EXHORT

While it is the privilege of all humbly to confess what the Lord has done and is doing

²¹ 2 Pet. 1. 3-11.

for and in us, it does not follow that all should become teachers or exhorters. "Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? . . . Do all interpret?" All are, indeed, "called to be saints," and hence to lead lives of purity and love, and thus teach by example; but gifts, whether intellectual or spiritual, are not distributed alike to all. If called to the work of teaching or of exhortation, let it be done "with all long-suffering and doctrine." An attempt to drive Christians into this life usually results in driving them away from it and in confirming them in their indifference or antagonism.

NO DOCTRINE TO BE MINIFIED

It is wholly unnecessary and decidedly objectionable to attempt to minify other important doctrines in order to magnify those that relate to spiritual wholeness. If one link be broken, the chain is broken.

It will never be found expedient or necessary to speak disparagingly of Christian life as commonly understood and experienced. Indeed, the higher the appreciation of that life the more exalted must be the conception of the life of perfect love.

TIMELY AND JUDICIOUS INSTRUCTION
NEEDED

There is great and urgent need of instruction on this great theme and an equally great necessity that the instruction given should be both fittingly timed and judiciously imparted. Especially is there need that recent converts and young Christians should be properly instructed with regard to these higher attainments, and that they should be lovingly urged to make the necessary consecration and exercise the required faith, in view of the richer experience to be enjoyed, the more favorable conditions for spiritual growth, and the enlarged opportunity for impressing and influencing others, and thus honoring God, which such a life affords. It is a sad fact that the impression, though perhaps unexpressed, nevertheless prevails to a large extent, that this life is not so much for the young, but rather for the middle-aged or the aged; that it has reference more especially to those who are already becoming or have become mature. A greater mistake could not be made, since it lies at the very basis of and furnishes the best conditions for spiritual growth and for the most earnest and aggressive work and the greatest possible

usefulness, as well as for the most blessed experience and the richest reward. Finally, let all who give instruction in these things illustrate their meaning as far as possible in their lives, and thus by their own example “adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.” “Put on therefore, as God’s elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye: and above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness.”²²

²² Col. 3. 12-14 (R. V.).

CHAPTER XVI

THE TRUE BASIS OF CHRISTIAN UNITY WHOSE PREVALENCE IS THE SURE HARBINGER OF WORLD CONQUEST

THE CHURCHES AND THE CHURCH

THE churches are organizations with more or less clearly defined systems of doctrine, rules of government, and forms of worship. The church is the body of Christ,¹ a living organism vitalized by him and permeated with his life. The churches are many, the church is one. The churches as organizations are not coincident with the church as an organism. Each contains many individuals not in the other. Not every one who belongs to one or another of the churches is a member of the church, neither is every one who is not connected with one or another of the churches excluded from the church. The church is com-

¹ Eph. 1. 22, 23.

posed of those only "whose names are in the book of life."²

It is evidently the divine design that the churches as organizations should, as nearly as possible, embrace all such, and only such, as are included in the church as an organism. But because of the imperfection of human knowledge, discernment, and judgment this most desirable ideal can never be realized in the form of ecclesiastical organization. Nevertheless, regardless of numbers, the nearer the approach to its realization the greater the power and efficiency of the churches.

Once at least in the world's history ninety-nine hundredths of an army were but an incumbrance. Gideon's band of three hundred was more efficient without the thirty-one thousand than with them. The churches are indeed necessary, yet they exist for the church. The vine does not exist for the arbor but the arbor for the vine. The arbor imparts no life to the vine; it simply affords facilities for the expansion of its life. It matters little as to the form it may be made to assume. It is of little moment whether it be plain or ornamental. The only question of importance is

² Phil. 4. 3.

as to its adaptation to afford the vine opportunity to follow its divinely given instincts to rise from the earth, spread its branches far and wide, afford grateful shade, burst into bud and blossom, and produce abundance of fruit.

THE TRUE IDEA OF UNITY

The world has long witnessed the vain attempt to bring all Christians into one vast organization. It has also beheld a mighty reaction resulting thus far in the equally foolish extreme of dividing a large portion of the Christian world into almost innumerable organizations. The approach of a more auspicious era is indicated in the rapidly increasing trend in the direction of union on the part of those churches whose doctrines and polity are similar, and of alliance and cooperation in the case of those whose divergencies in belief and form of government are greater.

That the great Head of the church desires unity among his followers is certain, but it is equally certain that he designs that it shall be not so much a formal as a vital unity. The true unity at which he aims and toward which his followers are tardily moving is not that of uniformity of polity or of form, or even of

doctrine, but, rather, the unity of a common brotherhood centering in the person of Christ, on the part of all who really desire and are striving to be like him and are endeavoring to cooperate with him in saving the world from sin and building up his kingdom of righteousness. True spiritual life is the heart, while Christ is the soul of this unity.

THE WAITING AND EXPECTANT CHRIST

This unity is set forth by Christ in the clearest and strongest forms of expression possible to human language. It is likened to the most vital connection between the vine and its branches through which the same life current flows. "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing."³ It is so exalted as to be like unto the unity which subsists between the Father and the Son. "As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us."⁴ It is presented as one of the most striking characteristics and experiences of the dispensation of the Spirit, concerning which

³ John 15. 5 (R. V.).

⁴ John 17. 21.

he declares, "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."⁵ Preeminent among the qualities which characterize this essential all-important unity are the all-pervasive elements of righteousness, holiness, and lovingness, or the coalescence of these elements in righteous and holy lovingness.

The most profound meaning of the life that began in Bethlehem's manger and ended on Calvary's cross is that through that life and death each believing soul may be united with Christ, and that all believers may be united in Christ, and that through this unity they may be partakers of eternal life. The transcendent importance of the realization of this truth in the life of each and every believer is manifest when we remember that, while it is necessary to personal salvation and to the perfection of the moral nature, the union of the individual with Christ is at the same time the only true basis of Christian unity, and that upon this unity depend in large measure the extension and prevalence of the kingdom of Christ over the earth. It was this most sublime conception, this most exalted purpose, that called

⁵ John 14. 20.

forth the exquisitely impassioned and importunate prayer with reference to his own and their relation to the world's reception and experience of his saving grace, which so soon was to be made possible by the agonies of Gethsemane and Golgotha: "that they all may be one, . . . that the world may believe, . . . that the world may know."⁶ Long, patiently, expectantly he awaits the time when all his people shall have become one, as foreshadowing the consequent universal conquest.

THE WEARY, WAITING WORLD

The heathen world, with its unsatisfying superstitions, wearily waits for the nominally Christian world to give it full proof of the superiority of the Christian religion over its ancient and hereditary beliefs. While the lone missionary in the midst of great multitudes seeks to disseminate Christian truth and illustrate that truth by his living example, scores from Christian lands, and therefore supposed to be his fellow Christians, by lives of indifference to the claims or open disregard to the teaching of Christianity, in large measure neutralize his work and do incalculable harm to

⁶ John 17. 21, 23.

the cause which he represents. So-called Christian nations through unhallowed greed of gain trample upon the rights of heathen nations and thus prejudice the minds and steel the hearts of millions against them and their religion. The nominally Christian world, while recognizing the Christian religion as true and its Founder as divine, stands without the inclosures of the churches and waits for a clearer and much more general exemplification of the Christian life, a far more intense glow of Christian love, and a far greater manifestation of zeal and devotion in seeking and saving the lost. It is weary of formalism, of the observance of rites and conventional usages apart from the substance of Christianity. It is weary of the dogmatism which lays great stress upon intellectual beliefs while forgetful of the spirit of truth; which magnifies things of minor importance and neglects "the weightier matters of the law."⁷ It is weary of empty professions of Christian belief accompanied by a life that is void of the true Christian spirit; of the placing of gifts upon the altar as substitutes for rectitude of life and nobility of character. Why should it not

⁷ Matt. 23. 23.

care more for consistency of life than for orthodoxy of creed? Who can blame the world for judging by the rule laid down by the great Head of the church, "By their fruits ye shall know them"?⁸ Its persistent cry to every professed believer is, "Show us the fruit of your religion. We are content with no testimony apart from the witness of the life." While we cannot for a moment concede that the world is either reasonable or excusable in its attitude toward the churches, nor that there is not sufficient evidence of the transforming power and supreme excellence of Christianity as witnessed in the lives of a large and ever-increasing number of Christians, nevertheless this does not change the lamentable fact that, unwarranted as is this attitude, the pretext upon which it is based is occasioned by the worldliness and inconsistency of a large part of the membership of the churches. This great, this shameful stumbling-block ought to be, may be, must be removed. Nothing short of this will suffice. How long shall the world wait for the unequivocal testimony of the churches, for the universal presentation of the only possible

⁸ Matt. 7. 20.

proofs of true discipleship—a pure life and a loving spirit?

The world's needs are varied and great, but by far the most urgent, crying, importunate need is that the membership of the churches be thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Christ, that they constitute one vast brotherhood in him, bearing his likeness, illustrating his teaching in their lives. It is for this that the world wearily waits. By this, and by this alone, will it be speedily won. While the life of rectitude, purity, and lovingness is the only true basis of Christian unity, the prevalence of that life is the only sure harbinger of universal conquest for Christ.

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