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HOW TO KEEP SWEET
By John Marvin Hames

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FOREWORD

We are sending forth our twenty-fourth book. We have selected for a title, "How To Keep Sweet", which we believe will fill a needed place in the Holiness Movement.

We have sought to put into this little volume, the very cream of holiness. In Chapter three, "Affliction Versus Glory", we are indebted to our friend Dr. G. D. Watson for the first part of this chapter. The last part of this chapter we have taken from one of our books which we believe will throw light on this subject and comfort God's people who are suffering afflictions and going through dark tunnels and fiery trials.

Our prayer is that the messages contained in this little book may feed your faith and enlarge your vision for a larger Christian life.

In His Name,
J. M. Hames

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Chapter 1

HOW TO KEEP SWEET

"Let your moderation (Sweetness) be known unto all men." Phil. 4:5.

The word "moderation" in the above text is a little hard to turn into English. Various meanings have been given to it, which are all suggestive: such as "Yieldedness", "Forbearance", and "Gentleness." Perhaps the most striking translation is the Syriac Version rendered "sweetness." The Holy Ghost imparts to us Divine Sweetness, which is the very marrow of the Christ-like life. There are many Scriptures that refer to the sweetness of God. David said God's Word was as sweet to him as honey. God's Word is His eternal Son, that outspoken Word generated in His 'bosom, and uttered forth in the blessed Person of Christ.

It will take nothing less than a divine revelation from God to enable us to discern what is the Christlike spirit, the inexpressible tenderness and gentleness of His nature. Without the sweetness of His divine nature, the most intensive and righteous life is like the image of God without His beauty and attractiveness.

There is a tenderness and sweetness which cannot be defined. It is more than orthodoxy, good behavior and the outward correctness of life. It is the breath of Jesus in the heart, the vapor from the river of life, the perfume of the Rose of Sharon, which is worth more in the sight of God than all the outward hull of a religious form; which only serves as an alabaster box to the Christ-like spirit.

The old writers on Christian Perfection had much to say about being "dissolved in love", "lost in God", and "sinking in a sea of divine peace."

Some years ago a prominent and efficient minister was conducting a revival meeting in New York City, and had for a co-worker a fine Christian woman of extraordinary power in soul winning. One day he ventured to ask her the secret of her experience and power. Without any hesitation she answered, "It is the sweetness of love."

What is the sweetness of love? "It is love made perfect and filling, enlarging and overflowing the breast; love pushing its wave up into the intellect and will, deluging all the mental faculties with its delicious current; love filling the tongue, selecting the fittest words, sweetening the voice, or holding it in precious silence; love that obeys God in everything."

There are several reasons why we plead for the experience of divine "sweetness" among God's people. First, it is the best state for the soul to thrive in. To feel the touch of the Holy Spirit in sweetness and heavenly joy is one of the marks of Apostolic Christianity. Perhaps no one thing serves as a touchstone to mark the difference between Apostolic and Worldly religion, as this one thing of divine sweetness. When this heavenly intoxication fills the heart, all the dormant powers and soul faculties are resurrected and quickened into divine life. The baptism of fire takes hold of the great deep of the soul and purifies, adorns and expands every God-given capability.

What unction in preaching, what sweetness in song, what fervency of prayer, what stretches of faith, what patience in sorrow and the power to suffer and keep sweet!

A second reason for the possession of sweetness of spirit is found in its fruitfulness. Just as soft, mellow, rich soil is the best state for grain and plants to grow in, in like manner, a soft, tender heart is the best condition for the fruit and graces of the spirit to grow and ripen in the summer land of Beulah.

"Nothing in all creation bears such fruit as the sweetness of God poured all through the soul. It is like the rich river of the Nile inundating the soil of Egypt, which makes it yield the richest harvest in the world. As the mysterious Nile forms its headwaters in the Mountains of the Moon in Africa, gathers up from those mountains a rich fertilizer, brings it down and spreads it over Egypt for the product of luscious crops, so the divine Nile of the Holy Spirit pours down from the Mountains of the Godhead, those feelings, emotions, visions, yearnings, prayers, affections and sweetnesses of the Christ-like life."

Third divine sweetness is attractive. It has a magnetic drawing power. Just as long as the early church kept the fires of Pentecost burning, the multitudes flocked to the places of worship. Let God's people today seek and find the Pentecostal blessing with its gladdening presence, and the people will come from far and near to see the glory of God.

The question has been asked time and again; how to reach the masses and get the unsaved in the church? Scores of things have been suggested, but they all have failed. We are convinced more and more that it is not human eloquence and logic that constitute the glory of the New Testament Church.

Says the eloquent Dr. B. Carradine, "The church will have to get drunk on joy. There must be an intoxication of spirit, as the body is intoxicated by wine. There must be a bubbling of gladness in the heart, an overflowing of sweet, holy rapture that cannot be retained; but will rush into every open channel of privilege, opportunity and duty with sunlit face, shining eyes, liberated tongue, praising lips and flying body carrying food, light, and comfort to broken-hearted and bankrupt nations of the earth."

A fourth reason for the possession of sweetness is the beautifying power to the life. God must believe in beauty. "He has a way of making golden gates out of the sunset clouds; giving the appearance of a resplendent city with domes and battlements of fire; creating a blue sea with strands of purple 'and islands of pink and scarlet of gold, edged with silver as if waves were lashing against their seashores; so that the evening, fair and peaceful in itself, is made beautiful and memorable by added loveliness and glory." So it is not enough for us that we possess truth, uprightness, principle and character. There are beautiful dispositions and graces that we must possess for our adornment.

The very nature of Christianity demands that we keep sweet. If our holy religion were a thing of creeds and ceremonies, we would not need to keep sweet to perform a few duties. But, Christianity is different from all other religions in that it consists of tempers, Christ-likeness, heavenly mindedness and sweetness of spirit. A heart filled with the Comforter will be characterized by a gentle, dove-like spirit.

A fifth reason for a sweet spirit is found in the enrichment it brings to one's own soul. It is impossible to be kind, polite and sweet without feeling a reflex of beneficial influence on the heart. When you are tempted to feel hurt or unkind toward someone who may have injured you, quietly and prayerfully forgive, and reject all unkind thoughts and refuse to brood over a wrong or an imaginary injury. At once a honey-like feeling will settle down over your spirit. This is worth far more than winning at the expense of one's peace of soul. God is winning the world to Him by kindness and he who would truly represent God in this world must abound in kindness. Kindness, whether it is felt in the heart, heard in tone 'and word, or seen in deeds, is nothing but love in action.

Kindness will unlock more hearts and swing more rusty doors off their hinges and win more men to God than all of the big sermons that are preached without this grace. We plead then, give us more of it. Help us dear Lord to practice it in the home, church, on the streets and in the shops and stores. This kind of life pays great dividends here and hereafter.

But the great question is, "How to Keep Sweet." There are two words in the Bible when linked together work wonders in the believer's life. These words are "Let God." The name of God occurs thirty-five times in the first thirty-five verses in Genesis; and the word "let" occurs fourteen times in the same verses. The first is "Let there be light", and last is, "Let them have dominion." Then as we pass over into the New Testament, we have such words as "Let the peace of God dwell in you richly"; "Let us enter into that rest"; "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus"; "Let not your hearts be troubled"; and finally, "Let brotherly love continue." So then, the words "Let God" form the key to a victorious life. Here is the secret of keeping sweet. The first "let" is "Let the peace of God dwell in your heart." The peace of God--not merely peace with God (for that stands for pardon); the peace of God is nothing less than the very heart of God transfused into our hearts so that we enter into its perfect rest. It is the peace which He Himself possesses. He dwells in the eternal calm, unmoved as the sun and stars of heaven, or the deep bosom of the sea by billows which foam upon its breaks.

It "passeth all understanding." No brain or intellect can comprehend it. This peace shall keep your hearts and minds. It fills the whole inner being. The heart may represent the higher nature. It is a little world within itself with its emotions, conscience, will and affections. No one has ever been able to keep the heart but the peace of God like a golden lump of honey lodged within, dripping sweetness. All through the trying hours of the day, the peace of God keeps the heart warm and tender.

"Our peace deepens and widens as we advance in the inner soul knowledge of God, of Christ and the Holy Spirit. So this multiplication of God goes on and on until we get out in the eternal tranquilities, where dying beds, bursting tombs, burning worlds, groaning spirits, shouting Seraphim and revolving eternity are insufficient to break the soul's repose."

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 2:5). Here is one of the highest commands ever given to a child of God. To have one's mind is to think his thoughts;

Christ is God's ideal man. "In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." "And ye are complete in Him." (Colossians 2:9, 10). We read, "For it pleased the Father that in Him should all the fullness dwell." "By this the Apostle means that every grace that grew and blossomed and bore fruit in the heart and life of our Lord, 'we are to receive in our hearts and manifest in our lives.'" Oh, the pure, loving-minded Christ, to possess Him means peace, rest and sweetness.

The secret of keeping sweet is found in another "let." "Let us go on to perfection." (Hebrews 6:1) The better rendering would be, "Let us be borne immediately to perfection."

Notice how quietly God works in nature. The Panama Canal is so miles long, and the six double locks raise and lower ships eighty-five feet. One of our largest battleships, the New Jersey, enters the locks, the gate is closed behind it and it can be raised or lowered 85 feet to where it glides out into the ocean without an effort. The God of all grace works the same way in the spiritual world. He can sanctify you in a moment if you only let go and "Let God."

"Christian perfection deals mainly with the inner life; with the motives, intentions, desires and propensities that spring up in the heart; with the purification of the fountains of life, experience, and conduct."

The great work of the Holy Ghost is to clean the heart from all sin and fill the heart and affection with perfect love. With such an experience you will find it easy to keep sweet.

"Let not your heart be troubled." (St. John 14:1).

It is wrong to be crushed by trouble. Sorrow and trouble have a paralyzing effect on the brain and body. It seems to freeze and benumb every part of the spirit, soul and body; which unfits us for life duties. It is all right for a big ship to be in the ocean and let the storm beat against her, the vessel was made for storms, but woe unto that vessel when the water gets on the inside. Trouble cannot hurt you unless it gets in your heart and mind. Remember, the latch is on the inside; it is up to you to keep trouble outside the heart. Let the ocean of His love flood your heart, and

sorrow and sighing will flee away. God will give you "Beauty for Ashes", "The Oil of Joy for Mourning", and "The Garments of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness." Lift the latch just now and "let go" and "Let God."

Another "let" is found in Hebrews 13:1, "Let brotherly love continue." Love is one of the greatest forces in the universe of God. It is the sweetest thing on earth. It is love that holds the human family together. That great old saint, Colonel S. L. Brengle, says, "The heart that loves unflinchingly will be a fountain of sweet water from which healing streams will flow. Such a heart blesses its possessor and all who are round about. It is both a fountain and a fire. If the fire of love is fed with fresh fuel every day from God's Word; if it is blown upon by the breath of prayer and praise; and if the drafts are kept open, it will never go out, but will burn on and on until it is caught up and co-mingled with the eternal fire of love that burns in the hearts and enlightens forever the angelic host of Heaven and the very heart of God Himself."

"Let God" is the latch to hundreds of doors which open to us a larger and deeper life. We may feel an urge or call to a certain field, and at present, every door is closed to us. How often we strive to break through impenetrable walls of limitation and difficulty, and try to think of ways and agencies of getting through until the brain aches when at last we lie helpless and limp and consent to "Let God." Then the iron gates of circumstances and hindrance open noiselessly and of their own accord. Someone has said, "We think so hard, pray so hard, and trust so hard, that we become unrestful and disquieted and noisy and thus drive Him (The Heavenly Dove) away."

Dear heart, if you are fighting losing battles, why not find your way to the "upper room" and tarry at the feet of Jesus until His all-cleansing blood has purged out every root of bitterness; then sweetly and gently lift the latch (by your God-given will power) and let the sea of omnipotence flow into your very being, your life, your troubles, your past, your present, your future, your finance and into that mystery which cannot be explained that perplexes you. "Then shall thy days be as the days of Heaven upon earth." "Thy sun shall no more go down." "And the days of thy mourning shall be ended" (Isaiah 60:20).

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Chapter 2 JOHN THE BAPTIST AND HIS MESSAGE

Matthew 3:11

John the Baptist will ever be remembered as the last Old Testament prophet. He burst in on society and a backslidden nation like a spiritual earthquake. He was true to his portrait; a rugged child of nature, with a camel hair coat and a leather girdle about his loins.

He chose the wilderness for his sanctuary and pulpit. Like his predecessor Elijah the Prophet of Fire, he seemed to be at home in the wilderness. It seemed that God put several of his choice men through wilderness universities.

Moses took a post graduating course in the Wilderness University. He received his divine commission at the "Burning Bush." Elijah took a special course in this university. He learned to distinguish God in the "Still Small Voice."

All paths in those days led to the wilderness to see and hear a strange, rugged prophet. John's voice broke the stillness of four hundred years.

Jesus paid a high tribute to John when He said, "Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women there has not risen a greater than John the Baptist." Matt. 11:11. If we are not careful we will overlook his true greatness.

John wasn't great because the multitudes flocked to his ministry. John the Baptist's true greatness consisted in his humility. There isn't a sweeter grace this side of Heaven than the sweet grace of humility; little in your own eyes; willing for others to take the honor and glory, while you sit at the feet of Jesus.

As one of the old saints said, "How sweet and blessed to be little in one's own sight, willing to be overlooked, slighted, set aside and forgotten. It is delightful to be in a corner with Jesus. It is blessedness itself to be delivered from big mountains, big celebrations, big everything outside of actual grace, and to walk quietly, humbly with the Lord. There is no pining for high places, no craving for great honors or the notice and approval of men. The soul is not sour, the heart is not unsympathetic, and the life is not frozen. It is not a hermit existence, but a life full of humility and meekness. Such a character is easily approached. He has no starch-like dignity to uphold nor grandeur to preserve. The indwelling Christ in his heart, the constant consciousness of the presence of God in the life makes it impossible to be otherwise."

It was said of John that he was a burning and a shining light. St. John 4:35. Notice that he burned as well as shone.

It is not enough to shine! The moon gives off a pale light but no heat. The moon shining on a frozen lake has no melting effect on it. You may be brilliant and shine in the ecclesiastical world, but without that divine heat which the Holy Ghost alone can give, you will be a failure as a soul winner.

John the Baptist "shone until Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around about Jordan, were startled and awakened by the light. Crowds went out to see and hear, and he burned into their hard-cold hearts until multitudes confessed their sins. Even King Herod himself and his wife were so scorched by the heat of the burning herald of righteousness, that Herod had him shut up in prison."

Says that prophet and saint of the Salvation Army Commissioner S. L. Brengle, "The Founder and Mother of the Army, shone and burned their way through immeasurable obstacles of vice and ignorance, of indifference, ridicule and contempt, of organized and stubborn opposition. And multitudes of lesser men and women have won their way, and triumphed by the same burning."

To quote him further, "What is this fire? It is love. It is faith. It is hope. It is passion, purpose, determination. It is utter devotion. It is a divine discontent with formality, ceremonialism, lukewarmness, indifference, sham and noise, parade and spiritual death. It is the Holy Ghost burning in and through a humble, holy, faithful man."

John the Baptist's messages bristled with repentance. Real genuine repentance embraces a Godly sorrow for sin, restitution making all wrongs right.

Do you know we are trying to have revivals today without conviction and Godly sorrow for sin? All such so-called revivals are a sham and are built on a sandy foundation. Jesus preached repentance. Peter on the day of Pentecost preached on repentance. Before God can save a soul, that person must confess and repent.

Real repentance brings on the soul the blessing of sky blue regeneration, the new birth, a change from darkness to light, a turning from the power of Satan to God.

St. Paul says, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." The old sins and habits are gone. A new spirit is given us, new tempers, dispositions, affections are planted within us. We seek new companions, even the people of God.

Under the preaching of John the Baptist, many received remission of sins. As John was preaching one day and the multitudes were being swayed and as the hot truths fell from his anointed lips, the preacher looked down the lane and saw the "Fairest among Ten Thousand", making His way through the throngs. John dropped an index on Jesus and said, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh the sins of the world." John 1:29. John cried out and said, "There is another baptism for you who have repented of your sins."

It seems to the writer that anyone with an unbiased mind could not read Matthew 3:11 and fail to see the two distinct baptisms. One with water and the other with fire. One is external and the other internal.

There are some facts noticeable about the Baptism of Fire: Fire purifies: This is fundamental. If we speak in order of time we would say the first thing the baptism of the Holy Ghost does is to cleanse the heart. "The gift of the Holy Spirit is first of all purifying. The cleansing is not separate as some teach, but coincident with the indwelling of the Holy Ghost."

We would like to stress this because there is a very popular movement afloat in the land, speaking as if sanctification and filling of the Spirit were different things; in effect making the filling a third work or blessing.

It is the baptism that cleanses the temple in order that He might take up His abode within. It is complete. The Holy Ghost does a complete work. The fire of the Spirit is internal, penetrating and intrinsic in its cleansing power.

Fire transforms: It not only purifies gold but glorifies it. "A person can take an iron poker, cold, rusty, and unattractive, and placing it in the fire, it becomes like fire. So let the soul be enveloped and filled with the heavenly flame of the blessing we are talking about, and the transformation is remarkable. A man is never so much like Christ as when the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire is upon him. The coldness, stiffness, rustiness, unattractiveness are gone, and his life-bearing words are heavenly. It was after this baptism that the people took knowledge of them (the disciples) that they had been with Jesus."

From the pen of that gifted, fiery Holy Ghost preacher, Reverend Samuel Chadwick, "John baptized with water, Jesus with fire. The difference in the two elements expresses exactly the difference in the mission of John and Christ. John's was a mission of repentance. He was a fore-runner. The King was coming and he must prepare His way. He called men to serious thought, and pointed the way to a larger life. He was preeminently fitted for his task, an iron man, stern, severe, and solitary. His words were short, sharp, and trenchant as a warrior's. It was a baptism of water, good-but not enough. Water must be followed by fire; He kindles in men 5 hearts a fiery passion for righteousness, changes the spirit of cold obedience into a burning enthusiasm, and a lukewarm dutifulness into a flame of eager devotion."

Fire Gives Light: It illuminates our understanding, and reveals Jesus to us. It takes the Virgin Birth, the life, death, and resurrection of Christ and makes them intensely real to us.

We Are Saved By Fire: "Light isn't enough, we must have fire. Knowledge cannot save us. Water is not sufficient. Cold exacting obedience to law and precepts brings no saving energy. The washing away of filth is good as far as it goes, but sin goes deeper than water can get; It is in the very fiber of the soul, and can only be burnt out."

"Fire means warmth, our only safety is in heat. Our peril is in cooling. When we grow cold we are lost. True religion cannot live in anything else."

The only hope for the American Church is to get back to Pentecost!

After the fire fell on the disciples they went everywhere kindling fires, plowing hell up by the roots and turning the world up-side-down. When it came upon the early Methodist preachers they kindled revivals, melting opposition and like a tornado sweeping everything before them.

Fire Generates Power: Among the first words the Risen Saviour uttered early in the morning was "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

Forty days later just before His ascension, while His footsteps pressed the Mount of Ascension and the company of angels were standing to escort Him to His heavenly home, He said, "But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

The great mistake of the church has been in attempting to conquer the world without this power.

Apostolic Christianity was marked by two things: First, the Holy Ghost. Another personality appears -- no longer Jesus, but one just as distinct as Christ Himself. The event which took place at Pentecost is nothing less than the actual descent of Deity.

The Holy Ghost is a Divine Person. There are at least three things necessary to constitute personality. First is intelligence. A person is one who thinks. That enables me to offer hospitality to the Holy Ghost. He is the author of God breathed inspired Scripture.

Another element is love or emotion. We read of the love of the Spirit. Still another element is the will or the power to choose. He is not 'an influence or abstract of power. He is the third person of the Godhead.

Again Apostolic Christianity was marked by a second feature--namely power. This is just what the poor, weak, struggling church needs.

The first chapters of Acts tell us of power. The next chapters tell us of witnessing, and preaching the gospel to the ends of the earth. Let us notice the nature of this power.

(1.) It is the power of a holy character. It is not power merely for service, but to make men holy. Power apart from holiness is dangerous. Some want power in order to become a great preacher, or a star singer. This is of the flesh and proud flesh at that. Fire is the only remedy for proud flesh and self-seeking.

(2.) It is the power to be patient and longsuffering. There are three words for power in the original. One denoting authority and another extraordinary power, which is our Greek word for dynamite. But the third word means strength. "Strengthened with might according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness." Col. 1: 11. This is just 'as essential as the dynamite form of power. Nothing wins like sweetness. To suffer long and be kind.

(3.) It is the power of love. The baptism of the Holy Ghost was a baptism of love, which always melts hearts and brings unity.

(4.) It is the power to draw men to God. Christ told his followers while on earth, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me." The reference was to His Crucifixion and its effect on the hearts and lives of men.

Christ drew multitudes after Him before His death, and still vast crowds today, as no one else has been able to do. There was a holy magnetism about Him, which drew people to Him. It is so often written that "They came unto Him." People would drop business, quit home, travel far to be near Him. They heard Him gladly, the children went to His arms.

Said Dr. Newman Hall, of London, "Should Jesus appear again in flesh among men, unheralded, the children and young people, and all people would instinctively gather about Him and feel in some inexplicable way that He was their friend. The Holy attractiveness was peculiar to Jesus and just such a magnetism in kind exhales from the believer who is anointed with the Holy

Ghost. It is the supernatural attraction of the indwelling Spirit." Having this, we will draw and not drive. An unseen power will go out from our lives, which will naturally draw men to God.

In conclusion let me give you a witness to this blessing to show that God still 'answers by fire.

Dwight L. Moody was a nationally known evangelist and soul winner. Dr. Shoefield said, "He was baptized with the Holy Ghost and knew it." Mr. Moody says, "The blessing fell upon me suddenly like a flash of lightning. For months I had been hungering and thirsting for power in service. I had come to the point that I think I would have died if I had not got it. I remember walking the street in New York. I had no more heart in the business I was about than if I had not belonged to this world at all.

"Right there on the street, the power of God seemed to come upon me so wonderfully that I had to ask God to stay His hand. I was filled with a sense of God's goodness. I felt as though I could take the whole world to my heart. I took the old sermons I had preached before, without any power; it 'was the same old truth, but there was a new power. Many were impressed and converted. This happened years after I was converted myself."

To the pulpit and the pew let me say, the baptism with the Holy Ghost will solve your church problems. Empty pews will be filled. Tithes and offerings will fill the empty treasury. Revival fire will break out. The membership will be increased. The prayer meetings will take on new life and power, while the church sweeps on to victory.

"Oh for the fire! Oh that the church would weep and pray before God until the flaming baptism of heaven would descend!"

Oh, that it now from heaven may fall,
And all my sins consume.
Come, Holy Ghost for thee I call;
Spirit of burning, come.

* * * * *

Chapter 3 AFFLICTION VERSUS GLORY

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." 2 Cor. 4:17-18.

Part of this chapter is taken from an old volume which fell into my hands over forty years ago. Part of the latter half is taken from my book, "The Fullness of Jesus."

The two pivot words in this Scripture are working and looking. The affliction worketh glory, while the believer looketh at the unseen.

The term "worketh" covers the domain of the Holy Spirit's office, and the term "looketh" covers the domain of the believer's activity. The truth taught in the verses is that of a marvelous transmutation of pain into pleasure, of hardship into happiness, of tribulation into transport.

We can never see the full harmony and proportion of parts in any subject of observation without taking in the whole, and studying the relation of each part to the whole. When this life is cut off from the future, everything in it is utterly unexplainable. You may select a few of the finest notes in some majestic anthem, and if they are sounded alone and apart from the whole, they would lose all their melody and charm. Each note alone as a monotone is unmusical, but when they all glide together in round billows of music they roll and break with strange rapture upon our ears.

There are three contrasts in the text: that between affliction and glory, that between the terms light and weight, and that between momentary and eternal; and between these opposites is the soul of the believer. The first opposites are affliction and glory. This refers to that particular kind of glory which belongs to each individual Christian which St. Paul elsewhere calls the "glory to be revealed in us," and which is not transferable to anyone else. Though there is such a contrast between affliction and glory, yet when you place a trusting, obedient Christian soul between them, such a soul becomes a divine laboratory through which His working process goes on, and under the touch of the Almighty Spirit of God, cooperating with man's obedience and love, the sourest acid of affliction is transmuted into the sweetest fruit of glory. There seems no intimate relation between prussic acid and a ripe peach, but if you interpose the roots and trunk of a vital healthy peach tree between them, that deadliest of poisons in passing through the arteries and life of the tree is transformed into one of the most luscious of fruits.

The next contrast is between the words "light" and "weight." When the apostle characterized the afflictions of the Christian as light, it was not because He looked upon them with a stoical spirit, or failed to measure either their intensity or dimension, for, like his Master, in his life he had accented nearly every syllable in the volume of affliction.

Listen, as he describes his experience, "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one."

"Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep.

"In weariness and painfulness, in watching, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness."

The third contrast is between "Momentary" and "This light affliction." It was light in contrast to the weight of glory. We say a sponge is light because its particles are so widely separated as to admit much air and water. In contrast with the sponge, a block of pure gold of the same size would be very weighty. In other words St. Paul compares his afflictions and that of the child of God as something light, like the sponge, but the glory as weighty like a block of pure gold.

It seems to the writer that a great many Christians have reversed the divine order in their own lives, by speaking and acting as if their affliction was weighty and almost unbearable; and their glory as something light that did not abide.

The third contrast is between "momentary" and "eternal", the affliction is momentary and the glory eternal! When you compare this short life to eternity our affliction fades away. The glory increases as the years roll on. There is nothing that will 'attract, produce conviction, and convince the sinner, that Christianity is supernatural as to see a believer full of joy and heavenly glory.

This brings us up to our second text.

"We know that 'all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them who 'are the called according to his purpose.'" Romans 8:28.

In this passage we have a Divine certainty of God's overruling and protecting power, and that everything In earth and Heaven shall work together for good to the child of God. This is one of the most comforting and faith-strengthening promises in the entire Bible There is enough in this one verse to forever banish doubt, fear and unbelief, and to start the Heavenly choir to singing and the joy bells to ringing in the heart, that shall never cease its sweet music while time shall last.

Hear it! I say it in the fear of God and His inspired Word: Whenever all the conditions are met and maintained, there is nothing that can happen to a real child of God but that will work out for his good and God's glory. This ought to make us victorious in the face of every circumstance of life. This is not mere presumption, but simply taking God at His word. When this truth becomes a fact in one's life, it proves a faith tonic and a well-spring of inward gladness to cheer and comfort, no matter how trying the circumstances of life may be.

Some one may ask, "How can slander and injuries work together for our good?" The Bible is full of God's overruling power and making the wrath of men to praise Him. The inspired Word plainly tells us that God permitted the sale of Joseph into slavery in order that He might get the glory. It would be hard indeed to find in the Bible or human history an individual who was as bitterly wronged and tried as Joseph. Envied and hated by his brethren, torn from his home and sold into slavery, slandered by an ungodly woman, lied against and put into prison for fourteen years, and yet at the same time knowing that he was innocent. Surely nothing worse could have happened to a human being in the way of suffering and sorrow. But through it all we are told "God was with him." This throws a shaft of light on things, and explains some things which otherwise would have 'been a mystery. He who has the "God with him" blessing can afford to wait, to be overlooked, set aside, discounted, and even abused. We have seen some professed Christians who become bitter because they were not re-elected to a certain office, and spend the balance of their life in criticizing their brethren and finding fault with everything and everybody;

But if we have the "God with us" experience, we can stand all of this and much more beside without getting bitter. It matters not how great the wrong, or how much one may be slandered or injured, if we only keep calm and sweet the relief will arrive, the door will open and deliverance will come. It suddenly opened for Joseph, and it will open for you.

One of most beautiful scenes in the Old Testament is where Joseph's brethren came to him after the death of their father and fell on their faces before him and asked forgiveness for their transgression for selling him into Egypt. Do you remember what he said unto them? Here it is: "And Joseph said unto them, Fear not, for am I in the place God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." Gen. 50:19, 20.

When Colonel Brengle, the great soul-winner of the Salvation Army, was preaching on the street some years ago a big burly ruffian threw a brickbat at the Colonel, which struck him on the head, a blow which came very near taking his life. He was laid aside from active service for many long months, and while he was recovering he began to write those wonderful messages on Holiness which have blessed tens of thousands, and have been translated into several languages. When he was able to return home he found the missile that was hurled at him by the hand of hate, but oh, how transformed. Mrs. Brengle had gotten hold of it, painted and beautified it, and put these words on it: "Ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good." Had this not happened, who knows, the world and the church might not have gotten those wonderful books. Surely God can take the blunder of devils and the hatred of men and work it out for good.

There is one thing certain, not one of us can afford to live without the experience of "God with us." If God is with us He is also for us, and "if God be for us, who can be against us." If God is for a man, he will come through and come out of every difficulty with victory perched in his banners.

The hatred of Haman and his scheming to destroy God's man, was not only brought to naught, but worked out for the good of Mordecai and the people of God. So let men hate, plot and plan against us: If God is for us, He will bring to naught all that men or devils may do against us.

The imprisonment of John Bunyan gave us a book which has startled, blessed and helped millions to a better life.

The persecution by Herod of the early Church only served to scatter the holy fire and send the Gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth, so that by the third century Christianity had to its credit over eight million converts.

Look at this picture: "Stephen is stoned; the saints look sad. But Saul, holding the garments of the murderers, is receiving light and truth; and the haughty persecutor of today will soon be seen blind and penitent at Damascus, and humbly kneeling at the feet of Ananias, a worshipper of the Nazarene. And ere the grass grows green on Stephen's grave, his convert in death is preaching to the Gentiles."

Look at Methodism, with its blood and fire spirit spreading everywhere. But Wesley dies, and Coke is buried in the mighty deep, and the Methodist family is mourning on both sides of the Atlantic; but the revival fires kindled by these holy men go on.

Others may say, I can see how persecution and opposition can work for our good, but how can death and the taking of our loved ones from us work together for our good?

Strange as it may appear, God has a way of working out His purpose and plans through the agency of death. Death robbing us of our loved ones seems to wean us from earthly things and make the things of this old world look mighty small to us. Tens of thousands can testify to the fact that since the messenger of death visited the home Heaven has been sweeter and nearer to them. Not all look at it this way. We once read of a woman who had lost her husband. For hours at a time she would sit in her chair, robed in black, and sigh and weep. Her little five-year-old boy was profoundly puzzled as well as distressed, and 'approaching her one day, he asked: "Mama, is God dead?" The Spirit used the question of the child to bring her to her senses and back to God.

Some go down in darkness and open rebellion against God when death comes into the home. But the soul that has accepted Romans 8:28 and believes it means just exactly what it says, never questions God's dealing with him but bows his head and kisses the hand that smote him.

Still another class says, I do not see how misunderstanding can work together for our good. I will confess that is hard to bear, after you have done your best to be misunderstood, criticized, and to have mud flung at you; but even here God can step in and overrule the hatred of men and devils and work out even this for your good. As to the mud which is flung at you, my advice is to just wait until it dries and give it a flip and off it comes. God will take care of the man who was flung at, and also the mud-flinger.

Some years 'ago near Naples there was an awful volcano, which threw out a substance which was boiling hot. It drove the people nearby from their homes, but after the eruption ceased and this lava had time to cool, the people gathered back to rebuild their homes and plant their vineyards; and from this ash soil and substance which came from the bowels of the earth grew some of the most delicious grapes in all the country. Just so, out of the soil of hate and malice which was meant to destroy you, wait until God breathes upon it and you can grow delicious fruit from the very soil that hell vomited out. Some people sour and go down under misunderstanding, but the real saint makes it a steppingstone to something higher. The writer sees nothing to be discouraged over; God is still on the throne, and He has not forgotten you.

The Book of Revelation gives an account of the last battle to be fought upon this planet. In the closing chapters we see Satan bound, and all his followers going down into the pit. The earth is renewed, the curse is lifted, and the New Jerusalem is seen coming down and resting upon this new earth. Christ and His people are reigning from shore to shore; congregations never break up; the Sabbath never ends. No one ever grows old. Holiness is everywhere. The City is ablaze with the glory of God. Such a view as this surely it is enough to cause the heart to take new courage, faith to be quickened, and the hope renewed.

To the weary, toil-worn child of God: look up, cheer up, believe, and look on the bright side. God is right now working out everything for your good and His glory.

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Chapter 4 SAMSON AND HIS STRENGTH

"And she made him sleep upon her knees; and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him.

"And she said, the Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him." Judges 16:19-20.

Samson shines out in Old Testament history like a beacon light. He is listed among the great men of faith. He judged Israel twenty years, had supernatural strength, and was a Nazarite.

When God wishes to teach some great truth or doctrine, He often uses some great character to do so. Moses stands for meekness; Daniel, courage; Elijah, a prophet of fire!

Samson with his supernatural strength was meant to teach some great truth and if that teaching is not holiness, then the wonderful life of the man is still a mystery. Accepting the thought that holiness is thus typified and taught, at once Samson's life unfolds before us.

We wish to call your attention to several facts; first, Samson was a Nazarite -- Nazarites were the typical holy people. They lived lives of separation, they were a very peculiar people, practiced self-denial, drank no wine, and were not allowed to cut their hair.

A truly sanctified man is a Nazarite today. He has entered into a covenant relationship with God, and is under peculiar vows, and is expected to be different from the masses in the religious world. A Nazarite was not only called to live a holy life, but was called to walk a narrow, lonely path. Things lawful within themselves and which may be practiced or enjoyed by others are not allowed to him. Others may secretly pull wires to be elected to some ecclesiastical office, but God restrains him.

A sanctified man has an open countenance, an honest, pure look in his eyes, a sweet expression in his face. He has nothing to hide! He is the Lord's anointed one.

Another fact about Samson's life is that his great strength was a secret. The unction and glory of the sanctified life is a secret. You cannot attribute this power to a magnetic personality, psychology, eloquence, or all of these combined. It is a direct work of God upon the soul. It is the indwelling life of Christ. He alone can impart it. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, to them He shows His covenant." Psalm 25:14. "The White Stone" and new name is given to the overcomer.

The third fact relative to the strength of Samson is the supernatural power which would arise in him at certain times. While he always had the secret strength, at certain times it seemed the Divine energy would surge through him, the Spirit of the Lord would come upon him, and with the blood rushing through his veins, his muscles swelling, a shout of triumph ringing from his lips, Samson would hurl himself upon an enemy, and there would be a marvelous victory. All of this is

perfectly familiar to the sanctified man; that strange mysterious something called unction coming upon him, and a feeling that he could strangle young lions, pick up gates of brass, slay a thousand Philistines, and do exploits for God.

A fourth fact about Samson is that he did not depend on certain methods to bring him victory. When the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, any weapon he could lay his hand upon was sufficient to win the day.

When he met a young lion in the way and the animal sprang at him, the Bible says, "the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him and rent him as he would have rent a kid." But the same passage tells us when he did this, "he had nothing in his hand."

Another time a multitude of his enemies shouted against him. Again we find Samson with nothing in his hands; but finding a bone lying upon the ground, and rushing into combat with this simple weapon, he slew a thousand men. Each time he won those mighty victories, we are told, the Spirit was upon him.

All of this is readily understood by the man of God. With the blessing in him, filling him to overflowing, he goes into battle with a feeling of victory and that the God of Samson will bring him out more than a conqueror. What God is looking for today is not methods, intellectual giants, but clean channels through which He can pour rivers of living waters to heal a broken-hearted world, and to feed a famishing Church. A rod in the hand of Moses, with God behind it, could break the power of the mightiest throne on earth, part the waters of the Red Sea, smite a rock and bring forth a stream of pure gushing water.

It is amazing to look over the list and see the simple weapons and instruments which the Lord has used to subdue kingdoms, putting whole armies to flight. We find such things as ram's horns, trumpets, pitchers, lanterns, jaw bones, and other strange things, yet with these weak weapons, we behold tottering walls, sacked cities and sweeping victories.

An old saint of God who in his day was sought for all over the nation because of his eloquence and deep piety, describes a camp meeting scene back in early days of the holiness movement. He said, "We once witnessed the discomfiture of a large camp ground over the failure for nearly a week, of a number of star preachers to bring down the 'power' of heaven. One afternoon a man entered the pulpit whose every look showed that he walked with God. He preached a short sermon, and one that, examined critically by logicians and orators would have been severely handled. They would have pronounced it a poor affair, a mere stick, and so it may have been, but God made it to bloom and blossom and break rock, and call down a flood of glory as it was lifted to the skies. Over two hundred people ran to the altar, heaven and earth rejoiced and hell mourned over the work done that afternoon."

This old saint of God said further, "We all know what it is to see great union meetings of churches, with combined chairs, platform notables, rosetted ushers, artistic solos, eloquent prayers, great discourses on oratorical, logical, and theological order and yet nothing accomplished. Something seemed to be lacking. The Spirit of God had not and did not fall on the services and the people. Over against all of this let the man have the blessing we are writing about,

the power seems to come down in a way independent of people, of circumstances. No matter what he says and what he does, a heavenly influence is at once felt in convicting, softening, quickening, comforting, and saving power. He is clothed with holy energy, and God acknowledges and honors his servant in ways most unmistakably from the skies."

We now come to the second stage of Samson's life, namely his backslidings. What a pity the chapter didn't close when he was in his glory. We had all better look well to that second chapter of life. It would have been a blessing if the curtain had dropped over some of God's workers in the first stage of their life and ministry.

In tracing Samson's backslidings, we note two things which caused his downfall. First, he trifled with a woman's affections. Second, he trifled with his covenant.

Samson was a great lover. His affections got him in trouble. He could strangle young lions, pick up gates of brass and walk off with them and go down with a crash through unholy affections. A chain is not any stronger than its weakest link. Wesley advised his preachers to converse sparingly with women. This is an age of trifling with human affections. It seems that the average young lovers today do not look upon marriage as something sacred. Engagements and marriages are hurriedly entered into, which keeps the old divorce mills running day and night. Young man, your eternal destiny may hinge on the kind of girl you marry and vice versa! A sheep and a goat do not make a good match.

Samson's downfall was the result of marrying the wrong woman. He went down in the land of the Philistines to get a wife. He went against the warning of God and the advice of his parents. He paid an awful price for his folly.

Samson not only trifled with a woman's affections but he trifled with his God-given covenant. As you will remember, Samson's parents entered into a Nazarite Covenant that this boy should not drink wine, nor allow his head to be shaved. Samson lost his strength when he placed his head in the lap of Delilah and trifled with that secret covenant.

It is a wonderful thing to enter into a covenant relationship with God. You may receive hundreds of blessings, uplifts, refreshings and great manifestations of the Spirit, and yet they may subside and pass with the using. But not so with a covenant. It holds good when feelings and emotions are at a low ebb. How many thousands could testify how God worked miracles in their financial world and healed their sick bodies, after they had entered into a sacred covenant with Him?

Nothing could stand before Samson as long as he kept his covenant, however, the moment he touched the unclean and placed his head in the lap of Delilah, his strength went from him.

The third stage in Samson's life was that he was restored. God gave him a second chance! Listen, "Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after that he was shaven." No doubt as he grinds in the prison house from day to day he had time to think. His memory takes him back over his past life; He sees himself strangling young lions, picking up gates of brass, and slaying a thousand of his enemies. The warrior weeps and repents. Methinks, I hear him say, "Oh I am so

sorry I trifled with thee; I am sorry I trifled with that wonderful covenant. I am sorry I trifled with that woman's affections and placed my head in Delilah's lap."

God takes him at his word. One day in the height of a great national carnival, while hundreds of thousands of Philistine nobles are crowding the galleries of the vast amphitheater, whose roof is supported by two great pillars in the center, and all are waiting for Samson to come forth and make sport for them, Samson's strength is given back to him. He gives a triumphant shout and, gripping the mighty pillars, with one mighty effort tears them from their foundations, and with a crash like ten thousand thunders, the building is in ruins. The cries of the proud Philistines are like the wails of the damned. Samson is not only victor, but dies a victorious death, because he had died to the self-life, and by dying he accomplished more than he had done in all of his twenty years of great achievements.

There is one bright, cheery note in the last chapter of this hero's life that we may profit by. You too, backslider, can come back to God. Confess 'all, promise God to walk in the light, to obey the checks of the Spirit, and then go on to perfection. Die that deep death to the self-life (The "Old Man"). Say that last eternal yes to the whole will of God. He may be pleased to give you a double portion of the Spirit.

Oh, for a spiritual Samson to come forth today and put his consecrated arms around the pillars of God's promises, and with a mighty upheaval of prayer 'and faith bring heaven and earth together. Amidst the cries of the unsaved for mercy, the shouts of the saints, and sweeping clouds of glory, devils would flee, while salvation would roll like a river.

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Chapter 5 THE SWEETNESS OF HOLINESS

There are three things that are absolutely necessary in order to have a well rounded, symmetrical experience of holiness. We will consider them in their threefold aspect:

Doctrinal, experiential, and practical. The subject is incomplete unless received in this threefold order.

1. There must be a clear, definite doctrine of holiness. Holiness means moral soundness, purifying the believer's heart from the remains of the carnal mind, and filling the heart with perfect love.

2. There is a clear, definite experience of holiness set forth in the Scriptures. There is an inner consciousness of purity of heart; a feeling of cleanness in all the soul faculties; a sense of rest while perfect love floods the soul.

3. There is a practical form of holiness. We are to manifest in our outward life the inward work of the Holy Ghost. There can be no outward, practical holiness without first having an inward work. Right here we see a danger for the holiness people. It is possible to have a clear,

specific doctrine of holiness fixed as an unchanging truth in your mind after the tender, melting Spirit of love has leaked out. It is much easier to retain certain truths in the mind than it is to retain a sweet, melting, tender spirit.

Love is like a heavenly flame which must be fed, if we are to retain the experience of holiness.

Our purpose in writing this is to call attention to the experiential part Of holiness. Suppose we call to the witness stand some old warriors of the National Holiness Movement, and let them tell us in their own words how they obtained the blessing.

The first witness we will introduce is the noted Greek scholar, Dr. Daniel Steele. He said, "I found my faith had three points to master, the Comforter for me now. Upon the promise I ventured with an act of appropriating faith ... Suddenly I became conscious of a mysterious power exerting itself upon my sensibilities. My physical sensations, though not of a nervous temperament, in good health, alone, and calm, were indescribable, 'as if an electric current was passing through my body with painless shocks, melting my whole being into a fiery stream of love. The Son of God stood before my spiritual eyes in all of His loveliness." Years later he testified and said, "The Man of Calvary, the Son of God, treads all the avenues of my soul, filling its emptiness, melting its hardness, cleansing its impurities, pouring upon my head"

"Blessed Unction from above
Comfort, Life, and fire of love."

The next witness we wish to bring before you is a Saint of the Most High God, Dr. John A. Wood, who was pastor of Court Street Church in Binghamton, N.Y. God had convicted his servant for heart purity. He said, "Through the entire summer of 1858 I was seeking holiness, 'but kept the matter to myself. God only knew the struggle I had that long summer, during many hours of which I lay on my face in my study, begging Jesus to cleanse my poor, unsanctified heart; and yet was unwilling to make public avowal of my feelings, or to ask the prayers of God's people for my sanctification.

"The District Camp Meeting commenced that year. About eighty of my members attended it with me. On the last day of the meeting, a few minutes before preaching, a faithful member of the church came to me weeping, and said, "Brother, there is no use trying to dodge the question. You know your duty; if you will lead the way and define your position as a seeker of entire sanctification you will find that many of your members of your charge have a mind to do the same."

"I immediately walked up to the stand, just as the preacher gave out his text, to ask for prayer. The baptism of fire came upon me. For me to describe what I then realized is utterly impossible. It was such as I need not attempt to describe, to those who have felt and tasted it, and such as I cannot describe to the comprehension of those whose hearts have never realized it. I was conscious that Jesus had me in His arms, and that the Heavens of heavens was streaming through and through my soul in such beams of light and overwhelming love and glory.

"Jesus then and there, all glory to His blessed name! sweetly, completely and most powerfully sanctified my soul and body to Himself. He melted, cleansed, filled, and thrilled my feeble, unworthy soul with holy sin-consuming power. After about three hours I regained sufficient strength to walk to my tent, and we commenced a meeting for the promotion of holiness. Our meeting continued all night long. A large number of my leading members commenced seeking holiness, and about every half hour during that whole night, the glorious power of God came down from the upper ocean in streams as sweet as heaven. Every time the power of God came one or more souls entered the land of Beulah, the Canaan of Perfect Love."

Dr. E. M. Levy, a leading Baptist, while he was pastoring a Baptist Church in Philadelphia, was invited by a Methodist minister to attend a Holiness meeting. Dr. Levy saw the light, and after many conflicts and struggles, he said, "I turned to my congregation and said; I stand before you a poor, weak, helpless sinner. I have tried to find the way of holiness by every possible means. All of my efforts, my struggles, my prayers, my fastings and my round of duties are a miserable failure. I fell upon my knees, and bowed my face to the floor. For a moment I felt I was sinking in a great sea, and all of its waves were going over me ... a strange peace entered my soul.

"When the meeting ended I retired immediately to the parsonage. I threw myself in a chair and at once the baptism came. I seemed filled with all the fullness of God. I wept for joy. All night long I wept. All the next day, at the family altar, in the street, and in the Sanctuary tears continued to flow; the fountain of my being seemed broken up; and my heart was dissolved in gratitude and praise.

"My soul seemed to be filled with pulses, and every one thrilling and throbbing with such waves of love and rapture that I thought I must die from excess of life."

In conclusion let us notice the steps to holiness, or how to obtain the blessing.

There are seven steps to the throne. First, you must believe there is such an experience. Doubt and unbelief will shut out the blessing. Second, you must realize your need of the blessing. You will not seek in real earnestness until you feel that you cannot live without it. Third, you must desire the "Pearl of Great Price" above everything else. Fourth, you must seek the blessing at the altar and in secret. Fifth, you must not be discouraged if you do not get through the first time you come forward for prayer. Keep holding on, look up; the fire will descend. Sixth, make a complete consecration. Remember, a perfect consecration brings on the soul the blessing of entire sanctification, which fixes, establishes, and makes permanent the human work of consecration. Seventh, you must have faith. Faith is the connecting link which connects the soul with omnipotent forces. If you want to be free from your inward struggles, and enter into that deep, Sabbath-like rest; why not firmly settle your soul on the eternal Word, that the blood of Jesus actually cleanseth you right now from all sin.

Reader, if you would only believe that the blood cleanseth, you would be transformed in one moment into a joyful-lipped, sunny-hearted Christian. You must lay aside all signs, feelings, and aids to faith and calmly step out on the promise; get under the blood, and the Comforter will take up His abode within.

This is the cream, the heart, and the marrow of Christianity.

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THE END