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LESSONS FOR SEEKERS OF HOLINESS

By Harmon Allen Baldwin

Containing numerous quotations from Wesley,
Fletcher, and other standard authors, and
designed to aid such as are groaning
after purity of heart in entering
upon the experience

Introduction by
John S. McGeary

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INTRODUCTION

Another book on the subject of entire sanctification? Yes; and doubtless there will be many others. It will be many days before the last word shall have been written on this important subject. The theme of the book is the "Central Idea of Christianity." Deliverance from sin and sinfulness is the very heart of the gospel message. It was the burden of prophetic message under the old dispensation; It was the keynote in the message of the heavenly visitors who announced the coming of the Lord; it was the "chief cornerstone" of apostolic building as they laid the foundations of the Christian Church; and it is still the theme which, above all others, when presented in the Spirit, is attended with the inspiration and power of the Holy Ghost, and is effective in the salvation of men.

A subject of such vast scope and importance, sustaining such a vital relation to the gospel of Christ and the welfare of his Church, cannot be exhausted. Hence there is room for another book. This book covers ground peculiarly its own. Most books written on this subject deal more or less with controversial questions. A glance over the outline as given in the table of contents will show that the experimental and practical phases of the subject are here emphasized rather than the doctrinal or controversial. Surely there is need of this. Volumes have been written to prove that entire sanctification is a second work of grace, So of other doctrinal phases of the subject. But the great demand is that men shall be clearly shown their need of the experience by exhibiting the manifestations of carnality -- the characteristics of an unsanctified heart -- and then that they be shown how they may attain and retain the experience of cleansing.

These are the lines followed by the author. In the course of his experience as pastor and evangelist he has met many souls who have been troubled by erroneous conceptions of the experience; others who have been deluded into believing that they had the experience when they had it not; others again who were in confusion as to the steps to be taken in order to obtain the experience. He has undertaken, so to speak, to blaze a track through the wilderness of false theories, erroneous teachings and wrong conceptions, a track which honest seekers after purity of heart may follow, and, in following, find their way to the Canaan of perfect love, which, having reached, they may hold against all their foes. Opinions will, of course, differ as to how well he has succeeded.

The writer of this introduction has been acquainted with the author almost from the time of his conversion. He knows him as a man of pronounced individuality. This individuality naturally is apparent in the volume before us. The book, however, is not a mere transcript of personal

experience; it deals with fundamental principles, and the honest seeker after a clean heart who ponders its teachings and follows them will, it is believed, attain to the experience he seeks.

Some of the author's statements may, at first glance, appear unduly strong, some of the tests applied unduly severe. But do not set these aside hastily. Remember that the Church is flooded with superficial teachings on these very subjects, and that thorough, and even heroic, measures are necessary to rouse men from the moral lethargy into which the depravity of their own hearts and these superficial teachings have lulled them. Superficial or spurious holiness is perhaps the greatest hindrance to the promotion of "true holiness" In our time. Is there not need that some one on this subject lay "judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet"? We believe our brother has sought only to do this. He who seeks counsel of this book will be led into no shallow or superficial experience.

John S. McGeary
Titusville, Pa.

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PREFATORY NOTE

The author wishes hereby to acknowledge his indebtedness to the Rev. John S. McGeary, of Titusville, Pa., for kindly writing the introduction to this little volume, and also for helpful advices given with regard to its preparation; to the Rev. Wilson T. Hogue, of Evanston, Illinois, for valuable aid rendered in preparing the matter for the press; and to all who, by their sermons, prayers, testimonies and counsels, in an earlier day helped to lend him to the fountain of cleansing and to ground him in "the principles of the doctrine of Christ" as to the privileges and possibilities of grace. And now with the prayer that these "Lessons" may prove helpful to all who read them, and especially to honest inquirers after the way of full salvation, they are sent forth on their mission in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

H. A. B.
Rochester, Pa., February 11, 1907

* * * * *

Chapter 1 OUR POSITION

Volume after volume has been written on the subject of holiness, until the ground has been pretty thoroughly canvassed. There is scarcely a phase of the subject that has not been criticized by its enemies and defended by its friends, It has been set before us as a desirable experience, until our eyes could almost see the luscious fruits of the Canaan of Perfect love; it has been defended as a biblical experience, until the Sacred Volume fairly sparkles with the gems of promise; it has been taught as a possible experience, until a man must be spiritually blind that cannot see his high privilege; it has been taught as a present experience, until persons whose hearts are still unclean can almost feel their feet pressing the vine-clad hills of Canaan; Heaven and earth, the Bible,

human nature, and even hell, have been ransacked for incentives to draw or drive men's sluggish souls to action, Some of the mightiest intellects of earth have exhausted their resources in depicting the beauties, deliverances and possibilities of holiness. All this is good and necessary, but we take it for granted that the reader already accepts the doctrine, and so take up our task along another line, As some one has said, "Much has been written defining holiness, proving it to be scriptural and showing that it is desirable, but how to obtain the experience mortals desire to know."

The writer firmly believes in the Wesleyan view of holiness as the most scriptural and the most reasonable. A great many of the modern theories are a compromise with worldliness, This is an age when mist and darkness are settling over the hearts and consciences of men, and "they will not endure sound doctrine." As a consequence we see them professing holiness when they have not, as Fletcher says, "attained the candor of a conscientious heathen;" while manifesting unholy dispositions and tempers, and bringing into reproach the doctrine they so clamorously uphold. It makes no difference how loudly one may profess, if his life does not correspond with his profession, the world will call him a hypocrite.

The chief occasion for this deficiency in grace is a lack of depth in seeking. Seekers skim over the surface, and call the first stirring of their emotions the experience; and when the emotion subsides they find the same old trouble inside and are forced to one of two conclusions; either they must call these feelings temptation, and ignore them, or else give up their profession, They are not made to thoroughly understand that holiness is not merely an emotion, but a deliverance from sin, not a feeling, but a state.

Here is where Wesley is peculiarly clear in his teachings. He seldom, if ever, magnified the emotional, but held before the minds of his readers their deliverance from sin as that which they must obtain in order to be perfected in love. He held steadily to the necessary characteristics of the experience, and discouraged the use of expressions that would lead away from this central idea; while, on the contrary, a great many persons teach their own convictions, leadings, blessings and even notions, as a necessity for all.

John Wesley and his great defender, the saintly John Fletcher, have taught us much about how to obtain the experience of holiness, but neither of them has taken it in hand to lay before us consecutively the steps necessary to be taken. Although these things are scattered through their works, yet they are not, for the most part, in order, and are mixed in with page after page of the most wholesome of teaching on the nature and possibility of holiness. We have thought that if these gems could be brought together in such a way as to fit them to the peculiar requirements of today they would be of use to not a few struggling, panting seekers after the fullness of God.

This then is our reason for writing these pages -- to be of help to souls who have heretofore been tossed by many conflicting winds of doctrine, desiring to anchor in the haven of rest, but who are as yet unable to do so on account of their vague ideas of their own needs and privileges. When God came to our own soul after years of struggling and fears and settled our heart in the bosom of his infinite grace, we cried, "O God, teach us the way to help others who are in the same condition." On our face before God, with our heart burning with the desire to be of some use to these hungry ones, the conception of producing these pages was born.

We have not attempted excellency of speech, since that would spoil the whole end we have in view; we have not feigned learning or superior spiritual attainments; but as a plain Christian we believed God had given us a message, and in the simplest manner possible we have delivered it. And throughout we have aimed to be practical. If you think our words at times are too plain, remember we had a message, and were so thoroughly taken with this thought that we could not well speak otherwise.

We have studiously omitted the marvelous and visionary and held to the unpolished truth, We have eliminated the peculiarities of our own experience, for no two are exactly alike in every particular, and held closely to those truths that are as nearly universal as possible. Where for thoroughness we have been forced to speak of individual manifestations the fact has been mentioned.

Reader, if you are praying for that purity which will fit you for the society and employments of heaven we trust our words will be of some use to you in gaining the goal of your endeavors, but put away the thought that it is too hard, and that you can never be made clean. Who can tell the value of a necessary article? much less can you tell the value of that "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." It is of such infinite worth that any price you can pay will be but a drop compared to a mighty sea. Do not seek an easy way or a "shorter route," but take the way that will lead you to the blood that washes thoroughly from every stain.

If you have already attained the fullness of love, we hope you will here find encouragements for your faith, and some humble lessons that will help you to be more effective in pointing others to "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

With fervent prayer that God will bless our humble words to your good, and with an earnest desire that in the day of final reckoning we will find some one person that our tears and labors have furthered toward God, we commend these pages to your perusal, and may the blessings of the Triune God be with your spirits evermore.

* * * * *

Chapter 2 THE CALL TO HOLINESS

"For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." -- 1 Thes. 4:7.

"The human heart asks love; but now I know
That my heart hath from thee
All real, and full, and marvelous affection,
So near, so human! Yet divine perfection
Thrills gloriously the mighty glow!
Thy love is enough for me!

"There were strange soul depths, restless, vast and broad,
Unfathomed as the sea;

An infinite craving for some infinite stilling;
But now thy perfect love is perfect filling!
Lord Jesus Christ, my Lord, my God,
Thou, thou art enough for me."

Yes, there are "strange soul depths, restless, vast and broad." There is an "infinite craving for some infinite stilling" that never will be satiated until the famished soul quaffs living, healing waters from the fountain of eternal life, whose streams, sufficient for all the soul's needs, flow right into this world from the "fountain opened to the house of David."

There are possibilities in man that are awful to contemplate. We are so accustomed to seeing him, conversing with him, enjoying or revolting his company, that we forget the infinite possibilities that are locked up in him. Yea, we are liable to forget the infinite worth of our own souls. Men's lives are too material. Matter and its motions are about all the average person knows. Some, bolder, delve into material mysteries, and bring to light marvelous things; and these people are called famous. Still others philosophize concerning mind and its powers; but, notwithstanding nil their wisdom, they are little appreciated outside of the halls of learning. There are very few, however, who trouble themselves to search into the mysteries of their spiritual existence. Thoughts of the Godhead are too deep for them to entertain; redemption, the new birth, the mysteries of godliness, "the hope of our calling," the way of holiness, are all out of the realm of their investigations. True, they desire to get to heaven when they die, but want to do so with as little trouble as possible. Meanwhile their immortal spirits are clamoring after God; their hungry souls demand refreshment, and their longing hearts pant within them for a draught from some cooling fountain; but all these inward demands are either unheeded or slaked from the shallow springs of earthly good.

Poor man, muck-raking in the mud and among the stubble of earth, when an immortal crown, more glorious than ever graced the head of Solomon, is suspended over him, which he can have for the asking! Spending his precious days and years in earthly pursuits, gaining pleasure, fame and wealth, when the pleasures of palaces, the fame of generals or conquerors, or the wealth of earth's mightiest magnates are not worthy to be compared with the glory that may (even here) be revealed in him!

Man, arouse thee. All nature is vocal with the call. It whispers in every passing breeze; it thunders from the rumbling skies; it echoes from the earth, and comes in beckoning form from sun, and moon and stars: The Bible repeats the call like the voice of God trumpeting on Sinai's cloud-capped mountain, or as heard speaking to Jesus when they that heard it said it thundered. The Spirit knocks at your heart's door and offers "a feast of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." You are wasting immortal energies; you are trifling with costly gems; you are bartering away the pearl of great price. He calls you; will you come to the feast? "All things are now ready."

But you say that you are already saved from sin; that you have left the world behind you; that you have counted its gold as clay, and its gains as loss. Thank God for all you have, but greater things are in store for you. You may be made "perfect in love." God has called you to holiness.

"Ye who know your sins forgiven,
And are happy in the Lord,
Have you read the gracious promise
Which is left upon record?
I will sprinkle you with water,
I will cleanse you from all sin;
Sanctify and make you holy;
I will come and dwell within.

"Though you have much peace and comfort,
Greater things you yet may find;
Freedom from unholy tempers,
Freedom from the carnal mind.
To procure your full salvation,
Jesus suffered, groan'd and died;
On the cross the healing fountain
Gushed from his wounded side."

As these words are written the writer's soul almost bursts within him. It gets a glimpse of infinite things, urges him forward, and moves him with the holy Bramwell to cry, "Oh, how I long for all the church to know this great salvation!"

Oh, these burnings of love divine! Oh, this unquenchable flame, these strong desires after God and for the purification of the saints! May God dip this pen in blood, point it with fire, and wing it with love and let it bring from his great heart burning words that will urge the reader on to holiness!

"Rouse up, brother! rouse up, sister!
Seek, O seek, this holy state;
None but holy ones can enter,
Through the pure celestial gate.
Can you hear the thought of losing
All the joys that are above?
No, my brother; no, my sister,
God will perfect you in love. "

In order to see the consummation of these things, let us go forward, Are you saying, "Amen, I will ?" Then let us pray together, in the last stanza of the foregoing hymn, --

"May a mighty sound from heaven,
Suddenly come rushing down;
Cloven tongues, like as of fire,
May they sit on all around,
O may every soul be filled
With the Holy Ghost today;
He is coming! He is coming!

O prepare, prepare the way."

The following words from Fletcher will aid you, reader, in seeing the import of your holy calling, and perhaps help you in your decision to take the way. "Lift up your hands which hang down; our Aaron, our heavenly High Priest, is near to hold them up. The spiritual Amalekites will not always prevail; our Samuel, our heavenly prophet, is ready 'to cut them and their king in pieces before the Lord. The promise is unto you.' You are surely called to attain the perfection of your dispensation, although you still seem afar off. Christ, in whom that perfection centers -- Christ, from whom it flows, is very near, even at the door; 'Behold,' says he (and this he spake to Laodicean loiterers), 'I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door I will come in and sup with him,' upon the fruits of my grace in their Christian perfection; and he shall sup with me, upon the fruits of my glory, in their angelical and heavenly maturity.

"Hear this encouraging gospel: 'Ask and you shall have: seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.' 'If any of you [believers] lack wisdom' -- indwelling wisdom (Christ the wisdom and the power of God dwelling in his heart by faith), 'let him ask of God, who giveth to all men, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. But let him ask [as a believer] in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed:' 'for let not that man think that he shall receive' the thing which he thus asketh. 'But whatsoever things ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. For all things [commanded and promised] are possible to him that believeth.' He who has commanded us to be 'perfect in love,' 'as our heavenly Father is perfect,' and he who has promised 'speedily to avenge his elect, who cry unto him night and day:' he will speedily avenge you of your grand adversary, indwelling sin.

"In the meantime be not afraid to give glory to God by 'believing in hope against hope.' Stagger not 'at the promise [of the Father and the Son] through unbelief:' but trust the power and faithfulness of your Creator and Redeemer, till your Sanctifier has fixed his abode in your heart. Wait at mercy's door, as the lame beggar did at the Beautiful gate of the temple. 'Peter fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said, Look unto us: and he gave heed to them, expecting to receive something of them.' Do so, too: give heed to the Father in the Son, who says, 'Look unto me and be ye saved.' Expect to receive 'the one thing now needful' for you, -- a fullness of the sanctifying Spirit: and though your patience may be tried, it shall not be disappointed. The faith and power, which, at Peter's word, gave the poor cripple a perfect soundness in the presence of all the wondering Jews, will give you, at Christ's word, a perfect soundness of heart in the presence of all your adversaries."

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Chapter 3 DEFINITION

Wesley defines Christian Perfection as "The loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. This implies that no wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul; and that all the thoughts, words, and actions, are governed by pure love."

When a person is justified, or converted, his past transgressions are blotted out, and he is "born again," or "regenerated: he is born into the family of God, thus becoming "a son of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ;" he receives the witness of the Spirit testifying to this fact, from whom also he receives "power," ability, or "grace" to walk henceforth in the commandments of God. He lives a new life. "Old things are passed away and, behold, all things are become new." He "rejoices in God his Savior," and has "this testimony, that he pleases God." He has peace and love and all "the fruits of the Spirit.' He loves God supremely, and loves his "neighbor as himself."

But while all this is true, yet he sees in his heart an element, or a principle, that is contrary to this. He loves God, but realizes that his love is not perfect; he loves his neighbor, yet must struggle against inherent principles that are the opposite to this love; he rejoices, but sees that his joy is liable to run into levity; he is sober, but his sobriety is mixed with melancholy; he has peace, but maintains it amid inward strife, or feels himself settling into stagnation; he is longsuffering, but sees a tendency to be so for policy's sake, or, on the contrary, to lose his patience; he is faithful, but continually reproaches himself for the unfaithfulness of his heart, and sees a tendency to be firm because of stubbornness, or for the sake of contention; he has faith, but must constantly struggle against the infidelity of his own heart; in short he has all the fruits of the Spirit, but sees that every one of them is opposed by a contrary element, and that there remains in him a tendency to some inordinate leaning that has a semblance to genuine piety (and is called genuine by the world), but which is ruinous to grace.

But when the heart is made holy all this is changed. Negatively, holiness is the absence of all moral defilement, of inherent tendencies to sin. This means exclusion of all wrong tendencies. Sin is a unit, i. e., the nature of sin is such that where one of its attributes appears every other attribute is present -- even "the body of sin" itself. So if there is one carnal manifestation in the soul, all the rest are there, though they may lie dormant for the time being, and, it may be, will never show themselves. Carnality is indivisible; it cannot be taken out in the way of one thing at a time, and those who think that they can thus get rid of their heart sins find that when they suppose they have conquered one manifestation and begin on another the conquered one will rise up and thrust at them with the same viciousness as before. Inbred sin must be removed as a whole. True, it manifests itself to the mind's eye as pride, envy, jealousy, lust, and such like, but we cannot have pride cast out and retain envy; and, if impatience remains, so does jealousy, though these manifestations may be so weak as to cause the person to think that they do not remain.

Since the "man of sin" can only be seen by those outcroppings which reveal its inherent nature, as the swaying of trees tells which way the wind blows, it follows that the only way to reach the center of this disease, or to find out the real condition of the soul, is carefully to observe the tendency of the desires springing from and expressing the nature within. If there is the least movement of the desires contrary to the love of God, or the least inclination toward gratification unlawfully or to an inordinate degree, there is back of this inclination a "body of sin" that will, unless held in check by the power of God or cast out, create in time a whirlwind of passion and unholiness which will be fatal to grace. So it behooves us to be careful.* [* See page 155, "Conflicts of the Entirely Sanctified."]

Negatively, then, holiness is the perfect absence of inbred sin. The blessings which so delight the soul are received as a result of purity, and may be present in the experience to a greater or less degree. A sense of purity inwrought by the Holy Ghost is the abiding evidence of holiness, from the negative side.

Positively, holiness is:

1. Abandonment to all the will of God, without even involuntary objections to that will, in such a state one can praise God in afflictions, in necessities, in temptations, in slanders, as well as in prosperity, and can turn every providence, no matter how bitter and mysterious, to spiritual profit.

2. Holiness is purity of motive, or, as the Bible says, "a single eye." The holy heart is saved from all mixture in its motives of the vile with the precious things of the Spirit, and has constantly a pure desire for God's glory. If its possessor makes a mistake, as he sometimes will, he can examine the most secret workings of his soul, and, after the most critical search, can conscientiously say, "I made a mistake, but my motives were pure." In order to make the claim that his motives are pure he will not be forced to fall back on the fact that he professes holiness and say, "I profess holiness, my heart is clean, therefore this motive must be all right." No; he can hold his motives before God, independent of his standing or professed standing in God, and see that they are pure. This means much but it is blessedly possible.

3. "Purity is power." This statement is often made, but there is much confusion as to what this power is, as to what it will do for its possessor, and as to what its possessor will be able to accomplish. This is an important question, as a misunderstanding one way or another might cause one to give up his hope in God if his accomplishments did not come up to his ideal.

The power which springs from purity is neither eloquence nor the force of intellectual supremacy. Some men can sway great audiences at their pleasure; that is power, but not necessarily the power of the Holy Ghost. Cicero did that, and he was a heathen. Patrick Henry, Daniel Webster and Stephen A. Douglas possessed remarkable ability in this direction, but they used it only in secular matters. The fact that some preachers of today possess the same ability, of necessity proves nothing, but merely indicates their personal magnetism or intellectual superiority. Beware of following a person because he manifests such power unless his advice is biblical. We must search deeper than the intellect for real power, for power in the Bible sense.

The power of purity is manifested in four directions:

(1) In the ability to control one's own life; to gain easy victory over temptations and circumstances; to live with a single eye and a victorious heart.

(2) Although its possessor rejoices not because he is subject unto him, yet he can gain a comparatively easy victory over them. When the prince of this world cometh he hath nothing in the clean, devoted soul; it is a dry place to him, and he must go elsewhere to find rest.

(3) Power with men. its possessor may or may not realize its exercise, but, consciously or unconsciously, he is wielding an influence that is deeper than mere human supremacy, and which lays hold of the heart of the onlooker, He may be inferior in intellectual capacity, and like Paul, his "bodily presence may be weak, and his speech contemptible;" but he can have so much of the Holy Ghost that he will rise above all this and compel people to respect the God in him.

The power of purity is not in the outward form of utterance, but in the deep undercurrent that silently but effectually cuts to the heart and convinces of sin. This is because the Holy Ghost accompanies the pure in heart more than others, since these can be trusted, it is said of James Caughey that he lived next door to heaven, and the celestial powers acquainted him with things they did not let everybody know.

The sermons and testimonies of the pure in heart will stir the hearers up to more holy living, How many people there are who can preach and testify well, even eloquently, but all they say flies over the people's heads like sky rockets, till men almost become dizzy watching the shining paths in the sky, but when the enraptured hearers come down to the dull realities of living they find they have not been strengthened in the least, and, it may be, are grievously disappointed with the cold, hard facts of life after such a dizzy, ethereal flight, and find themselves even weakened when they meet severe temptations, But the power of purity lies in its ability to go straight to the mark, and, with holy unction and fervor, point out the lack in people's lives and set them all on fire for greater achievements.

Its power also lies in its force of example. Godly humility will incite honest people to emulation. Earnestness will produce a like zeal in others, and love will catch in devoted hearts like fire in standing corn. One's eminent attainments in this direction will cause a pressing forward in others.

Again, its power is manifest in its holy, steadfast confidence. Realizing its own innocency, purity fears not to proclaim the whole truth of holy living, and to express its entire confidence that others can receive a like benefit

Its possessor feels the importance of what he says. That person who has spent the most of the day in idle chit-chat must not expect much of the power of God at night. The purified person so realizes the importance of his words that he is choice in using them; then each word is more likely to burn with holy fire as it goes home to some needy heart. "Let thy words be few," and the few will be more likely to be honored of God.

The possessor of purity is burdened for souls. There is nothing so effectual in awakening souls as a God-given burden for them on the part of God's people, This the pure soul possesses. He knows what it is to weep for the lost, to groan in Gethsemane, The person who does not possess this burden would do well to search the ground of his heart and see if it is clean as he fondly imagines it to be.

The great source of the power of purity lies in the fact that its possessor is indwelt by the Holy Ghost. Although the hearer may not know anything about spiritual matters, and may even be skeptical as to their possibilities, yet in spite of contrary prejudices his heart is moved. This is the

great thought that Jesus impressed on the minds of the disciples in connection with the reception of the heavenly Paraclete -- "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem till ye be endued with power from on high." "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." From the earnestness of the disciples in waiting for the fulfillment of this promise we naturally infer that they felt their great need of its accomplishment, and that they were not properly equipped without it. The results, when compared with their former weakness, fully justify the assumption, if you lack that holy anointing which makes you strong in the Lord and in the power of his might you are not to the bottom yet; dig deeper till your soul is filled with all the fullness of God.

(4) Power with God. Jacob had power with God, he wrestled and prevailed. Daniel prayed and the angel came to his rescue. Elijah prayed till it rained not for three years and six months; he prayed again and the heavens gave rain. Holy men of all ages have wrestled till God answered. Here is the real reason for all the power of purity. Its possessors tarry so much in the secret place that they prevail with God. And coming from this sacred presence how can they help but be a power with men and victorious in life? Such persons shed a sacred influence wherever they go. "As princes they have power with God." Oh, for the Pentecostal baptism of prevailing power!

4. The holy heart is filled with all the fruits of the Spirit. It is entirely free from all the alloy that is found in the justified heart, and the graces of the Spirit, perfect in quality, reign alone. The development of these graces does not consist in a change or bettering of their nature, but in such a deepening and enrichment of them that they more and more perfectly control the outward actions, and even the most secret thoughts; changing and refashioning the whole life from day to day; utilizing every furnace, trial or temptation, every misunderstanding, every burden or perplexity, for the perfecting of outward and the maturity and enrichment of inward holiness, "till we all come ... unto a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." In respect to the possibilities of growth there is no end; and as a man is not physically perfect till he gets his growth, so the soul is never perfect in the sense of excluding further development; but, thank God, it can have not only perfect love, but also perfect faith, patience, resignation, humility, longsuffering, hope, and all graces of the Spirit, -- perfect in quality though not in degree.

Fletcher says, "Christian perfection is a spiritual constellation made up of these gracious stars; perfect repentance, perfect faith, perfect humility, perfect meekness, perfect self-denial, perfect resignation, perfect hope, perfect charity for our visible enemies, as well as for our earthly relations; and, above all, perfect love for our invisible God, through the explicit knowledge of our Mediator Jesus Christ. And this last star is always accompanied by the others, as Jupiter is by his satellites. We frequently use, as St. John, the phrase 'perfect love,' instead of the word perfection; understanding by it the pure love of God shed abroad in the hearts of established believers by the Holy Ghost, which is abundantly given them under the fulness of the Christian dispensation."

The following definitions from Wesley will help to a proper understanding of the subject.

He says, "But what is perfection? The word has various senses: here it means perfect love, it is love excluding sin; love filling the heart, taking up the whole capacity of the soul, it is love rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, in everything giving thanks."

"The pure in heart,' are they whose hearts God hath 'purified even as he is pure;' who are purified through faith in the blood of Jesus, from every unholy affection; who, being 'cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfect holiness in the [loving] fear of God.' They are, through the power of his grace, purified from pride, by the deepest poverty of spirit; from anger, from every unkind or turbulent passion, by meekness and gentleness; from every desire but to please and enjoy God, to know and love him more and more, by that hunger and thirst after righteousness, which now engrosses their whole soul: so that now they love the Lord their God with all their heart, and with all their soul, and mind and strength."

"What is then the perfection of which man is capable while he dwells in a corruptible body? It is the complying with that kind command: 'My son, give me thy heart.' It is the 'loving the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind.' This is the sum of Christian perfection: it is all comprised in that one word, love, The first branch of it is the love of God: and as he that loves God loves his brother. also, it is inseparably connected with the second: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself:' Thou shalt love every man as thy own soul, as Christ loved us. 'On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets:' these contain the whole of Christian Perfection..

"St. Paul, when writing to the Galatians, places perfection in yet another view, It is the one undivided fruit of the Spirit which he describes thus: 'The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering gentleness, goodness, fidelity,' so the word should be translated here, 'meekness, temperance.' What a glorious constellation of graces is here! Now suppose all these things to be knit together in one, to be united together in the soul of the believer, this is Christian perfection."

Wesley explains the difference between the experiences of justification and holiness thus: "In the same proportion as one grows in faith, he grows in holiness; he increases in love, lowliness, meekness, in every part of the image of God; till it pleases God after he is thoroughly convinced of inbred sin, of the total corruption of his nature, to take it all away; to fulfill that promise which he made first to his ancient people, and in them to the Israel of God in all ages: 'I will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.'

"It is not easy to conceive what a difference there is, between that which he experiences now, and that which he experienced before. Till this universal change is wrought in the soul, all his holiness was mixed, He was humble, but not entirely; his humility was mixed with pride: he was meek; but his meekness was frequently interrupted by anger, or some uneasy and turbulent passion. His love of God was frequently damped by the love of some creature; the love of his neighbor, by evil surmising, or some thought, if not temper, contrary to love. His will was not wholly melted down into the will of God: but although in general he could say, I come 'not to do my own will. but the will of him that sent me;' yet now and then nature rebelled, and he could not clearly say, 'Lord, not as I will, but as thou wilt.' His whole soul is now consistent with itself; there is no jarring string. All his passions flow in a continual stream, with an even tenor, to God. To him that is entered into his rest, you may truly say,

"Calm thou ever art within,
All unruffled, all serene!"

There is no mixture of any contrary affections; all is peace and harmony after. Being filled with love, there is no more interruption of it than of the beating of his heart; and continual love bringing continual joy in the Lord, he rejoices evermore. He converses continually with the God whom he loves, unto whom in everything he gives thanks, And as he now loves God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind, and with all his strength; so Jesus now reigns alone in his heart the Lord of every motion there."

Again he says, "The apostle seems to mean by this expression, *telleioi*, Ye shall be wholly delivered from every evil work; from every evil word; from every sinful thought; yea, from every evil desire, passion, temper; from all inbred corruption, from all remains of the carnal mind from the body of sin; and ye shall be renewed in the spirit of your mind, in every right temper, after the image of him that created you, in righteousness and true holiness."

The following thoughts may be of service in giving the reader more exact understanding of what holiness will do for him. Holiness of heart does not consist in wonderful ecstasies and raptures, but in a heart in tune with the pure love of God; not in wonderful upliftings, so much as in wonderful down-sinkings; not in wonderful witnesses, unless as they are accompanied with and followed by an absence of sinful tendencies; not in spiritual exaltations, but in ever-deepening self abasement. As the individual views himself and his efforts, holiness consists not necessarily in the fact that he sees the mighty power of God working through him, but in a deep sense of his own weakness and utter dependence on God.

Holiness does not consist in boldness and forwardness, but in meekness and gentleness; not in being headstrong and independent, but in being teachable and easily entreated; not in being loud and boisterous, even in manifestations of blessing, but in the possession of a "meek and quiet spirit;" not in the ability to lead, but in willingness to be led, and that even by an inferior; not in the ability to hold to and win our point, but in the ability to yield to another, even when in the right, and not feel crosswise toward the other person when he smiles at your seeming defeat.

Holiness does not consist in the ability to preach wonderful sermons, or to give powerful testimonies, but rather in the ability to hear some one excel you in these functions and not feel envious; not in the ability to gain the applause of the people, but in freedom from jealousy when the other man is applauded.

Holiness does not consist in the ability to disregard your faults and smile at reproof; but rather in the ability to look them squarely in the face and come out as clear as ever; not alone in victory over temptation, but in a deep abhorrence of the thing offered in the temptation, in a conscious absence of the inward strugglings of sinful tendencies when tempted; not in the ability to disregard temptation, but in the ability when it confronts you to squarely face it. and still know you are clean; not in the ability to hold an experience, but in the ability to seem to turn it loose, and then find it return clearer than ever; not in the ability to face temptation down, but in the ability when it faces you down and has done its best, to arise through it all into glorious light, as clear before God as when it came.

Holiness does not consist in being clear before man only, but in being clear before the omniscient eye of Jehovah.

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Chapter 4 PROPER AND IMPROPER CANDIDATES

The first question to be settled by seekers of holiness, or entire sanctification, is whether or not they are proper candidates to receive this inestimable grace. One thing is true, much of what is called holiness teaching these days is not properly such, since it is given to those who are as unfit to receive its benefits as a swine's nose is unfit for a jewel of gold, and who would, therefore, be sure to degrade the holy profession to their own unholy purposes. The average professor of today is an unfit subject for sanctifying grace, until he first repents of his crookedness and takes the way of the cross,

We desire to show, first, who are not; secondly, who are, proper candidates for this experience.

I. Who are not proper candidates.

1. The person who has never been converted cannot be sanctified wholly, for it is a work of grace received by faith subsequent to that of justification. On this question we need have very little controversy, for in all ages of Christendom no other doctrine has been taught except by very few men in comparatively recent years. The creeds and confessions of church bodies and theological, devotional and biographical writings generally are replete with testimonies in favor of holiness as a second work of grace. So numerous are they that if we should attempt to transcribe them, we would scarcely know where to end. About the only thing on which they disagree is with reference to the time subsequent to conversion when one may be sanctified.

People take on a profession of religion in some evangelistic meeting, and, afterward, realizing that their experiences are unsatisfactory, are persuaded that what they need is holiness. But this in most cases is not true. What they need is to be so thoroughly saved from sin that they will get out of the seventh chapter of Romans. Have you ever had a clear, positive conversion? and did you receive the witness of the Spirit unmistakably testifying to this fact? If not, stop seeking holiness as an advanced experience and ask God to save you from your sins.

2. The backslider in heart is not a proper subject for sanctifying grace. Some persons seem to think it necessary for them to get into a place where they no longer enjoy the blessing of God as they formerly did, where they are living a crooked, two-sided life, manifesting bad tempers and giving way to vicious appetites, in order that they must seek holiness to save them from all this. Such persons answer the Bible description which says, "The backslider in heart is filled with his own ways;" and the first thing necessary for one in this condition is, to be restored to the favor of God as in former years.

To determine your religious standing answer before God the following questions:

Have you the same victory over sin you formerly possessed?

Was the blessing you received the day you were converted the most wonderful you ever received?

Does God come to your heart now as he did formerly?

Have you the same earnestness for God's glory and the salvation of your friends you had formerly?

Do you have as great love for secret prayer as you had when you were first saved, or is the secret place sadly neglected?

Is it as easy to deny yourself now as formerly?

Is the cause of God uppermost in your mind, or can you easily find excuses to stay at home from meetings, or to neglect other religious duties?

Be careful, reader, for if the former days were better than these, in that proportion you have lost ground; and you must reach the high-water mark of past experience before you are ready to seek sanctification.

3. If you have been living an up-and-down life, and are under condemnation for neglect of duty, or for the indulgence of sinful tempers, words or actions, you are not a proper candidate for entire sanctification, and will not be, until you have repented and been forgiven. Some people vacillate between obedience and disobedience, between the favor and the disfavor of God. Sometimes they are on the mount of transfiguration, and at other times in the quagmire of doubt and uncertainty, At one time their consciences approve them, and at other times their consciences condemn them. Vacillating here and there, driven about by "every wind of doctrine" even their friends acknowledge that it is hard to tell where to find them at any given time. Such persons generally get "warmed up" during the revival meeting, and "run well for a season" -- until "something happens" -- then they are "down" until quarterly meeting, camp-meeting, or some other general service comes, Then they fall in line again, "work up" a good feeling, and are loud in their expressions of joy. You can depend on them, as seekers, at every camp-meeting; and, usually, toward the last of the meeting they will take the ground by storm. But two weeks later they are in the same old rut. Either their husbands, wives, neighbors, friends, enemies, the preacher, the church, the grocer, the plumber, or some one else, did not do things to suit their notion; and, as the old, chronic sore was touched, the same old virus came out as before; and then for days and weeks everybody in the family and the church is in misery when they are around. Reader, do you belong to this class? If so, for your own soul's sake pray out today; get the victory, and keep it, and then go in for holiness; but stop trying to make yourself and the people think that what you need to save you from such a life is holiness, No; you need a thorough conversion which will save you from such inconsistencies of life.

How often you hear people saying, "My justified life was not satisfactory, I would fly off the handle, get angry, and say and do things I ought not to have said or done, and so made crooked paths for my feet; but when I got sanctified I quit getting angry, and have been making straight paths ever since." Saved people do not get angry, or, if they do, they sin and must be forgiven; or make crooked paths; and if the foregoing was your experience, you got converted instead of sanctified. And the fact that you live right now does not prove that you have holiness in the sense of entire sanctification. Can God justify a sinner who persists in his sins? The Bible says, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Psa. 66:18). Also, "Whoso confesseth and forsaketh them [his sins] shall have mercy. "

4. It would be impossible to collect and refute all the erroneous ideas of different people in regard to the condition of those who need holiness. One class of persons allows some things while condemning those things allowed by another class, and you will notice that they allow the very things of which they have been guilty, and condemn those from which they were the most free, They make room for themselves to slip through, One man allows rebellion, "God told me to do something, and I said 'No,' and would not do it. Holiness saved me from saying no to God." Another allows anger, "In my justified experience I was always getting angry." Another allows pride, "Before I was sanctified I wore feathers, flowers and jewelry, but when I was sanctified I had to put all these away." Another allows dishonesty; and another uncleanness, as tobacco, snuff, etc. But conversion cleans a person up in these respects and helps him to live a clean, honest, righteous life.

II. The second question is, Who are proper candidates?

The answer is very simple: All who have been clearly converted, and are still walking in all the light. This looks clear at first sight, but the fact is that people's ideas of what constitutes conversion are so varied, and some of them so erroneous, that it is necessary briefly to state the marks of this experience, and also the steps necessary to its attainment, in order to help out any who may be in the dark.

By glaring, everyday facts we are forced to the conclusion that the great defect in modern holiness teaching is its tendency to belittle the glorious doctrine of justification by faith; and that this is done by superficial preachers of holiness to make room for their abnormal presentation of the experience of holiness. After minimizing or entirely overlooking regeneration and the consequent life of righteousness, they proceed at once to preach holiness to a congregation of worldly, unconverted professors, and exhort them to go up at once and possess the land. Its glories and beauties are set before them in such glowing terms that it causes a strong desire for its possession, even from a selfish standpoint. Tens, twenties, fifties, and even hundreds flock to the altar, and, with scarcely one thought of doing the thing that is the most necessary for them to do -- repent of their past sins and separate themselves from worldliness -- they submit to a given formula and profess holiness without having been converted, or even deeply convicted of sin. Such persons, by their crooked, and carnal lives linked to a profession of holiness, which they persist in publishing abroad, will, as a natural consequence, bring reproach on the doctrine and experience of entire sanctification. All, or nearly all, of this confusion would be avoided by properly presenting the Bible standard of justification.

To be clearly justified one must meet the following conditions: 1. Repent, and in the scriptural sense. Repentance is (1) A godly sorrow for sin; not the shedding of a few sentimental tears, nor sorrow because of the consequences of sin; but sorrow for sin because of its sinful nature. (2) Confession; to one's neighbors where they have been wronged; where no one in particular has been injured, to God only. (3) Restitution of that which has been taken by theft or fraud, so far as possible. (4) Separation from sin, worldliness and worldly companionships. 2. Entire devotion of one's self and all he has to the service of God for time and eternity. 3. Faith in God. There are two kinds or degrees of faith necessary; (1) That general confidence in God taught in the words, "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (2) Saving faith, or that which now takes hold of the merits of the blood of Jesus Christ and appropriates the same to the soul's needs.

4. It is also necessary in scriptural justification that the seeker receive the witness of the Spirit. Much might be written on this subject without making it one whit more clear than to say, it is an inward consciousness wrought by the Holy Ghost that past sins are forgiven, that the heart is renewed, and that the renewed man has become a tabernacle for the indwelling of God. The real witness of the Spirit cannot be mistaken. God testifies definitely, clearly, and beyond dispute, to his work. "Verily, verily, we speak that we do know."

A changed life will necessarily follow the reception of this experience. Old things are passed away. Sinful fashions, evil habits, wrath, frauds, thefts, drunkenness, blasphemy, in short, all wickedness is a thing of the past. Now the tree produces love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, patience, brotherly kindness, and all the beautiful fruits of the Spirit.

Let us propose a few questions by which you may weigh yourself and see if you are a proper person to begin seeking the experience of holiness.

1. Were you clearly converted? So clearly that you would dare risk your chances of heaven upon its certainty?

2. Is there a moment in your past experience to which you can point and say, "There old things passed away, and I passed from death unto life"?

3. Has your life been godly ever since?

4. Did you ever backslide? and if you did, were you as clearly reclaimed afterward as you were saved in the first place?

5. Do you have an inward realization that you please God?

6. Have you now the witness of the Spirit to your acceptance?

7. Is your daily life before your family, friends and enemies consistent with your profession?

8. Do you enjoy, or endure, your religion?
9. Do you delight yourself in the Lord? or do you serve him to escape hell?
10. Do you conquer the inward strivings of carnality? or do they conquer you?
11. Do you long to be made perfect in love?

If before God you can give satisfactory answers to these questions, you are in a good place, and may regard yourself as a promising candidate for all the fullness of God.

"Come, let us ascend,
My companion and friend,
To a taste of the banquet above;
If thy heart be as mine,
If for Jesus it pine,
Come up into the chariot of love."

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Chapter 5 STRIVINGS WITHIN

Usually when persons are first converted they have such remarkable victory that they are unconscious of the fact that there is anything in their hearts contrary to the love of God. Joys flow like a river, or, at least, like gurgling streamlets, almost constantly; nothing ruffles the peace and quietness of the love which reigns supreme and unfettered. This state of things lasts for different lengths of time in different individuals, Generally it continues less than a month, but sometimes may continue for even a year; and in other cases, where there has been unusually clear light and more than the ordinary perception of divine things, light on internal conditions and needs is given almost immediately after conversion; but such cases are exceptional.

Here is how it comes about. All is going on smoothly; peace flows undisturbed; there is freedom in prayer, in testimony, in the heart; provocations are met and conquered with astonishing ease, But, as the poet says,

"Some days must be dark and dreary,"

and such a day comes to this happy convert. In spite of every effort to the contrary complications arise; different obstacles throw themselves across his path; trials of the most vexing kind press in from every side; and right in the midst of all this his eyes are drawn from without, and he is given a view of the workings of his soul. To his astonishment he sees an element that rebels, or that at least grows impatient and complains, it may not be very great, almost imperceptible at first, but it is enough to cause grief, and something like a sting mingles with the holy thrill of joy so lately experienced. This never leaves for any great length of time till the heart is cleansed. He may have a struggle to quiet the inward troubler, but the grace of God assisting, he conquers.

Or, the vision of inbred sin may come suddenly. All at once some trying event occurs. Some talebearer repeats in your ears a vile report that has been told about you; or, you are insulted to your face; or some one offers to strike you. Whatever it is, it comes suddenly, takes you off your guard, and in an instant anger arises and thrusts sore at you. You may feel your fists clench and your tongue ready to utter perverse words; but you remember that you are saved and do not yield to the trial even in your heart, but shut your lips tightly and hurry away to some retreat where you can pray and get the victory, And you do get it, but are much troubled, and say, "O God, what does this mean? I thought that such things were forever past. Must I forever endure this ?" But while you will mourn, you need not mourn as those that have no hope. The promise is yours. Here let me say that it is positively unnecessary that you get your head down and allow melancholy brooding to take possession of you or to hinder you in any degree. You are not to blame for these things, and you ought to rejoice that the Lord has been so kind as to open your eyes to see your condition. God does nothing to tantalize us, and this sight of sin is given that you may be delivered, and you should praise him for it all.

Wesley asks the question, "But may we not continue in peace and joy till we are perfected in love?" and answers it as follows: "Certainly we may; for the kingdom of God is not divided against itself; therefore, let not believers be discouraged from 'rejoicing in the Lord always.' And yet we may be sensibly pained at the sinful nature that still remains in us. It is good for us to have a piercing sense of this, and a vehement desire to be delivered from it. But this should incite us the more zealously to fly every moment to our strong Helper, the more earnestly to press forward to the mark, the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus. And when the sense of our sin most abounds, the sense of his love should much more abound."

There is no doubt that this is the best time to begin to urge your case for deliverance. Many persons have wandered weary years with these carnal traits staring them in the face, without gaining the deliverance they needed, simply because they either failed to push forward (through lack of energy or earnestness), or because they were not properly led by their teachers.

Here is where a great many holiness teachers and seekers fail. Quite often the seekers would not be so apt to make mistakes if they were let alone, for in the ardor of their desires after God they would find the sore of their hearts and confess and deplore it until deliverance would be given, But as soon as a little earnestness is manifested, a few tears shed, and a strong desire for holiness is expressed, they are straightway thrown from the track and run off in the wrong direction. Instead of being urged to press their suit before God earnestly, they are set to consecrating their time, talents, etc., or to presuming that the work is done, till they get into the fog and must struggle, perhaps for weeks, to get out into clear sailing again.

The following from Wesley is to the point concerning the first movings of carnality after conversion: "How naturally do those who experience such a change, imagine that all sin is gone; that it is utterly rooted out of their hearts, and has no more any place therein? How easily do they draw that inference, 'I feel no sin; therefore I have none: it does not stir! therefore it does not exist; it has no motion; therefore it has no being.'

"But it is seldom long before they are undeceived, finding sin was only suspended, not destroyed. Temptations return, and sin revives; showing it was but stunned before, not dead. They now feel two principles in themselves, plainly contrary to each other; 'the flesh lusting against the Spirit;' nature opposing the grace of God. They cannot deny, that, although they still feel power to believe in Christ, and to love God; and although his 'Spirit [still] witnesses with their spirits, that they are children of God;' yet they feel in themselves sometimes pride or self-will, sometimes anger or unbelief, They find one or more of these frequently stirring in their hearts, though not conquering; you, perhaps, 'thrusting sore at them that they may fall'; but the Lord is their help."

Again, "It is true, he has scarce any conception of this (the carnal mind and the necessity of deliverance from it) who now begins to know the inward kingdom of heaven, 'In his prosperity he saith, I shall never be moved; thou, Lord, hast made my hill so strong.' Sin is so utterly bruised beneath his feet, that he can scarce believe it remaineth in him. Even temptation is silenced, and speaks not again: it cannot approach, but stands afar off. He is borne aloft in the chariots of joy and love: he soars 'as upon the wings of an eagle.' But our Lord well knew, that this triumphant state does not often continue long: he therefore presently subjoins: 'Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.' "

-- But they see temptation and sin, which they fondly supposed were gone never to return, arising again, following after them again, and holding them in on every side, it is not strange if their soul is now disquieted within them, and trouble and heaviness take hold upon them, Nor will their great enemy fall to improve the occasion; to ask, 'Where now is thy God?' Where now the blessedness of which thou spakest? The beginning of the kingdom of heaven? Yea, hath God said, "Thy sins are forgiven thee?" Surely God hath not said it. It was only a dream, a mere delusion, a creature of thy own imagination. If thy sins are forgiven, why art thou thus? Can a pardoned sinner be thus unholy? -- And, if then, instead of immediately crying to God, they reason with him that is wiser than they, they will be in heaviness indeed, in sorrow of heart, in anguish not to be expressed. Nay, even when God shines again upon the soul, and takes away all doubt of his past mercy, still he that is weak in faith may be tempted and troubled on account of what is to come; especially when inward sin revives, and thrusts sore at him that he may fall, Then may he cry out,

"I have a sin of fear, that when I've spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore."

Now the battle has commenced in earnest, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Gal. 5:17). There is a good Bible illustration of this internal warfare in the two sons of Abraham -- Isaac and Ishmael. Isaac "the son of the free-woman" was "by promise," but Ishmael, "who was of a bondwoman was of the flesh." The two boys did not get along well together, for it is written, "He that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit." Then it is added, "even so is it now." Finally, Abraham was commanded to "cast out the bondwoman and her son." Yes, "even so it is now" in the heart of every young convert until he, by the grace of God, "casts out the bondwoman and her son;" until he receives the second work of grace -- the cleansing of his soul from inbred sin.

When the Spirit of God within leads out to endeavor for him, the "flesh," or "carnality," or "depravity," by whatever name it may be called (some prefer one and some another), so "lusteth against" him that it is hard to obey. The warfare is continual, grace against nature and nature against grace, till the heart cries out for peace at the hands of God. There is hope for you, brother, in such a case, and God, by these views of the internal strife, is calling, is wooing you on to greater things. Press forward; the goal is not far distant. "So run that ye may obtain."

A natural question that arises at this point is, how long will it take me to pray through? How long must I thus groan in sight of my corruptions before I may expect deliverance to come? At present let us quote a passage from Wesley and return to the question later.

"But some who maintain this doctrine in its fullest extent are too often guilty of limiting the Almighty. He dispenses his gifts just as he pleases; therefore, it is neither wise nor modest to affirm that a person must be a believer for any length of time before he is capable of receiving a high degree of the Spirit of holiness.

"God's usual method is one thing, but his sovereign pleasure is another, He has wise reasons both for hastening and retarding his work. Sometimes he comes suddenly and unexpectedly; sometimes not till we have long looked for him.

"Indeed it has been my opinion for many years that one great cause why men make so little improvement in the divine life is their own coldness, negligence, and unbelief. And yet I here speak of believers.

"-- God usually gives a considerable time for men to receive light, to grow in grace, to do and suffer his will, before they are either justified or sanctified; but he does not invariably adhere to this; sometimes he 'cuts short his work;' he does the work of many years in a few weeks; perhaps in a week, a day, an hour. He justifies or sanctifies both those who have done or suffered nothing, and who have not had time for gradual growth either in light or grace. And 'may he not do what he will with his own? Is thine eye evil, because he is good?'

"It need not, therefore, be affirmed over and over, and proved by forty texts of scripture, either that most men are perfected in love at last, that there is a gradual work of God in the soul, or that, generally speaking, it is a long time, even many years, before sin is destroyed. All this we know: but we know, likewise, that God may, with man's good leave, 'cut short his work,' in whatever degree he pleases, and do the work of many years in a moment."

Modern imperfectionists, or rather gradualists, take such passages as this from Wesley to prove that he believed in gradual sanctification, But this is not true. His writings as a whole are against any such doctrine. He simply means in this place that most people are not sanctified soon after they are saved, but that they grow in grace and gradually approach the experience for perhaps a number of years, but that at length the time comes when sin suddenly dies, and at that moment the heart is made perfect in love. The prominent thought of the above quotation is that God sometimes does the work of entire sanctification soon after conversion, and that if it is not thus received, it is because the seeker by his "coldness, negligence, and unbelief" limits the power of God, and not because God will not give it to him until he has grown or suffered his way into it. Now is God's

accepted time, and he will perfect you in love as soon as you meet his reasonable requirements, and, by faith, get under the blood. Beware of putting off the matter too long, thereby grieving the tender Holy Spirit of God; and, on the contrary, beware of being too hasty, and rushing ahead of the Spirit. God will give you time to make sure work in the destruction of every vestige of the carnal mind. Carnality is his enemy, and he desires that you shall pursue it unrelentingly, till it expires on the cross by power divine.

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Chapter 6 MOTIVES

The motive that prompts to any action must be right in order that the action be acceptable in the sight of God. Also the motive for asking favors of the Lord must be right before the favor can be granted, it is the motive then that either gains or forfeits the approval of God.

So the motive that prompts to seeking holiness must be right. Many seek with a wrong motive, and, because they fail to get what they desire, are tempted to think that God is unable or unwilling to cleanse from inbred sin at all, at least to cleanse them; or at least that he will not do it till they are about to die. James said, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts" (Jas. 4:3). He that comes to God must come with all his heart, and in the full purpose of his will throw his sin-tossed soul on the mercy of God

A mere desire to feel happy will not gain the coveted prize. The senses are too prominent in this motive. While there is little room to doubt that if the soul is cleansed there will be deep, powerful, holy emotions, beyond what the merely justified ever have, yet the desire to obtain these pleasing emotions for their own sake is born of carnality and selfishness, and God will not answer a carnal, selfish prayer. The fact that you feel badly while others enjoy themselves is no sufficient reason for seeking deliverance, You must get deeper than that.

Then some have a secret desire to make a good appearance, and, thinking that holiness will give them the ability to do so, they strive after its attainment. They have heard those who profess holiness, testify, pray, exhort, or preach, with a great amount of liberty and unction, and they want holiness so they can do the same. This is born of emulation, if you are cleansed you will, in all probability, feel more like getting back in a corner than like "vaunting" yourself in this way.

Then some want to be able to testify to some "wonderful experience." They want people to stare at them and say, "What a wonderful experience Brother Blank has." Or, because others have an experience that is remarkable, they want to be able to testify to the same experience. Then others seek holiness because it is presented as a gospel privilege. Thousands are duped into a profession of holiness by so-called holiness evangelists, who present the glory and privilege side of the experience to the exclusion of other things just as important. Against their better judgment they are pushed and crowded into saying they are sanctified, and if they hesitate they are accused of dishonoring God. Instead of holding their cases before God for his answer and seal, they accept the statement of the evangelist or his helpers that the work is done. For the sake of your soul do not listen to such things, but be sure you obtain the experience before you testify to it.

Many other things might be mentioned but let these suffice. The essential thing is to be sure you have proper motives in seeking this high state of grace, Certain it is that the enemy will accuse and buffet you, and constantly accuse you of wrong motives; but when such things appear, to the best of your ability "cleanse your hearts" from them, and where you fail for want of strength God will supply grace.

Here are some considerations that ought to induce you to be importunate in your pleadings for deliverance.

God has told you to "grow in grace." There is little room for doubt that in your lack of entire sanctification the time will come when you will lose the ability to obey this command until you are sanctified wholly -- when God will put no more of his Spirit in the unclean receptacle. He commands you to go up and possess the land, and if you fail to obey quickly, to that extent you are displeasing God. While we would not compare the experience that follows such a failure to Israel's wilderness walk, with all its backslidings and rebellions, yet in some ways there is a resemblance. At times you will pray clear up to the highest place you ever held, then through the carelessness and sluggishness of your soul you will slip back, not into condemnation, for that is caused by actual sin, but into a gloomy, indefinite place, where you feel keenly that you are not all you should be. You may meanwhile attend camp-meetings and other general services; light accumulates, but grace is stagnated. Time and again you resolve to know more of God, but as often you are forced to say, "I cannot do the things I would." While you may not actually be retrograding, yet, as from time to time you compare present attainments with your light and your ability to follow the pillar of fire, you are tempted to think you are losing ground. This is not a necessary experience, since there are some striking exceptions; and you can go right on from the time you are converted, without a halt, into the promised land. And who would venture to say that this would not be the better way? Why should you cheat yourself out of months, or even years, of victory and be going the rounds of such conflicts when God calls you to holiness? Reader, if you are not already in the old treadmill round, keep out of it, and get the victory right away that the Lord has for you. To those who are already going the rounds of the wilderness, and who have not teachers to show them the "more excellent way," we would say, there is hope for you if you seize your opportunity.

One man said, "I used to pray for light, but I quit that, for I have more light than I know what to do with." Here is the secret of failure; if you cannot walk in all the light you have, one of two things is true, either God's grace is not sufficient for his demands, or you fail to get the grace that he intends you to have in order that you may fulfill his demands.

Let us repeat and thus enforce the fact, that the time will eventually come when you can grow no more, or at the best but very little, until you are cleansed from inbred sin, That you may have power to fulfill the command to "grow in grace" is thus seen to be an incentive to seek holiness, When you are cleansed grace has free course; all the hindrances to its growth are gone, and you will be surprised at your ability to mount heavenward. Fletcher says: "A perfect Christian grows far more than a feeble believer, whose growth is still obstructed by the shady thorns of sin, and the draining suckers of iniquity."

Again, as a general thing God cannot trust you with much of his power while your heart is unclean, for he knows and you know that you would consume it on your lusts. He is a jealous God and demands all the glory himself. He knows you are not worthy of any such thing, and that if you had it, it would spoil you; and so like a wise parent, he refuses to give you the thing that will cause your ruin. Although Paul had an exalted experience in holiness, yet, "through the abundance of the revelations given him," he was in danger of making shipwreck of faith, and God, to prevent such a calamity, gave him "a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to buffet" him. See to it that your heart is cleansed, and God will fill you with his power and grace, even if he does have to give you a thorn in the flesh to keep you from being exalted above measure through the abundance of your revelations.

While your heart is unclean you are unable properly to do the things that will glorify God. Your soul is weakened. Carnality saps your spiritual vitality, and at times you feel as weak as water, As you see your present lack of grace, and of ability to do these things which you are convinced God would have you to do to glorify him, earnestly cry out, "O God, deliver my soul;" and "deliverance will come. "

In your present condition you are, to some extent at least, displeasing God, He cannot look upon sin with any allowance. He will send the unrepentant sinner to hell because of his sins. While by having your sins forgiven you have escaped the fires of hell, yet you often feel, as some unclean tendency of your soul asserts itself, that because of this uncleanness God is justly displeased, You are not condemned, but you do not please God as you feel you should. God wants a clean, a perfect sacrifice, But your sacrifice is tainted; it is unclean. The psalmist called upon all within him to bless the Lord; but you cannot thus bless him, since carnality will not praise the Lord. The commandment is to love the Lord with all your heart; but in your present condition you cannot do it, for there are remaining involuntary clingings to sin that are contrary to love. You love, but your love is mixed. The Rev, J. A. Wood, in "Purity and Maturity," says: "While the merely regenerate loves God supremely -- above all else or every other object (to do less would be idolatry), he cannot love God with all his heart, until he is entirely sanctified; or so long as the remaining carnality, or 'inbred sin' as it is usually called, is not removed. This inward foe -- the 'carnal mind,' which is 'enmity against God,' must be expelled before perfect love can be possessed or enjoyed."

Desire to be like God should be an incentive to seeking holiness, When you get a glimpse of the amazing holiness of God and turn to yourself and scrutinize in the light of this holiness your own uncleanness, you may well exclaim with Isaiah, "I am a man of unclean lips;" or, like the lepers of old, you may well cover your lips and cry aloud, "Unclean, unclean." When you reach this place you will earnestly pray:

"O for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free;
A heart that always feels thy blood,
So freely spilt for me.

"Oh for a lowly, contrite heart,
Believing, true and clean;

Which neither life nor death can part,
From him that dwells within.

"A heart in every thought renewed.
And full of love divine;
Perfect, and right, and pure and good,
A copy, Lord, of thine.

"Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart,
Come quickly from above;
Write thy new name upon my heart;
Thy new, best name of love."

Once more, the interests of dying men and women demand that you be made "perfect in love." On every hand sounds the Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us." Nothing honors God like a clean vessel through which may pour the living streams of salvation. Missionaries need it, not only to run the gauntlet of sin and wickedness, but, above all, that they may effectively point the heathen to the holy Lamb of God. Preachers need it, not only to run the gauntlet of praise and censure, but to convince the gainsayers. Laymen need it, that they may the better let their light so shine before men that, seeing their good works, men may glorify our Father in heaven. Yea, the whole world needs it, that they may meet God in peace, and not call for the rocks and mountains to hide them from the Judge of quick and dead.

If you will honestly search the field, you will find reasons without number that should urge you forward with all your ransomed powers. Gather them up and put them in one side of the balance; then in the other side place every contrary thing, and see which is the more weighty, which is the more deserving of your immortal energies. On one side you will find delight in the praise of men, the desire of the world, the festering, gnawing canker-worms of the soul, reeking with moral filth, a veritable "body of death," steeped in blood-guiltiness like Judas of old, the "old man" of sin refusing allegiance to the King of Peace and rebelling to the bitter end against stacking arms before Immanuel's triumphant march. On the other side how changed. Love, that crowning grace of redemption, holds unlimited sway; joys immortal bud and blossom amid the thorns and thistles of earthly sorrow; quietness and confidence ride peacefully above the turbulent waves of earthly strife; hope, the perennial flower of Paradise, springs up amid the despair and melancholy of failure and defeat, causing the soul to sing and make such melody on broken lyres as drives away all discord forever. O Joy! O Peace! O Love! almost unknown on this vile earth, but spring ye forth in the depths of my longing soul, and draw me as with cords celestial to regions where ye do bloom unfading and eternal! Ye are my choice -- my unchanging, my immortal choice!

Here are motives, which, if pondered well and allowed to determine your choice, will bring you to where you shall walk with him in white, even in this present world.

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Chapter 7 HINDRANCES

When clear light begins to shine on the heart of the candidate for holiness, a great struggle is often experienced in getting definitely at the work. Sloth and indifference bind the soul as with fetters of brass. Persons who in other matters could rightfully repudiate the charge of laziness are so overcome with spiritual sloth that they put off seeking for the greatest boon ever granted to man, for even years; or at best, they seek only indifferently. Of course, it is hard for them to realize that this is their true condition; but it is, nevertheless.

Nearly everybody is naturally lazy in some particular. The boy whom the farmer calls lazy is by the school teacher considered the most studious boy in the school, and vice versa. Set one to doing the things he likes to do, and he will work hard, while in other matters he works sluggishly. No one likes to delve down through the strata of carnality to press his way against sloth, indifference, and his own moral inertia, and force the matter to an issue. It goes "against the grain." You may set before his mind the most glorious promises of God's word, and the richest, juiciest fruits of Canaan as his, if he will seek, and still the dead weight of his own soul will hinder him until he will be forced to "storm the gates of strife," if he makes any headway, and will feel that like Samson, he has the gates of Gaza on his back; and also that, like Reuben, his strength is "unstable as water." Let us note some of the signs of spiritual sloth.

1. Lack of interest in prayer. The duty of prayer appears to be irksome; time thus spent drags heavily, and the secret place is left with an almost unconscious sigh of relief with gladness that the duty is done. Then the man will plunge into business with a zest that convinces every one of his earnestness.

2. Another sign of sloth is absence of desire for and delight in the house of God. If in this state you can easily find excuses for absence from prayer and class meetings.

3. Indifference about the salvation of one's friends and neighbors, and that to such an extent that we seldom, if ever, call on them, or pray with them when we do call, or even mention the salvation of their souls, also arises from spiritual sloth. One can see the vineyard of God lying waste, growing up to weeds, and the stone wall thereof crumbling in ruins, and feel little concern. Such souls think the preacher and class leader ought to work harder, and criticize them for their lack of effort, while doing nothing themselves.

4. Procrastination indicates a slothful spirit. When the slothful soul attends holiness meetings he fears lest an altar call be given or a test proposed; and if the call is given, he says inwardly, "I want the experience, but the effort to obtain it is too great, I will wait till some other time." A lazy man generally intends to do the thing required, but the effort to do it now is too great, and he is only waiting till he feels like it; and, meanwhile, he dies a pauper, and is buried in the potter's field.

5. One great ruse of the enemy to induce people to delay is to suggest that they must wait the Lord's time. That they must in this way be taught some new lesson or killed out to a hurried spirit. What strange things the enemy of souls can get us to believe! When the soul is cleansed it will then be dead to both carnal hurry and carnal sloth. This idea of waiting is virtually an attempt to deliver ourselves independent of the blood; to get the work done without the trouble of getting

God's help; to bring about the end desired without using the God-appointed means; expecting something to "turn up," looking for our fortunes on the sidewalk instead of rolling up our sleeves and making them. Draggers are below par in this world; we need pushers; and especially is this true in religious matters in this Laodicean age. Oh, this round of waiting, wishing, hoping, expecting, desiring, but never obtaining! Quit it now, lay hold of the promises, and your legal years will be ended. God says, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." Avail thyself of his blessing now by faith and hope.

As Wesley says, "You shall not be disappointed of your hope; it will come, and will not tarry. Look for it every day, every hour, every moment. Why not this hour -- this moment? Certainly you may look for it now, if you believe it is by faith."

This same temptation is sometimes presented in another form, with the suggestion that some other time will do. The fact that the soul is Saved, has peace with God, and feels no condemnation, is liable to be used as an excuse for lack of immediate action. Condemnation would be an incentive to action, but the very assurance of safety is liable to be used as a plank to slide into indifference or open rebellion. Apply Wesley's translation of o. 10:12 to your case: "Let him that assuredly standeth take heed lest he fall."

Opportunities fly like the wind, and must be caught in passing or they are gone forever. God says, "Now is the accepted time." Do you believe what God says? Then act accordingly. There is little room for doubt that the longer you stand in the place you now occupy the harder it will be to pray out. If your soul is in a growing condition it is well, and you will, it may be, keep approaching the prize; but the time will come sooner or later when you must put forth an extra effort or you will settle back into a hard, callused condition which it will take all the powers of your being to break through. So the wise thing is to take the present as the best opportunity and see to it that the work is done.

6. Another plan taken by the carnal heart to keep one from facing the issue is to induce him to look and wait for a more favorable opportunity. This is a common trouble and one which must be guarded against. When in meeting, an altar call is given, the suggestion comes, "Wait till you get home." When at home "the cares of this life" come pressing in, and hour after hour passes, and the earnestness and determination felt in meeting are soon gone; and then when you do go to pray, you feel dry, the heavens are frozen over, and the enemy says, "You must wait until meeting again." Or, if you should seek your closet as soon as you get home you are constantly distracted with thoughts of this or that which must be done until your mind is completely diverted, and you are helpless. What shall you do? First, stop yielding to such suggestions. Then seize the first chance as God-given, and force your way through. Stop yielding to circumstances, and make circumstances of your own. Now is God's time; these surroundings were permitted by God, and you can make them all work for your good and to your salvation.

7. The next thing likely to keep you from immediate action is the thought that certain persons are not at hand to pray for you. You have great confidence in the prayers of certain ones, and it may be that your confidence is not misplaced; but you must not lean too much on the arm of flesh. True it is that God generally employs human instrumentalities in the work of salvation, yet he is not confined to any certain one, and can, if he chooses, work independent of any. There have

been cases where seekers have set their eyes on certain persons and thought if they could obtain their aid they would be cleansed. There is sometimes a good deal of the spirit of Naaman in this. They want the prophet to pronounce words over them, lay his hand on their head, and say the word of salvation. They would be greatly disappointed if he would tell them Just to go and wash in the sin-cleansing Jordan, and promise them that if they did they would be made whole. But it may be possible that if you get with the person you so desire to see, that God will not let him help you; and that If he does attempt to do so he will hinder more than help. It is neither Paul nor Apollos nor Cephas, but Christ that does the work.

Still you may say, "All this is true, but I have 'no one that is likeminded' to help me. I am all alone in the community. There are no holiness people, and if I should even mention the longings of my heart, they would think I had lost my mind." Yours is indeed a sad lot, but there is help. Let us quote the words of the saintly Fletcher addressed to such as you:

"But perhaps thou art alone. As a solitary bird which sitteth on the housetop, thou lookest for a companion who may go with thee through the deepest travail of the regeneration. But alas! thou lookest in vain: all the professors about thee seem satisfied with their former experiences, and with self-imputed or self-conceited perfection. When thou givest them a hint of thy want of power from on high, and of thy hunger and thirst after a fullness of righteousness, they do not sympathize with thee. And indeed how can they? They are full already; they reign without thee; they have need of nothing. They do not sensibly want that God would grant them according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith, that they, being rooted and grounded in love, may comprehend with all saints (perfected in love) what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that they might be filled with all the fulness of God (Eph. 3:16, etc.). They look upon thee as a whimsical person, full of singular notions, and they rather dampen than enliven thy hopes. Thy circumstances are sad; but do not give place to despair, no, not for a moment in the name of Christ, who could not get even Peter, James, and John, to watch with him one hour; and who was obliged to go through his agony alone; -- in his name, I say, 'Cast not away thy confidence, which has great recompense of reward.' Under all thy discouragements, remember that, after all, divine grace is not confined to numbers, any more than to a few. When all outward helps fail thee, make the more of Christ, on whom sufficient help is laid for thee -- Christ, who says, 'I will go with thee through fire and water;' the former shall not burn thee, nor the latter drown thee. Jacob was alone when he wrestled with the angel, yet he prevailed; and if the servant is not above his master, wonder not that it should be said of thee, as of thy Lord, when he went through his greatest temptations, 'Of the people there was none with him.'"

8. Spiritual sloth manifests itself in some people in half-hearted seeking. They keep at it steadily enough but never seem to make any headway. Their efforts are sluggish and lacking in the spirit of real importunity. They can be depended upon to be at every camp-meeting or holiness convention, and to be down at the altar praying the same old prayer for sanctification. Perhaps it is better to do this than not to seek at all, better to be at every altar service than to be altogether indifferent. Die trying, if necessary; but there is one thing you can depend upon, this easy-going, half-hearted way must be broken up if you ever obtain the experience. Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Bestir yourself. Get out of this rut. It may be that you are so "settled on your lees" that it will take a mighty effort to do so. But settle it

that the work must be done. Do something desperate, if necessary, in order to stir up your sluggish soul. Proclaim a fast, drop everything else that you possibly can, and launch out after God. Victory will come.

9. Still others seek like a colt or a balky horse pulling at a load -- by jerks. To see them lean over, strain every muscle, and jerk at the load you would think something must come. The traces and whiffletrees seem to be in danger, but nothing will be harmed, at least nothing will move. So with some seekers; at times they seem to pray earnestly, and people looking on are greatly encouraged. They throw back their heads, swing their arms like a windmill, sweat and holier till the veins of their necks swell out, fall over on the floor and cry, "Sanctify me, sanctify me" at the top of their voices; but lo, they run against some carnal tendency, and, instead of confessing it out, they either stop seeking or try to thresh through without meeting the light (trying to pound their way around the cross), and, failing in this, they back down and become indifferent and lazy for a season, and, it may be, backslide. After a while they take a fresh start; and so the process is repeated again and again. The way for such persons to do is to force themselves to the cross, not boisterously, but with determination; and calmly and intelligently hold themselves up against the white light of heaven. They may not make so much noise, but the clear light of heaven will purge out every vestige of carnality till they are pure within, like gold tried in the fire. Rev. B. T. Roberts says, "The best way to seek holiness is to seek it" Get at it, and keep at it till the victory comes. "Keeping everlastingly at it brings success."

As soon as you settle the question that you will seek and seek earnestly, you will be harassed by the enemy with all sorts of suggestions. Some of them will be seemingly harmless, some the most vicious possible; some of them will be open, with the acknowledgment that they are from the devil, while others will be underhanded and deceitful. He will step to your side and, if possible, fill your mind with fearful thoughts of distrust and unbelief, and cause you to stagger in your decision. There is little doubt that he hates holiness more than any other thing, and, as a consequence, will level his most destructive enginery at this point. But faith in God will make you invulnerable to all his fiery darts. Let us notice some of his most successful suggestions:

"God will not cleanse the heart" He is now perfectly willing that you should believe in justification, but is very solicitous lest you should deceive yourself and seek holiness. But this one passage should be enough to settle your mind on this point and forever put to rout the father of lies: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God that 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" (1 Thess. 5: 23, 24). Such a prayer, followed by such a "faithful promise" ought to convince the most stubborn heart that knows anything of God's power.

Failing here the enemy will say: "Yes, God can and does cleanse, but will not cleanse you." Anything suits him but to make the matter of salvation personal. The passage quoted above is personal, and is a promise that YOU may be cleansed. Akin to the foregoing suggestion is the thought which is sometimes suggested that none but the apostles ever had or ever can have such an experience. But there is no place in God's word where even an intimation is given that such gifts should depart from the church. On the contrary it sparkles with encouraging promises of the graces of holiness to be given to all who believe. Jesus said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word" (Jno. 17:20); and, strange to say, he was

speaking of sanctification, having said just before, "Sanctify them through thy truth." You and I are among the chosen number, for we believe the words of the apostles left for us in the New Testament

Then the enemy will suggest, "Yea, he will cleanse you, but not until just before you die." God fully appreciated the fact that it would be hard for the unbelieving human heart to grasp the fact that he would actually cleanse it from all carnality in this world, and so to help our faith, not only by promise, but also by his immutable oath, he lifted up his hand and swore by himself (for he could swear by no greater), that we might be holy not only at death, but all the days of our life. Read these wonderful words given from the lips of Zacharias while under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and recorded by Luke (Chapter 1:73-75): "The oath which he swore to our father Abraham, that he would grant us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life."

Again the enemy says: "Your heart is too treacherous, you cannot get it in the attitude before God where it can be cleansed." But your heart is just like the hearts of others: they have conquered by the grace of God, and you can do the same. The following, from Horatius Bonar, is to the point here: "Do not keep back from Christ under the idea that you must come to him in a disinterested frame, and from a strictly unselfish motive. If you are right in this thing, who can he saved? You are to come as you are; with all your had motives, whatever these may be. [That is, involuntary motives are wrong; If not what would be the use in seeking any more grace? but the real motives must be acceptable to God: or you will "ask and receive not."] Take all your bad motives; add them to the number of your sins, and bring them all to the altar where the great sacrifice is lying. Go to the mercy seat. Tell the High Priest there, not what you desire to be, nor what you ought to be, but what you are. Tell him the honest truth as to your condition at this moment. Confess the impurity of your motives; all the evil that you feel, or that you don't feel; your hard-heartedness, your blindness, your unteachableness. Confess everything without reserve. He wants you to come to him exactly as you are, and not cherish the vain thought that, by a little waiting, or working, or praying, you can make yourself fit, or persuade him to make you fit."

Then at times the enemy takes the opposite extreme, and says: "You are so indifferent that it is impossible that you should lay hold of God for cleansing." Be it so, your very indifference is an excuse for coming to God, and it is the glory of his divinity to wake you and take away your indifference. Fletcher says to come to God by faith, "bringing nothing with you but a careless, distracted, tossed, hardened heart, -- just such a heart as you have got now." Confess your indifference and God will help you. Some one has testified thus: "How reasonable that we should just do that one small act which God requires of us, go and tell him the truth. I used to go and say, 'Lord, I am a sinner, do have mercy on me;' but as I did not feel all this, I began to see that I was taking a lie in my hand, trying to persuade the Almighty that I felt things which I did not feel. These prayers and confessions brought me no comfort, no answer, so at last I changed my tone, and began to tell the truth -- 'Lord, I do not feel myself a sinner; I do not feel that I need mercy.' Now all was right; the sweetest reception, the most loving encouragements, the most refreshing answers, this confession of the truth brought down from heaven. I did not get anything by declaring myself a sinner, for I felt it not; but I obtained everything by confessing that I did not see myself one."

If he fails in every other attempt the devil may be successful in trying to get you to grow into the experience. But you might as well try to grow weeds out of your garden as to grow the carnal nature out of your heart. But you think grace by being constantly cultivated will so increase that it will kill out sin. Greater grace by its having greater ability to do right may weaken the power of sin, but it takes an especial act of divine grace to kill the sin. If not, it is not done by God but by ourselves. The following from Wesley is to the point: "Four or five and forty years ago, when I had no distinct views of what the apostle meant by exhorting us to leave the principles of the doctrine of Christ, and go on to perfection, two or three persons in London whom I knew to be truly sincere, desired to give me an account of their experience. It seemed exceeding strange, being different from any that I had heard before ... The next year, two or three more in Bristol, and two or three in Kingswood, coming to me severally, gave me exactly the same account of their experience. A few years after, I desired all those in London, who made the same profession, to come to me all together at the Foundry, that I might be thoroughly satisfied. I desired that man of God, Thomas Walsh, to give us the meeting there. When we met, first one of us, and then the other, asked the most searching questions we could devise. They answered every one without hesitation, and with the utmost simplicity, so that we were fully persuaded they did not deceive themselves. In the years 1759, 1760, 1761 and 1762, their number multiplied exceedingly, not only in London and Bristol, but in various parts of Ireland as well as England. Not trusting to the testimony of others, I carefully examined the most of these myself; and in London alone, I found six hundred and fifty-two members of our society, who were exceedingly clear in their experience, and of whose testimony I could see no reason to doubt I believe no year has passed since that time, wherein God has not wrought the same work in many others; but sometimes in one part of England or Ireland, sometimes in another; -- as 'the wind bloweth where it listeth;' -- and every one of these (after the most careful inquiry, I have not found one exception either in Great Britain or Ireland) has declared that his deliverance from sin was instantaneous; that the change was wrought in a moment. Had half of these, or one-third, or one in twenty, declared it was gradually wrought in them, I should have believed this, with regard to them, and thought that some were gradually sanctified and some instantaneously. But as I have not found, in so long a space of time, a single person speaking thus; as all who believe they are sanctified, declare with one voice, that the change was wrought in a moment, I cannot but believe that sanctification is commonly, if not always, an instantaneous work."

To the foregoing quotation let us add one from Fletcher, one of the most remarkable men of early Methodism: "If our hearts be purified by faith, as the scriptures expressly testify; if the faith which peculiarly purifies the hearts of Christians be a faith in the 'promise of the Father,' which promise was made by the Son and directly points at a peculiar effusion of the Holy Ghost, the purifier of spirits; if we may believe in a moment; and if God only may, in a moment, seal our sanctifying faith by sending us of his sanctifying Spirit: if this, I say, be the case, does it not follow, that to deny the possibility of the instantaneous destruction of sin, is to deny, contrary to scripture and to fact, that we can make an instantaneous act of faith in the sanctifying promise of the Father, and in the all-cleansing blood of the Son, and that God can seal the act by the instantaneous operation of his Spirit? ... This is not all. If you deny the possibility of the quick destruction of indwelling sin, you send to hell, or to some unscriptural purgatory, not only the dying thief, but also all those martyrs who suddenly embraced the Christian faith, and were instantly put to death by bloody persecutors for confessing the faith which they had just embraced. And if you allow that God may 'cut his work short in righteousness' and in such case, why not in other cases? Why not,

especially when a believer confesses his indwelling sin, ardently prays Christ would, and sincerely believes that Christ can, 'now cleanse him from all unrighteousness?'"

The accusations and suggestions mentioned above, together with numerous others, may be used by the enemy to hinder you from seeking and obtaining the "promise of the Father," but, as with Bunyan's pilgrim, the only safe way for you to do is to "put your fingers in your ears and run" crying, "Life! life i eternal life!" and never stop till you reach the goal Of your endeavors,

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Chapter 8 CONVICTION

God is not a thief, and so he will never take away the carnality of our hearts without our knowledge and consent nor is he a robber, and hence he will not force us to give it up; neither is he a deceitful Being, therefore he will not cleanse us from it unless we know what we are yielding. When we see the fairness of his demands, and give our willing consent, he will give us purity in the place of the uncleanness he takes away. Hence the Holy Spirit reveals sin as far as possible in all its heinousness, until the soul gladly makes the exchange. As God sent hornets and made the Canaanites glad to leave their country, so the Holy Ghost with convictions like hornets, disturbs the soul until it yields gladly to the death of self.

Many people have wrong ideas of the conviction necessary in seeking holiness. Some think it is simply a knowledge that we need such an experience; others that it is a feeling that if it is not obtained we will be lost; still others that it is some strange sensation which seizes us and impels us toward God, or so impresses us that we know now is the time to seek; yet others that because God commands we are to obey without any feeling; and yet others an intellectual realization that we are unclean, and hence must be cleansed. But all these conceptions fall below the mark. Wesley, after a wonderful description of a soul's view of the workings of the carnal mind, adds: "In this sense we are to repent, after we are justified, (Using the word 'repent' in the same sense as we shall use 'Conviction.') And till we do so, we can go no farther. For, till we are sensible of our disease, it admits of no cure." Again he says: "A deep conviction that we are not yet whole; that our hearts are not fully purified; that there is yet in us a 'carnal mind,' which is still in its nature 'enmity against God,' that a whole body of sin remains in our hearts, weakened indeed, but not destroyed; show, beyond all possibility of doubt, the absolute necessity of a further change ... We still retain a depth of sin: and it is the consciousness of this which constrains us to groan for a full deliverance, to him that is mighty to save. Hence it is, that those believers who are not convinced of the deep corruption of their hearts, or but slightly, and, as it were, notionally convinced, have little concern about entire sanctification. They may possibly hold the opinion that such a thing is to be, either at death, or some time, they know not when, before it But they have no great uneasiness for the want of it, and no great hunger or thirst after it. They cannot, until they know themselves better, until they repent in the sense above described, until God unveils the inbred monster's face, and shows them the real state of their souls. Then only, when they feel the burden, will they groan for deliverance from it Then, and not till then, will they cry out, in the agony of their soul,

"Break off the yoke of inbred sin,

And fully set my spirit free!
I cannot rest till pure within;
Till I am wholly lost in thee!"

Such we believe with Wesley is the conviction necessary to intelligently seek cleansing -- a clear conception of what the evil nature is from which you pray to be delivered -- its deep, deceitful workings, and the danger if it is not taken away.

Dr. Jesse T. Peck, in "The Central Idea of Christianity," says: "But let us not be superficial. Whatever is valuable in religion must be grounded in conviction ... Conviction is a law term. It implies that the accused has been arrested, tried, and condemned -- brought in guilty of the crime alleged against him in the indictment.

"But in theology this term has a special sense. It is the work of the Holy Spirit, imparting to the soul positive evidence of its guilt, its depravity, and its exposures...

"But there is a conviction of inward impurity of 'sin in believers,' which is eminently the work of the Holy Spirit. Depravity of the heart, however concealed, cannot remain long concealed. Its first motions, as we have seen, are felt with surprise by the truly regenerated. They produce more or less of pain and exposure, but if properly resisted, they do not bring a feeling of guilt upon a spirit trusting in Christ. Further experience, however, shows that the life of the Christian is to be almost a continual battle, not merely with outward foes, but with himself. The recognition of these inward wrongs will depend not only upon what they are, but upon the habit of attention to the state of the soul, and the degree of divine influence secured by the co-operation of the human agent. The truly devout man will, however, frequently find his attention silently but powerfully drawn to these inward impurities. Sometimes when, so far as his consciousness reports, no train of reflection has led to it -- In the midst of passing engagements, and of other thoughts, the conviction will flash upon him suddenly, and he will feel like hiding himself from the sight of men, burying his face in the dust, and crying out for deliverance. At other times this sense of wrong tendencies assumes an amazing distinctness in the midst of spiritual exercises, and even of powerful outpourings of the Holy Spirit. This cannot be due to unprompted reason. Left merely to ourselves, we would sensibly or insensibly yield to the rising evil, and allow the conquest of the heart by its own subjugated foes. Whatever influence we may attribute to the associations of the hour, and the habits of life, they are not sufficient to account for the searching light that breaks in upon the soul, and the power which humbles it to the dust. The great Reprover 'of sin, of righteousness, and of Judgment,' is there in the faithfulness and authority of God, performing the work for which he has appeared among men.

"These convictions, let it be expressly stated, differ from those felt by the unpardoned sinner. They are convictions of inward depravity, and not of guilt; they are connected with felt aversion to the impurity recognized, and a conscious dependence upon the Savior's merits for gracious acceptance; they produce pain, but not condemnation; they are not infrequently strongest in the midst of fervent spirit-pleadings for gracious influence, and increase with the advance of the soul in its longings after God, and in the elements of higher Christian life."

When you sought God for pardon, if you really obtained it, you saw that you were a sinner condemned of God. Your past life loomed up before you, the Spirit pointed to one sin after another, and, as he thus revealed them, you groaned and wept and confessed to God, and to men also, if they had been wronged. Your sins looked hateful to you because they separated you from God. But now you seek cleansing from the "inbred monster" that has troubled you all through your Christian life, kept you from mounting into God, from living as humbly and walking as carefully as you in your inmost soul knew was your privilege; and which, in short, has lain like a treacherous vampire at the fountain of your heaven-brought experience, and continued its unwelcome existence by drawing from your spiritual vitality leaving you weak and at times almost helpless in consequence. Now you see its real nature, and are forced to cry out for deliverance. This is the rational definition of conviction for cleansing. It arises from the soul's intelligent apprehension of its unclean condition and pressing need, and is not a mere fanciful idea of some vague blessing God has promised to give.

But there are thousands of persons who seek, and even profess, the experience of holiness who have never thus seen their hearts, and who have very vague ideas, if any at all, of what real deliverance from inbred sin means, of what real holiness is. Many of them, no doubt, are honest, and, if they but clearly saw what they should do, would gladly do it; but because their teachers have led them wrong, they are in the dark, making a loud profession, and, in their works, denying the power of God. Although there may be exceptions to the rule, yet we are convinced, both from the study of the doctrine and from the history of the holiness work, that the foregoing type of conviction is necessary in order to obtain a genuine experience. Every method possible may be tried without this conviction, and because of its lack the soul will land somewhere short of the work of grace needed. Here is the great failure in much of the holiness teaching and profession of today -- a great lack of light on the conditions and needs of the soul. Faith is preached until, apparently, nothing more can be said; theories are spun until they are worn threadbare; but comparatively few in the power and sweetness of the Holy Ghost probe into the depths of inbred uncleanness, and bring to view the hidden chambers of imagery, the Achans, the Agags, and the Ishmaels of the soul.

Every method possible may be tried without this conviction, but to no effect. We knew a young man who at different times fasted and prayed for deliverance from inbred corruption, neither eating nor drinking for six or seven days at a time, but to no avail. At length he stopped long enough for God to speak, and was directed by the Spirit to hold still and not seek until the Lord should direct. Now notice the way God took to help a soul that was honest, and also what God considered his needs. For some time he went along blest and free, enjoying himself in God. Finally, one night after having an exceptionally free time in meeting, he felt the stirrings of self-glory. Immediately the burning finger of God was pointed at it, and the Holy Spirit said, "That is carnality." This was the first time he had actually known the real nature of the carnal mind. This was the entering wedge. Back over his Christian experience the Spirit led him, revealing this outcropping of self; then the same with another manifestation, till clear, blazing light shone on all the principal phases of the inbred foe, revealing it in all its iniquitous nature. Now it was comparatively easy on his part to pray through, for the seeker saw the disease and its danger, and was glad to find the only physician who could heal.

If preachers would but faithfully let the light shine in this way, first having their own hearts melted with real love, until their hearers would actually feel the burden of their unclean hearts, there would be more who would obtain the prize. It must be acknowledged that this is a slower process, and that the natural heart shrinks from being thus exposed; that it will be a source of burden, and possibly of misunderstanding, for the preacher. Many times his heart will ache, and melt like wax in a furnace; but the actual results that follow will repay a thousand times. This is the divine plan, and the path followed by the worthies of a hundred years ago.

Today, however on the contrary, the many so-called holiness preachers are holding up before their people the glory side of the experience, almost or entirely to the exclusion of the "repentance" side. Their sermons are stirring, and cause an eagerness for its attainment, but as they neglect to tell the steps necessary to be taken, and to show the people their actual condition, their efforts avail little or nothing, so far as real deliverances are concerned.

A favorite method with such preachers is to work on the fears of their listeners; preach elaborate sermons on what the experience will do for a person, and, when they get the people to trembling because they do not possess it, turn the battery, and tell them they will go to hell if they do not get it; that without it they will eventually backslide; that without it they cannot see God; or tempt their appetites with the sight of the delicious fruit of Canaan, and, when they are all wrought up, promise it to them if they will only hell eve.

If one retains a clear experience of justification, there is no doubt but that sooner or later light will shine on his heart, and when it really does shine, there will be very little need of such exhortations. He will be seeking it everywhere. If one does need such talk to cause him to move, he is either not clearly saved, or sufficient light has not been shed on his trouble to make him see his need. In either case he needs different treatment Let the preacher or teacher thoroughly probe the seat of the trouble, and, if the man is honest, he will soon be so aroused as to move out in earnest after full redemption.

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Chapter 9 CONVICTION (Concluded)

Reader, if clear light has not shone on your heart and revealed the depths of depravity still lurking there, you can undoubtedly obtain such light by following carefully these rules:

1. Pray that God may reveal to you your own heart. He has told us that if we lacked wisdom, we are to ask of him and he will give "liberally," and not upbraid us for our ignorance. Pray earnestly. Wrestle with God. If matters seem hard to unravel, fast and pray. Be determined that you will obtain. Take no denial. Do not slack your efforts, for if you do, you may lose all the ground you have attained.

"Pray -- Oh pray," says Dr. Peck, "that he will deign to come to your aid. Invite him as your friend -- your welcome guest Beseech him to increase the light that reveals the defect of your

Christian state, and uncovers to your view the most secret wrongs within you. Invite even the anguish, if need be, of the most humiliating self-exposures, and shrink not from the rod of correction, which shall drive you to the bosom of your only protector. Need you again be reminded how far beneath your privilege you have lived -- how numerous have been the evidences of your internal depravity -- how frequent have been your failures to honor God and advance the interests of his cause? Prayer -- humble, believing, mighty prayer -- prayer from your heart -- prayer as you walk the street -- prayer with your brethren, and especially prayer in the closet -- long-continued, inquiring, struggling prayer, will help you to know yourself better -- will bring the special grace of God to your aid. In darkness, in coldness, in hardness, if it must be, pray until the subduing, melting grace shall be given.

"Your conviction, to be available, must not be superficial -- must not be the merely ordinary impression, with occasional increase, that you are not what you ought to be. It must be profound, penetrating, and abiding, or you will never make it the starting point of successful effort to obtain purity of heart and life."

2. Hold your heart open to receive light when it comes. It will come, if you hold on in this direction. There is danger when one thus thinks of searching into his heart of an almost unconscious fearfulness of the consequences preventing him; a fear that he will find something he will not want to see, or that he will not want to confess. Brother, if there is such a secret feeling as this lurking in your heart, which comes to your view just long enough for you to get a glimpse of it, you have light already. That feeling itself is carnality, and that, too, in its most treacherous form -- carnality, afraid of God and skulking away among the bushes to evade inspection. Trace it up, and bring it out to the light; analyze it, and see what its real elements are; go against it, and be determined that you will have God's penetrating light to flash through and through your heart, no matter what it may reveal. Are you in earnest. Then so is God, and God's word for it, your needs will come to the light very soon.

3. Examine carefully and prayerfully the inmost workings of your soul. Peck says; "Again, we beseech you, examine your heart with the profoundest sincerity. Nay, shrink not from the revelations unfolded to your view. Submit to the worst. Whatever the pain -- whatever the loathing produced by the discovery of the facts, still invite this discovery. Secure it by every means in your power ... You will know -- you will feel in every part of your being -- that you are deeply depraved; that you cannot remain so; that you must be holy, or wrong your own soul, and wrong your Savior whose blood is freely offered to cleanse you from all sin."

On this same point Fletcher says: "Through grace detect these evils by close attention to what passes in your heart at all times, but especially in an hour of temptation."

When you do anything, especially if it is out of the ordinary, stop as soon as possible and endeavor to find out what motive or motives have prompted you. Do not flippantly pass it off by saying that you did it for the glory of God. It may be you did, and it may be you did not. There could have been such a motive, and, along with it, a contrary motive, stronger and more influential than the right one. Look carefully and honestly. Force yourself to look. Nature will rebel, but "through grace" you must conquer. If you really want the victory, nature must be held to the rack by grace, in spite of its struggles and strong cries against such a course.

At first your motives will, as it were, skulk away, and you will have a hard time analyzing them. In fact, you cannot do it without the help of the Holy Spirit. They are deep-seated, and, as a consequence, they require supernatural power to uncover them. This is the reason why people hesitate to let the "thoughts of their hearts be revealed;" there is an almost unconscious knowledge that there are motives and desires hidden away in this storehouse of uncleanness that will make the heart sick when they are brought to light.

Man naturally wants to know the best of his case; but the Holy Ghost is true to him, and will show him the very worst. This he will shrink from as long as possible. But if you want to be cured, you must let the physician probe the wound. The more you object and hold back, the longer your trouble will last. If you hold yourself still, the work will shortly be done, and you will rejoice in the glorious deliverance of the children of God. When you decide that the gain will repay you for all the seeming loss, and become quiet under the white light of heaven, God will begin to speak.

One small and seemingly insignificant act will, at times, be found to be backed by several motives, until you will actually wonder what was the ruling intention. To illustrate: You give a dollar to some public collection. When you hear its hearty jingle in the basket, and realize that it has already gone on its way, turn your eyes inward, and see what motives cluster around that single coin. You will be surprised when they show up something like this: 1. A desire to glorify God. 2. A covetous feeling, that wants the dollar for some other purpose. 3. A desire to be seen of men, that you may be applauded. 4. A desire to excel others in giving. 5. Hope of some kind of visible reward for giving to God's cause.

Again, you have an exceptionally free time in testimony. After you sit down and the blessing somewhat subsides, turn your eyes inward and you will see: 1. Spiritual pride that exalts itself above or at the expense of God. 2. Self-glory in your abilities and spiritual attainments. 3. A secret glory that you are freer than some other person. 4. Expectation of and reaching out after praise, which if no one utters after the meeting, you feel disappointed, and possibly speak about it yourself. 5. May be a little thanksgiving to God, Or, some one else instead of you gets the blessing, and now you find: 1. A feeling of envy, because they are blest and you are not. 2. A secret desire to reach to their measure in blessing. 3. A thought of the time you were as much blessed as they. 4. Complaint against God for leaving you out. 5. Perhaps a thought of some wrong, real or imaginary, that the person has committed. 6. Some gladness because your brother rejoices.

What an awful spectacle! This is the human heart unsanctified, yet possessing a measure of grace. This is the condition which the Spirit will reveal when the heart is thrown open for his light to penetrate.

To promote this deeper knowledge of the workings of his own soul, that wonderful man of God, Jonathan Edwards, among a number of other rules, held himself to the following: "Resolved: Frequently to take some deliberate action, which seems most unlikely to be done for the glory of God, and trace it back to the original intention, designs, and ends of it; and, if I find it not to be for God's glory, to repudiate it as a breach of the fourth resolution [not to the glory of God]."

"Resolved: Whenever I do any conspicuously evil action, to trace it back till I come to the original cause; and then, both carefully endeavor to do so no more, and to fight and pray with all my might against the original of it.

"Resolved: To examine carefully and constantly what that one thing in me is which causes me in the least to doubt the love of God, and to direct all my forces against it.

"Resolved: Never to say anything at all against anybody, but when it is perfectly agreeable to the highest degree of Christian honor, and of love to mankind; agreeable to the lowest humility and sense of my own faults and failings; and agreeable to the golden rule; often when I have said anything against any one, to bring it to, and try it strictly by the test of this resolution.

"Resolved: To inquire every night, as I am going to bed, wherein I have been negligent; what sin I have committed; and, wherein I have denied myself.

"Resolved: Never to do anything of which I so much question the lawfulness, as that I intend at the same time to consider and examine afterwards whether it be lawful or not, unless I as much question the lawfulness of the omission.

"Resolved Whenever my feelings begin to appear in the least out of order, when I am conscious of the least uneasiness within, or the least irregularity without, I will subject myself to the strictest examination."

When he subjected his heart and motives to such a strict examination as this day after day, it is no wonder that we afterward hear him testifying to the uncleanness and sinfulness of his heart in the following strong and, perhaps exaggerated language: "My wickedness, as I am in myself, has long appeared to me perfectly ineffable, and swallowing up all thought and imagination, like an infinite deluge, or mountains over my head. I know not how to express better what my sins appear to me to be, than by heaping infinite upon infinite, and multiplying infinite by infinite. Very often for many years these expressions are in my mind and in my mouth: Infinite upon infinite, and multiplying infinite by infinite, When I look into my heart and take a view of my wickedness, it looks like an abyss infinitely deeper than hell. And appears to me that were it not for free grace, exalted and raised up to all the infinite height of all the fulness and glory of the great Jehovah, and the arms of his power and grace stretched forth in all the majesty of his power, and in all the glory of his sovereignty, I should appear sunk down in my sins below hell itself."

Jonathan Edwards was a Presbyterian and at the time of writing these rules did not believe he could be delivered from these sins of his heart; but the plan he took in dealing with his soul would have surely brought deliverance if he had only added the belief that God could cleanse him. But since he did not, he had to struggle on looking at his bosom foe the greater part of his life, when cleansing was right at his door, But we have not so learned Christ. We know that when we get a sight of our hearts, and loathe ourselves before God, there is cleansing at hand for us.

By taking the course described above the disease of the soul will come to light, If you thus examine closely and honestly, you will find your heart reaching out for praise or preferment, or fearing the scorn or disapproval of others; an uncomfortable jealous feeling when others are

praised In your presence and you left out, and a secret wish that you might be praised instead, and this perhaps accompanied by thoughts of the failings of the one praised, and a strong desire to tell them; pride of your own person, no matter how lacking in beauty, often complacently viewing your face in the mirror; pride of your attainments, your name, your family; unclean promptings -- the mind reaching out after unclean things, perhaps in desire to see immodest pictures or things gratifying to prurient curiosity; lustful glances, accompanied by secret desire for gratification that wars against the Spirit; impatient feelings when crossed or slighted; and, when any little matter goes contrary to your desire, a tendency to say unkind things, It is useless to go through the whole list, and the windings of sinful tendencies are so numerous that it would be impossible; but, if you are honest, and steadily and persistently hold your heart open before God, your uncleanness will loom up before your spirit's vision and cause you to humble yourself before him, Oh, for honest souls, who will be clean at any cost!

When the light of the Spirit shines on any one of these tendencies, trace it back in your life, and you will be surprised to find how many times it has shown itself and you passed it by not knowing what to call it God will bring these things to your remembrance, if you honestly desire his guidance.

Take one manifestation of the carnal nature as an illustration of what is meant. Another person is praised in your presence, and you feel the strivings of jealousy. (To be sure you did not yield to these strivings; if you did you forfeited grace.) Get alone with God as quickly as possible. Throw your heart and mind open, and you will perhaps see that yesterday when Sister Blank had quite a free time you felt jealous of the praise she would get, or even jealous over the fact that God would bless her and not you. Perhaps you will remember that when church officers were elected and you were left out you felt so uneasy inside that you could scarcely hold up under it. The preacher calls on Sister Blank twice and only once on you, and how uncomfortable you feel. Sister Blank has a larger house, more money, better education, better clothes than you, and, oh, how your heart burns and you have to pray much to keep the victory, You will see numerous instances where you have felt jealous of your husband, your wife, your neighbor's money, honor, preferment, blessings, till you will actually wonder how God kept you saved at all, and it may be you will be tempted to think you have not been saved; but hold still; this is God's way of answering prayer and giving you light.

Now you begin to see what carnality really is. This is light from heaven. Do not draw back. The sight will make you shudder, but press right up to the light. It is the blessed God that is shining. Press on; go ahead; hold yourself to the rack; and at length God will lead you right into the depths of your soul, where all around you are its vile tendencies, and you will see that they are in every move, in every word, in every prayer, in every testimony, in everything you say and do. How you will shudder and cry out to God! Hold steady. Let the light pour in till the whole brood is thoroughly routed and cast out, But here is where a great many fail; their spirit faints at the sight. But if you will be steady here, God will take you through to glorious victory.

Page after page might be taken from Wesley's writings to promote this deep knowledge of the sinfulness of the un sanctified heart, For your encouragement we will give one quotation from his sermon on "The First Fruits of the Spirit," which must suffice: "There is no condemnation to them which 'walk after the spirit,' by reason of inward sin still remaining, so long as they do not

give way thereto; nor by reason of sin cleaving to all they do. Then fret not thyself because thou still comest short of the glorious image of God; nor yet because pride, self-will, or unbelief, cleave to all thy words or works, And be not afraid to know all this evil of thy heart, to know thyself as also thou art known. Yea, desire of God that thou mayest not think of thyself more highly than thou oughtest to think. Let thy continual prayer be. --

"Show me, as my soul can hear,
The depth of inbred sin;
All the unbelief declare,
The pride that works within."

But when he heareth thy prayer, and unveils thy heart; when he shows thee thoroughly what spirit thou art of; then beware that thy faith fail thee not, that thou suffer not thy shield to be torn from thee. Be abased. Be humbled in the dust. See thyself nothing, less than nothing and vanity. But still 'let not thy heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.' Still hold fast, I, even I, 'have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' 'And as the heavens are higher than the earth, so is his love higher than even our sins.' Therefore, God is merciful to thee a sinner! Such a sinner as thou art! God is love; and Christ hath died! Therefore, the Father himself loveth thee! Thou art his child! Therefore he will withhold from thee no manner of thing that is good. Is it good, that the whole body of sin, which is crucified in thee, should be destroyed? It shall be done! Thou shalt be 'cleansed from all filthiness, both of flesh and spirit.' Is it good, that nothing should remain in thy heart, but the pure love of God alone? Be of good cheer! Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and mind, and soul, and strength.' 'Faithful is he that hath promised, who also will do it.' It is thy part, patiently to continue in the work of faith, and in the labor of love; and in cheerful peace, in humble confidence, with calm and resigned, and yet earnest expectation, to wait till the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this."

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Chapter 10 CONFESSION

When to one is given this deep view of the inward workings of carnality, he will just as naturally confess it as he will confess his actual sins when seeking pardon. The fact is that such a view of self will be accompanied by confession almost as inevitably as a person is accompanied by his shadow; the discovery and confession can scarcely be separated in experience, and we have separated them here only for convenience, Then his heart in its honest moments will groan its complaints to God, no matter how contrary to his theories such a course may be. If this is true, it seems strange that there should be holiness teachers who would oppose confession; and yet it is not so strange either when we know how the natural heart opposes everything vital in religion. But confession inherent sin is a Bible requirement, the doctrine of those "holy men of old" who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

Dr. Jesse T. Peck, in his "Central Idea of Christianity" (pages 220-221) says: "But you will find some stubborn difficulties in your way. There are some unavoidable implications in the confessions you are called upon to make, that will be deeply humbling to the soul, You have

probably been long known and recognized as a Christian -- perhaps a faithful, fervent Christian; you may have been a leader in the armies of Israel -- a minister in the church of God -- even an eminent minister among your brethren. In either case, it is not quite easy to confess that you have been all this time without a pure heart -- that your religion has been a religion of contests with yourself, as well as with the world and Satan, and that, though you have advocated for years a religion of purity, you have never yet fully availed yourself of the purifying provisions of the gospel ... Nor is it upon any principle of penance, or self-mortification, or with any view to priestly absolution, that confession is required. The grand principle of this whole concession is truth, truth to the conscience; truth to the facts of the present and the past truth to the convictions of the soul by the Holy Spirit; truth to the vows you have made, and the demands of the church; all of which requires, and must have, candid expression; and you will be gratified, you will be thankful to God for the benefits it confers."

Dr. Adam Clarke, in his comments on i John 1:9 says: "Guilt, to be forgiven, must be confessed; and pollution, to be cleansed, must be confessed. In order to find mercy, a man must know and feel himself to be a sinner, that he may fervently apply to God for pardon; and in order to get a clean heart, a man must know and feel its depravity, acknowledge and deplore it before God, in order to be fully sanctified. Few are pardoned because they do not feel and confess their sins; and few are sanctified, or cleansed from all sin, because they do not feel and confess their own sore, and the plague of their hearts."

One condition of pardon is that a person confess his sins, and one condition of cleansing is that the depravity of the heart be confessed and deplored. A sinner confesses his actual transgressions because he seeks forgiveness for them; but the Christian confesses his sin or depravity because it is this from which he now seeks to be delivered, But in either case God requires of the seeker an honest confession before he will do the work for which he seeks.

In order to make our meaning concerning the necessity of confession clear let us quote some things that are not and some things that are implied in the scriptural confession of inbred sin:

I. Some things we do not mean when we speak of confession.

1. We do not mean auricular confession, -- confession to some human being, as the Catholics confess to their priests, This is the first thing that occurs to the minds of many when confession is mentioned. This may be from the fact that this matter of confession has been almost entirely excluded from our Protestant theology, and is scarcely mentioned any more, except in speaking of the errors of the Papists, But because Papists run to extremes in confession and works, Protestants are not excusable for running to the opposite extreme of secrecy and so-called faith. No, God's way always lies between the two extremes of rabid radicalism and flesh-pleasing conservatism, If we regard it as necessary to confess all the thoughts of our hearts to some human being, we shall be involved in several difficulties:

(1) No person can pray through to victory alone. If the confession must of necessity be made to some person, this is the inevitable conclusion.

(2) There must be a confessor, or some person who will consent to listen to our tale, Now some persons are so situated that this would be impossible, and when the depths of depravity are being unfolded it would take a person with a great deal of nerve and grace to stand quietly by and listen. Such persons are hard to find.

(3) It would necessitate telling all. Roman Catholics, hold special penitents to this line, and, if they forget, or hesitate the priests have a series of questions as reminders.

(4) Confession could not be made to one of the opposite sex. True, Catholics do this, but our Protestant hearts revolt from such a procedure, and it is well that they do. Some things could be confessed, but not all.

It seems to me that these four considerations effectually do away with the necessity for such a confession as some seem to teach.

2. We do not think it is either necessary or possible to see and confess all the unclean movings of the soul. It is comparatively easy to remember our worst sins, but when we undertake to remember every sin and tell the motives that have impelled us to every action of our lives, the absurdity of such a course is apparent in a moment. Enough only is necessary to cause the soul to turn with loathing from carnality to the blood that cleanses.

3. There are some confession which it is improper to make under certain circumstances:

(1) It is improper to tell in public the secret movings of the soul to such an extent as to bring reproach on the cause of God. Such errors have been committed, done by honest souls who wanted to do their best at getting right with God. The enemy likes to crowd such persons too far.

(2) It is improper for a husband or wife who has in reality been true to the marriage vow to tell too much of the involuntary infidelity of the heart. Involuntary heart wanderings, if promptly and firmly resisted, involve no actual guilt, and such confession may only cause alienation of affection in the party to whom it is made.

(3) Do not confess to this or that just to break up your heart. Such a course is liable to run into great extremes, for if the heart must be broken in this way, of course the worst things imaginable will be the first things to be told. Hold steady before the light till the sight of your own heart breaks you down; then pour your heart out to God, and it will do you much good.

(4) Do not berate and belittle yourself. Carnality will grow fat on such things. Calling yourself mean names and extravagant expressions will do no good. Simply tell the truth.

(5) Do not exaggerate. Hold yourself to the absolute facts in the case. Overstatement is just as wrong as understatement. Don't hunt for some fearful thing that will astonish yourself and others. Truth is had enough without such exaggeration.

(6) Do not descend to trifles and whimsicalities. Tell them out to God if necessary, but do not annoy and degrade others with such things. Hold yourself to the real issue.

(7) Do not ramble over the whole country, but hold steady before the white light of heaven. This hurts. This will kill. So do not fall into aimless bush-whacking, but with tears and groans march against the enemy. Amen. By Jesus' help you can dislodge him.

II. The proper kind of confession, as taught by the Bible and early Methodism:

1. Public confession, Under this head we quote from Peck's "Central Idea" (pp. 217, 218): "We must suggest that this conviction for holiness and resolution to obtain it can in no case be made a secret ... And yet you must be consistent. God will not allow you to be one thing to your own consciousness, and another in the reasonable apprehensions of others, You may not inwardly reckon yourself a seeker of entire salvation, and outwardly appear to be content with the ordinary Christian state. You cannot ask God to look upon you as a determined seeker of holiness and ask your brethren to look upon you as having no peculiar convictions, or purposes, or feelings in regard to this great question. No duplicity can be allowed here or elsewhere. Honestly, just what you are, you must be willing to be considered."

There are, no doubt, certain lines of confession that God requires of certain individuals. No line can be specified that will cover every case, as God suits his requirements to the case in hand; using only the means and amount necessary to bring each individual down at his feet. It is manifestly as impossible to particularize, and lay down iron-clad rules that will suit every case, as it is perfectly to understand every case, and when we do understand to incorporate them all into one; or as it is to read the mind of God. There is no doubt that in separate cases he makes known to the soul the special direction to be taken under its peculiar circumstances, but these leadings are as various as the various individuals and their different temperaments and necessities. But general rules can quite easily be laid down that will cover the separate cases in a general way.

(1) There should be a general confession of the condition of the heart, You might say something like this: "I have been professing holiness for so many months, or years, but now find that I was mistaken. All the while I have been harassed with doubts as to whether my heart was actually clean, but I laid these embarrassments to temptation. Sometimes I would be really blest, and would then feel quite clear and comparatively easy in claiming the glorious experience; but now I find that this was the blessing received by every truly justified soul, yet God did not reject me for misrepresenting matters, because he saw that I was honest. At times I have felt the stirring of pride and jealousy in my soul, and have had a hard time to keep the victory. Impatience came involuntarily boiling up, and because the Spirit of God that was in me did not allow me actually to give way, I turned it off as merely a temptation, When I looked away from it to Jesus I was happy, but I now see that God always blesses honest souls when they look to him. I have felt sin struggling against grace, and grace against sin. At times it has seemed that sin would gain the day in spite of all my efforts; then again grace so triumphed that I scarcely realized the presence of sin, But now I see my true state. The light shines clearly. I mean to press my case until deliverance comes." Much the same course in general could be pursued by those who never have professed holiness.

(2) More detailed confession might profitable be used at the altar, if you have the privilege of one where you can pray as you choose. If not, tell it to God in secret. When your soul is broken up and you see your true standing, pour your heart out to God. Mourn because your heart is

unclean. Tell God how it has dishonored him, and taken to itself the glory due to him only. Tell him how pride has hindered your prayers, and how jealousy has infused your spirit. Tell him of the deadly strife, of the clashing of arms within. Tell him how impatient and envious you have been of the rise or promotion of another. In short, confess out in general your heart's deep strivings, but do not descend to particular events. Reserve this for a more private place. The ears of God are always open to hear your complaints.

Do not consider this an irksome task, but thank God for the privilege of hunting your foe to the death. Let a godly glorying in this "revenge" you are obtaining against the "old man" arise in your heart. Persecute him to the death. Hew him to pieces before the Lord. Cry out for God's aid, it shall be given.

2. Individual confession should sometimes be made. By this we mean confession to parties you have injured, or toward whom you have manifested had tempers. Peck says, "We refer not to minute details; -- these are not due except to individuals who you may have injured and to whom you owe reparation; and this, it is presumed, you have not knowingly withheld, or you would have lost your justification" (Central Idea, pp. 220, 221), But it may be that in a moment of severe pressure you have let some unkind or hasty word escape your lips, which stung some one to the very heart. Perhaps they spent hours of weeping as a result, and constantly feel that you have a lack of true love for them, Now when the Holy Spirit brings this to your remembrance, make all haste to go to the one injured and cast out the fire from your bosom. Tell them of that ill word you spoke, or that injurious tale you helped to keep going, it has stung your own soul ever since, if it has not kept you under absolute condemnation, it has chained your soul so that it is impossible to rise. You may find right here that something like this has been holding you back for months. Now be honest. Let the light pour in; and, when it comes, walk in it, for you are now after God, and to find him you must take the track that leads to him.

3. Private confession. It will no doubt be admitted by all, or at least by the radical branch of the holiness movement, that if a seeker for heart purity will take some friend to one side and tell the troubles of his soul, pointing out specifically under what circumstances he felt certain tendencies arise in his soul, that he will be greatly helped.

Dr. Adam Clarke, in his comments on James 5:16, says: "This is a good general direction to Christians who endeavor to maintain among themselves the communion of saints. This social confession tends much to humble the soul, and to make it watchful. We naturally wish that our friends in general, and our religious friends in particular, should think well of us; and when we confess to them offenses which, without this confession, they could never have known, we feel humbled, and are kept from self-applause and induced to watch unto prayer, that we may not increase our offenses before God, or be obliged any more to undergo the painful humiliation of acknowledging our weakness, fickleness, or infidelity to our religious brethren, It is not said, Confess your faults to the ELDERS, that they may forgive them, or prescribe penance in order to forgive them, No; the members of the church were to confess their faults to each other, therefore auricular confession to a priest, such as is prescribed by the Romish Church, has no foundation in this passage. Indeed, had it any foundation here it would prove more than they wish, for it would require the priest to confess his sins to the people, as well as the people to confess theirs to the priest."

Dr. Benson, in his comments on the same passage, brings out the same thoughts, and it is not necessary to transcribe the passage here.

Wesley, in his notes on this passage, says: "Confess your faults -- whether you are sick or in health -- to one another. He does not say to the elders. (This may or may not be done; for it is nowhere commanded.) We may confess them to anyone who can pray in faith. He will then know how to pray for us, and be more stirred up so to do; and pray one for another, 'that ye may be healed' -- of all your spiritual diseases."

Again, in his "Christian Perfection," Wesley says: "And If any of you should at any time fall from what you now are; if you should again feel pride or unbelief, or any temper from which you are now delivered; do not deny, do not hide, do not disguise it at all at the peril of your soul. At all events go to one in whom you can confide, and speak just what you feel. God will enable him to speak a word in season, which shall be health to your soul. And surely he will again lift up your head, and cause the bones that have been broken to rejoice."

In speaking of confession in his "Central Idea" (p. 222), Dr. Peck says: "It will, moreover, secure a strong sympathy for you, and the most fervent prayers from those you love, You will feel the power of this collateral support. It will sustain your resolution mightily, and the richness of blessings called down in answer to united intercessions, from faithful believing ones, will more than compensate you for the cross you have borne."

There is in man a desire to unburden himself, a desire to find some one to whom he can make his condition known, and of whom he can obtain assistance. St. James says, "Confess your faults one to another." There is a wonderful tendency in this kind of confession to humble the soul, melt it like wax in the fire, and make it feel its utter depravity and great need of the cleansing blood. When all these things are locked up in your heart, and you flatter yourself that no one knows, there is great liability that a feeling of vanity may arise; but in telling out honestly the workings of your soul this vain feeling is crucified, and a sense of shame and self-abnegation takes its place.

Then, again, it is the nature of sin to hide itself. The first thing Adam and Eve did when they fell was to hide their shame, and from Adam and Eve to Ananias and Sapphira this tendency is clearly disclosed in the Bible. Now, to drag out these things from their lurking places and set them up in full view of God and a fellow man will wither them as the scorching August sun "withers the worms that are turned out" by the plow. Although it is true that we naturally want a friend in whom we can confide, and to whom we can tell our troubles and obtain help, yet it is also true that carnality hates detection, and will shrink from public view as long as possible.

Oh, how your heart will shrink and rebel from this process! Your tongue will almost cleave to the roof of your mouth, but why should it? Every one has the same unclean nature, it is in men's hearts, even if they have not seen and acknowledged it, But now you see it. Thank God for that fact, and urge the sinful thing to the cross.

We do not wish to be misunderstood as teaching this confession as meritorious, but only as an aid to humble the soul and bring it to the blood. Confessing our faults one to another in the Spirit will seldom or never fail in humbling and helping our souls.

The more persistently you drag these things out to the light, the more desperate your soul will become, and the more fearful you will discover the deceitful lurkings of inbred sin to be. Under the light now shining you will be as one in a charnel house, beset on every side with pride, anger, jealousy, love of praise, carnal confidence, envy, suspicions, lust, evil eye, softness, sinful self-love, unbelief, and innumerable other unclean spirits, like so many venomous serpents striking at your trembling soul, infecting their deadly poison and hissing with infernal hate against the things of the Holy Spirit. Awakened thus to a sense of your need, you will soon find the cleansing blood. Yea, you will find your way to Calvary's Victim, and, broken and mangled, you will prostrate yourself at his feet and receive the warm flow of the sin-cleansing tide on your awakened soul. Amen. Even so, Lord Jesus.

It is comparatively easy to make a general confession of sin, but to come to particulars and say, "There and there I felt so and so," is harder to do. After all it is not these tendencies that are the trouble, but these lead into the trouble. The real trouble is way back in the heart, and these tendencies followed up will lead you into its very midst, as the trees blazed in the forest will lead you to the settlement within its depths. Follow them up, and confess them out. There is efficacy in the blood to cleanse.

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Chapter 11 CONFESSION (Concluded)

4. This line of confession, wherever practicable, will greatly help; but where it is not practicable, still there is a way through, We have spent much time on public and private confession in order to make the subject clear. So many errors have been taught and practiced in connection with this matter that honest people are justly afraid of going too far, But that some have erred is no reason why we should likewise err in flying to the opposite extreme, While we have much confidence in public and private confession as a help, yet where there is no opportunity to make such confession, God himself will supply every deficiency and take the honest seeker through just as quickly and clearly without it. Fasten your faith, then, to Almighty God, and you will find it as a nail driven in a sure place. God only knows the heart, and to him alone is confession of heart conditions absolutely due, except as honesty demands adjustment with others where possible. David said, "Against thee, and thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight."

It may be that you will only have an opportunity to simply state your need in public congregation, and that you have no friend to whom you can unburden your soul. The pent-up feelings of your heart are longing for utterance, but you have "no man like minded" who will listen to your tale of woe. You ask, "What shall I do?" We answer, God is always listening for people in your condition to speak to him, But you want some human ear to hear. God will supply every deficiency. Tell him all. His time is not so taken up with governing the universe that he has no time

for you. Wait for God in humble prayer, open your heart to him, until he melts it all down at his feet, then pour out your inward sins and your soul's great needs to him. Let your confession go as deep as it may; keep pressing your case persistently; there is no doubt that it will strike deeper and deeper, and your hatred for sin will increase from time to time.

The length of time will depend greatly on the persistency with which you urge your suit before God. Indifferent prayers will bring no satisfying answers; while importunity will bring direct and speedy answers. Make no excuse for your lack of earnestness, It is not your duties and cares but your slothful heart that causes you to be thus careless. It will not take God long to finish the work, if you follow quickly in every ray of light.

The following advice of the holy Fletcher's Christian Perfection may help you at this point, and is worthy of being studied carefully on your knees:

"You will have this humble and thankful disposition, if you let your repentance cast deeper roots. For, if Christian perfection implies a forsaking of all inward as well as outward sin, and, if true repentance is a grace 'whereby we forsake sin,' it follows that, to attain Christian perfection, we must so follow our Lord's evangelical precept, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,' as to leave no sin, no indwelling sin, unrepented of, and, of consequence, unforsaken, He whose heart is full of indwelling sin has no more truly repented of indwelling sin than the man, whose mouth is defiled with filthy talking and jesting, has truly repented of ribaldry. The deeper our sorrow for, and detestation of indwelling sin are, the more penitently do we confess 'the plague of our heart:' and, when we properly confess it, we inherit the blessing promised in these words: 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.'

"To promote this deep repentance, consider how many spiritual evils still haunt your breast. Look into the inward 'chamber of imagery,' where assuming self love, surrounded by a multitude of vain thoughts, foolish desires, and wild imaginations, keeps her court. Grieve that your heart, which should be all flesh, is yet partly stone; that your soul, that should be only a temple for the Holy Ghost, is yet so frequently turned into a den of thieves, a hole for the cockatrice, a nest for a brood of spiritual vipers, for the remains of envy, jealousy, fretfulness, anger, pride, impatience, peevishness, formality, sloth, prejudice, bigotry, carnal confidence, evil shame, self-righteousness, tormenting fears, uncharitable suspicions, idolatrous love, and I know not how many of the evils which form the retinue of hypocrisy and unbelief. Through grace detect these evils, by a close attention to what passes in your heart at all times, but especially in an hour of temptation. By frequent and deep confession drag out all these abominations. These sins, which would not have Christ to reign alone over you, bring before him; place them in the light of his countenance; and, if you do it in faith, that light and warmth of his love will kill them, as the light and heat of the sun kill the worms which the plow turns up to the open air in a dry summer's day.

"Nor plead that you can do nothing; for, by the help of Christ, who is always ready to assist the helpless, ye can solemnly say upon your knees what ye have probably said in an airy manner to your professing friends. If ye ever acknowledged to them that your heart is deceitful, prone to leave undone the things ye ought to do, and ready to do what ye ought to leave undone, ye can undoubtedly make the same confession to God. Complain to him who can help you, as ye have

done to those who cannot. Lament, as you are able, the darkness of your mind, the stiffness of your will, the dullness or exorbitancy of your affections; and importunately entreat the God of all grace to 'renew a right spirit within' you. If ye 'sorrow after this godly sort, what carefulness will be' wrought in you! 'what indignation! what fear! what vehement desire! what zeal! yea, what revenge!' Ye will then sing in faith what the imperfectionists sing in unbelief:

"Oh, how I hate these lusts of mine,
That crucified my God;
These sins that pierced and nailed His flesh
Fast to the fatal wood!

"Yes, my Redeemer, they shall die,
My heart has so decreed;
Nor will I spare those guilty things
That made my Savior bleed.

"While with a melting, broken heart
My murdered Lord I view,
I'll raise revenge against my sins,
And slay the murderers, too!"

He also adds this wonderful prayer which should assist you in bringing your suit before God:

"How long, Lord, shall my soul, thy spiritual temple, be a den of thieves, or a house of merchandise? How long shall profane thoughts profane it, as the buyers and sellers profaned the temple made with human hands? How long shall evil tempers lodge within me? How long shall unbelief, formality, hypocrisy, envy, hankering after sensual pleasures, indifference to spiritual delights, and backwardness to painful or ignominious duty, harbor there? How long shall these sheep and doves, yea, these goats and serpents, defile my breast, which should be as pure as the Holy of Holies? How long shall they hinder me from being one of the worshipers whom thou seekest; one of those who worship thee in spirit and in truth? O help me to take away these cages of unclean birds! Suddenly come to thy temple! Turn out all that offends the eye of thy purity, and destroy all that keeps me out of the rest which remains for thy Christian people: so shall I keep a spiritual Sabbath, a Christian jubilee to the God of my life: so shall I witness my share in the 'oil of joy,' with which thou anointest perfect Christians above their fellow-believers. I stand in need of that oil, Lord. My lamp burns dim: sometimes it seems to be even gone out, as that of the foolish virgins: it is more like smoking flax than a burning and shining light. O quench it not! Raise it to a flame! Thou knowest that I do believe in thee. The trembling hand of my faith holds thee; and though I have ten thousand times grieved thy pardoning love, thine everlasting arm is still under me to redeem my life from destruction; while thy right hand is over me, to crown me with mercies and loving-kindness.

"But, alas! I am neither sufficiently thankful for thy present mercies, nor sufficiently athirst for thy future favors. Hence I feel an aching void in my soul, being conscious that I have not attained the heights of grace described in thy word, and enjoyed by thy holiest servants. Their deep

experiences, the diligence and ardor with which they did thy will, the patience and fortitude with which they endured the cross, reproach me, and convince me of my manifold wants. I want 'power from on high;' I want the penetrating, lasting unction of the Holy One; I want to have my vessel, my capacious heart, full of the oil which makes the countenances of wise virgins cheerful; I want a lamp of heavenly illumination, and a fire of divine love, burning day and night in my breast, as the typical lamps did in the temple, and the sacred fire on the altar; I want a full application of the blood which cleanses from all sin, and a strong faith in thy sanctifying word -- a faith by which thou mayest dwell in my heart, as the unwavering hope of glory, and the fixed object of my love; I want the internal oracle -- thy still small voice together with Urim and Thummim, the new name, 'which none knoweth but he that receiveth it;' in a word, Lord, I want a plenitude of thy Spirit, the full promise of the Father, and the rivers which flow from the inmost soul of the believers who have gone on to the perfection of thy dispensation. I do believe that thou canst and wilt thus 'baptize me with the Holy Ghost and fire:' help my unbelief: confirm and increase my faith with regard to this important baptism.

"Lord, I have need to be thus baptized of thee, and I am straitened till this baptism is accomplished. By thy baptism of tears in the manger, of water in Jordan, of sweat in Gethsemane, of blood, and fire and vapor of smoke, and flaming wrath on Calvary, baptize, O baptize my soul, and make a full end of the original sin. I am tired of forms, professions, and orthodox notions, so far as they are not pipes or channels to convey life, light and love to my dead, dark, and stony heart. Neither the plain letter of thy gospel, nor the sweet foretastes and transient illuminations of thy Spirit, can satisfy the large desires of my faith. Give me thine abiding Spirit, that he may continually shed abroad thy love in my soul. Come, O Lord, with that blessed Spirit! come, thou and thy Father in that Holy Comforter! come to make your abode with me; or I shall go meekly mourning to my grave! Blessed mourning! Lord, increase it! I had rather wait in tears for thy fulness than wantonly waste the fragments of thy spiritual bounties, or feed with Laodicean contentment upon the tainted manna of my former experiences. Righteous Father, I hunger and thirst after thy righteousness!"

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Chapter 12 MISCELLANEOUS

This chapter will be devoted to a few miscellaneous thoughts that may be of service to you in your quest after God.

1. Let us emphasize the fact that you must be led of the Spirit, This is all-important. All the help of your friends and teachers will be a hindrance without it. To this end throw your heart open, hold it steadily before God, and, as he points you to one trouble after another, be quick to acknowledge the situation. The quicker you do this the sooner the work will be accomplished.

2. Talk faith to God and to every one. Shun unbelief as you would a viper, Some people seem to think unbelief is a virtue. They call it being honest with themselves, getting discouraged with themselves, etc., but in reality it is throwing the lie into the face of the Almighty; for has he not said, "Seek and ye shall find"? also, "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it"? Then

seek in expectancy. You must not only "believe that he is," but that "he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," If you are to be successful.

An ounce of faith is worth a ton of groans and confessions. Without faith you can never be cleansed; but he that hath faith as a grain of mustard seed can remove mountains. Groans, when they are in the Spirit, are al right; but very often instead of being a sign of earnestness they are caused by a desire to dodge the light and get through in some other than God's way. Man fell away from God through unbelief and disobedience, and God proposes that he shall return by faith and obedience. God works contrary to sin, always.

A good plan is to turn your eyes heavenward, get a sight of God and his amazing holiness; and then, when you turn again to view yourself, your native unholiness will show up in a clearer light than ever. The contrast will sicken you of self, make your soul long, yea, pant after a nature like that of God, and enable you by faith to lay hold on him for what you need.

3, You have a right to praise God. It is just as much your right now as it will be after the work is done. Let the Lord bless you and then praise him for it, but be careful that you do not take the first stirring of your emotions for holiness. God often blesses the seeker to keep him encouraged, or to convince him that he is on the right track. Wait for the direct witness of the Spirit, and do not allow any one to argue you into a profession without it.

4. There is no need of groaning and agonizing to convince God that you are in earnest. He knows all about that. Some people seem to think that if they can pray loud, and thresh around and sweat, the Lord will be convinced that they are in earnest and come to their rescue. But holding your heart steadily before God, and pouring out your complaints to him will bring him to your aid much more quickly and effectually.

Be patient, and get your heart still before God long enough for him to speak, it is a good rule to "make haste slowly." Be sure the ground is well covered, and then the enemy will not have any occasion to accuse you of shallowness when you get through. He will try it, no doubt, but you can defeat him much more easily when you are certain that you have thoroughly met the conditions before you profess the experience.

One great reason why some people have an "up and down" experience is that they cannot bear the idea of not being able to say, "I am saved, I am sanctified." Hence, as soon as they find their hearts unclean they rush into a profession without properly presenting and holding their case before God. They work themselves into a frenzy, and God blesses them in a measure (perhaps to keep them from losing their minds), and then they jump up, clap their hands and claim to be sanctified. In a little while, however, they are down and in doubt and bondage the same as before.

Reader, to know that you please God is greater victory than to be able to say, "I am saved and sanctified," especially when you have to say this with your own conscience contradicting the statement. Perhaps you think you must use the stereotyped expression, "saved and sanctified," to keep clear and hold an experience, but an experience that must be held in such a way is better lost. If you are forced to hold your experience, what comes of our preaching that holiness is a safeguard against backsliding, that it is something to hold you? According to your idea, you must not only

hold yourself, but have the additional trouble of holding an experience that is like a fractious horse, forever trying to get away.

Probably one reason why God does not oftener let the light shine clearly on the carnality in the hearts of young converts is because the light is so penetrating and the strength of the subjects so small that they are not able to bear it. So he lets them go on for a while until they get strong in grace and faith, it is a mistake so say that grace gets weaker, for if a person walks in the light it gets stronger and firmer, Then when the proper time comes God shines in.

Wesley says: "And now first do they see the ground of their hearts; which God before would not disclose to them, lest the soul should fall before him, and the spirit which he had made, Now they see all the hidden abominations there, the depths of pride, self-will, and hell; yet having the witness in themselves, 'Thou art an heir of God, a joint-heir with Christ, even in the midst of this fiery trial;' which continually heightens both the strong sense they then have of their inability to help themselves, and the inexpressible hunger they feel after a full renewal in his image, in 'righteousness and true holiness.'"

We do not think for a moment that it is necessary or possible for everybody or anybody to see absolutely all the manifestations of carnality within them. It is so subtle, so complex, and has such diversified manifestations that this would be impossible. But God will disclose enough to give us such a conception of "the body of sin" that we shall cry out against it till deliverance comes.

5. Lay no plans, and conceive no formulas for the working of the Holy Ghost. Let him work in his own way. There is enough variety in his workings so that no one need copy the experience of another. No matter how the spirit wishes to use you, give yourself without reserve into his hands.

The fact that you have done all that you see to do does not prove that you have done all that you can do. At times the light may not shine so brightly, and then again it will pour in more clearly than before. You have not done all you can do until you exercise faith in the blood and receive the witness of the Spirit that the work is completed, and that your heart is cleansed. So long as the witness tarries keep pressing forward.

6. Be humble. Fling away the idea that you are conferring a favor on God in seeking holiness, it is he who is conferring on you the greatest boon possible to mortal man, the boon of "perfect love." Fletcher says: "If thou seest any beauty in the humbling grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sanctifying love of God, and in the comfortable fellowship of the Holy Ghost, let thy free will run to meet them, and bow itself toward the ground. O for a speedy going out of thy tent, thy sinful self! O for a race of desire in the way of faith! O for incessant prostrations! O for a meek and deep bowing of thyself before thy divine Deliverer!"

The nearer you get to God the worse your heart may seem to be. In reality it is not worse, but you now see it as it is, and as it has been all along. The way up is down. Most people would like to soar into the experience of perfection as in a balloon; but instead of this, one must dig down through all the strata of sin and unbelief till he reaches the lowest place possible of attainment

before God in his present condition. We must, as Fletcher says, "Go down till we come to the lowest place."

Quite often God works contrary to what we would think. He shows us our indifference, not always by a special revelation but by allowing us to feel indifferent and sluggish till it takes an effort to shake ourselves loose; to show impatience he allows days of testing till it seems we can scarcely stand; he shows us unbelief by allowing doubts to come in like a flood; pride by permitting its assaults in various ways; and so on through the whole list of evil propensities. But if there come these days of sluggishness, trial, testing. etc. -- we must press through all, remembering that,

"Behind a frowning providence he hides a smiling face."

7. Pray much. Find occasions and places to pour out your heart before God, You cannot expect to make any headway without this. Be importunate. Fasting also is a good accompaniment of prayer. While you rejoice in God's favor, do not cease to afflict your soul before him and you will soon find the door of the kingdom.

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Chapter 13

USES OF TEMPTATION

"Temptations," says Thomas a Kempis, "are often very profitable to men though they may be troublesome and grievous: for in them a man is humbled, purified, and instructed. All the saints have passed through and profited by many tribulations: and they that could not bear temptations, became reprobates and fell away."

We have already mentioned some of the temptations and trials that come to those who are seeking holiness, but these were along one line only, and did not include the thousands of tests that come to the soul as a result of its being saved, and which have nothing to do, directly, with holiness. Thank God, however, that since these "offenses must come," it is possible to make even these things "work for us," and that to the end that we may become "partakers of his holiness." The writer is radically opposed to the teaching that we must obtain holiness through sufferings, or bodily pain, as taught by Madam Guyon and other mystics of the middle ages, yet it must be admitted that the pains and trials with which we are beset are permitted for our good, and for our furtherance in the way of holiness. St. Paul says, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God."

Self-inflicted pains, penances and flagellations are relics of heathenism, and have more of a tendency to bolster up the soul in its self-righteousness than to humble it; but the pains and afflictions providentially received while in the true way we are stretching after God, are beneficial, and tend to humble the soul and lead Godward. Of course, the benefit of these things is conditioned on the way the soul behaves itself in the midst of them, For if one sets to complaining, and endeavoring to fight against them in his own strength, much or all of the intended benefit will be lost; but if he abandons all to the will of God, and, to the best of his ability, rejoices that he is

counted worthy not only to believe, but also to suffer for his sake (Phil. 1:29), he will come out better than if he had been constantly blest. But it is hard for one in whom the carnal nature still remains to see that "all things," even temptations, "work together for good." God is so good, however, that he will not allow an honest soul to settle down in ease and carnal security, and so he keeps it constantly on the move, hurrying it from one furnace to another, heating the last hotter than the first, giving it that amount of suffering that will the best temper it and make it to "know him and the fellowship of his sufferings" (Phil. 3:10).

The following from Madam Guyon, referring specially to a person seeking holiness, or entire sanctification, is rather strong, but has in it much food for careful thought: "The more God loves a soul and designs it for great things, the more he pushes it forward without mercy and without giving it a moment of rest: it finds no rest of spirit, nor the least thing in the world to depend upon. There are only precipices, unfathomable depths, and assurances of total loss; so that the more the soul desires to rest, the less it finds to rest upon -- filled as it is with the strangest bitterness."

The following also from Benjamin Pomeroy, one of the last of the Methodist giants, is to the point and will be better understood: "But in later years I have been made to rejoice in prospective good, foretold in these sore trials; and even at times have been happy in misery when the Spirit made me miserable or even permitted it, as that was a sign of God's hope for me, and that some higher and nobler purpose was yet to be wrought out in and through me; and if I could but survive the crucible, he would prepare me not only for more glorious revelation. of the unseen and heavenly, but through these terrible prostrations and humiliations I should be so prepared that the abundant revelations should not exalt me above measure; that while honored with the reflection of Christ's glory, I might not be tempted to call it my own, or attribute the chief grace of God in me to hereditary or acquired gifts."

We would here also add the following from Fletcher: "Our Lord 'was made a perfect Savior through sufferings,' and we may be made perfect Christians in the same manner. We may be called to suffer, till all that which we have brought out of spiritual Egypt is consumed in a howling wilderness, in a dismal Gethsemane, or on a shameful Calvary, Should this lot be reserved for us, let us not imitate our Lord's imperfect disciples, who 'forsook him and fled;' but let us stand the fiery trial, till all our fetters are melted, and all our dross is purged away. Fire is of a purgative nature: it separates the dross from the gold; and the fiercer it is the more quick and powerful its operation ... Therefore if the Lord should suffer the best men in his camp, or the strongest men in Satan's army, to cast you into a furnace of fiery temptations, come not out of it till you are called. 'Let patience have her perfect work:' meekly keep your trying station till your heart is disengaged from all that is earthly, and till the sense of God's preserving power kindles in you such a faith in his omnipotent love as few experimentally know but they who have seen themselves, like the mysterious bush in Horeb, burning and yet unconsumed; or they who can say with St. Paul, 'We are killed all the day long -- dying and behold we live.'

"Should thy conflicts be 'with confused noise, with burning and fuel of fire;' should thy 'Jerusalem be rebuilt in troublesome times;' should 'deep call unto deep at the noise of his water-spouts;' should the Lord 'shake not the earth only, but also heaven;' should all his waves and billows go over thee; should thy patience be tried to the uttermost; remember how in years past

thou hast tried the patience of God; be not discouraged: an extremity and a storm are often God's opportunity. A blast of temptation and a shaking of all thy foundations may introduce the fulness of God to thy soul, and answer the end of the rushing wind, and of the shaking, which formerly accompanied the first great manifestations of the Spirit. The Jews still expect the coming of the Messiah in the flesh, and they particularly expect it in a storm. When lightnings flash, when thunders roar, when a strong wind shakes their houses, and the tempestuous sky seems to rush down in thunder showers; then some of them particularly open their doors and windows to entertain their wished-for Deliverer. Do spiritually what they do carnally. Constantly wait for full 'power from on high;' but especially when a storm of affliction, temptation, or distress overtakes thee; or when thy convictions and desires raise thee above thyself, as the waters of the flood raised Noah's ark above the earth; then be particularly careful to throw the door of faith, and the window of hope as wide open as thou canst; and, spreading the arms of thy imperfect love, say with all the ardor and resignation which thou art master of, --

"My heartstrings groan with deep complaint,
My flesh lies panting, Lord, for thee;
And every limb, and every joint,
Stretches for perfect purity."

Let us now examine a few passages that speak of temptations, trials, etc., and notice the close connection between these things and holiness. They bring forcibly to our minds the fact that all things can be made to work for our good.

1. Chastening. The chastening of the Lord is given when some word has been spoken or some spirit either manifested or apparently manifested which was contrary to the love of God, or the rules of Christian propriety. It is directly given by God and causes the soul to feel reprov'd and humbled, if properly accepted. It is a blessed thing to live where we can hear the reprov'ing voice of God and feel the fatherly stroke of his chastening rod. Comparatively few live in such a place. Paul says (Heb. 12:5, etc.), "My son despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening God dealeth with you as with sons ... For they [our earthly fathers] verily for a few days chasteneth us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness, Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." The connection between holiness and chastening is here seen at a glance. The object God has in view in his chastenings is "that we might be partakers of his holiness." His reproofs constantly and faithfully administered, point out to us the numerous places in our lives where we can improve, leaving off the wrong and taking on the right; they point out the inward tendencies to sin, if any remain; they often cause pain, but in this the Lord only shows his earnest desire that we shall be like him.

2. Tribulation. Paul says (Rom. 5:3-5); "We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Here the first step in the ladder is "tribulation," and the last is the "love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost." This in its fulness is the experience they received at

Pentecost. Tribulations are hard to bear, but if the soul resigns itself without reserve to be led by God, the end of such faith will be entire cleansing, So when tribulation comes decide that God has something in view for you that he cannot give in any other way, and be patient under the test. This will naturally beget a deeper experience; and as experience increases, hope naturally bounds heavenward and takes away all shame; for the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost.

3. Temptations and trials. James says (Jas. 1:2, 3): 'My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall [not run] into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.' He does not say that temptations are joy, but that we should "count it all joy" when they come, put that much in the joy column, because they are for our good. They try our faith; this trial of faith works patience; and when "patience has her perfect work" the soul is "perfect and entire, wanting nothing." The first round of this ladder is "divers temptations," and the last is perfection -- "perfect and entire, wanting nothing." Then never complain again at your lot; but, when you are tempted, look ahead for the excellent glory which God will reveal in you, after the temptation is passed, and rejoice.

4. Sufferings. Peter says (1 Pet. 5:10): "But the God of all grace, who hath called you unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." Here is a ladder with five rounds, The first is suffering -- "after ye have suffered a while," and the second is perfection -- "make you perfect;" then follow three steps upward in this glorious experience -- "stablish, strengthen, settle you." Almost any one who desires God at all would be willing to take the second and other upward steps, but most will naturally shrink from the first, We must take the first step of a journey, however, before we can take the second. Note the five steps of the ladder: (1) Suffering, (2) perfection, (3) establishment, (4) strengthening, (5) settling. In writing to the Hebrews the author of the epistle, under the figure of Christ's sufferings, taught this same thing, and clearly shows what these sufferings are. "Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach." The sufferings then are the reproaches of Christ, which Moses counted "greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." Again he says: "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb. 2: 10, 11). Here it is clear that they "are all of one" from the fact that they all endure sufferings; and since his sanctified ones endure sufferings "with him," "he is not ashamed to call them brethren." Who is willing to take this way with the "Captain of our salvation"?

5. infirmities. "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." it is comparatively easy to see how the other things may help us, but how can our infirmities be of any avail in helping us on to God? When we see our weakness, and the inability within ourselves to accomplish anything aright, it drives us to our only refuge, the cross of Christ: so through the discovery of our weakness his "strength is made perfect" in us, and "the power of Christ rests" upon us. There are three steps in the above passage: (1) Weakness, or infirmities; (2) sufficient grace, (3) God's "strength made perfect." His perfect strength is

displayed in us in perfect pardon and perfect cleansing, which is perfect victory over and deliverance from sin, inward and outward. This is holiness.

Since it is written, "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God," let us thank God that "in all these things" we may be "more than conquerors," and that "none of these things shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

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Chapter 14

ABANDONMENT OR CONSECRATION

In order to understand properly the requirements of God at this juncture it will be well to find out three things: (1) The condition of the seeking soul. (2) the nature of the experience he is seeking, and (3) the relation to God he now sustains and will sustain when cleansed from all sin.

First, the contract made with God by the seeker for pardon is complete, so far as the will and voluntary conditions are concerned. Its only lack is in the fact that the heart is unclean, the nature of sin causing involuntary movements contrary to the love of God. These involuntary movements or elements in the soul cause undue attachments to legitimate objects, as well as sinful leanings toward wrong objects. To illustrate: Conjugal love in itself is always right, but in the unclean soul there is a selfish or sensual element that vitiates it. Right affections never interfere with the pure love of God, but this sinful element of the soul causes the man involuntarily to place his wife either in some sense in the place that belongs to God, or to hold her in less esteem than he ought. The same principle is applicable to other matters, This is the real condition of the seeking soul.

The second point necessary to settle is the nature of the experience for which the soul struggles. The answer to this inquiry is involved negatively in the foregoing paragraph. He seeks entire conformity to the nature of God; or, rather, he seeks in its fullness the nature which God designs him to possess. He is already "set apart," but he sees an element in his heart that pollutes the sacrifice. Over this he mourns, and from this he seeks deliverance. He cries,

"'Tis worse than death my God to love,
And not my God alone."

When he gains the goal for which he strives his heart will be all love, with no admixture of inordinate affection; a heart so clean that it naturally and without effort is as it should be; a heart which, so far as it rightly understands, loves no object either more or less than it should; which is centered in God, and moves not for one moment from that center. This is the experience he seeks, and which God will give him if he perseveres.

The third question is as to the relation he does now, and will, when cleansed, sustain to God. The justified soul is at peace with God. He asks to know God's will, and when he knows, does it, But he is conscious that in his soul is an element not in harmony with God, and that hinders if it does not fully prevent him from doing God's will, He is God's child, but still has involuntary

inward longings for things that are not good for him. The fact is that in the determinations of his will he is all God's property; but there is within an involuntary principle that hinders him from being as completely lost in God's will as he sees he should be. Such is the relation he now sustains to God.

In the experience of entire sanctification this involuntary principle is removed, and the soul is "filled with all the fulness of God," and thereby "made perfect in love." Without a single qualifying condition the man is now God's peculiar treasure; a royal diadem in the hand of his God. without a rival to dispute God's claims upon him. He has thirsted that all his being might be purified and given to God without even involuntary self-clingings or inclinations to wrong; and now he realizes the fulfillment of his desires, and sees that all through his soul he is all God's property only and always God's, Such is the relation he will sustain to God when cleansed.

Since this involuntary principle of the soul is not reached by anything that is done by the seeker for pardon, it must of necessity be reached by a deeper and more penetrating action, and this is found in the abandonment of his entire being to God, that he may do with the individual as seems best in his wisdom and righteousness; and when the seeker thus abandons himself to God, the blood is applied which purges away his inbred uncleanness. The definition of abandon is, "To forsake, or renounce utterly; to give up wholly; desert; quit; leave" (Standard Dictionary). There are absolutely no specifications as to what shall be done with the offering. The whole being is given to God, utterly renounced, and deserted. All, even involuntary claims, are quit, and God can do as he pleases with his property and not hear a single murmur because of his providences.

When praying for pardon the seeker sees that he is wicked and has been used as a tool for the devil and sin. The desire of his heart is that his sins may be forgiven. and that he may be set apart from an unholy to a sacred use. But now, when seeking holiness, he sees that although in God's sight and also in the full purpose of his will he is already sacred property; yet his sacredness has been defiled by the carnal, self life within, and that God has been hindered from having his perfect way, As a consequence, his prayer is that he may be thoroughly purged from inbred sin, to the end that he may serve God perfectly. He is already sacred to God's use, but he desires to be where God can use him as he pleases, and with no inward foe to rival his claims. To this end he surrenders himself to the cross of crucifixion; abandons himself to God without reference to the use God will make of him; determines to quit even trying to dictate to God. His cry is, "O God, remove the thing that has hindered thee from having thy perfect way, and use me henceforth as thou dost choose, for joy or sorrow, for ease or pain."

Let us look a little deeper into this glorious doctrine of abandonment, and, as we do so, we shall find beautiful things, if we view them from the victory side, but hard things, if viewed from the carnal side. Abandonment is the yielding of the attachments we have had for legitimate objects, -- the wrong bias we have had for them. For instance, the idolatrous attachments one may have for the objects of his domestic love, the unclean leaven which may have polluted his conjugal or parental affections, it may seem to him that these objects of his love will actually go, but on the resurrection side he finds that, instead of this he loves them with a dearer, cleaner love, One must also die to the servile attachments he has had to the opinions of the saints or the creed of his church; must die even to that sensual clinging he has had for spiritual delights, and which would substitute these pleasures for faith in God; for God will have our undivided confidence, and love

and service, Some one has said that we must not only die to our sinful self, but also to our righteous self.

Every one who gets a clear view of his own soul will find that, although grace cries for deliverance, there still remains within an element of evil, or a tendency to cling tenaciously to the self life, something that says, "I will not die." Carnality hates death. Grace says it must die, but nature stubbornly refuses. This unwillingness cannot be helped, it is the nature of the man of sin with which we are dealing. You can never expect to be rid of that feeling till you are rid of the carnal mind itself, for it is an essential element of that mind, Here the soul is liable to be tempted in the direction of supposing that, since there is an evil element that thus clings to life, no remedy can be found; but, thank God, there is one -- the blood of Jesus Christ, And we place ourselves in a position to receive its merits by submitting to the crucifixion of self, or by self-abandonment. We voluntarily surrender this clinging, unclean nature to God for death, and that in spite of its own unwillingness. Despite the writhings and strong cries of nature to be permitted to live, in the volition of our will we must hold it to the cross until the fire of the Holy Ghost consumes it From God's side the remedy is always the blood; but man must co-operate with God in order to obtain this benefit, and he does this by forcing his unwilling heart to stand under the burning rays of "the Sun of Righteousness" until the last remains of sin are withered and driven like fine dust from the heart forever.

On this point Madam Guyon says: "For nature [carnality] will make use of everything to sustain its life, as a drowning man will support himself in the water by clinging to the blade of a razor, without adverting to the pain it causes him, if there be nothing else within his reach ... God has unrelentingly pursued our [carnal] life into its covert hiding places; for so malignant is it, that when hard pressed, it fortifies itself in its refuges, and makes use of the holiest and most reasonable pretexts for existence; but being persecuted and followed into its last retreat, in a few souls (alas how few!) it is obliged to abandon them altogether."

When bringing yourself to this point of abandonment it may be helpful to sing, --

"O God, my heart cloth long for thee,
Let me die! Let me die!
Now set my soul at liberty,
Let me die! Let me die!

"Die to the trifling things of earth,
They're now to me of little worth,
My Savior calls -- I'm going forth,
Let me die! Let me die!

"Oh, I must die to scoffs and sneers,
Let me die! Let me die!
I must be freed from slavish fears,
Let me die! Let me die!

"So dead that no desire will rise

To appear good or great or wise
In any but my Savior's eyes,
Let me die! Let me die!

"If Christ would live and reign in me,
I must die! I must die!
Like him I crucified must be,
I must die! I must die!

Lord, drive the nails, nor heed the groans,
My flesh may writhe and make its moans,
But this the way and this alone --
I must die! I must die!

"Begin at once to drive the nails,
Let me die! Let me die!
Oh, suffer not my heart to fail,
Let me die! Let me die!

Jesus, I look to thee for power,
T' enable me t' endure the hour,
When crucified by sovereign power,
I shall die! I shall die!"

There is great need of this separation of the precious from the vile, and the seeker as he reaches this point sees it clearly. He sees how his "time, his strength, his all," has not been as fully God's as it should be; how his most holy actions have not been all for God; how he has loved souls, but not altogether with a disinterested love; how desire of praise or self-aggrandizement has influenced him to some extent all along; and how his heart cries out with Faber, --

"Oh, I could go through life's troubles singing,
Turning earth's night to day,
If self were not so fast around me clinging
To all I do or say.

"O Lord, that I could waste my life for others,
With no ends of my own,
That I could pour myself into my brothers
And live for them alone.

"Such is the life thou livedst, self-abjuring,
Thine own pains never easing,
Our burdens bearing, our just doom enduring,
A life without self-pleasing."

The following from Wesley, is clear as to this imperfection of the service of the justified soul: "But let it be supposed that they continually 'watch and pray,' and so do not enter into this temptation; that they constantly set a watch before the door of their mouth, and keep the door of their lips; suppose they exercise themselves herein, that all their 'conversation may be in grace, seasoned with salt, and meet to minister grace to the hearers;' yet do they not daily slide into useless discourse, notwithstanding all their caution? And even when they endeavor to speak for God, are their words pure, free from unholy mixtures? Do they find nothing wrong in their intention? Do they speak merely to please God, and not partly to please themselves? is it wholly to do the will of God, and not their own will also? Or, if they begin with a single eye, do they go on 'looking unto Jesus,' and talking with him all the time they are talking with their neighbor? When they are reproving sin, do they feel no anger or unkind temper to the sinner? When they are instructing the ignorant, do they not find any pride, any self preference? When they are comforting the afflicted, or provoking one another to love and good works, do they never perceive any inward self commendation as 'Now you have spoken well'? Or any vanity, a desire that others should think so, and esteem them on that account? in some or all of these respects, how much sin cleaves to the best conversation even of believers...

"And how much of sin, if their conscience is thoroughly awake, may they find cleaving to their actions also? Nay, are there not many of these, which, though they are such as the world would condemn, yet cannot be commended, no, nor excused, if we judge by the word of God? Are there not many of their actions, which, they themselves know, are not to the glory of God? Many, wherein they did not even aim at this; which were not undertaken with an eye to God? And of those that were, are there not many wherein their eye is not singly fixed on God? Wherein they are doing their own will, at least as much as his, and seeking to please themselves as much, if not more, than to please God? And while they are endeavoring to do good to their neighbor, do they not feel wrong tempers of various kinds? Hence their good actions, so-called, are far from being strictly such; being polluted with such a mixture of evil...

"If any man is not satisfied with this, if any believe that whoever is justified is able to remove these sins out of his heart and life, let him make the experiment. Let him try whether, by the grace he has already received, he can expel pride, self-will, or inbred sin in general. Let him try whether he can cleanse his words and actions from all mixture of evil; whether he can avoid all uncharitable and unprofitable conversation, with all the sins of omission; and, lastly, whether he can supply the numberless defects which he still finds in himself. Let him not be discouraged by one or two experiments, but repeat the trial again and again; and the longer he tries, the more deeply will he be convinced of his utter helplessness in all these respects.

"... Though we watch and pray ever so much, we cannot wholly cleanse either our hearts or our hands. Most sure we cannot till it shall please the Lord to speak to our hearts again, to speak the second time, Be clean: and then only the leprosy is cleansed. Then only, the evil root, the carnal mind, is destroyed; and inbred sin subsists no more, But if there be no such second change, if there be no instantaneous deliverance after justification, if there be none but a gradual work of God (that there is a gradual work none denies), then we must be content, as well as we can, to remain full of sin till death."

These strong words from Wesley, if taken with the context and in connection with his other writings, do not for a moment allow of willful crookedness in life, thought or intention in the justified soul (such things as some people would make it appear that Wesley allows them to do), not to the least degree, but only go to show that while inherent depravity remains it will, to some extent, color the life and taint the desires, This is what we have called above the "involuntary principle" that hinders the person from being altogether "God's property." It is the "unholy leaven" that "taints the sacrifice." The sacrifice is acceptable to God, because it is the product of a willing heart and is the best the person has to give and all he has to give; but it is not as pleasing as it would be if it were "cleansed from all mixture of evil."

Bishop R. S. Foster, in "Christian Purity," says: "Would you be holy, you must make up your mind to the crucifixion of every sin; they must be surrendered and given to the cross and spear."

Charles Wesley has also expressed the thought of abandonment in some of his hymns on holiness. The following are instances:

"Eager for thee, I ask, I pant,
So strong the principle divine
Carries me out with sweet constraint,
Till all my hallowed soul is thine:
Plunged in the Godhead's deepest sea,
And lost in thy immensity."

"Come, Lord, and claim me for thine own:
Savior, thy right assert;
Come, gracious Lord, set up thy throne,
And reign within my heart.

"The day of thy great power I feel,
And pant for liberty;
I loathe myself, deny my will,
And give up all to thee.

"I hate my sins, no longer mine,
For I renounce them, too;
My weakness with thy strength I join;
Thy strength shall all subdue.

"So shall I bless thy pleasing sway,
And, sitting at thy feet,
Thy laws with all my heart obey,
With all my soul submit."

We close this chapter with a few passages from Madam Guyon and Archbishop Fenelon on the subject of abandonment.

"God gives us the cross, and the cross gives us God. We may be assured that there is an internal advancement, when there is progress in the way of the cross; abandonment and the cross go hand in hand together. As soon as anything is presented in the form of suffering, and you feel a repugnance, resign yourself immediately to God with respect to it, and give yourself up to him in sacrifice: you will then find, that when the cross arrives, it will not be so very burdensome, because you have yourself desired it. This, however, does not prevent you from feeling its weight, as some have imagined: for when we do not feel the cross we do not suffer. A sensibility of suffering is one of the principal parts of suffering itself."

"... Suffer not yourselves to be attached to anything, however good it may appear; it is no longer such to you, if it in any measure turns you aside from what God desires of you. For the divine will is preferable to every other good. Shake off, then, all self-interest, and live by faith and abandonment; here it is that genuine faith begins truly to operate."

"Thus does the soul ascend to God. by giving up self to the destroying and annihilating power of divine love. This is a state of sacrifice essential to the Christian religion, in which the soul (i. e., self-life in the soul) suffers itself (because forced by grace coupled to divinity) to be destroyed and annihilated, that it (the soul) may pay homage to the sovereignty of God; as it is written: 'The power of the Lord is great, and he is honored only by the humble.' By the destruction of self we acknowledge the supreme existence of God. We must cease to exist in self, in order that the Spirit of the Eternal Word may exist in us: it is by the giving up of our own life, that we give place to his coming; and in dying to ourselves, he himself lives in us.

"We must surrender our whole being to Christ Jesus, and cease to live any longer in ourselves, that he may become our life; that being dead, our life may be hid with Christ in God, But how is it we are to pass into God? in no way but by leaving and forsaking ourselves, that we may be lost in him; and this can be effected only by annihilation, which, being the true prayer of adoration, renders unto God alone, all blessing, honor, glory, and power, forever and ever."

"Whoever shall become acquainted with the admirable economy of grace and the wisdom of God in bringing man to a total sacrifice of self, will be filled with delight, and, insensible as he may be, will expire with love. Abandonment ... is the key to the inner court, so that he who knows truly how to abandon himself will soon become perfect."

The following is from Fenelon, who obtained the experience of holiness under the teachings of Madam Guyon:

"The abandonment of evil things, then, consists in refusing them with horror; of good things, in using them with moderation for our necessities, continually studying to retrench all those imaginary wants with which greedy nature would satiate herself."

"Having abandoned everything exterior, and which is not self, it remains to complete the sacrifice by renouncing everything interior, including self."

"Herein consists true self-abandonment; it is this spirit of self-divesting, this use of ourselves and of ours with a single eye to the movements of God, who alone is the true proprietor of his creatures, You will desire to know, probably, what should be the practice of this renouncement in detail, But I answer that the feeling is no sooner established in the interior of the soul, than God himself will take you by the hand, that you may be exercised in self-renunciation in every event of every day. Self-abandonment is not accomplished by means of painful reflections and continual struggles; it is only by reframing from self-contemplation, and from desiring to master ourselves in our own way, that we lose ourselves in God."

* * * * *

Chapter 15 FAITH

"Deep repentance is good," says Fletcher; "gospel self-denial is excellent; and a degree of patient resignation in trials is of unspeakable use to attain the perfection of love; but as faith immediately works by love, it is of far more immediate use to purify the soul."

When Peter stood up before the apostles and elders who were considering whether the Gentile converts should be circumcised, after mentioning how God had first chosen him to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, he added: "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:8, 9).

St. Paul is also in accord with this when he says, "By grace are ye saved through faith." The same sentiment is voiced all through the New Testament. Faith is the great procuring cause of salvation on man's side, By it he appropriates to himself the benefits flowing from the atonement of Christ.

But, as with everything else in the wonderful plan of salvation by grace, the devil and wicked men have succeeded in so counterfeiting faith that we need carefully to distinguish between the genuine article and its base imitation, Because of much erroneous use of the term faith some honest people are afraid to mention it to seekers of holiness lest they should take up with some one of the modern uses which are neither reasonable nor scriptural. We need have little fear, however, if the conditions of salvation are properly laid down, the nature of saving faith carefully set forth, and the line of distinction between faith and presumption clearly drawn.

There is no difference in kind, or, of necessity, in degree, between the faith that justifies and that which sanctifies. Saving faith, in these two acts of experience, does not differ as to its nature, but only in the object or end for which it is exercised, in the one act it is exercised for the forgiveness of sins, and in the other for the cleansing of the heart. The arguments and illustrations that apply to the one exercise will apply nearly if not quite as well to the other. Hence, in the quotations we shall soon give from Wesley and Fletcher the fact that at times they were talking to penitent sinners and at other times to Christians need cause no confusion. Sometimes they addressed both classes at once, using the same words to describe the faith of a seeking sinner and that of one seeking heart purity.

1. Let us note what saving or sanctifying faith is not. It is not simply a mental assent to the general truths of redemption, that Jesus Christ lived, suffered, died for sinners, etc. Nearly everybody in Christianized countries believes these things, but how few comparatively believe them with any saving effect.

Faith is not simply acknowledging that Jesus died for me, and concluding that, as a consequence, I may be sanctified. We once knew a preacher to tell a man who believed that Jesus died for him, that because of this it might be that he had been saved at some time in the past -- when he did not know it. Seekers are often urged to take Christ as their sanctifier, simply because he died for them, without a word being spoken about conditions that must be met before this faith can be exercised. Confusion and deception result almost inevitably from accepting such teaching.

Faith is not believing without evidence. There is a method of argument sometimes used by some workers in order to persuade seekers that, because cleansing is promised, they should declare the work done, and that if they hesitate to do so, they thereby displease God. This reasoning may at first glance seem plausible and honoring to God and his promises, but it is certainly a very insecure ground on which to build one's hope of full salvation. A passage from God's word should keep us from error at this point: "he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself" (1 John 5:10). Not "will have the witness," but "hath" it now. We do not undervalue the promises, but would suggest that they never save; they are grounds of and helps to faith, but it takes the merit of the blood of Christ to save. "Believing without the evidence," as taught by some, is likely to be believing an untruth.

Faith is not merely resting on the promises, in the commonly accepted way of doing. Hungry souls are led to make a mental surrender of all, and then told to rest on the promises and wait for the witness, which they may expect to come at any time. Some seeking souls are led by their teachers to repeat this process from time to time, but the expected blessing never comes; and, finally, they give up in despair and are put down as backsliders; or it may be they become fighters of holiness.

Faith is not that easy-going, restful feeling sometimes mis-called "living by faith." People who accept this doctrine usually settle into a place where they can talk sweetly of Jesus, and can use honeyed phrases about the sweet place of rest they have found, while they woefully lack in devotion, and in that breaking up of their hearts before God, without which the true "rest of faith" can never be attained. There is a sameness about their lives and testimonies, never very high and never very low, which they mistake for holiness or sanctification. They never shed the fragrance, however, that comes from tarrying with the Lord, nor manifest the courage of those who have gained the victory over sin in a mortal conflict. The sweetness of a holy life is lacking. Emptiness and hollowness rather than the fulness of the Spirit are ruling characteristics. Oh, for the Spirit-filled life!

Faith is not the laying of one's all on the altar, and there claiming the work done, feeling or no feeling. Those who teach this as the way like to sing,

"My all is on the altar,

And I'm waiting for the fire;
Waiting, waiting,
I'm waiting for the fire."

But the trouble is that the fire seldom if ever falls. Moreover, this theory, that "the altar sanctifies the gift," when applied to seeking holiness is unscriptural. This appears from the following considerations.

1. When Jesus used this expression he had no reference to religious experience, but simply to the sacrifices of the temple. it is wrong to wrest a passage from its connection to make it teach any doctrine, no matter though that doctrine be right in itself, and clearly taught in other places. But this doctrine is taught in no passage of the Bible, not even by inference. Those who teach this theory use our Lord's words literally. There might be some excuse if they were only used as an illustration, but even then the effect would not be changed. We are told that Christ is the altar, the seeker the gift, and, that as soon as the gift is placed on Christ the work of cleansing is done. But by a cold assent of the mind to say, "My all is on the altar," and then take the rest for granted, is going beyond the bounds of scripture and reason, We have no other way of knowing that the Lord completes his work but by the witness of the Spirit: and if God really saves one he will without fail witness to the fact. it is he that should de the witnessing, and not ourselves. in this work there is a part that man does and a part that God does. If our consciences bear us witness that we have done our best, well and good; but it is going too far to assume God's part, and, without his witness, to say the work is done. This leaves God entirely out of the matter so far as anything practical in the work of sanctification is concerned, and makes man's spirit the only witness.

But with many who teach that "the altar sanctifies the gift," it is not Christ who is the altar, but rather an indefinite something like a mourner's bench, or a kind of sacrificial altar, upon which they put their time, talents, money, reputation, all they know, and all they do not know, for time and for eternity (and sometimes they put on their tobacco, jewelry, stylish dress, worldliness, secret societies, and what not), and then proceed to climb thereon themselves and complacently sing,

"My all is on the altar,
And I'm waiting for the fire."

2. Again, sanctification has two meanings: first, to set apart, to consecrate; second, to purify or cleanse. The altar never cleansed the beast that was placed on it. That had to be done before the victim touched the altar, and when it touched the altar it became in a peculiar sense God's property, set apart for his worship, and was sanctified by the altar in that sense only.

Dr. Daniel Steele has written as follows on this important subject: "When a thing is laid on God's altar it is not purified, but only consecrated. When the phrase 'I lay myself on the altar,' is used by a seeker of entire sanctification he has a wrong formula, for impurity has no place on the holy altar of God. its place is in the cleansing stream issuing from the pierced side of the Son of God. in the Wesleyan sense no person in the scriptures was ever sanctified by being laid on the altar of God, or by touching it. The altar theory of sanctification is not found in the writings of either Wesley or in the volumes of his great defender, John Fletcher, nor in any of the standard Methodist theologians, Watson, Raymond, Pope and Miley. In fact it originated in America about

the year 1840, in the writings of Mrs. Phoebe Palmer, who regarded it as a great discovery. It was her short way to entire sanctification. Christ is the altar; the altar sanctifieth the gift; lay yourself on the altar and you are sanctified. The error is in confounding the two meanings of sanctify, or in substituting purification, the work of the Holy Spirit, for consecration, man's work.

"The more thoughtful friends of the precious doctrine of full salvation adhered to Wesley's statement that 'NO ONE OUGHT TO BELIEVE THAT THE WORK IS DONE TILL THERE IS ADDED THE TESTIMONY OF THE SPIRIT WITNESSING HIS ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION AS CLEARLY AS HIS JUSTIFICATION.' That souls have experienced entire sanctification while asserting 'the altar sanctifieth,' we do not deny. They had real faith in Christ despite the erroneous formula. But many have made the same assertion and have found themselves in great perplexity. The altar theory has become a snare to them. Their faith was mere presumption, an unwarranted inference that God does his part because they have done their part, as they suppose ... Many a person has, under erroneous instruction, thought that he laid himself on the altar and has been induced to say, 'The altar sanctifies the gift,' and has kept repeating this assertion for months and years, without realizing any inward change. Some continue thus till death, but many more in despair pass into a state of indifference and unbelief respecting the question of purity of heart in this life. Bishop William Taylor styles the altar theory 'the devil's switch just outside the depot of full salvation, by which he switches off seeking souls, and causes them to wander round and round, and to fail of entering in.' The so-called holiness evangelist is strongly tempted to adopt this theory, because it enables him in his brief term of labor in any church to count up as sanctified as many as he can persuade to say, 'I am on the altar, and the altar sanctifies the gift.'"

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Chapter 16

FAITH

(Concluded)

We proceed to note, --

II. What saving or sanctifying faith is.

There are always three aspects to the faith that saves, the historical, the expectant, and the appropriating features.

1. Historical faith is that act of the intellect by which we give credence to the facts regarding Christ's person and mission, and to the sufficiency of his work to redeem the soul from sin; also it is belief in the Being and attributes of God, and confidence in the Bible as the revealed will of God. Fletcher says it is the gift of the God of grace in the same sense as the senses of sight and hearing are the gift of the God of nature. He gives us our eyes and ears, but will not use them for us; and we may destroy them and thus destroy our power of seeing and hearing if we choose. This kind of faith is good as far as it goes, for without it none will ever seek God, and if they do not seek. they will not be saved. it is written, "He that cometh to God must believe that he is." This is historical faith.

2. The next aspect of faith is that of expectancy. When the inspired penman said, "He that cometh to God must believe that he is," he also added, "and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." To be saved or sanctified a person must not only believe the recorded facts about the person and works of Christ, but must also believe that, if he is diligently sought, he will be found. And this conviction must be put into practice. If it is, it will set the soul to mourning over its unclean condition, and expecting the deliverance God has promised. But many a person stands in this place for weeks, and even months, mourning his lack, and expecting the work to be done some time, but not now. But there must come a time when the soul momentarily expects the coming of the Lord into his temple, or the work will never be done. This makes way for that final, bold and effectual act of appropriation which evangelical Christians have been pleased to call "saving faith."

3. Regarding this aspect of evangelical faith Fletcher says: "Justifying or saving faith is believing the saving truth with the heart unto internal, and (as we have opportunity) unto external righteousness, according to our light and dispensation."

Wesley thus defines it: "Christian faith is, not only an assent to the whole gospel of Christ, but also a full reliance on the blood of Christ; a trust in the merits of his life, death, and resurrection; a recumbency upon him as our atonement and our life, as given for us, and living in us. It is a sure confidence that a man hath in God, that through the merits of Christ, his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favor of God; and in consequence hereof, a closing with him, as our 'wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,' or, in one word, our salvation."

There are three steps in saving faith which are clearly shown in the following chorus by Phoebe Palmer, which has been an inspiration to perhaps hundreds of holiness seekers.

"The cleansing stream I see, I see;
I plunge, and oh, it cleanseth me."

The three steps might be named as follows, -- 1. The faith of apprehension, -- "The cleansing stream, I see, I see." 2. The faith of reception or appropriation, -- "I plunge." 3. The faith of acknowledgment, -- "And oh, it cleanseth me." The act of faith is not completed till the soul acknowledges the cleansing to be done; there are some traces of unbelief where this acknowledgment is lacking, it is the spontaneous "My Lord and my God" of the soul that completes or seals the act of faith; so Paul says, "With the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

The heart peering timidly through the mist sees Christ and the flowing blood, and when it gets a glimpse of the object for which it has been searching so long its timidity takes flight, and the next natural step is to make a desperate plunge into the crimson flow, and the instant it strikes the fountain all through its ransomed depths it shouts and sings, "'Tis done, it cleanseth me."

The first step is God's revelation of himself to the longing gaze. And he reveals himself only when the seeker reaches the limits of God's requirements as to self-abandonment, and in his helplessness cries for divine assistance. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity." So right at the limit of man's ability, and when he fully acknowledges his inability, God discovers himself to the inner eye of his soul, We may talk and reason about this, and say that if he had believed a week

before he would have had the experience; and we may try to argue people into believing as much as we please, but in spite of it all the fact remains that saving faith is impossible till the soul has reached the end of self and realizes its utter need of divine help, This may be sooner or later, Some may quickly and with comparative ease appropriate the blood to their needs, while others may struggle for days or weeks. One may be as honest as the other, but for some reason fails to comprehend or apprehend the truth aright, it is the same with natural life, Some have but little vitality, and easily give way to death! while others in much greater afflictions cling tenaciously to life, and only yield after a prolonged battle. Physical conditions in the same person may vary at different times, and one may fight successfully through a long siege that would have ended a less resolute person, and later succumb to some trifling ailment.

So with the carnal nature, if we may so express it, the carnal mind exhibits a great amount of vitality, a determined clinging to life, a refusal to die that hinders the Spirit; but when the moment comes that the seeker arises and, with all his ransomed power and in the strength of God, decrees that now the enemy of his soul shall die, the efficacy of the blood will very quickly appear to faith's interior eye. Seeker, you can make that moment for you arrive sooner or later as you choose, if you will receive the full import of that scripture, "Now is the accepted time," and apply it as God desires you should, to your own case, you need not linger long outside of Canaan. Constantly turn your eyes toward heaven with the expectation that you will see the Christ of your desires coming to your assistance. Be in constant readiness to receive him. Keep the arms of your faith thrown wide, and fly to his breast. You will not be disappointed, for he will kindle in your soul the sacred fire of his presence, till, with the once doubting Thomas, you will cry, "My Lord and my God." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

"Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,
And looks to that alone;
Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries, it shall be done!

"Obedient faith that waits on thee,
Thou never wilt reprove;
But thou wilt form thy Son in me,
And perfect me in love."

The common error in the teaching of today concerning faith is not so much that of wrong analysis as that of misapplication. The divine order is, (1) apprehension, (2) reception, (3) acknowledgment, But in these days we too often have just the opposite order; (1) acknowledgment, (2) reception, (3) apprehension; which amounts to this. first, since you have done all you can, acknowledge that you are sanctified, for the altar sanctifies the gift: then, as a consequence of your acknowledgment, you will receive the cleansing blood on your heart, and finally will apprehend Christ's cleansing power.

There is a sense in which apprehension follows reception, but it is not in the sense of faith, The apprehension of faith sees Christ separate from itself, standing as its atonement, ready to cleanse, while the apprehension that follows faith sees him as the indwelling Christ revealing his nature and purity to the inmost soul -- not to faith, but through faith to the consciousness of the soul.

The proper foundation of faith is the Person of Christ. Spurious faith begins by saying or acknowledging that the work of grace is done, and professes thus to obtain the experience sought. But this cannot be. To say that the work of sanctification is done before it is really accomplished is to make an untruth the foundation of its reception. "He has done it," and, "He is doing it," are two different statements, in the former the person says the work is accomplished or finished now, which is untrue; but in the latter he states that the work is being accomplished now, which, at this stage, is true, for God always comes to the rescue as soon as the seeking soul gets on such grounds. The latter is faith, the former is presumption. This does not make the reception or the experience a gradual process, for the moment that the soul thus believes, the work is accomplished.

Bishop R. S. Foster, in "Christian Purity," says, "You cannot rightly believe the work is accomplished before the evidence is produced in your soul." John Fletcher says, "Nobody can truly believe according to this dispensation, without being immediately conscious both of the forgiveness of sins and of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." And again: "What is faith? it is believing heartily, What is saving faith? I dare not say that it is 'believing heartily,' my sins are forgiven me for Christ's sake;' for if I live in sin, that belief is a destructive conceit, and not saving faith."

Dr. Philip Schaff, in "The Person of Christ," says: "True faith is an act of God wrought in the soul by the Holy Spirit, who reveals Christ to us in his true character, as Christ has revealed the father." While we cannot agree that faith is an "act of God," yet it is given of God, and if God gives it he will surely allow no other foundation but himself; while man's so-called faith is wrought up, and makes man its foundation, it is a common saying that if we would exercise the faith we naturally have we would be saved. There is no doubt that there is a great amount of faith that might be called natural, which is saving in the sense that it is necessary in order to properly seek God, but it is not that exercise of the soul that is commonly called "saving faith;" and as gospel light decreases natural faith degenerates into credulity, and causes a person to believe the mythologies and absurdities of heathenism. All the true natural faith a man possesses is brought into exercise when one starts to seek God, but saving faith can not be exercised until man's part is done. All men have not saving faith, and no one can have it till he meets God's requirements.

The following from Fletcher is clear on this subject: "As, on the one hand, it never came into my mind that an impenitent murderer can have even the saving faith of a heathen: so, on the other hand, it never entered my thoughts, that a penitent can believe with the faith of full assurance when he will: for this faith depends not only upon our general belief of the truth revealed to us, but also upon a peculiar operation of God, or revelation of his powerful arm, it is always attended with a manifestation of 'the Spirit of adoption witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God.' And such a manifestation God in general grants to none but them that groan deeply under 'the spirit of bondage unto fear,' as Paul did while he remained blind at Damascus; -- or them that are peculiarly faithful to the grace of their inferior dispensation (justification), and pray as earnestly for 'power from on high' as the apostles did after our Lord's ascension."

The Bible supports this excellent quotation. Paul says, "All men have not faith" (2 Thess. 3:2); clearly meaning that the "unreasonable and wicked men" of whom he spoke were excluded from the class of persons who have faith, and that faith which one does not possess he surely

cannot exercise, at least until he meets the requirements laid down in the word of God. And on the same grounds those who have in their hearts carnal tendencies unconfessed and uncrucified have not sanctifying faith, and cannot have it until so far as meeting conditions is concerned, their part is done.

Charles Wesley represents the seeker of holiness as praying,

"Open my faith's interior eye,
Display thy power from above,
And all I am shall sink and die,
Lost in astonishment and love."

Here he calls on God to open the interior eye of faith and give the soul power to discern, thus acknowledging that he cannot do it himself; and when the eye of faith is thus opened God displays his saving power before it, which when the soul sees, "all it is sinks and dies" at Jesus' feet, "lost in astonishment and love."

Wesley, in his sermon on "The Scripture Way of Salvation," defines faith thus, "Faith in general is defined by the apostle, an evidence, a divine evidence and conviction (the word means both) of things not seen; not visible, not perceivable by sight, or by any other of the external senses. it implies both a supernatural evidence of God, and of the things of God, a kind of spiritual light exhibited to the soul, and a supernatural sight or perception thereof. Accordingly the Scripture speaks of God giving sometimes light, sometimes a power of discerning it. So St. Paul, 'God who commanded light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.' And elsewhere the same apostle speaks of 'the eyes of our understanding being opened.' By this twofold operation of the Holy Spirit, having the eyes of our soul both opened and enlightened, we see the things which the natural 'eye hath not seen, neither the ear heard.' We have a prospect of the invisible things of God; we see the spiritual world which is all round about us, and yet no more discerned by our natural faculties, than if it had no being: and we see the eternal world; piercing through the veil that hangs between time and eternity. Clouds and darkness then rest upon it no more, but we already see the glory which shall be revealed ... it is certain, this faith necessarily implies an assurance (which is here only another word for evidence, it being hard to tell the difference between them) that Christ loved me, and gave himself for me. For 'he that believeth' with the true, living faith, 'hath the witness in himself.' ... But let it be observed that, in the very nature of the thing, the assurance goes before the confidence, For man cannot have a childlike confidence in God till he knows he is a child of God. Therefore, confidence, trust, reliance, adherence, or whatever else it may be called, is not the first, as some have supposed, but the second act or branch of faith."

Much has been said of conviction and confession as necessary, and some would naturally ask, "If these things are done in seeking holiness, do you not attach at least some merit to their performance?" In reply let us quote the words of Wesley: "Though it be allowed, that both this repentance and its fruits are necessary to full salvation; yet they are not necessary either in the same sense with faith, or in the same degree: not in the same degree; -- for these fruits are necessary conditionally, if there be time and opportunity for them; otherwise a man may be sanctified without them, But he cannot be sanctified without faith. Likewise, let a man have ever so

much of this repentance, or ever so many good works, yet all this does not at all avail: he is not sanctified till he believes: but the moment he believes, with or without those fruits, yea, with more or less of this repentance, he is sanctified, Not in the same sense; -- for this repentance and these fruits are only remotely necessary, necessary in order to the continuance of faith, as well as the increase of it; whereas faith is immediately and directly necessary to sanctification. it remains, that faith is the only condition, which is immediately and proximately necessary to sanctification."

Yes, if a man will believe with more or less of these things the experience will immediately be given, But the natural heart is so constituted that it will not acknowledge its own helplessness until it is forced to it, and as faith grasps that which is beyond man's natural power, it will not be exercised till he sees his weakness; and in order that the seeker may see this and sink at Jesus' feet, God is obliged to reveal to his inner eye his utter sinfulness, natural rebellion and hardness of heart, then when the merits of the blood are displayed before his longing vision he is ready to accept it, for it is now his only plea.

Faith will never have anything of which to boast, for all former righteousnesses and efforts are as "filthy rags " in its sight, and the soul will instinctively recoil from every suggestion of self-glory. All his best efforts of the past are seen to be not only tainted with sin but impotent and insufficient to bring deliverance. As never before he realizes that man cannot make himself holy, and as never before he sees that "the blood is the life" of the soul.

Then as you approach God for heart cleansing, if you have had a definite view of your sinful heart and confessed it to God, if you feel that in the volition of your will you are completely abandoned to all the will of God, -- endeavor to pierce through the darkness of unbelief and see God, for at this moment he may be standing ready to reveal himself to your waiting heart. Do not be content till he does thus reveal himself. Do not be content with a cold, dry assent to certain promises, but tarry till your whole soul is filled with his love, You will not see him in bodily form standing before you, as the disciples saw him on the storm-tossed sea, but your spirit's eye will see him as a Redeemer from all sin, and the vision will be as clear and assuring as that of any material object can ever be.

Jesus said, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." It is not the "way of life," but "the way that leadeth. unto life," that is strait and narrow, The way of life is out in the broad fields of infinite love, When you touch infinity you are not hampered by walls nor bound by fetters, but you are brought forth into a large place, a place of broad rivers and streams, a place of green pastures, where you can eat bread without scarceness, and lie down without fear.

But there is only one way into this broad place, the way of faith; and God shuts you up to this by shutting out everything else and hedging you up on every side. Before sanctifying faith is exercised your soul must stand stripped and helpless, You have had much help in living for God, but you now see your holiest actions polluted with self and all uncleanness, until you turn away with loathing, You are tired of the manna of the wilderness, and long for the corn and wine of Canaan, Your manna has been tainted with the corrupting breath of inward sin. You have poured out your troubles to God until your heart is sick, and in utter abhorrence you turn away from the treacherous foe. You fear your own heart. You tremble at the possible consequences if you fail.

You have almost unconsciously entertained good opinions of yourself, your abilities, your attainments, your spirituality, but now they all lie as refuse at your feet; and, instead of being puffed up with fancied worth, you see yourself filled with a loathsome disease. You have had friends whom you loved most dearly, but now they are snatched away. You stand helpless and alone, And if you dare entertain a hope that there is help outside of God, your clamoring passions fling the lie at you. Darkness and burden seem to be your only lot.

When Jesus hung on the cross, deserted by his friends, bleeding in every wound, sinking under the load of sin, and the sun refusing to behold the scene; humanity for whom he groaned mocking him to scorn; hell's minions surrounding and oppressing his spirit; angels forbidden to minister to his needs; and finally, and worst of all, the Father's face withdrawn and he left alone to bear the curse for sinful men, it is no wonder that he cried in awful agony, and with breaking heart, "My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me?"

So you, in your finite sphere, if you would be "crucified with Christ," will feel yourself deserted; and, seeing that divine justice burns against the inherent depravity of your heart, you, too, will feel like crying out, "My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me?" Yet, faint not. thou favored one, God is only preparing you for the great things he has provided for you. Cry unto him "out of the depths." Search for the door of faith. Look for the blood. There is a refuge for you at his cross.

An old adage says, "It is always darkest just before day." While this is not always true in experience, yet it is so apt to be true that when you see yourself beset on every side, and your Jerusalem is beset with armies, then flee to the mountains, to Jesus Christ; he is ever very near. Abraham prepared his sacrifice and set himself to drive away the birds, until a horror of great darkness settled around him and a deep sleep overcame him; then God came. Jacob wrestled all night till the break of day, and at last the angel unjointed his thigh; but he kept praying and did not let the angel go till he received the divine blessing, A great many of the mighty victories of the Bible followed the passing of the straits. So to all great attainments in God there is ever a narrow passage, in which the soul, divested of all other considerations, and shut up to "this one thing," falls prostrate and crawls through the "needle's eye" of faith into the Jerusalem of its desires.

Let the following quotations from Wesley help you in fixing your eyes on the sin-destroying Lamb of God: "Now, faith is 'the demonstrative evidence of things unseen,' the supernatural evidence of things invisible, not perceivable by eyes of the flesh, or by any of our natural senses or faculties. Faith is that divine evidence whereby the spiritual man discerneth God, and the things of God. it is with regard to the spiritual world what sense is with regard to the natural. it is the spiritual sensation of every soul that is born of God..."

"If you ask, 'Why then have not all men this faith? all, at least, who conceive it to be so happy a thing? Why do they not believe immediately?' We answer (on the Scriptural hypothesis), 'it is the gift of God.' No man is able to work it in himself, it is a work of omnipotence. it requires no less power thus to quicken a dead soul than to raise a body that lies in the grave, it is a new creation, and none can create a soul anew but he who at first created the heavens and the earth.

"May not your own experience teach you this? Can you give yourself this faith? is it now in your power to see, or hear, or taste, or feel God? Have you already, or can you raise in yourself, any perception of God? or of an invisible world?..."

"Now, is there any power in your soul whereby you discern either these or him that created them? Or, can all your wisdom and strength open an intercourse between yourself and the world of spirits? is it in your power to burst the veil that is on your heart, and let in the light of eternity? You know it is not. You not only do not, but cannot, by your own strength, thus believe, The more you labor so to do, the more you will be convinced 'it is the gift of God.'"

"Again: 'But what is that faith whereby we are sanctified, saved from sin, and perfected in love?' it is a divine evidence and conviction, first that God hath promised it in the Scripture. Till we are thoroughly satisfied of this, there is no moving one step farther.

"It is a divine evidence and conviction, secondly, that what God hath promised he is able to perform. Admitting, therefore, that 'with men it is impossible' to 'bring a clean thing out of an unclean,' to purify the heart from all sin, and to fill it with all holiness; yet this creates no difficulty in the case, seeing 'with God all things are possible.' And surely no one ever imagined it was possible to any power less than that of the Almighty! But if God speaks it shall be done.

"It is, thirdly, a divine evidence and conviction that he is able and willing to do it now, And why not? is not a moment to him the same as a thousand years? He cannot want more time to accomplish whatever he will. And he cannot want to stay for any more worthiness or fitness in the persons he is pleased to honor. We may therefore boldly say, at any point of time, 'Now is the day of salvation.'

"To this confidence, that God is both able and willing to sanctify us now, there needs to be added one thing more, a divine evidence and conviction, that he doeth it. in that hour it is done: God says to the inmost soul, "According to thy faith be it unto thee."

"... Thou therefore look for it every moment! Look for it in the way above described: in all those good works whereunto thou art 'created anew in Christ Jesus.' There is then no danger; you can be no worse, if you are no better for that expectation, For were you to be disappointed for your hope: it will come, and will not tarry. Look for it then every day, every hour, every moment! Why not this hour, this moment? Certainly you may look for it now, if you believe it is by faith. And by this token you may certainly know whether you seek it by faith or by works. if by works, you want something to be done first before you are sanctified. You think, I must first be or do thus or thus. Then you are seeking it by works unto this day. if you seek it by faith, you may expect it as you are; and if as you are then expect it now. it is of importance to observe, that there is an inseparable connection between these three points. Expect it by faith, Expect it as you are, and Expect it now! To deny one of them is to deny them all. To allow one, is to allow them all. Do you believe you are sanctified by faith? Be true then to your principle; and look for this blessing just as you are, neither better nor worse; as a poor sinner that still has nothing to plead, but Christ died. And if you look for it as you are, then expect it now. Stay for nothing: why should you? Christ is ready; and he is all you want. He is waiting for you: he is at the door! Let your inmost soul cry out,

"Come in, come in, thou heavenly guest!
Nor hence again remove;
But sup with me, and let the feast
Be everlasting love."

The following, from Fletcher's "Christian Perfection," is also to the point: "If a momentary display of Christ's bodily glory could, in an instant, turn Saul, the blaspheming, bloody persecutor, into Paul, the praying, gentle apostle; if a sudden sight of Christ's hands could, in a moment, root up from Thomas' heart that detestable resolution, 'I will not believe;' and produce that deep confession of faith, 'My Lord and my God!' what cannot the display of Christ's spiritual glory operate in a believing soul, to which he manifests himself, 'according to that power whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself'?"

And again: "From the preceding observations, it appears that believers generally go to Christian Perfection as the disciples went to the other side of the sea of Galilee. They toiled some time very hard, and with little success, but after they had 'rowed about twenty-five or thirty furlongs, they saw Jesus walking on the sea. He said to them, "It is I, be not afraid." Then they willingly received him into the ship; and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.' Just so we toil till our faith discovers Christ in the promise, and welcomes him to our hearts; and such is the effect of his presence, that immediately we arrive at the land of perfection."

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Chapter 17 THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT

Upon the reception of the Spirit's witness to the cleansing of the heart depends all certainty regarding the experience of holiness. its reception marks an epoch in our lives, and can always be pointed to as the time when the work was done. A failure to receive this witness is one great reason for so much unsteadiness and uncertainty. in the majority of cases a careful, honest investigation of one's own heart will reveal the fact that what has been called "up-and-down" experience has really sprung from the fact that no direct witness of the Spirit has ever been received. Since the witness always accompanies the work, we are forced to the conclusion that many if not the great majority of those who vacillate in this experience were never in reality cleansed.

The first thing necessary to settle in seeking this experience is, that you will never stop short of the positive witness inwrought by the Holy Ghost. Endeavor to the best of your ability to comprehend the fact of the witness. You can no more comprehend the witness itself before it is given than could you comprehend the witness of justification before its reception, But you can grasp the fact that the witness will be clear, and settle it within yourself never to stop short of it.

Two things may be depended upon: 1. Anything short of the real witness must be unsatisfactory. One's experience may be wonderful, it may be glorious, it may come suddenly and flood the soul, and at the time swallow the whole being to such an extent that there will not seem to be anything lacking; but after a while, when trials come thick and fast, there will be an

indefiniteness about it and such a sameness with other blessings that have been received that the heart grows dissatisfied, and will long for some positive assurance that the work has been wrought. A sense of incompleteness will come over the soul at times that will be painful; a sense of indefiniteness will also be felt concerning the experience of perfect love which will be disappointing and oppressive; while at times, it may be, a consciousness of remaining impurity, expressing itself in word, act or motive, will disturb the soul like a horrid nightmare. Some blessing may be given, and because of this the seeker argues these feelings away as temptations, and settles back into the old rut of professing holiness without its power in the heart. 2. There is, on the other hand, a sweet, satisfying definiteness in the witness of the Spirit that is received in no other way. The blessing at the time of its reception may not be nearly so great as blessings received on former occasions, but the clear, divine testimony that the desired work of grace has been wrought in the soul fully makes up for the lack of emotion and moves the soul to thankfulness.

We may now proceed to consider what the witness of the Spirit is.

1. The witness of the Spirit may or may not be accompanied by a flood of ecstasy. In perhaps the majority of cases it is not, it is a mistake for persons to set seekers to hunting for a landslide of joy, for it may be that this will not be God's way of working. When they are seeking a good feeling they naturally seize the first blessing that is received and label it holiness, when, as Fletcher says, they may simply have their imperfections covered with a landslide of peace and joy in believing, and the old fires of carnality be still smoldering within. Remember this, Saved people get great blessings, and if you have kept clear you have had them yourself all along, and this may be an additional one given at this especial time. Certainly it will do no harm to carefully examine its characteristics. Wesley mentions this point in "Christian Perfection," where he says, "Some have much love, peace, and joy, yet have not the direct witness." Let us ask some questions: 1. Was the blessing just like those you received before? Some persons say that the blessing received in obtaining holiness is just the same as that received in justification, But this is not necessarily true. The states are different, and the work wrought is different, One is forgiveness, and the other cleansing. The blessings received during justification are testimonies to acceptance, while this is a testimony to purity. The Israelites ate manna in the wilderness, but as soon as they crossed the Jordan they ate old corn, and grapes, and honey, and oil, and drank milk, if you are really hungry for holiness, you cannot be satisfied with the manna of justification; and, while you are very thankful for all God's favors, there is something now unsatisfactory in the blessings that formerly delighted you. There is a difference, there must be a difference; not that it is given by a different person, for it is not, but in that it is received in a differently conditioned vessel, and is the evidence of a different state.

2. Is this blessing satisfying? There is something wonderfully satisfying about the blessing of holiness, if you wish to call it by that name. It stands to reason that although the blessings received during the justified life are remarkable, yet they lack a certain element of satisfactoriness, if they do not, why should additional satisfaction be sought? But in the experience of holiness God "satiates" the souls of his children. There is nothing lacking that would or could make it more perfect in the soul's eye. Now do not understand us to say that the blessing will be so great that you will desire no more, but the witness is so satisfactory that nothing more is necessary to full assurance and perfect rest. The quality is perfect, for it is Christian perfection.

3. But this thought must be qualified, for some people's ideas of satisfaction are pitched too low, while some are too high, What is your standard of satisfaction? if it is in the definite witness to holiness, it will take that to fill the demand; but if it is just a blessing, the first stirring of your emotions will cause you to think that you have reached the summit of Christian attainment. We have talked with sinners, who declared that they were satisfied; and with formal professors who were so "settled on their lees" that they sanctimoniously declared that they wanted no more, that they had enough religion to do them; with others who clung to their inherent depravity and were satisfied to let it remain, But if the Ultima Thule or your desires is true Christian perfection, you will not be satisfied until that goal is reached, So be sure your ideas are based upon proper conceptions of the truth before you declare that the satisfaction that comes to you is the limit of your possibilities in God.

4. Was the blessing you received accompanied by the Spirit's witness to the definite work of inwrought holiness? This is important. The blessing one receives may be great, powerful, and, in some sense satisfactory, but if it lacks this essential element, it is not the witness of purity. Visions, ecstasies, raptures, trances and various other manifestations, may be received in the justified state. Hence these are not evidences of purity. Unless the direct witness of the Spirit attests it there is no sure evidence of entire sanctification.

5. You may say, "Yes, it was a definite witness." But let us ask again, Did this witness abide? Was this presence of the Holy Comforter permanent? Or, did the edge wear off in a few days and leave you as uncertain about your standing as ever? Granted, that this may be caused by temptation, there is this difference: if you are clean, though the temptation may be severe, yet if you hold steady, you will shortly come out from under it, and, upon examination, will find that the witness is as clear as it was before the temptation came; but if it be true that your heart is unclean, the passing away of the temptation will still leave you in doubt, and you will find your supposed evidence clouded, and not even as bright as it seemed before.

Again: close, cutting truth may cause deep heart searching, but the deeper the search the clearer the real evidence will shine, for God's truth is never against his witness. The Spirit and the word agree. if you are forced to ignore truth in order to keep your evidence, the trouble is lack of the divine witness. The Comforter comes to abide. Does he abide with you, not merely in ecstasies, but in fact?

It is not well to be so hasty and over-anxious about the experience that you will call the first little stirring of your emotions holiness. Of course, if we ask a fish God will not give us a serpent. But God gives only "according to our faith." As Fletcher says, in substance, "If one deluge of sanctifying grace will purify the soul it is well, but if not we should continue to seek until it is purified." We have known persons who apparently did not have the full light God intended them to have, but who would pray earnestly for some time, and, seemingly come to the end of all they knew, when their faith would lay hold of God and a great blessing would be received, This would be immediately, or soon after, followed by additional light, a deeper plunge into God, and a greater knowledge and abhorrence of self, This would be repeated time after time, until, at last they would wade boldly into the cleansing stream and come out whole. Then do not be too hasty to claim the experience. Unless the witness of the Spirit is clear it is possible that your faith only

grasps a greater measure of justifying grace than formerly. Test it by the rule of God-given certainty.

Again, though you hear, or think you hear, some voice, and even though some comforting passages of scripture impress themselves upon your mind, it does not necessarily follow that you have the witness. Passages of scripture may or may not thus come to you, and the devil is always handy, ready to whisper in your ears. There is something better than either in the direct witness of the Spirit.

We now pass to consider more particularly the positive side of the question, We would define the witness of the Spirit as the testimony of the Holy Spirit to our inner man, assuring us that all carnal tendencies are gone from the heart, and that Jesus Christ reigns there alone.

(1) It is the testimony of the Holy Spirit, Man would substitute his own spirit, and say, "Because such and such things are true in my heart I am clean." But this is too shallow, Some would substitute scripture, and say, "Because the Bible says, 'Now is the day of salvation,' etc., of course it must be done." Others would substitute plausible arguments, and think, "I have done so and so, and therefore God must have done his part." Again, others would substitute the opinions of the brethren, and say, "They think I am clean, therefore it must be true." But all such persons lean on a broken reed. The witness needed is the direct, personal testimony of the Holy Spirit himself. He does not trust his work of witnessing with us, with our neighbor, or with the scriptures, but does it himself. So, unless you come in contact with and receive the witness of the Holy Ghost, you may be sure that the work is not done, no matter how happy you may be. The Holy Ghost himself is our sanctifier and witness-bearer.

(2) It is the testimony of the Holy Ghost to our inner man. There is something too cold and dead about much of the so-called holiness of today. The mind reasons well of God, the tongue speaks well of the Holy Ghost, and the sensibilities are stirred by thoughts of the Comforter; but "the inner man" Is still more or less carnal, and never comes in full sanctifying contact with God the Holy Ghost. While the mind staggers out blindly into the unsearchable riches of Christ, the poor heart remains behind, cold and indifferent, a mill-stone hanged about the neck of faith.

Two questions should now be answered by those who profess to be sanctified: First, when you were seeking, did you come in contact with that third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Ghost, and did he in his own way speak to you? Second, did he bear witness with your spirit, with your inner man, or was it some mere moving of the mind or stirring of the senses that you experienced, and which departed as soon as you left the building? Was the mighty deep of your soul broken up, and did the Spirit of God as a matter of certainty with you move on the face of its troubled waters?

(3) It is a direct revelation. The Bible is a revelation from God, but it comes to us through the medium of human utterances expressed with paper and ink, But this witness of the Spirit is a direct revelation -- an assurance conveyed immediately to the soul by the Spirit. My letter to my friend is an indirect revelation, but speaking to him my voice is more direct. God's witness, however, is more direct than either of these. I convey my ideas through the medium of my letter or my voice, but God is limited to no such means, for by his personal, divine incoming he reveals in and by himself the things that concern my soul. As the spirit of man understands the things that are

in him, so now the Spirit of God causes the spirit of man to know the divine witness which the Spirit bears within him. Nothing else can be so direct, so powerful, so convincing. Our outward senses may deceive, but when the divine witness is given it is sure, They are deceived who, without having received this heavenly witness, claim the experience of full salvation. The true witness of the Spirit is from God; yea, it is God himself within the soul.

(4) But this witness is a direct revelation of a fact. it is not an indefinite stirring of the sensibilities, but God witnessing to the fact of an inwrought work of grace. it conveys one definite assurance -- that the work of holiness has been definitely wrought in the heart and continues to be an accomplished fact.

But this work of holiness to which the Spirit bears witness has two aspects -- negative and positive. Consider,

First, the negative. "The carnal tendencies are all gone. " After all, this is the great thing that has been troubling the heart for so long, as the poor, frightened soul has been crying, "Oh, how I hate these lusts of mine!" Now the great Cleanser, the Holy Ghost, the only person in the universe who can attest such a thing, says, in effect, "It is done." The soul then cries out in surprise,

"'Tis done, the great transaction's done."

There may be no searching of the soul at present to find one thing after another gone, but this one great fact assured displaces all other considerations, "My heart, which was a cage of unclean birds, is now made clean. Glory be to God."

Second, the positive aspect, Jesus Christ reigns unrivaled and alone in the heart and life, No more of self; no more stirrings of pride, impatience, jealousy, lust and all the horrid train; but Jesus Christ has taken the throne in the heart and will henceforth govern it as he wishes. All hail, thou Galilean King! Welcome to thy rightful throne. Sit thou as Lord over all. Amen, The Holy Spirit testifies to this fact in the inmost soul, and "we know that his witness is true."

It is not necessary that there should be any great stirrings of the emotions, but on the contrary the emotions that were so lately stirred to their very depths may now settle into a heavenly calm; and upon the surface of the soul's sea there may not be the rippling of a wave. The tempest has ceased. "The Master of ocean and earth and sky" uttered his voice, and, at the sound of his "Peace, be still," "Immediately there was a great calm." There may be no sense of fulness, but, on the contrary, of emptiness and loss, From this comes the doctrine of two works in one, first cleansing, second filling or the baptism of fire. But the soul that is made clean is occupied by God. The conscious fulness of the Spirit that will come afterward may not be realized, but God fills the soul that is all his own, and from that very moment carnality goes, and the fire of perfect love begins to burn on the heart's altar, which need never go out. You will doubtless be more conscious of this love at certain times than at other times, but God constantly dwells in his temple, nevertheless.

Let us now pass to speak again of some of the accompaniments of this witness, always bearing in mind that these are not the witness, but that the true witness of the Spirit is an inward, divine testimony that the work is accomplished.

1. This witness may be accompanied by a flood of glory. There are numerous testimonies to this fact, although this is not the general experience. Since God chooses for reasons known to himself sometimes to accomplish his work in this way, it is all right; but you must be sure not to take your eyes from the work God has wrought in order to enjoy its blessings. There is danger of this being the case. The work of holiness is so great and so important that God wants you to see that it is he who does it, that you may henceforth give him the glory. Thank God for the blessings, but thank him more for the grace of "perfect love."

2. It may be, and perhaps generally is, accompanied by a sense of cleanness. As cleansing is that work for which we seek, it is natural that a sense of cleanness in-wrought by the Holy Ghost would be taken as an evidence. But this sense of cleanness is not always an evidence of entire sanctification. There is a purifying process and a certain sense of cleanness experienced by the soul which is freely justified. This is cleansing, but not entire cleansing. When the sense of cleansing accompanies the evidence of holiness it is peculiarly adapted to the circumstances, and reveals the fact that the "King's daughter is all glorious within."

3. The witness may be, and perhaps generally is, accompanied by a sense of the blood of Christ flowing over the soul, it is by merit of the shed blood applied to the believing soul by the Holy Spirit that the work of full salvation is accomplished, and it is natural to suppose that sometimes at least the evidence will be accompanied by a consciousness of this fact. Through all your soul, so lately appearing in your own eyes as a charnel house, full of all uncleanness, you feel the warm, penetrating, searching virtue of the blood, cleansing, purifying as it goes, until the whole soul glows with heavenly fire, and the last trace of coldness is gone.

"Oh, the blood, the precious blood,
That Jesus shed for me,
Upon the cross in crimson flood,
Just now by faith I see."

And not only do you now see it by faith, but your soul has come in actual contact with its sin-killing tide, and sinks before God as wax melted before the fire. Hallelujah! "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

4. The witness may be accompanied by a sense of emptiness, This will often be the case with those who get such an overwhelming view of their inward pollutions that they seem to themselves to be filled with a loathsome disease. When carnality is destroyed they feel empty and clean, as though their souls were almost hollow, when in fact they are only

"Emptied that he might fill them,
As forth in his service they go."

In this condition souls are apt to be tempted that they never will be able to do anything again; but hold still and in God's good time he will anoint you with fresh oil and make you strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

5. The witness of the Spirit may be accompanied by a holy awe. When your soul views the work done, and realizes its immensity, the infinitude of the cost, and its far-reaching results, it sinks in awe before the holy Being who could accomplish such a wonder, or cries out in rapture, as angels might do, while glory after glory of the Almighty is unfolded before their astonished vision. You never thought of him on this wise? Ah, he has just commenced to reveal himself. Greater things will follow, if you persevere.

6. The witness will also be accompanied by a deep sense of abasement, When the soul is stripped of its pride, its self-sufficiency, of all its own works, instead of taking the flight that it was expecting, it falls as a worthless slave at the feet of its conqueror, and at the feet of all others for that matter. This sense of abasement is so opposite to what the experience of holiness is generally conceived to be that it may cause some trial of faith. But God knows just what we need, and will humble our souls till such a time as he sees that we should be exalted.

7. Or, again, this witness may be accompanied by abounding love glowing in the soul like a furnace of fire.

There are in some cases other accompaniments of the Spirit's testimony, but whether any particular one or all of them are present makes very little difference, since the real evidence of full salvation is the direct testimony of the Holy Spirit. This cannot be explained to the satisfaction of one who has never received it, but is clear to him who has. It will be helpful to try your supposed evidence of entire sanctification by the following tests:

1. Does it assure you of the purity of your soul? The witness of the Spirit does this, as we saw above.

2. Is it a definite testimony, or is it vague and mystifying?

3. Is it unmistakable? The true witness of the Spirit is clear and infallible.

4. Is it positive? Not in that positiveness that says, "I am clean, no matter what any one says," but in that positiveness that can stand the most searching and thorough investigation and come forth without loss.

5. Do you recognize it as God himself witnessing with your soul?

6. Does it bring a sense of completeness, a feeling that your struggles against sin and for cleansing are ended, and that the work is at last accomplished?

Once again, the real evidence is internal. It does not come with a rush and din, with noise and bluster nor with pompousness of any kind, but "in all lowliness and meekness," speaking like a "still small voice" in the inmost soul.

This witness also reaches the consciousness. Nor does it travel through the medium of the senses, the intellect, nor any other intervening thing, but directly reaches the center of being and from thence transmits the message to the intellect and sensibilities. It goes to the center of being and becomes, as it were, a part of one's self. We know it because it is the very knowledge of ourselves; and from this center of operations the Holy Spirit diffuses his sweet, holy presence through the whole being, as the odor of a fragrant perfume diffuses itself through a room.

The following, from Wesley, is clear on the witness of the Spirit to the work of entire sanctification:

"Q. How do you know that you are sanctified -- saved from your inbred corruption?"

"A. I know it no otherwise than I know that I am justified. 'Hereby know we that we are of God [in either sense] by the Spirit that he hath given us.'

"We know it by the witness and by the fruit of the Spirit. And, first, by the witness. As, when we were justified the Spirit bore witness with our spirit that our sins were forgiven, so when we were sanctified he bore witness that they were taken away. Indeed, the witness of sanctification is not always clear at first (as neither is that of justification); neither is it afterward always the same, but, like that of justification, sometimes stronger and sometimes fainter. Yea, and sometimes it is withdrawn. Yet, in general, the latter testimony of the Spirit is both as clear and steady as the former.

"Q. But what need is there of it, seeing sanctification is a real change, not a relative only, like justification?"

"A. But is the new birth a relative change only? is not this a real change? Therefore, if we need no witness of our sanctification, because it is a real change, for the same reason we should need none that we are born of, or are, the children of God.

"Q. But does not sanctification shine by its own light?"

"A. And does not the new birth, too? Sometimes it does. And so does sanctification; at others it does not. In the hour of temptation Satan clouds the work of God and injects various doubts and reasonings, especially in those who have either very weak or very strong understandings. At such times there is absolutely need of that witness, without which the work of sanctification not only could not be discerned, but could not longer subsist. Were it not for this the soul could not then abide in the love of God; much less could it rejoice evermore and in everything give thanks, in these circumstances, therefore, a direct testimony that we are sanctified is necessary in the highest degree.

"But I have no witness that I am saved from sin, and yet I have no doubt of it." Very well. As long as you have no doubt it is enough; when you have, you will need that witness.

"Q. But what Scripture makes mention of any such thing or gives any reason to expect it?"

"A. That Scripture, 1 Cor. 2:12. 'We have received not the spirit which is of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things which are freely given us of God.' Now, surely sanctification is one of 'the things which are freely given us of God.' And no possible reason can be assigned why this should not be expected when the apostle says we receive the Spirit, for this very end, 'that we may know the things which are thus freely given us.'

"Is not the same thing implied in that well-known Scripture, Rom. 8:16, 'The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God'? Does he only witness this to those who are children of God in the lowest sense? Nay, but to those also who are such in the highest sense. And does he not witness that they are such in the highest sense? What reason have we to doubt it?

"What if a man were to affirm (as indeed, many do) that this witness belongs only to the highest class of Christians? Would you not answer, the apostle makes no restriction? Therefore, doubtless it belongs to all the children of God. And will not the same answer hold if any affirm that it belongs only to the lowest class?

"Consider, likewise, I John 5:19, 'We know that we are of God.' How? 'By the Spirit that he hath given us' (1 John 3:24). Nay, 'hereby we know that he abideth in us.' And what ground have we, either from Scripture or reason, to exclude the witness, any more than the fruit of the Spirit from being here intended? By this then, also, we know that we are of God, and in what sense we are so. Whether we are babes, young men, or fathers, we know in the same manner.

"Not that I affirm that all young men, or even fathers, have this testimony every moment; there may be intermissions of the direct testimony that they are thus born of God, But those intermissions are fewer and shorter as they grow up in Christ. And some have the testimony both of their justification and sanctification, without any intermission at all; which I presume more might have, did they walk as humbly and as closely with God as they may."

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Chapter 18

THE WITNESS OF OUR OWN SPIRITS

In his sermon on the "Witness of the Spirit," Wesley says, "That this testimony of the Spirit of God must needs, in the very nature of things, be antecedent to the testimony of our own spirits, may appear from this single consideration: We must be holy of heart and holy in life before we can be conscious that we are so; before we can have the testimony of our own spirit that we are inwardly and outwardly holy, But we must love God, before we can be holy at all; this being the root of holiness. Now we cannot love God till we know he loves us. 'We love him, because he first loved us.' And we cannot know his pardoning love to us till his Spirit witnesses it to our spirit. Since, therefore, this testimony of his Spirit must precede the love of God and all holiness, of consequence it must precede our inward consciousness thereof, or the testimony of our spirit concerning them."

It will, perhaps, be profitable to tell what the witness of our own spirit is and to distinguish between the witness of our spirits in justification from the same witness in entire sanctification.

Justification and sanctification stand on different grounds, and, as a consequence, are different in their manifestations to the soul. That is, the evidence of the one is different from that of the other. Outside of the direct witness of the Holy Spirit, each one carries with it its own witness, and it is this "witness in himself" (1 John 5:10) of Which we wish to speak.

Justification being accompanied by regeneration, purifies the outward actions and the voluntary tempers of the soul; while sanctification entirely purifies the heart and removes the involuntary evil tempers of the soul.

It can readily be seen that it is easier to judge of actions than of conditions, of voluntary than of involuntary tempers, in this fact lies an explanation of the reason why so many people profess holiness who have never attained to its rich fullness. They know they are doing right, that their wishes are not contrary to God, and, as a consequence, naturally enough conclude that their hearts are cleansed, But holiness goes deeper than this, and purifies the condition of the soul -- the fountain-head from which motives proceed.

Since the evidence of holiness lies so deep it is clearly manifest, as James Caughey says, that "the temptations to doubt concerning one's purity are much more intricate and perplexing than those regarding the forgiveness of sins.

Both a justified and a sanctified soul have temptations and in a sense the same kind of temptations, but there is this difference in the way the soul meets them. Both have a feeling of aversion toward the thing offered; this is grace, -- "the Spirit." But the justified person also realizes a deep-seated something within that favors the idea of wrong; of course he immediately subdues it, but it is there. and almost involuntarily he groans for deliverance; but the sanctified soul has nothing within that favors the wrong suggestion, but experiences a pure feeling of aversion.

Followed down to its deepest facts the difference in the evidence of the two experiences is that the justified soul realizes the presence of a sinful nature from which the sanctified soul realizes that he is delivered.

That the soul is blessed and has certain emotional experiences like those of one whose heart is cleansed is no positive evidence that the former is also cleansed. God pours out his blessings as he pleases, and may give one justified person more joy than he does those in general who are sanctified. This is God's part, and we should consent for him to attend to it Do not cover up the manifestations of carnality by saying, "I am wonderfully blessed, and therefore must be clean."

Again, the fact that, under certain circumstances which at one time would have overcome you, you keep free and do not even feel impatient within, is not positive proof of cleansing, it may or may not even be the proof of growth in grace. Physical and mental conditions are liable to exercise a great influence over the way in which things are "taken;" and the attitude of the soul at the

moment may be such as to exclude the probability of yielding just then, or even of being much tried at the circumstances, while at other times it would take all the grace obtainable to keep sweet.

The fact that you do not feel SOME things that are sinful is not a sure sign of purity. Everybody has weaknesses -- points where carnality is the strongest, and would naturally be tried there, while other things are hardly noticeable. Again, there are times when the devil makes special assaults on our patience; then he tries jealousy, evil speaking. etc., all in their turn; then with nearly everybody there come times when he tries all at once. This is terrible, but it is the enemy's business to make things as terrible as possible. If under the most severe trials there is found to be one sinful tendency remaining, your heart is still unclean, no matter how free you may be in other particulars.

The weakness or strength of the carnal manifestations has nothing to do with their presence.

one is loaded with manifold temptations, and the consequence will naturally be fondly to think the soul delivered; but lo! in an evil hour they return with all their old venom and force.

The fact that, after a season of seeking holiness, a great blessing is received and the soul feels free for some time, shouting and testifying to being as free as a bird. Is not proof positive of cleansing. Be careful. The devil knows his business well, and sometimes lets a person nearly alone and allows his "infernally offspring," as Adam Clarke says -- the carnal nature -- to rest for the time being. He well knows that when the person gets up high there will be a tendency to be off guard; then, like a flood, he will come sweeping in and attempt to arouse all the latent powers of the internal foe, and take the soul by storm. The Psalmist cautions us to "Rejoice with trembling" (Psalm 2:11).

The whole question centers in this one point again. Are there or are there not carnal tendencies in the soul? Not, do you have greater victory than formerly? And, from a strictly human point of view, the fact of deliverance can only be known by a careful analysis of the "workings of the soul." Here every man is his own judge, and God will most surely hold us accountable for our judgment. The Holy Ghost will be true to us, and if we honestly desire the whole truth of the matter he will reveal it.

Thus the evidence "in ourselves" of deliverance from carnality lies in the deep-seated consciousness that the motives and desires are pure, free from carnal bias. And if the heart is thus purified the most trying circumstances, and the most piercing gazes of divinity flashed through the soul, will only deepen that internal evidence; and each fresh evidence will be like the breaking of an alabaster box of ointment in the soul, spreading its delicious fragrance through the whole being. Hallelujah!

Taking it from another point of view, holiness is manifested in an added quickness to discern the approaches of evil. There are times when the justified soul unconsciously ponders illegitimate things, which are rejected as soon as detected; but the sanctified soul without an act of the will detects and with very little effort instantly rejects the approaches of evil. There is a never-sleeping monitor of the soul that sees danger from afar and wards it off. To some degree this

is true in justification, but there are weaknesses in the shield that are manifest and groaned over. Charles Wesley expresses this thought thus in one of his hymns:

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

"I want the first approach to feel,
Of pride, or fond desire;
To catch the wandering of my will,
And quench the kindling fire."

Again, holiness is manifested in a quickness to discern the leadings of the Holy Spirit. True, there is left a certain amount of dullness and sluggishness in this particular, caused by the infirmities of the flesh and mind, but to these is added the blinding, stupefying presence of carnality, in the justified soul, that is liable to confuse him in his leadings. But the heavenly monitor which is enthroned in the holy soul consciously or unconsciously to the person, with comparative ease detects the leadings of the Spirit of God.

Again, holiness is manifested in a quickness and readiness to obey the slightest movements of the Spirit. It quickly recognizes his reprovings, and heeds his warnings, and gladly does or ceases to do as the Spirit directs. It has no struggle to subdue inward foes before obeying. Obedience is the only rule of life.

Holiness is manifest in a greater devotement to God. Devotion is its atmosphere, in this it lives and moves and has its being. The justified soul is devoted indeed, but struggles to subdue spiritual sloth and rebellion.

Holiness readily acknowledges that all things work together for the good of its possessor. The justified soul tries to do this, and to a great extent, no doubt succeeds; but it is done amid inbred tendencies to break away from perplexing circumstances, and from an environment that binds the Spirit; but holiness is resigned to all the providences of God,

"And in his hottest fire holds still."

Holiness is manifested in greater fervor along all lines of heavenly employment. We do not say greater exertion, for sometimes that would be impossible, but greater fervor. In that spirit that not only works but fully brings God into its work, and accomplishes with one stroke what it would have taken two to have done without this fulness. This fervor manifests itself in soul burden for the lost, in agonizing prayer, in deep yearnings after God, in carefulness and even rigidness of life, and every other kind of holy zeal.

Its possessor has a deep consciousness that the principle underlying each action is pure; that this principle abides and rules without a rival; that all this quickening of his spiritual powers follows upon the taking away of the vampire that has been sucking the vitality from his most sacred

duties, and that grace sits sole monarch, with every enemy cast out of the kingdom within. Thank God for the possibilities of grace!

In Wesley's sermon on the "Witness of the Spirit," we read: "We are all liable to trials, wherein the testimony of our own spirit is not sufficient; wherein nothing but the direct testimony of God's Spirit can assure us that we are his children.

"Two inferences may be drawn from the whole: the first, Let none ever presume to rest in any supposed testimony of the Spirit which is separate from the fruit of it, if the Spirit of God does really testify that we are children of God, the immediate consequence will be the fruit of the Spirit, even 'love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, temperance.' And however the fruit may be clouded for a while, during the time of strong temptation, so that it does not appear to the tempted person, while Satan is sifting him as wheat; yet the substantial part of it remains, even under the thickest cloud, it is true, joy in the Holy Ghost may be withdrawn during the hour of trial; yea, the soul may be 'exceeding sorrowful,' 'while the hour and power of darkness' continue; but even this is generally restored with increase, till we rejoice 'with joy unspeakable and full of glory.'

"The second inference is, Let none rest in any supposed fruit of the Spirit without the witness. There may be foretastes of joy, of peace, of love, and those not delusive, but really from God, long before we have the witness in ourselves," etc.

Do not trust in any supposed witness of the Spirit of God unless the fruit of a holy life, even the absence of heart sin and the presence of all the beautiful graces of the Spirit immediately follow; and do not trust in any imaginary graces unless the witness of the Holy Spirit is given, for these two agree. If God has accomplished the work in your heart, his witness will agree thereto, and he will inspire your heart with a consciousness of the fact that it is clean every whit. Do not trust ecstasies, no matter how wonderful they may be. Do not trust any state of the emotions, but be determined to have the direct witness of the Spirit, and be determined that this witness shall be accompanied by the fruits of a holy life, the testimony of your own spirit, agreeing thereto.

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Chapter 19 CONFLICTS OF THE ENTIRELY SANCTIFIED

"To retain perfect purity," says James Caughey, "requires a continual acting of faith upon the leading promises of the gospel."

Jesus said, "Have faith in God." Isaiah says, "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established (Isa. 7:9). Paul says, "To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God," etc. (1 Thes. 3:13). "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith" (Col. 2:6, 7). "Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end ... For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end" (Heb. 3:6,14). "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering for he is faithful that

promised ... Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward" (Heb. 10:23,35).

Peter brings out the same general thought when he says, "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you" (1 Pet. 5:10), After the experience of Christian perfection is received, according to Peter's instructions, the next necessary step is to be established, This is necessary in any religious experience, and is generally brought about through trials and accusations that, at times, are terrible; but, little by little, the soul catches the idea that this is the way it must be established, and becomes more and more firmly fixed on the Rock of Ages.

When your soul is really cleansed, you must not think the battle ended. It has just commenced in earnest, and you are now in a condition to get into the thickest of the fight; and, sooner or later, God will put you there.

You are now in a new country, and the first thing to do is to get your bearings; that is, find out your surroundings, your new relation to yourself, the enemy and God; find out your new condition and its import in your life; find out the new duties and your relation to them. It is a strange land to you, and you are not as capable of forming judgments about it from what you have heard as you are of forming judgments of China or the jungles of Africa from reading books. The only way to know spiritual things is to "taste and see."

The first thing for you to do is to throw away any and all your preconceived notions concerning the experience, and determine to learn all the lessons God has to teach you. It is quite likely that the unlearning will be a more severe process than the learning, but you can make it easier and cut the work much shorter if you will, right away, thoroughly divest yourself of all past ideas and put your ignorant soul like blank paper in the hands of God to be filled out as he pleases. No matter how orthodox you may have been, you will be surprised at the change God will make relative to your past ideas concerning genuine experience.

One of the most essential characteristics of holiness is teachableness, and you must keep yourself in a teachable attitude if you expect to grow in grace, or to even retain the grace you already have. You do not know all there is to learn even after you are cleansed; and if you are sanctified you were never as willing to listen as now. You can learn from the humblest saint, or from a little child.

You will, in the first place, need to know something about the conflicts with which you will meet in order that you may be prepared when they do come the more easily to overcome them, You cannot go to heaven on flowery beds of ease any more now than before you were cleansed.

No doubt a great many have been wholly sanctified, but, because of improper teaching, or from failure to discern the wiles of the devil, have made shipwreck of faith, who might have been spared much trouble and saved to the cause of God, had they been properly instructed.

In our anxiety to tell the truth we should not be betrayed into holding people to a closer line than the Spirit does. Nor, on the other hand, should we make too much allowance where God

would tighten the lines. The claim we make for sanctification is that it delivers the soul from every sinful temper, and renews it in the moral image of God. Fletcher says, "Some people aim at Christian perfection; but mistaking it for angelic perfection they shoot above the mark, and miss it, and then peevishly give up their hopes. Others place the mark as much too low; hence it is that you hear them profess to have attained Christian perfection, when they have not so much as attained the mental serenity of a philosopher, or the candor of a good-natured, conscientious heathen." Wrong doctrine is a fruitful source of vacillation in some people's experiences, another is just as true when they underestimate that experience as when they overestimate it. Underestimation will cause looseness, and overestimation will cause perplexity and uncertainty that will eventually confuse and overthrow. So, to the best of our ability, we should place the experience just where God would have us, and, as the wise man says, not try to "be righteous overmuch," for there is danger on that line the same as in "overmuch wickedness."

I. Holiness does not save one from infirmities. An infirmity is defined as "a physical, mental, or moral weakness or flaw" (Standard Dictionary). It is found in a man's natural involuntary condition, in a holy person it is not sin, and is perfectly consistent with the highest degree of Christian perfection. Fletcher clearly draws the line between sin and infirmities in the following quotation:

"An infirmity is a breach of Adam's law of paradisaical perfection, which our covenant God does not require of us now: and (evangelically speaking) a sin is a breach of Christ's evangelical law of Christian perfection; a perfection this, which God requires of all Christian believers. An infirmity (considering it with the error which it occasions) is consistent with pure love to God and man: but a sin is inconsistent with that love. An infirmity is free from guile, and has its root in our animal frame: but a sin is attended with guile, and has its root in our moral frame, springing either from the habitual corruption of our hearts, or from the momentary perversion of our tempers. An infirmity unavoidably results from our unhappy circumstances and from the necessary infelicities of our present state: but a sin flows from the avoidable and perverse choice of our own will. An infirmity has its foundation in an involuntary want of power; and a sin in a willful abuse of the present light and power we have, The one arises from involuntary weakness, and is always attended with a good meaning; a meaning unmixed with any had design, or wicked prejudice: but the other has its source in a voluntary perverseness and presumption, and is always attended with a meaning altogether had; or at best, with a good meaning founded on wicked prejudices."

Instead of these infirmities being sin, and as a consequence a hindrance to grace, they may, if taken rightly, be made a means of grace, Not that they would be so if voluntarily indulged, for then they cease to be innocent infirmities and become willful transgressions. The point at which infirmities become sins is where the person voluntarily indulges them for some reason that would not pass before God, or where he refuses correction and instruction. He may excuse himself by saying it is his way, and that if he did not do that way he would not be natural; but if down in his heart he finds a secret glorying in such actions, and also in the fact that he cannot do otherwise, he is guilty of sin. Yes, Paul gloried in his infirmities, but not to such an extent that he voluntarily surrendered himself to the weakest points in his nature; but his glorying was in the fact that he could so take advantage of his involuntary weaknesses that what would otherwise have been his

ruin should become a means of his furtherance in God. Hence he said, "All things work together for good to them that love the Lord."

Suppose one because of his lack of judgment or foresight makes a mistake. If instead of being glad he has made the mistake, he feels sorry for it, he will gain ground. The mistake costs him no loss of ground unless he repines over it to an unnecessary degree, but the humiliation has brought him lower before God, and, in addition to this, he has learned a new lesson, and so has increased his knowledge. The glorying comes, not in the action itself, but in the humiliation that of necessity follows the contemplation of that action; not in the fact that there are remaining weaknesses, but in the fact that a candid survey of these weaknesses, and especially when the light of God shines on them, causes the casting away of any temptations to pride and humbles the soul more deeply before God. And the clean soul is thankful for anything that will more effectually humble it, and keep pride at the greatest distance. Without infirmities we might get to considering ourselves almost divine, and so be lifted up with pride, Wesley was of the opinion that those things which we cannot help are for our good. He says, "Rather let us pray, both with the spirit and with the understanding, that all these things may work together for our good: that we may suffer all the infirmities of our nature, all the interruptions of men, all the assaults and suggestions of evil spirits, and in all be 'more than conquerors.' "

It may be well to consider what some of the infirmities are from which we are not delivered in the experience of entire sanctification.

1. Physical infirmities, Under this head comes all those bodily tendencies variously called passions, appetites, or desires. Not that these, could they be restored to normal conditions, would be called infirmities any more than our physical form could be so called; but they are so depraved by the fall that they seldom, or never, manifest normal conditions and activities. They are either too weak or too strong, in some directions scarcely stirring at all, while in others they become inordinate. This is seen in an aggravated form in that person who becomes so addicted to the use of tobacco that he will forego the natural use of his appetite and do without food for the sake of his pet indulgence; or the person who will almost starve in order to obtain intoxicants to satisfy his inordinate desire in that direction, While these are only illustrations, but, carried to such an extent, are inconsistent with sanctification (and with justification as well, for that matter), yet they show, not the degree, but the manner in which the natural appetites of even a holy person are warped, and at times he may innocently go too far in some direction, and, when he sees his mistake, be forced to humble himself before God. Yet if he keeps clear, he will "keep his body under," and "will not be brought under the power of" even innocent things to such an extent that his transgression will become willful and chronic, On the other hand he will, by prayer and persistent self-denial, safeguard and thus strengthen himself at that point. As this brings in the idea of self-denial, and as self-denial has to do with the very part of our being with which we are now dealing, it may be well to outline the way that should be taken by holy people.

Some people, and good people, too, seem to think that since a thing is lawful, and not positively forbidden in the Bible, there is no such thing as self-indulgence in connection with that thing. And since this gratification is their privilege, and is lawful, that they can please themselves in that thing as much as they desire; and if any one suggests that this is dwarfing to grace, they are ready, with the "law and the testimony," to uphold themselves in their practices, They seem to

forget that Paul said, "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient [margin, profitable]: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any" (1 Cor. 6:12).

But there is a point at which the thing that otherwise would be right becomes injurious to the soul. There are different things to be taken into consideration before passing an opinion as to the expediency or non-expediency of any course of action.

Self-indulgence is defined as the "act or habit of indulging or gratifying one's own inclinations, tastes, passions, and appetites, especially when carried to excess or at the expense of the rights of others" (Standard Dictionary). Then self-indulgence is the act of gratifying not only the passions, and appetites, which have their rise in the peculiar demands of the physical man; but any sinful bent of the heart, such as evil speaking, jealousy, envy, etc. Now it is clear that if the heart is made clean, all this "sinful bent" is taken away, and where it does not remain there is no desire for indulgence. Consequently, if a person has hard work to keep from jealousy, evil speaking, etc., there is a strong suspicion that the heart is not made clean. Paul says, "Put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another" (Col. 3:8,9). He makes no allowance for any of these things; they are purely spiritual wickedness and have no manner of excuse for existence in the peculiar physical, mental or moral makeup of a sanctified man. Their indulgence is always sinful.

In the unsanctified heart there are sinful tendencies (as covetousness, lust, etc.), which correspond with these natural appetites, passions and desires and use them as channels through which to operate. Now, when the heart is cleansed, these sinful tendencies are removed, and there remains only the natural appetites, desires, etc., which all men have in common.

But there are other things which stand on a different footing; and, since they use the body and mind as channels through which to operate, they will never be removed till this corruptible shall have put on incorruption. Paul seems to recognize this difference, and says: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence and covetousness which is idolatry" (Col. 3:5). Here, in pointing out the danger to the Colossians, instead of using a mild form of speech, which would so faintly express his antipathy for self-indulgence, he shows what their natural tendencies (such as sexual desire, desire for money, etc.) would grow into if not mortified.

Though the soul is purified and restored to its original holiness, as far as the quality of the renewed nature is concerned, yet the natural desires remain to some extent warped, just as our minds are still subject to follies; and these desires must be kept under or they will make excessive demands and ruin the soul. The tendency of the natural desires is always toward excess, unless firmly held in check by grace. Quarles says, "My passions eagle-eyed, my judgment blind." If we listen to the clamorings of passion, the warning voice of judgment will soon be lost.

This brings the idea of self-denial and self indulgence down to denial, or gratification of the natural desires, passions, appetites and inclinations, such as desire for pleasing food, pleasant surroundings, congenial companionship, the attractions of the sexes, sleep, rest, etc., and attraction toward anything is in proportion to its ability to produce mental or physical pleasure.

A sanctified person may become too self-indulgent -- partaking too freely of those things which produce physical or mental pleasure; and, somewhere along this line one may cross the boundary of the lawful and enter the realm of the inordinate, thus becoming unclean again. Consequently the only safe plan is to swing as far on the line of self-denial as is consistent with physical and spiritual well-being. Keep the body under, even at the expense of physical comfort if necessary; and, by so doing, the soul will thrive. Godly self-denial produces great enjoyment at the last.

We do not for a moment think that it is necessary for a sanctified person to be satisfied with the poorest things of life, as poor clothing, poor food, poor houses, etc., unless one's circumstances are such that he cannot afford any better, if in running the way of duty, the splinters have to be scraped from the bottom of the flour barrel, and one patch is added to another, or a mansion is changed for a dugout, or for a log cabin in the wilderness, it is a fine thing to have at least grace enough to endure it, and that uncomplainingly, for the sake of Jesus, who had not where to lay his head, and had but five barley loaves and two small fishes to set before a multitude of about ten thousand.

Self-denial does not mean to live in rags, dirt, filth, slovenliness and indifference; such wretchedness is contrary to the spirit of a clean, wide-awake gospel. But there is such a thing as self-denial, it is defined as "the act or power of denying one's self gratification, as for the good of some one else or for self-mortification; forbearance, or refusal to gratify one's own feelings, inclinations, or desires; passive self-sacrifice. (Standard Dictionary).

Self-denial is not Greek stoicism nor monastic asceticism, but simply Christian self-mortification, that places the feelings of others before one's own, and the glory of God before one's own inclinations and desires; and, where the good of others or the glory of God run counter to all we should like to do, to put our own pleasures in the background and live for others; and also where present pleasure or gratification excludes to any degree any possibility of future good or spiritual profit, to deny one's self the present gratification for the sake of the future benefit. Even self-love properly governed would lead one to do that.

There are five points to be considered by a holy person before entering upon the enjoyment of any pleasure of the senses:

(1) Is it lawful? That is, do the laws of God and man uphold me in what I am about to do? if so, it is well, But we must remember that lawful things must be "used" and not "abused," and beware lest, in using the privileges we have under human law, and those which we flatter ourselves that divine law allows, we should cross the boundary of things consistent with spiritual health and enter the malarial quagmire of sin.

(2) The second point to be considered is the physical condition of the person. That which would be beneficial to one person, might be positively injurious to another. some require a warm and some a cooler climate; some a low and some a higher altitude; some regard pork as not injurious, but beneficial to their health, while a little lard cooked in the victuals of others will cause nausea. Some aged persons have been inveterate tobacco users and liquor drinkers all their

lives, it would be of no use to lecture them on the physical injuries of tobacco and liquor since their very existence would seem to give you the lie; others, however, would be permanently injured or killed by the use of either in a few months. We can settle on this one point, that that which is injurious to the health, be it self-denial or indulgence, is wrong and should be discontinued. But, on the contrary, we cannot admit that whatever is not thus injurious is right. We should be careful that while we are not injuring our bodies we are also not injuring our souls.

(3) For what purpose is the act committed? While man looks on the outward appearance God looks on the heart, and judges according to the motive that prompts the action. An act which is all right in one place may be wrong in another, according to the motive which prompts it. It is all right to seek congenial companionship when the motive is spiritual profit, as when we seek the communion of the saints; but when we seek certain companions because they amuse or flatter us, the motive is improper and the effect injurious. Again, when we follow any pleasing occupation for the glory of God, the effect is salutary; but should we follow it simply because it is pleasing, it is ruinous. Any indulgence, no matter how pleasing to the flesh, that does not strictly conform to the rule "whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God," will, if persistently followed, eventually sap one's spiritual vitality and leave him spiritually dead.

(4) What effect will the action have on any other party concerned? None of us live to ourselves. The least act will in some sense have an influence on some other person. That bunch of ribbon on your hat, that extra tuck or bit of lace may seem small to you, but some one else in following your example may go a little farther. That careless remark seemed small to you, but others standing by were taking you for an example. Of course, they should not have done this, but they did, and they were looking for just such a slip from you as an excuse for several such slips on their part. Now their consciences are eased, and they can more easily do the wrong thing the next time, and then excuse themselves by saying, "Brother So-and-So did it, and he is holy."

But some acts of indulgence implicate more than one party, Then a holy person in maintaining his fancied rights should be very careful that he is not trampling on the rights of some others, is it as pleasing to the other party concerned as it is to you? Godly self-denial, according to the rule "do all to the glory of God," would wonderfully straighten out some people and do away with the things that "hinder so many prayers." See I Peter 3:7. But some one is ready to say, "My rights, my God-given rights." Nothing has been said against your rights; we have merely mentioned the rights of the other person whom you ought to love. There is a line that is pleasing to God; if you would try it, you would be delighted with the results in soul-health and growth.

(5) The last and greatest rule by which we should govern our pleasure is, What effect will the act have on my soul? This is equivalent to asking, "Is it God's will?" for when the will of God is done, the soul is always benefited. Every spiritual person knows that there are some things that help and some things that hinder the soul's prosperity. It takes close living and constant praying to find the path of spiritual prosperity, but if honest in its pursuit we shall eventually find it. "I want to" is a poor rule by which to govern the life; "God wants me to," is the only safe way. If any course of action causes deadness of soul and lessens the spirit of prayer, it is unsafe and should be discontinued.

Do nothing for present pleasure that will cause future suffering. Do nothing that has the appearance of evil. Do nothing that has a tendency to weaken the soul. Do always that which is well pleasing in God's sight. "For if ye do these things, ye shall never fall."

On the line of physical infirmities come the pains and aches, sicknesses and disabilities arising from disease or heredity, These of necessity cause inconvenience, and often also hinder the person from doing the things he otherwise would; or, if he does attempt to do them, the performance is necessarily imperfect. Those shortcomings which arise from deficiency of physical power, caused either by lack of strength or practice, are infirmities that no person should look upon in individuals as wrongs, unless they have willfully kept themselves in weakness or ignorance, in such a case we would rightfully accuse them for not knowing the things that it was their privilege and duty to know.

2. We are not delivered from mental infirmities only in so far as these infirmities are sinful, When man fell he fell in the unity of his being and his mind went down in the general wreck, A certain class of modern scientists would have us believe that the mental caliber of man was very small at first, but that by constant development he has risen to a loftier plane of knowledge than that occupied by our primeval parents in Eden, We cannot accept such a theory, however, since to our mind it is destructive and pernicious. There is no doubt that, in respect to natural research, the scholarship of today eclipses that of the philosophers of two thousand years ago; but this is not because of an increase of intellect, but because we have the benefits of the researches, successes and failures, of the men of two thousand and more years ago, added to all that have lived since that time; and these products are handed to us in a form that we can easily grasp and retain, or if we do not wish to do that, we can put endless volumes in our libraries and turn to them when we choose. This is not to the glory of the intellect of the twentieth century, but rather, to the glory of that of former years. What scholar of today, without a foundation from which to start, could successfully study out Aristotle's rules of logic, and make them so perfect that two thousand years of sharpest criticism would not impair them?

No, our race is not on the up grade, and that to such an extent that mental infirmities will soon disappear. Until "time shall be no more" and this "mortal shall have put on immortality," mental infirmities will remain with the most intellectual and even the most spiritual. How often does the man of God bewail his lack of knowledge, his wrong conclusions, and hence his wrong though not sinful actions -- wrong in such a sense that, if he had the thing to do over with the increased light and experience he now possesses, would do differently. How often we hear him humbly confessing his lack of judgment that has caused him so much trouble.

We copy the following from Wesley's sermon on "Wandering Thoughts." "But does it only cause this in the time of sickness or preternatural disorder? Nay, but more or less, at all times, even in a state of perfect health. Let a man be ever so healthy he will be more or less delirious every four and twenty hours. For does he not sleep? And while he sleeps, is he not liable to dream? And who then is master of his own thoughts, or able to preserve the order and consistency of them? Who can then keep them fixed on any point, or prevent their wandering from pole to pole?"

"But suppose we are awake, are we always so awake that we can steadily govern our own thoughts? Are we not unavoidably exposed to contrary extremes, by the very nature of this

machine, the body? Sometimes we are too heavy, too dull and languid to pursue any chain of thought. Sometimes, on the other hand, we are too lively. The imagination, without leave, starts to and fro, and carries us away hither and thither, whether we will or no, and all this from the merely natural motion of the spirits, or vibration of the nerves.

"Farther: How many wandering thoughts may arise, from those various associations of our ideas, which are made entirely without our knowledge and independently of our choice! How these connections are formed we cannot tell; but they are formed in a thousand different manners. Nor is it in the power of the wisest or holiest of men to break these associations, or prevent what is the necessary consequence of them, and matter of daily observation. Let the fire but touch one end of the train, and it immediately runs to the other.

"Once more: let us fix our attention as studiously as we are able on any subject, yet let either pleasure or pain arise, especially if it be intense, and it will demand our immediate attention, and attach our thought to itself. It will interrupt the steadiest contemplation, and divert the mind from its favorite subject."

In this wonderful sermon Wesley clearly draws the line between sinful thoughts and wandering thoughts that are not sinful, for in addition to what we have quoted, he says, "All those thoughts which wander from God. which leave him no room in our minds, are undoubtedly sinful ... Such are all murmuring, discontented thoughts, which say, in effect, We will not have thee to rule over us; all unbelieving thoughts, whether with regard to his being, his attributes, his providence ... All thoughts which spring from sinful tempers, are undoubtedly sinful ... And so must those be, which either produce or feed any sinful temper ... for not only whatever flows from evil is evil; but also whatever leads to it; whatever tends to alienate the soul of God, and to make or keep it earthly, sensual, or devilish."

3. In the definition of infirmities given in the foregoing, moral flaws are mentioned in addition to those which are physical or mental, This is true of the sinner, and also of the imperfect Christian; but as applied to the fully sanctified, the term flaw must be limited to that innocent "weakness" which springs from our finite condition. God has not promised to deliver us from this in the present life. We do not mean "weakness" In the sense of inability to do all God's will concerning us (for his will makes allowance for this very weakness), but we mean rather that we are in ourselves finite, and incapable of doing things beyond our finite sphere. Taking Fletcher's definition of an infirmity as being an "involuntary want of power," and applying it to the condition of the holiest of earth, and it is perfectly consistent with experience, if not with some people's theories.

While we are sure that the soul is thoroughly delivered from sin, outward and inward, yet who can accomplish anything, even in spiritual matters, to his complete satisfaction? Here, as well as elsewhere, though "perfect in love" we are still imperfect in conduct. Who is there but at times, finds his soul lagging and stumbling, pressed down by the corruptible body and by corrupt surroundings, until he cries to God for a new impetus in divine things, a deeper going down before God, and a mighty quickening in holiness and love, Not that he has lost ground, but the time has come that he must get more grace or that which he already has will steadily decline. Wesley says we must continually pray and press forward. "It is good to renew ourselves from time to time, by

closely examining the state of our souls, as if we had never done it before: for nothing tends more to the full assurance of faith, than to keep ourselves by this means in humility, and the exercise of all good works." Bramwell says, "I am giving myself to God, to receive a much deeper baptism, which I feel is my liberty in this world, I cannot rest in sins forgiven, or in being cleansed from all unrighteousness. I see the glory which belongs to me in my blessed Lord is for himself to dwell fully in my soul."

What holy person, when he compares himself and his attainments with the attainments of some of his brethren, or with the worthies of other days, but has felt like saying, with the holy Bramwell, "I long to live as near as any ever did; and yet I feel I have not all Ann Cutler found. My soul is subject to sloth; and I have hard work, I assure you, to keep all things going at full speed. But when I do this for one day, I see the ground I have gone over, Oh, how swiftly we may run even in this world!"

There is no doubt but that a great share of this confession was caused by humility, but humility sees facts; it sees sins all gone, but places the soul on the proper level, and puts it in a place where, acknowledging its needs, it earnestly stretches out after more. Bramwell again searches his heart, and, in his earnest endeavors after God, cries: "The love of Christ is my study; but I am frequently at a loss to understand how it is that my love to him is so little, I am sometimes ready to stumble at myself on this account. Am I right? Can I be right in this little love? Could I die for thee? Could I suffer long, and still love with a passion like thine? I cry to God daily, hourly, constantly, to receive a thousand times more love, I must give myself away; for the sacrifice was consumed."

May God breathe on us more of the precious Spirit that inspired this holy man, and set us to reaching out with greater endeavors after all his fullness!

A lack of perfect maturity (which the most advanced saint would not claim to have attained) is an infirmity, in the sense in which we have spoken of infirmities. Anything that can be improved either in quality or degree is not yet absolutely perfect. Fletcher says, "Absolute perfection belongs to God alone ... God alone is supremely perfect: all beings are imperfect, when they are compared to him; and though all his works were perfect in their places, yet, as he gave them different degrees of perfection, they which have inferior degrees of goodness, may be said to be imperfect in comparison to them which are endued with superior degrees of excellence."

But in this world the spirit is infirm, not only because it is immature, but also in respect to its understanding and judgments; and from wrong judgments affections are liable to flow which, if we had judged rightly, would have been different. This appears whenever we misunderstand a person's motive, and, as a consequence, indulge affections toward him which are different than in strict justice he deserves, if we were angels we would make no such mistakes; but, while our spirits are perfectly cleansed from sin, yet through our error of judgment we love the man only as we would a sinner or an enemy, when he is worthy of being loved as a holy Christian, or a friend. Wesley is very clear on this point. In his sermon on "Perfection" he says:

"The highest perfection which man can attain, while the soul dwells in the body, does not exclude ignorance, and error, and a thousand other infirmities, Now from wrong judgments, wrong

words and actions will often necessarily flow: and, in some cases, wrong affections may also spring from the same source, I may judge wrong of you; I may think more or less highly of you than I ought to think; and this mistake in my judgment, may not only cause something wrong in my behavior, but it may have a still deeper effect; it may occasion something wrong in my affection, From a wrong apprehension, I will love and esteem you either more or less than I ought. Nor can I be freed from a liability to such a mistake while I remain in a corruptible body. A thousand infirmities, in consequence of this, will attend my spirit, till it returns to God who gave it. And, in numberless instances, it comes short of doing the will of God, as Adam did in Paradise."

Let no man excuse his carnality on this score, for if he feels in his heart the least tendency toward evil surmising, unkindness, uncharitable criticism, or any lack of perfect love toward all men, he is yet in need of the sanctifying grace of God.

II. Holy people are subject to trials. This arises from the peculiar relation they sustain to the world, both to the people and natural things, and to the various circumstances which arise from their connection with these things, This is not always the meaning that is attached to the word either in the Bible or in common parlance, but for the want of some better word we desire to use it with that meaning. Peter says, "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:7). God appeared to Abraham and said, "I am the Almighty God, walk before me and be thou perfect" (Gen. 17:1). Some time afterward he "tried" Abraham's integrity by commanding him to offer Isaac as a sacrifice. Job was a "perfect and an upright man," yet God allowed him to be tested, and when he was tried he "came forth as gold." Daniel says, "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried" (Dan. 12:10).

All people have trials, Man is ushered into the world amid scenes of suffering and sorrow, The first sound he produces is a cry, as if he would bewail his existence and reproach his parents for the sorrows to which they have begotten him. Here the stormy career begins. Through the little joys and sorrows of childhood the babe arrives at youth, when the mystery of existence begins to dawn upon him. Through young manhood he pursues his way, and at length we see him in succession, at the marriage altar, in his own home, surrounded by his family, in business life, in social and religious relations, until as his hair gradually silvers for the tomb, his eyes grow dim, his steps slacken, his spirit droops and he realizes, if he is a man of thought, that "Man born of a woman hath but few days and is full of sorrow." He rejoices in the house of feasting today, and tomorrow mourns at the bier of his friend, Now he exults at success, but soon weeps at failure. He laughs most happily when his spirits are light and airy, but soon groans in anguish as his body is racked with pain, and at last he goes the way of mankind, "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust."

"Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?
Like a swift fleeting meteor, a fast flying cloud,
A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,
Man passes from life to his rest in the grave.

"'Tis the wink of an eye, 'tis the draught of a breath,
From the blossom of health to the paleness of death,

From the gilded saloon to the bier and the shroud --
Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?"

We are social beings -- we desire companionship. Very few -- and they are abnormally constituted -- prefer to live as hermits, alone. Beasts and birds might associate together without the rights of one interfering with those of another, for their capacities are small and their wants few, But man is a complex being, with rights and desires which reach out in all directions. Hence it is impossible for him to associate with his fellows for any length of time without the real or fancied rights of one interfering with those of the other. Every time your neighbor, in maintaining what he may call his rights, interferes with your rights or privileges, or even transgresses your ideas of neighborliness or philanthropy, though he does nothing that injures you or detracts from your freedom or rights, if you are not careful to keep your heart steady before God, you will find a suggestion stealthily taking possession of you that he is not worthy of your friendship. Your spirit will become agitated, or at least uneasy, and you will find it necessary to pray in order to keep wrong feelings from entering your heart, This is a trial -- a testing of your grace, Sin has not yet entered your heart in the shape of animosity against your neighbor, but the temptation is in that direction.

While it is impossible to get a place where you will have no such trials, yet by the grace of God you may reduce them to a minimum; and that person who is always finding occasion to suspect his neighbor, and who is always having his rights crossed, even by well-meaning people, needs to get saved from touchiness and sensitiveness. George Muller testified, "Not until I became totally indifferent to what I thought, desired or preferred; to my opinions, tastes, purposes, and the blame or praise, the censure or applause, of my fellow men, and determined that henceforth I would seek no approbation but that of God; did I ever start on a life of happiness and holiness; but from that day until now I have been content to live alone with God."

The Rev. W. H. Kennedy, of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, says: "The true condition of the soul is shown by contact with things opposed to our tastes or habits of life, So when our good is evil spoken of, when our tastes are offended, our wishes or advices disregarded, or our opinions ridiculed, to take it all in patient silence is a fruit of inward purity.

"When I am 'contented with mean things' (Rom. 12:16, margin), with any food, any raiment, any society, any climate, any seclusion, any interruption, by the will of God, I have an evidence of inward purity.

"When I can bear with loving patience any irregularity, any disorder, any lack of punctuality, or any of the annoying things of life with inward quietness and meekness, then I bear the fruit of holiness.

"When I prefer to neglect myself for the benefit of others; when I avoid referring to myself in commendation, or to desire to be well spoken of; when I am forgotten, neglected or purposely set aside and my soul inwardly rejoices; that is an evidence of being dead, and my life hid with Christ.

"When I 'take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake,' I agree with St. Paul (see 2 Cor. 12:10), and, 'in all these things am more than conqueror through him that loved me' (Rom. 8:37)."

Circumstances sometimes get so complicated that they become a trial. Poverty, failure of crops, failure of business, etc., all conspire to try one's patience and faith; but in proportion as we learn to see God in everything, in that proportion these things cease to be a trial. Madam Guyon says, "Oh, what fears and uneasiness does a resigned soul spare itself!"

The following is from Wesley's sermon on "Heaviness Through Temptations:" "But how many are there in this Christian country that toil, and labor, and sweat, and have it [food] not at last, but struggle with weariness and hunger together? is it not worse, for one after a hard day's labor to come back to a poor, cold, dirty, uncomfortable lodging, and to find there not even the food that is needful to repair his wasted strength? ... Perhaps to find also the comfort of five or six children, crying for what he has not to give! Were it not that he is restrained by an unseen hand, would he not 'curse God and die'? Oh, want of bread! Want of bread! Who can tell what this means, unless he hath felt it himself?"

Besides these trials that are common to man, there are those that are peculiar to the Christian, it is a mistake to say that the sinner has all the trials a Christian does, for if you live for God the devil will do his best to make your life miserable. Jesus said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." Under this head come the persecutions, mockings, scoffings, and jeerings of the unholy throng, You will be reproached for being a Christian, "but he that endureth to the end the same shall be saved."

III. We are surrounded by innumerable hosts of spirits, some good and some bad, some intent on our salvation and some on our destruction, if we could meet our enemies in the open field, ourselves armed by the power of God and aided by our heavenly guardians, we might vanquish them; but no, they are unseen. Instead of coming out in bold array they keep up a rambling, guerrilla warfare, darting in when least expected, and always endeavoring to find the soul off guard, This is the most tantalizing, aggravating warfare imaginable. The enemy cannot be located till the crack of his gun is heard, and then he is invisible. and the victim might as well save his ammunition as to waste it shooting at random into the bushes. Take a lesson from this, and when you hear the crack of the devil's gun do not fire back; save your ammunition for better game; set to running off some of his flock, and keep him so occupied keeping up fences and renewing brand-marks that he will have to give you some rest. True he will try all the harder to catch the "robber," but you are never safer than when on such an expedition, for you are surrounded by a wall of fire, and "an innumerable company of angels" that are especially interested in your success.

The Bible represents the devil in different ways. He is sometimes called an "adversary," or "the accuser of the brethren." Always when the sons of God come together Satan (the adversary) comes also, and straightway begins his old business of accusing, And it is well if the sons of God detect his wiles and banish him. At times, realizing his inability to get people willingly to follow him if his identity is manifest, he puts on a cloak; clothes himself with the livery of heaven, and comes as an angel of light, thereby trying to deceive people into his clutches, When he fails as an

adversary and as an angel of light, he sometimes throws off all cloaks, stands forth in his true nature and attempts to frighten the soul into submission, Then it is that he appears as "a roaring lion."

Satan has different ways of working, One is by flashing evil suggestions, or, as the Bible says, "fiery darts." With these he attempts to pierce your shield. He searches diligently for a weak place in your harness. Like a good general he tries to find some place where you are off your guard, or where you have not properly strengthened your bulwarks, Then through the gap thus caused he hurls his fiery darts, in the shape of accusations, solicitations to or suggestions of evil; and it is well if he was mistaken and you had your shield ready, for against that his fiery darts will glance off like bullets shot against a wall of adamant. If you have "the shield of faith," he cannot puncture it. "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." Meet him with a Bible promise, or some other appropriate passage of scripture, as Jesus did, or go on your way without heeding him. Yet do not dare him to the fray, for he will come soon enough without that. Do not use railing accusations, since even Michael the archangel dare not do that. It is better to say, like Michael, "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan."

At times the very air will seem alive with his flying missiles, but do not be frightened or nervous; he is shorn of his strength, and faith as a grain of mustard seed on your part will make you "more than conqueror." Fear not. "Have faith in God," and by him you can run through a troop unscathed, pass through the floods and not be drowned, and march through fire without its smell left on your garments, in the midst of all you will be able, with Charles Wesley, to sing:

"Though in affliction's furnace tried,
Unhurt on snares and death I'll tread;
Though sin assail, and hell, thrown wide,
Pour all its flames upon my head;
Like Moses' bush I'll mount the higher,
And flourish, unconsumed, in fire."

Failing with his fiery darts, he will use various kinds of pressure to overcome you. Throwing his infernal influences around your soul (thank God, not into it) as an octopus does its many arms around its prey, he will thus attempt to force you into yielding to his demands. The victim will be troubled with strange, unaccountable feelings. At times the very atmosphere will seem pregnant with spirits that would goad your impatience, that insist on an entrance to the soul. Then pride will thrust sore at you, seeking to engender a spirit of self-exaltation. A spirit of envy will seek to usurp a place in your heart, or a jealous or covetous spirit to take possession of its throne; and so on through all the avenues of approach the adversary will seek to control and overthrow you. Sometimes groans will be wrung from your very heart, so crushing will be your burden. These suggestions and feelings may accumulate until your condition will answer the Bible description of "heaviness through manifold temptations."

James Caughey says, "Temptation is a subject of feeling, as well as indwelling sin. A temptation is not a temptation in reality unless it is felt. How can we know we are tempted unless we feel it? How difficult it is, frequently, to discriminate!" All this is true, with this explanation: indwelling sin implies an inherent tendency to evil struggling for gratification, while temptation to

the holy soul, in addition to the feeling caused by the temptation, is met by a feeling of aversion to and recoil from the forbidden object or the evil suggested, because of its sinful character. Joseph's response to the solicitations of Potipher's wife, "How can I do this great evil and sin against God?" is an illustration.

Here is another point. As you look back at it you will see that the stirrings of carnality in the past were definite -- that is of pride, envy, etc.; but in the present temptation there is an indefiniteness and uncertainty that shows it to be false. Wesley says that the purity of our hearts at present will appear in a clearer light if we compare the present with the past feelings, But if the heart is not clean, and we compare the present with the past, there will be such a striking similarity that it will increase the feeling that the experience has not been received.

In Wesley's sermon on "Wandering Thoughts" the following passage occurs: "And as long as evil spirits roam to and fro in a miserable, disordered world, so long they will assault (whether they can prevail or no) every inhabitant of flesh and blood. They will trouble even those whom they cannot destroy: they will attack, if they cannot conquer. And from these attacks of our restless, unwearied enemies, we must not look for an entire deliverance, till we are lodged 'where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest.'"

It might be asked, "At what point does the clean soul again become carnal?" Take one form of temptation as an illustration, which is no doubt the most dangerous and subtle of all, and perhaps the one that the enemy uses the oftenest: At what point do temptations to doubt so enter the heart as to render it again carnal?

(1) As soon as a person is really cleansed the devil levels all his batteries at this experience. He immediately suggests, "You do not have the experience. Be careful, holiness is a wonderful work and you are professing a great thing, No one was ever sanctified," etc. But none of these suggestions, no matter how persistently urged, are inconsistent with a clean heart. They are outside.

(2) A serious doubt as to whether the heart has been made clean, arising from a misconception of what real cleansing is, does not necessarily forfeit the experience. On the contrary it may cause one to examine the foundation of his hope and the more thoroughly convince himself of the genuineness of his experience.

(3) A fear that the experience has been forfeited does not of necessity forfeit it. This fearfulness is likely to occur often before the heart becomes "established" and learns the wiles of the devil, especially if the person is extremely conscientious.

(4) A failure to profess the experience, at least for a short time, during these temptations to doubt, does not necessarily admit unbelief to the heart, A great amount of mental misconception is consistent with a clean heart.

(5) To give up one's profession and attempt to pray through does not necessarily forfeit the experience. I have known persons who, in their great anxiety to be right, and honestly attempting to pray through, have obtained the witness to their cleansing, if possible, more clearly than before,

and upon examination of their past from this advanced ground were convinced that they had not lost their experience at all.

You say, "If all this is consistent with an experience, where can doubt come in ?" You will notice that all the above-mentioned complications arise from a misconception of God's requirements, or from a failure to recognize the devil's temptations. And there is no doubt that God makes a great deal of allowance for our human short-sightedness. Faith is not so much the acknowledgment of a fact of experience as confidence in God. This bases the experience on a different principle than much of the preaching of today wittingly or unwittingly does, But he who builds his hopes on his ability to profess an experience is not properly founded on the rock. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 3:11).

Here is the point of actual failure. The devil slips up in the midst of a severe test and says, "There is no use trying, God cannot keep you." This runs against the will, and if it is quickly repelled the heart is still clean; but if the will weakens and accepts the statement, the heart immediately becomes unclean, Or, the devil says, "Are you not sorry you ever professed holiness?" If the will says, "No," all is well, But if it admits the temptation. It falls. As long as the will persistently rejects the onslaughts of the devil, and holds its steadfastness in God. there is no cause for fear; but when it weakens and accepts distrust of God, carnality re-enters.

Carnality enters at the point of distrust toward God, be that distrust ever so small. So press on, though all your foundations of experience seem to totter; for if you steadily hold your confidence in God, all will come out right in the end. Remember that carnality enters, if at all, at the point of accepting and yielding to some sinful principle, Are you guilty in this respect? if so, you are on a lower plane than you once were. Rest not until the loftier plane is regained, and, "rooted and grounded in love," you are able to pass through every conflict, not only unscathed, but more than conqueror."

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Chapter 20 CAUSES OF VACILLATION

The question is often asked, "Why is it that people fail to keep a steady experience in holiness?" In answering in a general way we remark that in the things of grace people get all they live for. Holiness resides in the heart, and, as a consequence, the causes of vacillation may be found in heart conditions, or in things that influence those conditions, if your experience has been vacillating possibly you may find the secret of this unsteadiness in some of the following observations. If so, thank God for the discovery, and turn it at once to practical account.

Probably the greater number of vacillating professors of holiness never attained this rich experience, They have repeatedly gone forward in some holiness meeting or convention, consecrated themselves to God, repented of numerous shortcomings, and been greatly blest; but in a short time they have been down again, Then they say, "I have lost the experience of holiness," are reproached by others for their lack of faith and called doubting Thomases. But all this time there has been a questioning in their minds as to whether they really got what they thought they did.

The real experience may be lost, however -- from lack of faith, from failure to trust God implicitly. Our faith must "stand not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." But there come trying circumstances, when all hell seems to surround the soul; then there enters the heart a distrust of God's ability to keep from falling. It is the devil's business to inoculate us with this insidious thing, if possible; but remember the promise, "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever" (Psa. 125:1), Then hold still, and if you are really sanctified, you will come out with flying colors, knowing more of God than before. But where faith fails there is generally some other reason further back that is the cause of its failure, and we should be strictly honest and lay the blame at the right place.

Another sure cause of unsteadiness is a lack of watchfulness. The devil is always on the alert, always looking for an opportunity to take the citadel of "Man-soul" by storm. To offset this Jesus said, "Watch." We are fighting with an unseen adversary, We must watch in every direction and all the time, A great many become careless for a time, and in the unguarded moment are overtaken by the enemy and fall.

Still another occasion of vacillation is the lack of self-humiliation under all circumstances. We say lack of self-humiliation, for though pride be gone, yet there may arise circumstances, or a complication of circumstances, under which if we refuse to humble ourselves, though clearly in the right, we are, to say the least, in danger. Every change of circumstances should be seized by the sanctified soul as a fresh reason to go down before God. Resentment of slander, reproof, correction, insult, or any trying thing, leaves the door open and sin enters, But in all these conditions, and in success as well, the soul should constantly abase itself before God.

A failure of resignation may forfeit the experience. Under trying circumstances the temptation would be to rebel, and force our way out; but the resigned soul saves itself many perplexities by holding still under the trial. If the sky is black and lowering, the sun will shine all the brighter after the clouds roll away. Madam Guyon says if we fight our temptations, they will only grow worse, but if we let them alone and trust God they will soon leave.

Carelessness in respect to the outward life is another source of vacillation. Bramwell's advice was, "Reject everything in the present that would in the least draw you from the love of God." God desires that we glorify him in our lives. As never before, the soul when sanctified avoids the appearance of evil. He holds himself to the clean, Bible line, and makes no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof. Self-denial is his rule of life, and very often the secret of unsteadiness may be traced to some self-indulgence that grieves the Holy Spirit. We should constantly remember that even a little inattention to the suggestions of the Holy Spirit will dull the edge of grace, When the soul is clean, it more readily discerns evil than before. The first heavy feeling should be heeded and the mistakes which occasions it rectified, or the conscience will lose its tenderness and then it is not very far to the bottom.

A failure to press earnestly forward will deaden the soul. We must not think that because we are cleansed there is no more for us. The bread made this week is good, but it will mold next week; so more must be made. When God especially blesses us there is danger of getting elated and stopping to glory in the blessing instead of pressing on to greater victories, and thus we lose the

freshness and sweetness the blessing was intended to impart. Bramwell says, "Never imagine that you have arrived at the summit. No; see God in all things, and you will see no end."

But the one great occasion of vacillation is a lack of prayer. It is needless to quote the many scriptures that exhort us to this blessed exercise. Let this one suffice: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph. 6:18).

"Prayer makes the darkened clouds withdraw,
Prayer climbs the ladder Jacob saw;
Gives exercise to faith and love;
Brings every blessing from above.

"Restraining prayer we cease to fight;
Prayer keeps the Christian's armor bright;
And Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees."

A great many persons go through mere forms of prayer, and then wonder why they do not reach soul victory; but a life of prayer in the Spirit is ever a victorious life.

Other causes of vacillation might be mentioned, but the heart that will be true to God will discover the treacherous wiles of the devil intended for his overthrow. He will also be quick to discern the gentle leadings of the Holy Spirit, drawing him to a life of deeper devotion and of holy yearning, and to an ever-deepening self-abasement. As a consequence he will be filled more and more with the burning love of God. O Grace! where dost thou end? With cords of love thou dost draw our willing souls into thyself, renewing us evermore in the image of thy divine Author. Glory to God for this matchless fullness!

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THE END