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## **PEFECT YET PRESSING -- AND OTHER TALKS**

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**Editor of the Christian Standard**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The favor with which the volume of Friday Meeting talks, entitled "Spices of the Lord's Garden," by the editor of the Christian Standard, was received; and the desire expressed that another series should be issued, has induced him to prepare this volume for the press.

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## 01 -- PERFECT YET PRESSING

"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." Phil. 3:14, 15. Perfect, yet pressing. How is that?

"Oh," says some one, "I thought when we were perfect, there was nothing beyond -- that we had got to the end of the thing. How can there be anything beyond perfection?"

Well, one thing is positive: here is St. Paul's experience, whether you or I can explain it or not in which he said he was perfect, and that there were others like him. "Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect." That is where the apostle professed perfection, and yet, in the preceding verse, he says: "I press."

Now, go back a little to verses 12 and 13, where he says he is not yet perfect. The plain, common sense meaning of the whole passage is this: There is a sense in which we are not perfect and a sense in which we are perfect. "Oh," says, some one, "I do not expect to be perfect until I get to heaven!" Neither do I, in the sense you mean -- perfected in a resurrected body. A thing is perfect when it answers the purpose for which it was intended. A perfect watch is not a perfect steam engine. The apostle says positively that he is perfect, and that others with him are perfect.

You say, "I do not understand it." Well, you had better try to understand it, now. It is a terrible thing to toss matter aside, and say, "I do not believe this, that, and the other," but suppose that, when you get before his judgment seat, the Lord asks why you did not take pains to find out whether it was so or not ?

Now, here is a man who professes to be perfect, and yet he says he is "pressing on." "I count not myself to have apprehended." I have not apprehended in the sense in which I shall apprehend when I get my resurrection body; or, in many respects, in the sense in which I shall apprehend before I die. I expect to have more love and more grace before I die. I can be perfect in the sense of being clean. I can be perfect in this sense, and yet be pressing after deeper depths of light and life and love.

A man may look at his garden in the springtime, and say, "Well, that does look rather bad, but I will not clean it out; I will just throw the seed in there." I think the man next door to him would be apt to say, "It is plain to be seen that he knows nothing of gardening." A man who understands will dig and rake and work until he gets his ground as clean as he possibly can get it, because he knows that in clean ground there is better chance for the seed to grow, than in a ground full of weeds.

The same with a man's soul. If a man's soul is full of weeds, nothing planted of the Spirit can grow there, as it should grow, but let that soul be cleansed from all which should not be there, and the graces of the Spirit can and will have unobstructed growth. I know a great many things I did not know when I first claimed entire sanctification. I think I love God with a deeper, higher, more appreciative love than I did then. I do not think I stand today, where I stood last January. I would not want to. I should not.

What about perfection in heaven? Do you get stunted as soon as you get to heaven? Is that the end of your growth? Ah, I thank God that, when I get to heaven, I shall then just begin to grow. I thank God that when I get to heaven, where all the disabilities of this natural body are taken out of me, just then I will commence, with all sin expelled and all limitations removed, to expand in light and love and glory as long as I live and God lives.

I guess you had better try and find out how this is, that you can be perfect in heaven and yet grow on, just as you can be (in a certain sense) perfect on earth and yet grow on. "Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." How minded? Why, as the apostle was minded -- to "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

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## 02 -- SONSHIP - HEIRSHIP

"If a son, then an heir of God." Galatians 4:7

It is sometimes said that in order to get in entire sanctification, we are compelled to make out that regeneration is something less than it really is. There is nothing under the heavens that needs to be minimized to get in entire sanctification. Entire sanctification is so rich, so sweet, so deep, so full, and so different in every way from everything that precedes it, that there is no necessity for belittling anything else in order to get it in.

We insist that regeneration saves people from committing all sin. Is that minimizing it? "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." More than that! We insist that regeneration, not only saves us from allowing ourselves in what is clearly sinful, but also from whatever is doubtful. St. Paul says, "He that doubteth is damned;" that is, he that allows himself in any doubtful practices whatever, is condemned now, and unless he stops his doubtful practices, he will be damned eternally. We put ourselves alongside of St. Paul. We say that regeneration saves us, not only from committing positive sins, but that it also saves us from doing things that are doubtful. Is that minimizing it?

We agree with St. Paul that "Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin." Whatsoever anybody does, not believing it to be right for him to do it, to him it is sinful. The fact is that, in speaking of regeneration, we put it up so high that some people mistake our preaching of regeneration, for the preaching of holiness.

Regeneration, in one sense, is the greatest work ever done in a human heart, as the day that a man is born is the greatest day of life to him; for without birth nothing can follow. So, when a man is "born again," there can be no greater day to him, because it is the beginning of all that can come to him spiritually and eternally. Become thoroughly regenerated, and it will not be long before you will be sanctified wholly.

"If a son, then an heir." "An heir of God." I want the emphasis to fall on "God." When we talk about being a man's heir, we mean that we inherit his property. Well, so we do inherit what God has. "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." Under the Old Testament dispensation, while other Jews were allowed certain possessions, the Bible says of the sons of Levi that "the LORD was their portion." Oh, to be, not simply an heir of what God has, but to inherit God, himself, so that the Lord is our portion. Himself! "An heir of God!" Partakers of the divine nature! What does a right-minded woman care for a man's house and victuals and the clothes he gives her, etc., if she knows that somebody else has his heart! Oh, if there is anything that would make a woman rebel, it is to learn that her husband's heart is gone! She has to eat the victuals he provides, and wear the clothes he pays for, and take his money, but she wants him, not only the clothes and victuals and roof. Of course, she wants these, if she can have him, also, but not without. We are not servants, but sons! We inherit not only what is in the Lord's house, but we inherit himself. Regeneration saves us from all sinning. It transforms us from being the children of the devil to be the children of God, and, having so transformed us, we are made heirs of God. Dr. Levy once said in the Friday Meeting: "I like that idea of heirship with Christ. The wills of parents often direct that the children shall share and share alike. So God, in making us co-heirs with His Son, wills that we share and share alike."

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### 03 -- SLOW SOULS

"And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, How long are ye slack to go up to possess the land, which the Lord God of your fathers hath given you?" Joshua 18:3

That meant the holy land. That meant the land that was already theirs by promise, and had been waiting a good while to be theirs by power.

It was not simply that they were "slack" to go up and possess the land, but "How long are ye slack to go to possess the land!" A rope is slack when it has no tension, no pull. You say you want to enjoy perfect love; you want to inherit the holy land; you want to enter into your possession. But the fact is, that in your wishes and prayers, and your efforts, there is no tension; there is no pull; there is no strong, decided effort to enter now.

That is the trouble with people. If there is anybody who really wants to be sanctified wholly, who really wants to get into Canaan, I am ready to pledge God that, if there is tension enough in anybody's faith, effort, prayer, disposition and moral make-up, they could get into Canaan today; they could be sanctified wholly, now. Oh, I would to God that somebody would just spring in now. If there is anything I covet, it is for some one to be converted or sanctified wholly just while the offer of salvation is being made. I believe in the altar, in the inquiry room, in

standing up, in holding up hands, in everything that will get people nearer to God; but I wish we could quit getting these things in the way of our Jesus, so that in the twinkling of an eye, the work would be done without the help of the altar or anything else.

Impotent folk! A multitude of impotent folk! The pool was between that impotent man and God. But when Jesus came, he could do without the pool, without the help of any to reach the troubled waters; for Jesus just told him to "be whole," and it was done.

I wish, in this matter of getting into the Canaan of perfect love, that there was more pull less "slackness." I wish that we could, or would, get the tension up as far as it will go without snapping -- to that point where it seems ready to snap, but still draws us in. Let us get this slackness, this indifference, off of us! How long? how long? how long are ye slack? How long are ye so unwise? How long are ye without the moral force and courage to get into this Canaan of perfect love?

There are people that I have been looking at in holiness meetings for years. They seem to be about where they were when I first saw them. They are always in meeting, but they do not rise, or lift a hand, or come forward. I have wondered if something might not be done, somehow, to shake these people up; not to shake the life out of them, but to shake some life into them, to get them out of their indifference.

Shall it be today? Shall it be now? You are not waiting for God; God is waiting for you. You are not saying "How long?" to God, but God is saying "How long?" to you. Oh, that now some one would get into the Canaan of perfect love!

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04 -- THIS DAY!

"Thou art to pass over Jordan, this day, to go in." Deut. 9:1.

There may be somebody here exactly like those Jews; somebody who has been fighting against holiness; somebody who has been rebelling against God; somebody who has come right up against Kadesh Barnea and refused to go up and on and in; somebody who has come right up to the Jordan and failed to go over, and has had to go back into "The Wilderness," and perhaps for five, ten, fifteen, or even forty years has been wandering all through "The Wilderness." These people might have gone right straight through, only God knew whom he was dealing with. He knew what was in their hearts. He wanted to show them the evil of their own hearts.

Somehow, many have been magnifying the difficulties about going into the land, have been afraid to go forward themselves, have frightened and hindered others from going in, and they have had a time of sadness and agony and tears and confusion.

Now, I do not care what may be your position on the subject of holiness whether you have believed in it or not; whether you have criticized its adherents, or not; this passage of Scripture applies to you! Oh, if God would only this day take all the prejudice out of your minds, and would

cause you to eat all your words of opposition, and would remove all the rebellion from your wilful hearts and enable you to go in today! I am tired of having an altar between me and sinners -- between me and hungry, yearning hearts. I believe in the altar, but I want people to be converted while I am talking, and I want believers to go into the land of Canaan while I am talking. If there is somebody here who has been, up to this hour, in a defiant attitude; who has come to the holiness meetings, and has criticized and has gone out and talked in a way which has hurt himself and hurt others, now is your time! Drop your weapons! Give up! Will you now drop your weapons? Will you now give up your rebellion? Will you now find this to be applicable to you, "Thou art to pass over Jordan this day, to go in?"

Then there are others; people who have been praying, yearning, striving; who have never fought or rebelled against holiness; who have never sinned against God and light and grace and salvation; who have come up to the borders. Oh, for some help, just now! Oh, that I could assuringly say to such an one, "Thou art to pass over Jordan this day, to go in!" Will you go in? Oh, you praying, yearning soul, looking over Jordan, and wishing you could go in. "This day!" "THIS DAY!" "Thou," and "thou," and "thou art to pass over!" Oh, I wish a shout would burst from some emancipated soul! I wish that deliverance would come to some heart! I wish that some proof would come out of this congregation, as I talk, that some one has passed over Jordan to go in!

I think I will stop now. Is anybody going in?

"This is the accepted time!" "This is the day of salvation!" This is your chance! No matter what you have been, no matter what you have done; no matter what you have said; no matter whether you ever came up to Kadesh Barnea and went back into the wilderness, or not, "This day!" "This day!"

Beware, lest, if you fail to submit to God's time, He will not submit to your time.

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## 05 -- CONCERNING CONSECRATION

"Thou shalt not sacrifice unto the Lord thy God any bullock or sheep, wherein is blemish or any evil-favoredness for that is an abomination unto the Lord thy God." Deut. 17:1.

Concerning consecration. Away back in the old Jewish dispensation, a Jew was not to bring any sacrifice which had a "blemish or any evil-favoredness."

If ye offer me the blind, the lame, the sick, is it not evil? Offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee or accept thy person saith the Lord of hosts?" (Malach 1:8). And, if an evil offering was then rejected, because it made the altar of the Lord contemptible, how much more under the dispensation of the Holy Ghost! Notice the temptation there. Sometimes when a man has an animal in his flock which is not just up to par, the temptation is to get that one off to market first. This is the temptation which would probably assail the old Jew, who had to make a sacrifice unto the Lord. If he had a bullock or a sheep which was, in any respect, inferior to the rest, the

temptation would be to offer that faulty one. But the Lord headed him off: "Thou shalt not sacrifice unto the Lord thy God any bullock, or sheep wherein is blemish, or any evil-favoredness."

God swings the worlds, but he also counts every hair on our heads. There is not a grain of sand on the shore, or a drop of water in the ocean, that He has not numbered up. He knows the little things as well as the great things. God shows the infinitude of His nature, in that while He takes in the greater things, He goes down to the slightest things in nature and grace. God does not allow me to get off by any subterfuge from an entire consecration to Him. I must consecrate all that I know, and all that I do not know; I must consecrate all up to what He knows; so that, when God puts His finger on something I had not thought of when making the consecration, I can say at once, "Oh, that is in!" There is no bartering or dickering with God after the entire consecration has once been made. It will not do, after an entire consecration, which covers all that I know, and all that God knows, to say at a certain point, "I did not think that God would require that of me!"

That makes me think of that maid of Madame Guyon's who had consecrated herself to God, and who, when her mistress went into the prison, went in after her, but not into the same cell. Year after year, each in solitary confinement, they suffered for their devotion to this doctrine of entire sanctification. On toward the end of her life, that faithful maid declared, "Oh, God, I am glad that thou couldst trust me enough to take me at my word. I did not know that this was included in my consecration, but I am so glad thou couldst trust me to endure it all!"

It is one thing to say that we "count all things but loss," but quite another thing to say with St. Paul, "I have (actually) suffered the loss of all things!"

Now, our entire consecration is not to be an ill-favored thing. Of all the bright and beautiful and good things which God has given us, we are not to pick out something not quite so nice, and say, "We will give this which has a blemish in it to God."

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## 06 -- GOD OFTEN USES ODD FOLKS

"But his father and his mother knew not that it was of the Lord. The Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him." Judges 14:4 and 6.

Sampson was a very singular, mixed character. Yet the Lord had certain gracious purposes that He designed to accomplish by him. It is here said that "the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him." God can use some people who are very singular, who have some very strong points, and some very weak points. Persons seem to have a singular lack of judgment; yet God works mightily in them.

Sometimes, when a man is under the influence of the Spirit, he may not quite understand himself, and he is very apt to be misunderstood by other people. Now, here were Sampson's father and mother, not understanding that his purpose was of the Lord, trying to thwart it; yet God proposed, through Sampson, to carry out His own intent. In every dispensation there are strange leadings. We are not conscious of what the outcome of certain doings may be. A man's mind may

be set on carrying on his own plans, and he does not understand that, while he is actually carrying out his own plans, God's eye is upon him, and God's Spirit is upon him, making him to accomplish the divine purpose, and making him to "build better than he knew." I am glad that the Spirit can use some very crooked sticks. Mr. Wesley once said, "The Lord can live with a great many people with whom we cannot."

If away back under that dispensation, God could take such a strange, mixed character as Sampson, and get out of him His own gracious purpose, in spite of the misunderstanding of Sampson's relations, what can He not do under this dispensation of the Holy Ghost, with people whose characters and experience are not mixed: with people whose hearts are pure; with people who become incomprehensible to themselves and to others, through the power of the Holy Ghost; with people who go on, guided by the Holy Spirit, with single-mindedness and single-heartedness, turning aside for no one? If upon Sampson the Spirit of the Lord worked so mightily, how will the Holy Ghost work with one whose eye is single to the glory of God; a willing, flexible soul; a soul that is easy to be wrought upon by the Holy Ghost, but hard to be wrought upon by any other influence under heaven?

We talk of entirely sanctified people losing their wills, but it is only that their wills are lost in the will of God. A man's mind may be pliable, when the Spirit of God moves upon it, and yet people may try to change it in vain. There are hearts as full of love and tenderness as they can hold, yet, when certain influences are brought to bear, they are firm as a rock. They can be just as brave and true and steadfast and inflexible for God and holiness as possible, and yet be loving and tender. The gentlest people in the world are often the bravest. How many people there are who need always to be dandled, and fondled, who never come to an original, independent thought; who are never able to teach others! I would that light from heaven would flash through our minds and hearts! I would that the will of God might be done, and that the kingdom of God would come, so that, in our own lives, not depending on others, but depending on the Holy Ghost, we should become teachers and leaders, and move on to the accomplishment of God's purpose! When we can get to the end of self, and down into utmost childlikeness of soul, and flexible under the influence of the Holy Ghost, then things come to pass. Then, as Sister Amanda Smith says, "Something happens."

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## 07 -- HEAVEN DROPPED DOWN

"Days of heaven upon the earth." Deut. 11:21.

The eleventh chapter of Deuteronomy is a wonderful chapter. In it we find these striking and gracious words: "Your days may be...as the days of heaven upon the earth," -- as glorious, as multiplied, as enduring.

That was the Scriptural language in which life in the Canaan of the Old Testament was described. And what language, then, shall be used to depict life in the New Testament Canaan of Perfect Love?

And, in entering and occupying the Holy Land -- either or both of them -- the people of God were promised signal divine help and victory, if faithful to God and to His covenant: "For if ye shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you, to do them, to love the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways, and to cleave unto Him, then will the Lord drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall possess greater nations and mightier than yourselves. Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours." "There shall no man be able to stand before you; for the Lord your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, as He hath said unto you." The Bible says that "the meek shall inherit the earth." We sometimes think and talk as if it were the fighting people who are to get everything. I have often wondered why it was that the strong opposers of holiness do not do us more harm than they do. Do you know the reason? It is because there is a God in heaven. "The Lord your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon." There is something beautiful yet awful in holiness. I do not care how bad people are, there is a kind of dread upon them in the presence of holiness. People are afraid of the "evil eye" and the "curse," but they are much more afraid of the prayers of God's people and of the "single eye." "Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse."

Do you remember how this chapter started? It begins with, "Know ye this day: for I speak not with your children which have not known, and which have not seen the chastisement of the Lord your God, His greatness, His mighty hand," etc., etc. I do not talk to your children, who do not know how I have watched over you, and guided you, and cared for you, and delivered you from your enemies, and have saved you from all sorts of troubles and brought you here. I am not talking to your children, who do not know about, and have not seen any of these things; I am talking, to you! You who know about your wanderings in The Wilderness, and your crossing of the Red Sea and the Jordan, I am talking to you!

God wants us to be as faithful to Him as He has been to us. He wants us to remember all these things as we go in to take possession of the land, all the land promised to us. Every place upon which the soles of our feet shall tread, is ours. "Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse." Which shall it be? Your will must decide. We may accept all the blessings offered in perfect love, or realize the curse accompanying the rejection of such experience.

Are you putting your feet down rapidly? Are you getting quickly over this holy ground? Do not stop to get out any measuring instrument. Be a fleet-footed surveyor. Run just as fast as you can get your feet down.

"Every place upon which the soles of your feet shall tread." Oh, if people believed that, how quickly how quickly they would get into Canaan and get around in Canaan! What surveyors they would be! It would be a more rapid move than in Oklahoma and in the Indian Territory. You know how they did? They just got themselves and their horses and vehicles in, moved as fast as possible, and claimed possession. That is exactly the way God wants it should be with us in our Canaan of Perfect Love.

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"He will keep the feet of his holy ones, but the wicked shall be put to silence in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail." I Samuel 2:9.

"Them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." I Samuel 2: 30.

"Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him? James 2:5.

How some feeble saints talk! Listen: "What sacrifices we do have to make in order to secure this sainthood! How much we have to give up! What a dangerous thing it is to be saintly! How we lose influence with this, that and the other person! How a Methodist preacher has to be careful lest he lose all the good appointments! Nothing to hope for in this world."

Well, these passages do not sound so, do they? "He will keep the feet of his saints;" "The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord;" "Them that honor me, I will honor." It does no seem to make any difference to the Lord whether we are rich or poor, whether we are high or low, whether we are great or small. Indeed, he seems to make deliberate choice of the poor folks. "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith?" "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes and to make them inherit the throne of glory; for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them." "Promotion cometh neither from the east, the west, the north or the south, but God setteth up one, and putteth down another." God can do what he pleases, with men and things. He hath made the pillars of the earth, and has set the world on top of them. There is nothing upon which man sets a value that is not at the disposal of the divine hand and mind and heart.

But these feeble saints go on with their evil reasoning: "Now, is it best for me to put myself absolutely in the hands of the Lord? Had I not better hold on to this or that string? What will he do with me, if I resign myself entirely to him?" Do you know, there are hundreds who are hesitating right there? You go into a revival meeting and invite people to seek Christ or to seek full salvation. They seem to be just a little afraid that if they hand themselves over to him, he may take a notion to do something terrible with them, and they do not know what will become of them, anyhow. I venture to say that there is, at least, one such here today, who really wants to be saintly, but who is hesitating as to whether it is safe to give up everything.

"He will keep the feet of his saints." Keep them out of traps and snares; keep them out of bad places; out of questionable places; keep them from going where they might find a precipice over which they might fall and come to grief. If he keeps the feet of his saints, he keeps the whole body, for the body cannot go far without the feet.

"Them that honor me I will honor." I do not know just what sort of honor that means. There are a few whom the Lord can honor in all sorts of ways, and then there are others (whether it is because they cannot be trusted with honors or not I do not know), but somehow the Lord does not seem to pile honors upon them. If you are all the Lord's, you will get all that the Lord sees you ought to have. If you are wholly the Lord's, you will not want anything but what he wants you to

have; so, the best way to get what you want is to be wholly the Lord's. If I do not want anything but what the Lord wants me to have, and he has promised I shall have what he wants, the best way for me to get my desire is to give myself over to him.

The saint is the safest person in this world: "The meek shall inherit the earth." Meekness is different from humility. They are akin, but there is a difference between the two. Meekness is non-resistance. It is the humility that can be trodden on like a worm, that can submit to imposition. The Bible says that the meek -- the non-resistant -- shall "inherit the earth."

Our Gospel runs right across all the proverbs and axioms of earthly philosophy, and assures a man that God will take care of him, if nobody else does. A man may be scheming against your profession or your reputation or your appointment, and his schemes may be going on first rate; yet, just about the time he thinks they are to be consummated to his satisfaction, the Lord sees that his schemes have gone far enough and he just puts a ring in that man's snout. The Lord can do that thing. A man can run all over the country and toss my reputation around like a football. I do not know where he is going, but the Lord knows every step he takes and everything he says, and when the Lord chooses to bring him to a short stop and his words to nothing, he will do it. Oh, what a time-saving, brain-saving, heart-saving thing it is to have One who knows everything to attend to your affairs while you go right on attending to his affairs! It is a conception worthy of the divine mind. Any woman would do the best she could to defend her babe, and to suppose that God, who knows everything and can manage everybody, will let people do what they please with his saints, is to suppose what cannot possibly be. "Them that honor me, I will honor." God chooses the poor, and he can take them and put them upon thrones if he so pleases. He can empty a throne of its occupant, who has been there long enough for his pleasure, by a touch.

Oh, let us trust God! I have got to the end of all things. What insecurity there is around us on every side! I do not know anything but to trust God, so I give myself into the hands of God and ask him to keep my feet and to grant me such honor as he sees to be best, and to just take me and use me and guide me and save me, evermore.

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## 09 -- A RELIGIOUS SINNER

I Samuel 13:8-14.

Saul was a religious sinner. He was a worshipful sinner. Now mark you! I do not say that Saul was a saved sinner, a converted sinner, a regenerate sinner, but that he was a religious sinner. There in such a thing as having a great deal of religion, but not much salvation. Saul worshiped God, but he did not do the works of God. He counted sacrifice better than obedience, rather than obedience better than sacrifice. His life was a direct contradiction of the words of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was a very forgetful, impatient, religious sinner. He could not wait for Samuel, but thought that something must be done at once, and so he takes a priest's place and functions, and himself offered a burnt offering and sacrifice. Do you know that this thing is going on all the time -- all worship and no work; all words and no work? Over and over again Saul had to be taught that

he must not think that because he had worshiped God he could go on and do things that God could not approve.

Oh, that we could see that consistency in our daily lives, practical holiness, every-day holiness, obedience to God, is better than sacrifice! We may go to meeting every day in the year and be religious sinners all the same. A man cannot oppress the widow and the fatherless and then worship God and think that he is all right. That is being a worshipful sinner. The two things must exactly tally. We must be full of worship and full of work. Our spirit and our creed and our conduct must exactly tally and correspond. What is the good of talking about perfect love if in the church of God or in the family there is the short, snarly, critical, censorious, easily-offended spirit? Where is the perfect love in that?

When we are filled with the Holy Ghost, there is a keen spiritual discernment as to the will of God, the worship of God and the work of God, and as to just where one links on to the other, so that a man is one and the same thing all the way through. It should not be a hard thing to get these things together. It does not require books or papers to teach us these things. Simplicity, childlikeness, watching God, having the mind of the Spirit, keeping under divine guidance, moving cautiously, being careful to be obedient to everything that God says to us -- that is the safe path. Get off of that track and there is trouble somewhere there is trouble inside and trouble outside.

Oh, that the Lord would teach us this lesson! It is a very important one. I do not want anybody to stumble over me. They will, I suppose, but I want it should be because of my blunders, caused by imperfect judgment, and not because of anything that is inconsistent with pure and perfect love in me. I want worship and work to get thoroughly mixed up together in my religious life. Step cautiously. But not under strain and stress. The testimony of a pure conscience from a pure heart to a pure life. Say that I am under strain and stress. In one sense, bounding along with the simplicity of childlike freedom, yet keeping eye and ear, the eye and ear of mind and heart, open to God, in the minutest things of life. Not having a sore conscience, but a very tender conscience. Now, let us quit being religious sinners and be well-saved saints.

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## 10 -- PLEASING PEOPLE

"I please all men, in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved." I Corinthians 10:33.

"I please all men in all things." Now that was saying a great deal. Some of you may say, "I am not quite sure that I am prepared to go that far."

But do not let us interrupt the apostle in the midst of his speech. He says, "I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved." There was a man who advertised for a wife; he wanted that she should be a Christian, but the advertisement ended off with, "She must be pleasant." I suppose that somehow the idea was in that man's head that to be a real, honest, thorough Christian involved the being unpleasant. Some people do have that idea.

I once preached a sermon at Mountain Lake Park on the duty and privilege of not being disagreeable. There are people who have that idea that to be right good, to be fully saved, it is not only their duty, but also their privilege, sometimes, to be a little unpleasant. They put it on the line of plainness of speech: "I speak my mind right out; I am a free man." We ought to be plain-spoken, and we ought to be true, but, at the same time, it is our duty and privilege to be pleasant.

I have never regretted being pleasant, but I have regretted being disagreeable. No matter how faithful we are in rebuke it ought not to be done disagreeably. "I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved." You see, he has two ends in view. In "pleasing, all men in all things," he was not pleasant because it paid him to be pleasant, but that he might "profit" them, and "save" them.

Here are three points: The first is, to profit people; the second is, to save people, and the third is to do this just as pleasantly as we possibly can. I do not wonder that people say sometimes, "I do not know about being wholly the Lord's; I may have so many disagreeable things to say and do, I am not prepared to enter upon such a course of behavior as that."

Now, there are two ways of doing things. If a man's arm is to be amputated, you can take a blunt hatchet and hack away at it. You will cut through the arm, in time, of course. But you can take a sharp knife and, to make it work even more easily, you can put a little oil on it, and this will go through the arm quicker and better, and occasion very much less suffering. The skillful surgeon's business is to have skill enough and wisdom enough to take a man's arm off and to hurt him as little as possible. It is not necessary to take a sledge-hammer to kill a fly on a man's forehead.

We can say many things that people do not want to hear, if we can only convince them that we love them; that what we say, we say for their good; that it hurts us to say it more than it hurts them to hear it, and that we want to tell them the truth, but want to do it in the best possible form.

This is about where St. Paul was. I wish we could get more of this trinity of "pleasantness" and "profit" and "power to save" others all mixed up! I am going to be pleasanter than I have been, by the grace of God. I will try to be not the less plain-spoken; I will try to discharge my duty; but I will do it as pleasantly as I can, and as agreeably to others as the Lord will help me to do it.

O, let our faces light up! O, let the graveyard go out of our faces!

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## 11 -- THE COVENANT OF SALT

"It is a covenant of salt forever before the Lord unto thee and to thy seed with thee.  
Numbers 18:19.

Every true man counts himself a man of his word. The greatest insult you can offer a man is to question a statement he makes. How much more is that the case where papers are made out by two contracting parties, and those papers are signed and sealed on both sides, for one to, question

the other's sincerity. Where certain promises are made, and not only made but written out and mutually agreed upon, that constitutes a covenant. That covenant is sacred and binding to an honorable man.

God has been pleased to make a covenant with you and with me. It is not only a matter of statement, but it is the fact that the papers are made out. They are signed and sealed. Sealed by God on the one hand, and by every wholly sanctified soul on the other. It is a perpetual covenant. It lasts while life lasts. Just to think God binds Himself to me by every attribute of His nature! By His character. By His promise! By His power.

But it is "a covenant of salt." A Jew did not dare to bring a sacrifice to the altar unless the salt was with it. Salt is the emblem of purity. Salt purifies and keeps pure. So that this is a covenant of purity. When I bring myself to God in entire consecration, as the Jew brought his sacrifice to the altar, and brought, invariably, the salt with the sacrifice, so I cannot put myself upon the Altar (which is Christ) unless I bring with it the salt, the purity essential to its acceptance. "But," you say, "God makes us pure after the sacrifice has been offered." Yes, and yet in an important sense there must be purity upon our side before we can bring the sacrifice to the altar. There must be the purity of honesty; purity of motive; purity of desire and of determination; purity of devotement down to the very foundations of our being. I must be thoroughly honest with myself and thoroughly honest with God.

Now, when I can get myself upon the altar, with this covenant of salt, just that moment God respects His own covenant of salt. He takes me just as I came, and He makes me pure in fact. God's fire is kindled upon the altar, and the smoke ascends as sweet incense unto the nostrils of Jehovah, a "sweet-smelling savor." God has respect unto that covenant, have you bad respect unto it? Suppose that the papers are drawn and signed, (they generally sign two) in a covenant between you and me; you take one paper and I the other. Suppose I take my copy and throw it in the safe and never look at it, and never intend to respect its promises or in any way recognize its claims? That is the way that millions are doing with their covenant with God. The covenant has not been broken by God, but by them. But there are others who covenanted with God years ago. They brought their sacrifice. It was well salted. It was pure in the sense of thorough candor with themselves and with God. They got that on the altar. The covenant was signed on their side, and read on God's side. They have respected that covenant and will respect it until the time for the covenant is over, and they pass into the immediate presence of God. O, think of being in covenant with God! God binding Himself to me, giving Himself to me in a covenant that cannot be broken. When the papers are signed and sealed on both sides, and there is no going back on it, what a sense of security we feel!

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## 12 -- PROVOKING ZEAL

"Your zeal has provoked very many." II Corinthians 9:2.

The Corinthians had been ministering so generously and judiciously and promptly to the saints in contributing to their financial necessities that St. Paul considered it superfluous to write to them concerning that matter. He knew the forwardness of their mind and that they needed no further

prompting to liberality. He told them that he had been boasting to others about their generosity, about the forwardness of their minds therein, and tells them that their zeal had provoked very many -- not provoked them to anger or envy or jealousy or any other bad temper, but had provoked them to imitate their zeal and forwardness. That same zeal to minister to the financial needs of the saints ought to provoke us all to imitation and forwardness.

But even if we have been forward thus in ministering to the saints in money giving much or little --whether we have been zealous in giving much or little -- it is the privilege and duty of us all to be forward and zealous in ministering to sinners and believers the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Some may think we are very forward and make ourselves very public and officious in doing this. Some may be provoked to anger or envy or jealousy or some other wrong temper because we are so forward and zealous in doing this. Nevertheless, our forwardness and zeal herein may provoke others (in the better sense of that word) to imitation of our forwardness and our zeal. Better to be too forward than too backward in this matter. "It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing."

Our zeal may provoke others by awakening them to their duty in this matter. How few are forwardly zealous in ministering either financially or spiritually to the souls around them that so greatly need their ministry!

Our forwardness and zeal may prove to be an object lesson, a course of study, an effective teaching in the nature and extent and manner of both financial and spiritual ministrations. It may serve as an example. It may serve as the practice which speaks more loudly and more clearly than precept.

Our forwardness and zeal may act as a silent reproof to those who are backward in such matters -- to those who, so far from being forward and zealous herein, are exhibiting no forwardness, no zeal whatever, but are doing little or nothing either for the bodies or souls of their fellows.

Our forwardness and zeal may prove to be a strong inducement to those who have been so backward and have shown such a lamentable lack of zeal. It may stir them up to a generous rivalry in caring for the bodies and soul of men.

Our forwardness and zeal may bring about a general revival, not only those who minister thus in secular and spiritual things, but also a general revival among those who are ministered unto. It may eventuate in a revival -- not of "dead works," but of good works. It may bring about a revival of real religion. It may lead some on to entire consecration and entire sanctification.

Oh, may our zeal indeed provoke very many!

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"The men took of their victuals and asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord." Joshua 9:14.

Do you notice that the troubles of Joshua and the Israelites were not at an end when they had got over Jordan and into Canaan? That shows that Canaan is not a type of heaven, because some of the hardest fighting they had was when they got into Canaan.

The Lord had told them that there was to be an extermination of foes, and warned them that, if they made a league with the people in the land, that they should find such to be "thorns in their sides, and briers in their eyes."

They had hardly got into Canaan before they were surrounded by those wary Gideonites. It is surprising that a man like Joshua should be taken in with a piece of deceit like this. Yet Joshua and the people "took of their victuals, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord." Ah, we have to be careful after we get into the Canaan of Perfect Love. If we make a league with the world, the flesh and the devil, it shall be unto us as God said—they shall be "thorns in our sides and briers in our eyes." We cannot keep clear enough of these wily foes when we are sanctified wholly. One would have thought that those Israelites would have been on the watch for them.

Is it not strange that so often, instead of taking counsel of the Lord, we allow ourselves to be trapped in by believing the story that people bring us? We find that those enemies are right around us, in our homes. A woman, an entirely sanctified woman, yokes herself to a man who is an unbeliever, and then tries to lead a life of perfect love! Ah, it is this fixing things up with the world, without talking to the Lord about it! You think it is rather hard to go through this world alone, but it is harder to not go alone sometimes. A man had better sometimes go alone than go with one who is constantly drawing him into sin.

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## 14 -- FAITHLESS HEARTS

"An evil heart of unbelief." Hebrews 3:12.

Notice how the word "heart" occurs in this chapter. "Harden not your hearts;" "They do always err in their heart;" "An evil heart of unbelief."

There are many who think that faith is a purely intellectual process. Pure faith in a pure being, like an angel, must be a purely intellectual process. If men's hearts were right, the errors of their brains would be reduced to a minimum. Take a man who, five minutes before he is entirely sanctified, is full of prejudice and error, but just so soon as the divine glory strikes him, just so soon as his heart is made clean, his brain is made clear!

Some one in the Salvation Army has said, "Clean clear through, and clear clean through." To be clear clean through, you must be clean clear through. The Methodist altar is one of the grandest theological seminaries in the world. Men have gone through colleges, and have all the titles dangling after their names; yet they do not know as much about pure and undefiled religion as

some poor, little unknown souls who have had no educational advantages at all. So, if you want to do some right, clear, limpid, Biblical thinking and believing, get your heart right. It is "with the heart man believeth unto salvation."

If we could only see this "evil heart of unbelief;" this heart full of prejudice and blindness; this heart that arrays itself against God; this carnal mind and nature that sets itself against the moral perfection of God himself; this "evil heart of unbelief" that sets itself against truth and right and grace and glory, we would pray, "Lord save us from an evil heart of unbelief!"

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## 15 -- GOD WITH US

"Be strong and of a good courage. Fear not nor be afraid of them; for the Lord, thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee nor forsake thee." Deut. 31:6.

I might stop there, might I not? There are passages of Scripture that fill me with triumphant, holylaughter. This is one of them. There is nothing the Lord more emphatically assures his saints than that he is going before them and with them, that he is going to do all the fighting, and that all they need to do is to come along. To put that assurance in the same verse with "Be strong," etc., is what makes me laugh. If the Lord is going with me, in me, before me, behind me, above me, beneath me, and is going to fight all the battles for me, and if all that I have to do is go along with him, what have I to be afraid of?

I am not a strong man. Once in a while I drift in with a great big man, like Rev. William B. Osborne. There is a satisfaction in being with such a big man. Often Brother Osborne has said to me, "Let me get hold of that valise." It would not be a burden to him. All I had to do was just go along without bothering about the thing!

Moral cowardice! Spiritual cowardice! Faint-heartedness! Fearful-heartedness ! Always ready to run! Discouraged at every difficulty! Always seeing the walled cities and the giants! Always seeing everything and everybody but Almighty God! There is nothing so contagious as a panic. God says, "I have been with you, I have nursed and cared for you, you have never wanted for bread or for shoes, and now that you stand upon the borders of Canaan, I am with you. Be not afraid."

Talk about us being brave, when God is for us, and with us, and in us, fighting our battles, and is all in all to us! When I read passages like that, I laugh to think how safe I am -- to think how oddly those two things about God and courage sound together in the same verse! Where is the room for fear? We will not get a panic on us the next time, will we, when something turns up, or goes wrong, or that we are quite sure will go wrong? We will not get all in a tremble, because some big fellow plants himself right across our path, will we? No, we will take God, with all the infinite resources in him.

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THE END