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THE SECRET OF SPIRITUAL POWER
By George Douglas Watson

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01 -- THE SECRET OF SPIRITUAL POWER (A)

A great deal has been said and written upon the subject of spiritual power, and perhaps I can add nothing original upon the subject, but may help to stir up some pure minds by way of remembrance.

While attending a holiness convention in Star Hall, Manchester, England, one day, there opened up to my mind a series of thoughts as to the secret of God's power in man. In the first place, the secret of spiritual power consists in the union of the Holy Ghost with the purified faculties and natural energies of the human soul, and, on the human side, it consists in the utter abandonment of the soul to, and a hearty cooperation with, the Holy Spirit. It is not eloquence, nor style, nor personal magnetism, nor psychology, nor the natural energy of the human soul, not even the energy of a purified soul. The soul may be purified, and yet as a mere creature, the creature faculties and creature powers do not have the power of God in soul-saving, in aggressive spiritual work, in bringing sinners to repentance, or believers into holiness. It is true that a human soul free from sin, as a mere creature, has a marvelous power above other unsaved souls, but as a creature, though it be holy, yet in itself does not possess that secret energy which can communicate conviction and lead to salvation. So that, however holy a man is, there must be joined on to him a divine current, a supernatural energy which is emphatically divine, and of which he is the vehicle and conductor.

This divine power is a secret unknown to the world, uncomprehended by the most learned sinners, misunderstood by carnal professors, utterly beyond the grasp of philosophers or scientists. Let us notice some Scripture proofs. Jesus had a pure soul; from the very initial of His being He was perfectly free from the fallen nature of Adam, and, as a mere man, He was superior in moral strength to all the men of the world. And yet it was not by His holy creature-strength that He did the works of His father. The power that Jesus used in working miracles, in preaching sermons, in healing diseases, in casting out demons, in saving souls was not the power of His sinless soul, but it was the power flowing from the baptism of the Spirit upon His pure humanity. This is distinctly marked in the two periods of His life. From His infancy to His baptism in Jordan He was entirely holy, but wrought no miracles, but when the Holy Ghost descended on Him, from that time on, He was the Anointed One, and worked under the perpetual unction that flowed through Him from the Holy Spirit. So that in addition to His holy creature-faculties, God poured into Him the fullness of the Spirit. We are told that when Jesus had gotten through with the temptation of the wilderness, He "returned to Galilee in the power of the Holy Ghost." This expression of returning in the "power of

the Holy Ghost," implies that there was added unto Him a power which He did not possess as a mere pure man.

We sometimes hear it said that "holiness is power," and that all the power we need for the work of God is heart purity, but these remarks are not entirely correct according to the Word of God. It is true that heart purity is power in the creature sense of power, but it is not the power of the Holy Ghost in the Scripture sense of it. Jesus is our example, and we read that He received in addition to His pure humanity the power of the Holy Ghost, and that it was "through the eternal Spirit He offered Himself without spot unto God," and that it was "through the Holy Ghost He gave commandment unto the apostles." And He so often affirms, "The words I speak unto you I speak not of Myself," that is, the words did not proceed from His merely pure humanity. Now, if Jesus needed the Holy Ghost united with His holy creature nature in order to give Him the peculiar secret of power in His mission, and if He is our example, how much more do we need that we should have our sanctified hearts and our mental faculties in vital union with the Holy Spirit, that by that union we may do the work of God. So that we cannot depend On the natural energies even of our saved souls. We cannot depend on ourselves in any form, nor on any creature, or number of creatures however holy they may be.

Another proof text is, Jesus says, "Ye shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you." The old version says, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you." But it is more correct to take the marginal reading. According to the thought in the old version, the power is a something which is detached from the Holy Ghost, but according to the margin, the power is identified with the Holy Ghost, and is spoken of as a current or wave which gushes out from the conjunction of the Holy Spirit and the human soul. Just as the current of water in the wilderness did not gush from the rock of itself, nor did it gush from the rod, but when the rod touched the rock, from the union of the rod and the rock, the stream poured forth, so the current of divine power does not go forth from the Holy Ghost apart from the human soul, nor does it proceed from the merely purified soul, but when the sanctified soul and the Holy Ghost are united, from that ineffable union there goes forth what is scripturally called the power of God. Thus the secret of power is in having the Holy Ghost unite Himself to our souls, cleansing, filling, inspiring us, supplying us according to each emergency with supernatural light, energy, wisdom, courage, tact and zeal, to do the will and work of God. This power is something that God puts within the soul, which the soul itself does not comprehend, so that a person under its enduement does not break down with discouragement, does not break down under a thousand things that would break down the human soul if it were left by itself.

One of the best illustrations of this secret power is a current of electricity, of which the sanctified faculties of man form the negative pole, and the Holy Ghost the positive. If these are separated there is no current, but united there goes forth a shock to startle the slumbering, to awaken sinners, to cause the hearers to break down in penitential weeping, to reveal to Christian people as by a flash of lightning the original impurity in their hearts, and to move congregations toward the Saviour with earnest cries for salvation. The scarcity of these celestial shocks is because professedly Christian workers trust to creature strength, or to the mere orthodoxy of their words. "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man," and especially cursed is he that trusteth in himself.

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02 -- THE SECRET OF SPIRITUAL POWER (B)

Another condition essential to the full enduement of spiritual power is the crucifixion of self in order that we may be united with the Holy Ghost. God cannot fill us with His Spirit, illuminate us, empower us with courage and boldness, and that intuitive and divine insight and energy until we are first crucified. We must first die before we live; we must reach the point of our own utter inherent foolishness in order to receive the wisdom from above; we must reach the consciousness of our own indescribable weakness in order to join on to God's power. His strength is made perfect at the point where our weakness is perfect.

In the account in Genesis, where God met Jacob at Peniel and wrestled with him, Jacob's prayer prevailed at the very point where he was utterly conquered. We hear it said that Jacob wrestled with the angel, but the Word tells us, "There wrestled a man with Jacob." Let us remember that this wrestling was not with a convicted sinner, for Jacob had entered the family of God twenty years before at Bethel, but it was the conflict between the perfect will of God and the original perversity of Jacob's nature. At first Jacob thought he was wrestling with a mere man, but he had not wrestled long before he discovered that the man was an angel, and, a little later, this angel assumed the proportions of the Prince of the Angels and, before the conflict ended, he found it was God Himself. So that what seemed a mere man at the beginning turned out in the end to be the Jehovah Elohim, the Lord Almighty, who was no less a personage than the Lord Jesus.

How often this is illustrated in our experience. God comes to us in disguise, and seeks to conquer us at unexpected points and in unexpected ways, wrestling with us in the humble armor of some petty circumstance or person, hiding His infinite majesty under such little cheap apparel that we never dream it is God till we are conquered and the mist falls from our vision, and, like Jacob, we are amazed to find ourselves "face to face with God." The Lord wrestled with Jacob in order to perfectly break down all the hidden resistance within him to the Holy Ghost, all the latent resistance to God's will and love. And when he found that the wrestling was hard and delayed, he touched the hollow of his thigh and put it out of joint.

Here is another suggestion for us. Jacob was a strong man physically, and a good walker with his strongly built constitution, and as the thigh joint is the locality of strength, especially in wrestling, in long marching and in lifting or bearing heavy burdens, the Lord broke him down at the very point where he was strong, and in that very joint which he would likely boast of or depend on. And when that point was touched, and he was crucified in the last reserve and main dependence of his energy so that he had to limp as a frail thing, then the Holy Ghost flowed in and filled his being. Thus his utter helplessness became the most fitting condition of his union with the Holy Spirit, so that he limped in his body but leaped in his soul. Now, the same thing takes place in us. In order that we may receive the strength of God, the secret of power, God wrestles with us, and the wrestling must go on until He breaks down in us all resistance to His will, not only all open resistance, or known and conscious resistance, but all the hidden and unsuspected resistance that lies in our fiber or feelings, or faculties; that subtle stubbornness of nature which the delicate nature of God can see and feel, but which we do not perceive. And He must break us down at the very point where we are strongest, where our energy is lodged, be that in head or hand or heart, be that in our mind or management or money, be that in our education or prejudice or desires or

affections, in whatever point of our being we may fancy we are the best, in whatever locality there is stored up the most of self, there is where the finger of God must put the knife, there is where the last resistance must expire in order that the Holy Spirit may unite us with Himself and make us partakers with the Holy Ghost.

Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live." All through the Word of God we find that crucifixion precedes deep spiritual power. Not only must God break down the sins of a sinner in order to convert him, but in those who are truly regenerated He must needs break down their wisdom, learning, prudence, their pet views, their churchly training and prejudice, their narrow-mindedness, their knowledge, their righteousness. It takes the Lord just about as long to break down a Christian man's righteousness as to break down a sinner's unrighteousness. Do not understand me that God ever breaks down His own wisdom or righteousness or strength, but He breaks down that form of wisdom, righteousness and strength which sprouts and grows out of human nature. Whatever originates in self, in the creature nature, must be crucified in order that the creature may be wedded to Christ through the Holy Ghost, and from that sacred union derive other wisdom, righteousness and strength infinitely superior to that of any creature. We are to let go not only our wicked selves, but, also, our seemingly pious selves in order that we may take hold of God. The self-life at any point is like attaching a conductor to a telegraph wire which diverts the electric message and runs it into the ground. It is only the insulated wire through which man can pour his intelligence through the electric current, so it is the crucified and insulated soul through which God can pour His unmixed truth, and upon which He can place the secret unction of holy power.

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03 -- THE SECRET OF SPIRITUAL POWER (C)

Another secret of spiritual power lies in the perpetual ignoring of our creature ability. I do not say a perpetual denying of our ability. Telling an untruth never helps God any, whether it be against ourselves or against Satan, and if we represent ourselves as being nothing in the absolute sense of that world it is un-Scriptural.

But I say that the secret of power lies in the constant ignoring of our creature ability as a sufficiency of success. In the realm of creaturehood, our natural ability is something, but in the realm of divine grace, where spiritual miracles are to be wrought, we can be efficient in the hands of God by a most perfect ignoring of our sufficiency. It is in this sense we find all those Scripture expressions about being "dust and ashes," being a "broken vessel," "the lame taking the prey," and being less than the least, "being nothing," "taking the weak things, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are."

We are to put ourselves in the hands of God without relying on our powers. We are to abandon ourselves to the uttermost to the Spirit of God, and, at the same time, utterly ignore any strength or wisdom or goodness that belong to us as creatures.

Let me give you a sample. Joseph was wonderfully sanctified in prison. We are told in the Psalms that while he was in prison "the Word of the Lord tried him," it so tried, proved, tested him

as to lead him through a perfect crucifixion. When Pharaoh sent for him they made haste and shaved him and changed his prison raiment and rushed him in speedily before the king. The king said, "I have heard you have wisdom and can interpret dreams." In Joseph's reply to the king there is brought out this secret of power. He said to the king, "It is not in me." This was the negative pole to the current. While his natural faculties and talents were far above the majority of his fellows, yet he knew that the interpretation of the king's dream was a divine secret for a divine purpose, and lay beyond the region of any uninspired human mind. Hence the perfect renunciation of his own ability. Then he said, "But God will give Pharaoh an answer." What a world of meaning there is in that expression, "But God!" And then leaning back on the Holy Spirit in self-renunciation, in utter abandonment to the divine will, God put into his heart and mind the interpretation. And so he gave the interpretation as God gave it to him. He did not know the interpretation of it in prison, but he got the interpretation right there on the spot, and God poured a stream of light and discernment through that man because he had died to creature-wisdom, and his whole being was in such an attitude of dependence that God could prompt him to speak. He was not a battery, but the wire that conveyed the current. And when he finished the interpretation the king said, "The Spirit of God is in Joseph." That heathen king saw a divine light and power in that poor prisoner which surpassed all the wise men of Egypt.

There you have the secret power, a power that convinced a heathen king, a power that so pierced through his heathen nature and caused him to adopt the plans of an ex-convict, and thereby immortalize his name forever.

We may also take the case of the apostles, when through them was healed the lame man at the beautiful gate of the temple. The people looked upon Peter and John as demigods, and Peter said, "Why do you look upon us, as if by our holiness we had made this man well, it is by the name of Jesus, through faith in His Name, this man has been made whole as you see."

All through the Word of God, the secret of power is to "trust in the Lord with all our heart, and to lean not to our own understanding." Mark it is not merely not to depend on our understanding, but not even to lean or incline towards it. We are so apt to lean on our experience as if wisdom and unction were accumulated forces stored up in our faculties. Because a man has been preaching several years he is apt to lean upon his old sermons and old plans, and because we have been in the Lord's work for some time, we are apt to lean upon our methods.

True, there is a sense in which we acquire wisdom and facility and fluency. The man who is constantly at work for God, preaching, exhorting and teaching, does acquire experience, and becomes skilled in the exercise of his gifts, and in discriminating the fitness of times and things, and even from the creature standpoint the skillful use of gifts and doctrine amounts to a good deal.

But I am now talking about the secret of divine power, not the secret of creature power. The secret of divine power is, that with all our learning and skill and experience, we are never to bank on it, never draw a check on it for success, but view it all about in the same way as the dust out of which God made man's body.

If we desire to be workers for God, and keep in the power, we must walk along this path of ignoring creature ability and depending every time, as at the beginning, for the gift of the Spirit.

Oh, if we could only recollect ourselves. Recollect we are nothing, that we are empty and weak; recollect our attitude toward God and His work. God gives us unction not as a reservoir, but as a stream; not as a fountain, but as a current; not as a battery, but as a transmission. In a reservoir the water is dammed up, but in a channel the water is in perpetual flow. And so fully sanctified souls, acting under the power of the Holy Ghost, are more like a telegraph wire along which the lightning can flash at any time, and not like a battery of stored-up electricity. Many a Christian worker has lost the power by unintentionally regarding himself as a reservoir.

We are to keep at the point of self-nothingness, and at the same time look to God alone for sufficiency just as truly as we take the sunshine from the sun today and do not think of using the sunshine of yesterday.

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04 -- THE SECRET OF SPIRITUAL POWER (D)

Another secret of divine power consists in using only the appropriate truth which is requisite for the salvation of souls. The Holy Ghost works through the truth, and whether He convicts for sin, or regenerates, or sanctifies, or empowers, or imparts special comfort or wisdom, He uses that part of doctrine or truth which is especially adapted for the purpose. All truth is not saving truth, even all Scripture truth is not saving truth. All Scripture is given by inspiration and is profitable, but it is not necessarily all profitable in the same direction. The Holy Ghost in saving people uses the truth especially designed to that end.

The truth of man's fall, human depravity and need, the incarnation of the Son of God, vicarious atonement, the personality and agency of the Holy Ghost, the resurrection of the dead, heaven and hell, rewards and punishments, these are the staple, soul-saving truths. All of these truths are interwoven throughout the Scriptures in history, parable, miracle, prophecy, command, promise, example and poetry in a thousand shades and forms, so that in almost any chapter of the Bible there are enough of these truths to furnish the Holy Spirit material for conviction and salvation.

But even Scripture truth can be handled in such a way as to render it of no effect. It can be so generalized, or made to serve a merely poetical or intellectual or sentimental purpose which is nothing else than handling the Word of God deceitfully.

There are certain elements that do not conduct electricity. If you were to make your telegraph wire of glass, you would never get a message through it. It is pretty and nice and brilliant, far handsomer than iron, but it does not convey lightning. And just so there are certain truths in nature, philosophy, history, and a certain way of shaping even Scripture truth as to turn it into a glass wire, beautiful, bright, crystal truths, but along which there runs no piercing conviction, no flash of holy light, no sin-consuming fire. It is true that salvation is wrought by an act of God, but that action of the Spirit is always through the instrumentality of appropriate truth, just as the act of a soldier in battle is through some chosen weapon. Man's fall and depravity produces the need of salvation, the death of Jesus the procuring cause of salvation, the Word of

God the instrument of salvation, the Holy Ghost the executive agent of salvation, eternity with its heaven or hell the motives to salvation, and faith the condition of salvation. These are the columnar truths in the temple of redemption. Knock any of these columns away and, like another blind Sampson, sooner or later the whole fabric of revealed truth will be perverted and tumble down in infinite calamity upon your soul.

There are many preachers and religious teachers who hold some of these truths very feebly or not at all, but such havoc they do make. Their work is very superficial and transitory, they produce fanaticisms or wild fire, or else dead, cold formalism, or else a light-headed and vain sort of religion. There are many religious teachers, some of them brilliant, preaching on mere morality, on socialism, on politics, on questions of labor and capital, on the "higher criticism," on railroad accidents, on little recent events, on anything and everything except those great giant truths that break down the soul, enrage Satan, gladden heaven, and disclose both the secrets of the human heart and the destinies of eternity.

The Holy Ghost will honor those who honor Him, and He will honor those truths which He has chosen as the conductors of His power.

Our wisdom consists in implicitly conforming to God's plan, and putting ourselves right in line with the chosen order of God.

A plain farmer, or lumberman, or converted drunkard, or plowboy who is unskilled, from the creature standpoint, but who, by entire abandonment to God, passes himself over into the region of the supernatural and, in perfect simplicity of spirit, handles the supernatural weapons of truth, will be in contact with the infinite battery of holy power, and slay giants in sin, save and build up souls and transform a community as a whole regiment of philosophers could not do.

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05 -- THE SECRET OF SPIRITUAL POWER (E)

In order to have the abiding secret of power, we must consent to seeming failure for Jesus. I do not know how that thought may strike you, but if you will look at the great crisis events in the Bible, and into the lives of people of great faith, you will find over and over again that the sweep of power turned on the pivot of a perfect willingness to fail utterly in the eye of the world. Those who work with God cannot be failures, but there are times when from our standpoint and feeling everything seems to fail utterly, and our quiet acquiescence in such apparent failure for Jesus' sake, while it closes the valve on the creature side, it opens the divine side for the inflow of the energy that moves the universe. It is very easy for even sanctified souls to become attached to their work and to want it to succeed as their work. It is so easy for devoted persons running camp meetings, conventions, faith homes, missions, or any kind of philanthropic or spiritual enterprise, to become greatly attached to the enterprise itself, and to have an overweening desire for success. But a close analysis of the heart will often reveal the fact that the craving for success is because we are putting ourselves into the affair, and the Holy Ghost who searches all things, finds out the terrible secret that after all it is self that wants success. Now, in order that God may get all the glory, He must blister the fair face of seeming success, make us die to ourselves in our work, and then He can

accomplish results greater than we dream. Jesus does not want us to get wedded to His work instead of to Him. We are so frail even after we are sanctified, and although our depravity is purged away, all our faculties are so weak, that God must keep our wings clipped or we would fly over the bounds. A great many do jump the track. The man that never feels he has anything to boast of in his work, but always looks at the work as being nothing to his credit, is the one who is always at the point where he is willing to be counted a failure in the eyes of men. Read the record of great faith enterprises, such as under Luther, or Wesley, or George Muller's Orphanage, or Dr. Cullis' Consumptives' Home, or Bishop Taylor's work in India and Africa, and see how thousands of times in these men's lives they had to consent to eternal failure in the eyes, not only of the world, but in the eyes of philosophers, churches, ministers and renowned ecclesiastics. Note their solitary struggles in prayer, their solitary mountain-peak convictions, the lofty possibilities they saw that no one else could see. See how they surpassed all the law makers in their law, outstripped college professors in their teaching, eclipsed earthly bankers in their handling of money, how they put to shame the idleness, shiftlessness and unbelief of the majority of nominal Christians around them, and in order to achieve such great results, they had constantly to lie in the dust, to bear criticism, coldness and contempt from those from whom they expected help. And over and over again, in their hearts, had to say "Amen," to perfect failure. Let me give you a Scripture sample or two. Esther was told by Mordecai to do a certain daring thing to save the Jews. She said, "If I do this it may involve my death," but sent back word that she would comply with his terms, hazard her life, "and if I perish, I perish." That heart agreement to perish, to die and be buried in disgrace, was the key that unlocked the prison door, that let a whole nation out into liberty. There was the secret of power. When the great monarch of Babylon rebuked the three Hebrews for not worshipping his image, they responded, "Be it known unto you that we shall not bow down to your image, the God that we serve is able to deliver us from the fiery furnace, but if not, we will not bow down to your image." The secret of power lay in that expression "but if not." If we live by faith and walk with God, there will be many times in our lives when similar tests will confront us, and similar furnaces blaze for our destruction, and to go through unscorched, we must carry that great "but if not" in our hearts. The real value of any work we do for God, can often be measured by the amount of difficulties in the way of doing it, or else by the effort Satan makes to destroy it after it is done.

In the book of Revelation, Satan stood to devour the man child as soon as He was born. This is true of every work of God. If you receive a great blessing from the Holy Ghost, Satan will soon try to destroy or pervert it. If there be a glorious camp meeting or convention or revival, Satan will find human tools, oftentimes within the church, to blast or check the gracious work if possible. In such seasons, the true servant of God must consent to the seeming failure of his labors, and at the same time go right on working, and commit the work to the absolute care of God.

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06 -- THE SECRET OF SPIRITUAL POWER (F)

The concluding thought in connection with the secret of power is, we must constantly recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit. There is a marvelous secret of strength in recollecting the divine presence in us and in the work God calls us to. "Moses endured as seeing Him who was invisible." "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." The saints in the middle ages looked upon holiness as "the practice of the divine presence." Every time we go into a

meeting or speak to a soul or pray or sing or work for God, if then and there we recognize the Holy Spirit as in us and with us, it will not only be the source of our inspiration, but it will be the act of faith which God honors with success. I do not say we are not to pray for the presence of the Holy Ghost, or for Him to fall upon us and the Word, but that, having prayed in the name of Jesus, we are to recognize the prayer as answered. The Holy Ghost always accompanies His own Word. In every meeting for the purpose of salvation or spiritual edification, the Holy Spirit is invariably on hand. David said the Lord prevented him with His goodness. The word "prevent" originally meant to run before, just as Elijah ran before Ahab when there was going to be a plentiful rain, so the Holy Spirit runs before us preceding every copious work of grace. Jesus says, "Where two or three are met together in My name, I am there in the midst of them." Not, He will be there, but He is there, waiting to meet them. The Holy Spirit is in the church before we get there, in the pulpit waiting for us, in every human soul before we speak to it, and the secret of power is, to thoughtfully, trustfully, unwaveringly recognize Him there. When Jacob was converted at Bethel he said, "God is in this place and I knew it not." Twenty years after, when he had power to prevail with God, he recognized the Almighty in the form of a man, and went forth with an endowment which melted his hardened brother into tears. The Holy Ghost always moves through appropriate conductors, of which there are only two; namely, a truth or a personality. He never works except through some truth or some person. If we use the truth according to His will, and fully yield our person to Him we are then to recognize Him in the use of these two agencies.

"The Spirit and the bride say come." The bride is God's spiritual church. The Holy Ghost says "Come," and the Pentecostal church says "Come," but you notice the Holy Spirit gets His invitation in ahead of the church. And when you go to a sinner and say "Come to God," the Spirit has been there ahead of you, and is there to sanction your invitation.

The Spirit has gone to every child of humanity. I do not know just what the Spirit is doing, but it is my place to recognize His presence. In every assembly where the pure gospel is preached, there is some susceptible case. Some sinner susceptible to conviction, some believer that is a candidate for a deeper experience. We never know who the cases are. It is frequently the very persons we least expect, but the Spirit knows, and I am to recognize Him as working on the people. This very recognition of His presence will inspire us with energy and definiteness.

Did you ever see a blind person in a room with nobody there and he felt himself alone? Did you ever notice the countenance of such a one when he supposed himself alone, and then note the instant and wondrous change when he recognized your presence? The very recognition of another presence transfigured his features. I knew an old blind lady, who, when sitting alone, wore a very sad expression, but at the sound of your footstep, or a spoken word, the change in her expression was marvelous. The same thing is true in the spiritual realm. To forget the presence of God, to regard Him as at a distance, is to detach ourselves from the source of power, and our souls droop. But the moment we intelligently and clearly apprehend, God is here, the Spirit, the Comforter is in this place, He is ready and willing to work through me to the pulling down of strongholds, what a difference it will make in our words, prayers and songs.

There will be a freedom, an unction, a gladness, which nothing else can inspire. "Lo, I am with you always." I do not care how poor or infirm or weak you are, the moment your soul clearly apprehends the eternal verity of that fact, "I am with you always," there will be kept open in your

soul the secret spring of a power that is above all eloquence, for it makes eloquence; magnetism, for it creates magnetism; the power which alone is sufficient for gospel purposes.

These are some of the items which have come to me in connection with this subject. It is passing wonderful what utterly frail and weak things God can use for His glory, especially when we work, not for our emolument or fame, but for the glory of the name of Jesus, perfectly willing to be loved and prized by God alone. When the Lord has been pleased to use us in any work, the best thing we can do is to give the work up to God the moment we are done with it, and drop back into our native littleness and nothingness, and rest in God.

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07 -- LIQUID AND SOLID FOOD

In the fifth chapter of Hebrews we have a significant hint as to what constitutes spiritual perfection; it is the difference between feeding on liquid and solid food, or the difference between chewing and sucking. "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God, and are become such as have need of milk and not of strong meat." The term "strong meat" could more emphatically be rendered solid food. "For every one that useth milk -- that is, liquid food -- is inexperienced in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe"; that is, has not yet cut his teeth. "But strong meat -- solid food -- belongeth to them that are perfect, to those who by the habit of perfection, have their senses-spiritual faculties -- exercised to discern both good and evil." Heb. 5:12-14.

Instead of interpreting this Scripture so as to make Christian babyhood extend for twenty years, until we reach our full human stature, and thereby locating Christian perfection a long time after regeneration, the real pivot of the teaching is the difference between teeth and no teeth, and drinking and chewing food. A babe who has not cut its teeth, is not perfect as a member of the genus homo, because he has not all the physical organs belonging to his species until he has teeth. The expression in the fourteenth verse about being of full age, in the original signifies perfection and has no reference to maturity or old age at all, but simply to the perfection or entirety of creaturehood, having all the parts and organs belonging to a complete creature, which a babe with no teeth does not have. So instead of the old legal analogy of putting complete salvation off into old age, it ought to come, according to the strict meaning of this Scripture, never later after the new birth than a set of teeth comes after the first birth. It is not perfection of time, but perfection of nature, that is taught in this passage. The difference between feeding on liquid and solid food is very pertinent, and can be recognized among professed Christians in many ways.

Solid and liquid truth. The perfect believer feeds on solid truth. That is, the whole truth as revealed in the Bible, the truth unmixed with fables or rationalistic perversions, or Swedenborgian dreams or ecclesiastical traditions, and not diluted with human creeds. He can chew the whole wheat and eschew the chaff. The baby Christian, on the other hand, must have the truth diluted before he can swallow it, it must come to him in his particular church bottle, labeled with his particular church authorities, boiled up according to his particular catechism, and in various ways mixed and diluted with some form or ceremony or mixture of uninspired thought to render it palatable to him.

The complete Christian is governed by solid principle and not liquid policy. It is humiliating to see how many baby Christians -- even gray-headed babes, are governed by soft, flexible policy instead of a perfect unmixed principle. Touch any question of revealed truth or any application of truth to morals and reforms, such as prohibition, the Sabbath, tobacco, the use of money, the spread of holiness, and notice the lack of spinal column, of manly, outspoken truth. When we see the toning down of God's saving truth of professed scholars and theological teachers, the cringing before wealth and office, the cowardice and time-serving attitude toward all questions of divine moment, the adoption of human standards and human policies, the drifting with majorities, the accepting of soft sentimentalism in doctrine and discipline, we get an evidence that multitudes of professed Christians have never cut their teeth, and have not enough bone in their moral mechanism to masticate the hard food which makes Christian heroes. We see the difference between solid and liquid feeding in the matter of tithing and the use of money. The full Christian makes the giving of money and the using of his worldly goods for the glory of God, just as much a part of his life as prayer or faith. He never waits for anniversary sermons or begging appeals, or oyster suppers or a Chicago fire, to draw out of him a pittance for the Lord; but having fed on the solid truth that "he is not his own," that "God loveth a cheerful giver," that he is to "lay up treasure in heaven," it becomes a part of his very Christian being to give according to his ability, for the spread of salvation. The liquid food Christian gives but scantily, without settled convictions or hearty joyousness in the act, and even then it is by spurts and spasms, when he is made to weep under some heartrending appeal, or when it is coaxed out of him by some teasing petitioner or by some church frolic or festival. When all the so-called money-giving of the church is sifted out before the judgment seat, how little of it will be seen to have sprung from pure, generous, joyous giving of the heart. Another difference of the solid and liquid feeding is found in the matter of comfort and consolation in seasons of sorrow and trial. The solid food Christian in hours of great distress and sorrow, will go to the pure Word and closet himself with God, and by praying in the Spirit and reposing on the great and precious promises and a steady looking to Jesus, will gather such comfort, such quietness of mind, such internal girdings of the heart, as the unrenewed mind has no conception of. The liquid food Christian will drop into murmurings and complainings, run to human or earthly springs for a draught of comfort, and failing to find it, will be tempted of Satan to apply to the quagmire of dreams or spiritual mediums or some other wretched device as a substitute for that pure crystal stream which flows alone from God and the Lamb.

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08 -- HINDRANCES TO FAITH

"O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Matt. 14:31.

The pivot word in this question is "wherefore." Doubt should have a sufficient reason for it. Neither Peter nor any other has been able to find a satisfactory answer to this all-piercing "wherefore" of Jesus. The implication is, God could allow us to doubt if we had sufficient reason for it. The unbelief of the human heart startled and amazed Jesus at every turn. It was like the air on the frozen polar sea, that pierced His sensitive nature on every side. God made man to believe, organized his whole being on that line, launched him out in such a sea of relationships with nature

and the supernatural, with his fellows, with the past and future, that he could not exist, could never plant nor reap, never give nor receive testimony, in fact, never do anything of import, except by the exercise of a measure of faith. Doubt is no part of our original constitution, and can never be explained, except on the basis of a terrible calamity in our moral nature. God has never deceived human beings, never played fast and loose with the hopes and fears of His creatures. The greatest reason for Peter's doubt was the remaining carnality in his soul, which prompted an uneasy fear in such a sudden emergency of danger. But while carnality is the root of unbelief, there are some other considerations which will enable us to explain it.

I. One hindrance to faith is that of looking at our surroundings, and not to the fixed promises of Jesus. In the incident of the text we have an example of the power of our surroundings versus the power of the promise of God. There were two things upon which Peter might fix his attention; one was the word "come," uttered by the Saviour, the other was the waves of water. Peter was not destitute of faith, for he asked the Lord to bid him walk on the sea. He felt an inward inclination to go out to Christ on the water, but wanted the authority of the Master's word like a plank under his feet to authorize him in doing so; and that sublime inward prompting which was evidently of God, never broke down until his eyes were diverted to take in the danger of the waves. Here we have the conflict in every life, that between the prompting of the inward Spirit to trust God without reserve, and that of the senses which survey the instability of outward things. It is a battle between the invisible truth and the visible shadow, the stability of the rock and the motion of the sea. The appearance of the waves and the significance of the word "come," were to human reason directly the opposite of each other. Through all ages, the waves had never failed to drown, and on the other hand, God's word had never deceived any one; so here were two invariable things that met' as opposites; the only question was, which of these invariables was the stronger; which law should have the precedence, that of gravity or that of the word of God? The word "come," from the lips of Jesus, had more authority than all the rolling seas, for it was the power of His simple word that set every sea in motion. The water had the appearance of power, but in the word of Jesus was the real power. Most of our life is illustrated by this incident. We live on a rolling sea, we are repeatedly shut up to the alternative of trusting either the appearance of things or the invisible truth of God. If we listen to the blowing of the wind, it will shut out the omnipotent voice of Jesus. If we look at the white-capped waves of circumstance, we shall not see the outstretched hand of Jesus. Each of us must come for himself to a fixed, irreversible decision, as to which is reality, the wave or the word, and fasten ourselves to unchangeable truth.

II. Another hindrance to faith is that of receiving honor of men. Jesus asks us, "How can ye believe which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?" It is not seeking honor of men, but receiving it; that is, opening our heart to the cordial reception of human praise, or flattery, or fame, that utterly contravenes the repose of the soul in God. Receiving honor from men is a great virtue in the eyes of the world, but this is an instance in which things highly esteemed among men are an abomination to the Lord. It may not be seen by all at the first glance, how receiving worldly honor can prevent true faith in God, but a little reflection will show us that receiving worldly honor is an insidious, subtle and malignant form of idolatry. It has in it the element of man-fearing as well as man-worship. It is a subtle way of putting self in the place of God. It implies that our chief happiness comes from man, which is an ignoring of the true fountain of joy, and the hewing out of broken cisterns. This deference to the creature, this fearing or

cringing to man, this love of place and distinction for self-severs the soul from Christ, diverts its trust to some other object and destroys true faith.

III. Another hindrance to faith is the low state of faith in those around us, and especially the unbelief of those occupying high places in the visible Church. In the days of Jesus it was asked, "Have any of the rulers believed on Him?" The great mass of nominal Christians are in such an infantile state of grace, as to lack the independence to launch out boldly and alone, and trust God radically and bravely, in spite of the coldness and half-heartedness of those in religious authority over them. How often it occurs in every age, that those who are set to guide the affairs of the Church, and its education and economy, have no warm, living faith in God, beyond a gross rationalistic faith in their ecclesiastical system, who, like Bonaparte, put their faith on the side of the heaviest battalions. It is a historical fact that faith kindles faith, fervent holiness inspires others to pursue it. Saints multiply in great revivals of religion. In the world of letters, great authors rise in clusters, the same thing is true of inventors, and there have been epochs in Church history where saints rose in constellations. We need to be incited by those of faith, but let us beware of toning down our trust to the level of the half believers and doubters that swarm around us.

IV. Perhaps the greatest hindrance to faith is a lack of personal consecration to God. We are taught this in the twelfth of Hebrews, where, in order to look to Jesus as the "beginner and perfecter of our faith," we are to lay aside every weight and the easily besetting sin. Just as long as there is defect in our consecration, there will be corresponding defects in our faith. We can trust God only to the extent that we are given up to Him. Your risk in a bank is up to the limit of your deposit. Consecration puts us right on believing ground. Consecration is cutting the shore lines, and faith is launching out into the deep. So the real question is, not why should I trust all to God, but why should I doubt anything of Him? Have His promises ever broken down? has He ever disappointed or deceived us? True, He often tests our faith, but at the last moment, in the worst extremity, His train of infinite mercy and provision has arrived on schedule time, and the finale in many a psalm of life has been, "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

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09 -- FAINT NOT

There is an experience of soul exactly like the fainting of the body. When a person faints there is an utter loss of strength accompanied with a real sickish feeling, paleness and a clammy sweat, causing the body to get limp, beyond the control of the will, and fall away in an unconscious swoon. There is a real fainting of the soul which we are admonished against in the Word, "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him." "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, for which cause we faint not." "Faint, yet pursuing."

Some of the feelings which may lead the Christian heart to faint are the following:

A feeling of loneliness of soul, as if we were isolated from all other spirits, and especially shut off from the souls that are around us. We seem to be a castaway on some ethereal and desert island, with all intelligible communication with other souls cut off. We sometimes think we would like to open all our inner feelings to a fellow-spirit, but if the opportunity occurs to do so, an

invisible yet powerful check is laid upon us. We seem to be more in fellowship with the souls of far-distant ages than with those near by. We seem to pace the boundless shore of our solitary island, waiting for any sort of a change to break upon our experience, until we feel like sinking down under sheer sameness and monotone of soul.

Another feeling is that of being caged in, hampered and tied in an inextricable manner. Providence seems to go off and leave us to the heartlessness of a thousand petty demons who pervade every little circumstance; who seem, like the fabled Liliputians, to tie our hands and feet while we sleep; who snap all the threads in our financial looms; who upset our ordinary plans; who turn anticipated joys into ashes; who bother us with a host of mental perplexities too subtle to define and too numerous to count. There are times when a current of such things seems to set in; times when everything seems to weave itself into a network of crippling environment, and any effort to extricate ourselves only bruises us. At such times the question is shot into the mind, "What's the use?" Another feeling is that of a strange pressure and a heavy bearing down in the soul, it seems we cannot get low enough to slip out from under the weight; the floor or ground is entirely too high for us.

Another feeling is that of paralysis. The faculties seem benumbed and unable to exert themselves. Prayer is not versatile and fluent, but is reduced to a heart groan or the simple cry of the woman in the gospel, "Lord, help me." This inertia of the faculties is accompanied with a sense of weariness in the soul; the Holy Spirit recognizes this state of experience and distinctly mentions this heart tiredness, "Lest ye be weary and faint in your minds." The Spirit has given us three remedies to prevent soul-fainting: One remedy is, "Consider Him who endured lest ye be weary and faint." When prayer is inert, when every pinion of heart and mind is bound, we are to quietly fix our consideration on Him who endured; spread out before the mind how He was cramped, limited, contradicted; His inner feelings fettered and smitten in a thousand inconceivable ways; how the normal yearnings of His heart were denied and snubbed; how the whole of His outward environment was at such horrible disagreement with the fitness of things in His soul; to consider all this, and much more which will occur to a meditative soul, will bring a sense of fellowship with Him which is excellent medicine for faintness of spirit.

Another remedy is, "Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord." God arranges, or permits, for our chastening to come to us in such strange and unlooked-for ways, in such mortifying and disagreeable circumstances, by such undignified and outlandish agencies that we are apt to "despise the chastening."

We think we could take the scourging much better if it were applied with a more dignified and beautiful whip. Our chastisement often occurs by things in which we see no semblance of divinity. The trials, the besetments, the persons, the events, the gnarled and knotty annoyances, which God employs to correct or rebuke us, seem often so low and mean and out of harmony with the fitness of things that we are liable to despise the correction. Now, if we can discover the hand of God in all these ugly things, if we can see the divine presence under all this network of unpleasantness, it will at once throw a new light on them, and the recognition of His presence will keep us from fainting. "Despise not the chastening of the Lord nor faint when thou art rebuked by Him."

Another remedy for soul-fainting is the manifestation of Jesus to the inner spirit. Paul tells us in second Corinthians, fourth chapter, that God hath shined in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and says this manifestation is a treasure which we have in earthen vessels, then, after alluding to our peculiar sufferings, concludes by saying, " For which cause we faint not." So the best cure for heart-fainting is the blessedness of Jesus revealed in us by the Holy Ghost. The dear, deep apprehension of Jesus as a personal, sympathizing, indwelling Saviour is a soul tonic, an invigorating balm to the spirit which nothing else can be.

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10 -- AFFLICTION AND GLORY (A)

"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.

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. It is an inconceivable wonder of divine chemistry i~ which affliction, time, the believing soul and the Holy Spirit are factors. Elsewhere Paul tells us that he " reckoned the sufferings of this present time not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be in us." It were as if by the light of eternity he had weighed and measured the elements of suffering and glory and reached a mathematical conclusion. But this could only be by taking into his comprehensive grasp the entire destiny of the Christian. Had he confined his calculations to a small section of human existence, the result would have been far different. God sees all things, even the smallest, in the light of their true and eternal relations, and it was in that light that Paul surveyed the interests of mankind and especially those of the Christian; not with reference to a brief period in their existence, but swept with eagle eye the entire annals of their destiny. This is the only light in which we can perceive the equality and justice of God's ways, or by which we can interpret the dark and contradictory problems of life.

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. The inequaiities of the earth's surface, the elevations and depressions, if viewed only with reference to small sections, seem out of all proportion, but could we station ourselves at a sufficient distance from the earth and see its whole circumference pass in review before us, then

every local inequality would be so related to the whole as to render them constituents of harmony and perfection. In like manner, we do not live long enough to catch the full anthem of God's administration. His providence strikes a few notes in our ears during our short lives, but from these we cannot gather "the full diapason thunder roll," the completion of which fills the flight of ages. And the inequalities of human fortune, "the good man's tears, the pangs of despised love, the law's delays, the insolence of office, the scorn which patient merit bears," compose a moral landscape in life like Alps and deserts out of all proportion, until human destiny is surveyed in its entire orbit with its far-reaching circumference of immortality.

The spiritual chemistry suggested in the text is well worth analysis. It would seem that everything depends on the moral quality of the soul and its attitude toward the unseen. If the believer is holy, if his nature is in harmony with the Holy Spirit, if he habitually looks to the things of eternity, then whatever of suffering enters into his life is transmuted by the moral quality of his heart into the gold of glory. Just as the oak converts all chemistry into oak by the peculiar quality of its oak life, so the pure in heart, he that lives the Christ life, will from the dark chemistry of this world -- its disappointments and suffering -- turn all things into glory and praise.

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 this 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. So that it is not the affliction in itself that constitutes the glory, but it is the affliction working itself through a regenerated and purified soul, otherwise it would remain a deadly poison, "for the sorrow of the world worketh death." Affliction can work out glory in the soul by bringing it into most thorough acquiescence to the divine will and purpose. While it cannot purify the soul it can bring the soul into such submission to the divine will, that the whole purpose of God's saving remedy can pass unobstructed through the heart.

We go through tribulation, but moral whiteness is by the blood of the Lamb. We are, and through eternity must remain, under the sovereign will and wisdom of God, but that authority over us will be a source of boundless fear and pain unless we are in agreement with it. This alone will fit us as subjects for such a kingdom, for the issues and employments of immortality. This great lesson cannot be learned amid an unbroken flow of mild indulgence. If divine providence should never cross the path of our earthly happiness, our faith and loyalty would have no test, we would not come in direct contact with divine authority. It is affliction that makes the hand of God, as it were, tangible to the soul, it is then that we touch the scepter of the Almighty.

Again, affliction may work glory in the soul by enlarging its capacities. The capacity of suffering and enjoyment must be equal and that species of joy which comes out of suffering is in the nature of things doubled. The glory of any being is in proportion to the greatness of its capabilities to the volume and variety of experiences which it can contain. Therefore, whatever enlarges our conformity to the cross of Christ, to His diversified self-abnegation, to His patient suffering, must increase possibilities of enjoyment with Him. In the afflictions incident to a true Christian arising from such multiplied and sometimes opposite sources, there is a strain upon the mind, a stress of longing, a hot tension of feeling, a surging of sensibility, an upheaving of the under ocean of the soul which causes the waters of life to swell beyond their former shores, and imparts to it such keenness of taste, such relish for the highest and best, as qualifies it to more fully appreciate the joys that are divine.

Again, affliction works glory by widening the circle of knowledge and fellowship with the moral universe, by giving us a similarity and acquaintance with the great and good of all ages. If our religious life should be an uninterrupted season of summer days, it would debar us from knowing a large portion of the moral experiences of the world; it would exclude us from the inner and sublime fellowship of the martyrs and the white-robed company who have gone up through great tribulation. Affliction is the alphabet through which we read large portions of revelation. It is the clew by which we interpret the shaded lore of the oppressed, the persecuted and heroic of all time; the sheepskin brigade of whom the world was not worthy; it furnishes a passport to the internal solitudes of the man of sorrows, and unveils the mysterious anguish of the man of Uz. Thus, by extending the circle of fellowship with the great and good, by sinking us into deeper union with the divine will, by testing the principles of love and obedience, by curbing our impetuosity, by chastening our judgment, by melting to a warmer temperature the feelings of the heart, by enlarging the sweep of our sympathies, affliction can be made to throw over our whole character a softer and brighter luster than it were possible otherwise to obtain. These are a few instances by which affliction may work out in a Christian an imperishable glory, a glory which is rooted and grounded in the character, a glory which sprouts, blooms and fruits from the torn and plowed soil of the soul, a glory which being planted in your own nature, warmed by your own prayers, and watered with your own tears, can never be taken from you, but an inherent internal product of glory, beauty and honor, beaming with perennial loveliness upon your own character and fitted to adorn the paradise of God.

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11 -- AFFLICTION AND GLORY (B)

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. But he pronounced them light, because from the standpoint of inspired reason and as related to immortality, they are light. They are light because they spring from the lower and earthly side of our existence. The afflictions of a true Christian cannot spring from the wrath of God, nor the dreadful forebodings of judgment.

The nature of these afflictions is referred to in the words "perplexed but not in despair, persecuted but not destroyed, cast down but not forsaken," they are located outside of the spiritual life; they may arise from the mind or the body, from some thorn in the flesh, from our social environments, or from the state of our earthly fortunes. If we take the catalogue of all possible affliction, the loss of health, the pinch of poverty, the tongue of slander, the desolation of bereavement, the eclipse of reason, the dungeon of imprisonment, the red torch of persecution and death itself, they are all on the outer, earthly side of the soul. They cannot penetrate the inner citadel of the spirit, nor break the union of a perfectly loyal heart with its God. But the glory on the other hand fills the upper and moral nature, and in heaven will fill the whole outward life as well. So that while earthly affliction can invade only a portion of our life and being, the glory that is to be wrought out in us will envelope the whole being and leave no space for pain or want. Furthermore, the afflictions of the Christian are light because they are always blended with so many opposite and alleviating elements.

The particles of anguish do not come so close together as to form a solid, but are mixed and diluted with much that soothes and medicates. So much of art is exerted to alleviate our ills, so many streams of sympathy are poured into even the darkest waters of life, and the principle of hope will ever light its lamp in the darkest passages, that whatever combination of ills we suffer, they are not absolutely unmixed.

Now, in contrast with these afflictions which are neutralized, the glory will be unmixed and undiluted with any opposite. We say of a sponge that it is light because its particles are so widely separated as to admit of much air and water. In contrast with the sponge, a block of pure gold of the same size would be very weighty. The afflictions of the Christian are like the nature of the sponge, which will admit opposite elements, while the glory will be like the nature of solid gold, the particles of unmixed bliss, the atoms of light and love, will be so compressed into every part of our being and every moment of our duration as to form the nature of a solid. It will be a glory of such magnitude and splendor that our present senses and faculties could not endure, a weight of glory like that of the orchard bending under its load of ripened fruit.

The third contrast is between "momentary" and "eternal," the affliction is momentary, the glory is eternal. Life itself is only a moment to eternity; yet it is only a small portion of the average Christian life that is subjected to affliction. If our life extended to antediluvian longevity, and the whole of it was a scene of affliction, still it would dwindle to a twinkling moment in the mighty roll of innumerable ages. And when we turn our contemplation from the brevity of affliction to the unending nature of the glory, we find our faculties overwhelmed by the majesty of eternity. Here the feeblest and most towering imaginations are on a level, for they both equally fail to comprehend it. We cannot even approximate it for when we have, in fancy, borne ourselves forward on the stream of ages through millions of years, it still stretches away as vast as ever, the one solitary, shoreless, fathomless eternity. It is this infinite disparity between the duration of present affliction and future glory which makes it so marvelous to us. Is it not a stroke of infinite wisdom to so adjust the moral forces in a Christian soul as to cause such endless results to flow from such a momentary season of suffering? Every reflective mind must be startled at the disproportion which there is between the brief season of probation and the everlasting results of it. We wonder that such a short space of toil can be followed by such a length of repose, that the

littleness of the field can yield such an extended harvest, and that a few moments of affliction can work out such everlasting glory.

If the glory spoken of in the text was acquired as wages for work done, there would have to be some due proportion of time between the work and the wages, and it often happens in this world that the period of labor is more extended than the period of reward, for thousands of men will struggle for half a century for the brief reward of five or ten years in some splendid office. The economy of infinite mercy is just the opposite. Our afflictions, then, do not partake of the nature of toil, with glory for its wages, but they are, under the operation of the Holy Ghost, in the nature of a cause working within us the lasting effect of glory. While there is no proportion between a moment's work and an eternity of wages, there is some proportion between a momentary cause and an everlasting effect. Should God create a single mountain and attach it to the surface of our globe, it would be a very light and trivial burden for the world to carry, like the addition of a tiny feather to a soaring eagle, which it could not perceive. And yet the addition of that mountain would most certainly increase the bulk and gravity of our planet, it would likely cause it to verge nearer the sun, it would affect the speed of its revolution, it would gradually change the motions of our solar system, and in the long lapse of years it would send a gradual change of motion through the innumerable orbs of creation. In like manner, an affliction which is light in its nature and momentary in its duration, resting on an obedient, trusting soul, under the dominion of the Holy Spirit, will lend a gravity to the moral character, cause it to approach nearer to Christ, and set in revolution a new order of thoughts and feelings, which will dilate and stretch through the endless cycles of immortality. But let us remember that affliction can work out these glorious results, only while, in the attitude of perfect heart loyalty to Jesus, we habitually look at the things which are not seen. When we weep, it is by looking through our tears to that hand which will wipe all tears from our eyes that they will be turned into pearls of joy.

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12 -- THE ZONE OF ENTIRE CONSECRATION

Entire consecration is misunderstood by many who place it at one of two extremes. Some put it down with repentance and make it an element in repentance, or taking place at the same time. Others place it up with sanctification and identify it with the work of cleansing. The true zone of entire consecration lies between these two extremes. Entire consecration viewed Scripturally and experimentally comes after repentance and can be performed only by a living subject of grace, and on the other hand it precedes the work of purification, and prepares the way for that experience. Let us notice wherein consecration differs from repentance. Repentance has reference to our relation to sin and punishment; entire consecration has reference to our relation to the will and service of God. Repentance is the renunciation of all our sins, evil associations, ungodly alliances, unholy pursuits and business.

Entire consecration is just the opposite of this, it is the cordial yielding up of all our good things, our affections, our loved ones, our possessions, our reputation, our legitimate plans, purposes and prospects, our free will, our very life and destiny to the perfect will of God, subject to His disposal at all times. The first is giving up the bad things, the second is giving up the good things. If I may so speak, in repentance we let Satan take what belongs to him, and in consecration

we let God take what belongs to Him. Again, the motive to repentance is to escape punishment, to flee from the wrath to come; the motive that prompts entire consecration is a longing for a better experience, a desire to be like Jesus. Consecration is of the nature of making a will, of giving ourselves up a free-will offering to God, of making a quitclaim deed of ourselves and all our effects. But in order to execute such a will or deed, we must be citizens of the heavenly kingdom. Under our civil laws, a man who is under sentence of death, be he ever so rich, cannot make a will, or deed away a piece of property, for in the eye of the law he is dead. In like manner all impenitent sinners are condemned already, they are under the death sentence, and only awaiting the execution. Hence, they cannot make a free-will offering of themselves to God, or deed themselves away to Christ in the true sense of Scriptural consecration, until they are pardoned and restored to heavenly citizenship. So the Scriptures speak of offering ourselves "a living sacrifice," and of "yielding ourselves unto God as those which are alive from the dead." The same thought is illustrated by joining the army. A soldier in joining the army virtually offers himself up to die, he is a living sacrifice on the altar of his country, but it is only an uncondemned citizen who can thus offer himself.

No foreigner or unnaturalized person can join the army. Citizenship must precede soldiership. Such is true in grace, we must first be adopted and become citizens in the kingdom of grace before we can enter the true soldier covenant, and offer ourselves up to die for the King. It takes a good deal of grace in the heart to carry us through the act of entire abandonment to God. Entire consecration involves such a dying out of self, such a detailed yielding to the Lord, that no cold, formal Christian, no backslider in heart can do it. Only the subject of true saving grace can go through with it. So we see entire consecration is beyond repentance, and, in many things, quite different from it.

Now, let us notice the difference between consecration and purification. Consecration is our work, purification is the Lord's work. When we want our watches cleaned and oiled, we take them to a jeweler, and leave them with him, he cleanses them and rectifies their machinery. Our hearts are our watches, we commit them unlimitedly to Jesus; He, by His Spirit, cleanses them and rectifies their movements. Many persons are prejudiced against the word sanctification, and habitually use the word consecration as a synonym of sanctification. This is putting the word too high. There is a subtle reason for this, the unsanctified mind instinctively magnifies the human side.

You will notice that all persons who are not deeply spiritual will, without knowing it, ignore or minify the supernatural in religion; their eye is not on God half as much as it is on self, consequently they dwell almost exclusively on the human side of religion, upon the struggles, the trying, the doing of the creature. And because consecration is the act of the creature, it is magnified as the climax of religion; whereas, in reality, it is but "making straight paths for our feet," leveling the mountains, "gathering out the stones," "preparing the way of the Lord," opening up the avenue for the sanctifying Spirit to enter in. In saying that entire consecration is the act of the creature, it is understood that we can only do it through the help of the Holy Ghost, for every step in grace from repentance onward, is taken through the assistance of the Spirit of God. Consecration begins in the spirit of adoption, and it is completed just before the divine act of purification.

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13 -- THE ENTIRETY IN CONSECRATION

All believers are, in a measure, consecrated to God, just as all believers are, in a measure, sanctified. The spirit of consecration is a part of the new life imparted to the soul in regeneration; but in order to receive the full baptism of the Spirit, the principle of consecration must be carried to completeness. Just as long as consecration is defective on any point, or in any degree, the experience of complete cleansing and filling cannot be received. The fullness of salvation is conditioned on perfect trust in Jesus as a present Saviour, and on the other hand this perfect truth is conditioned on the perfect yielding of self up to God. Hence, if there is any defect or shortage in consecration, it most surely blocks the way to the entrance into full salvation. Every believer is consecrated, but not all in equal degrees. Some converted people, who are not fully sanctified, are much more yielding to God than others are, and have only a few more steps to take in order to reach the state of entire abandonment, whereas others are so slightly yielded, as to be a long way from it. Again, all believers are not equally yielded on the same points. Some will more readily yield on certain points than others. There are always one or two points which are the last to be yielded, and upon which the self life has a death struggle; but these points of death struggle are very different with different souls.

The three great lines of consecration are, to be anything the Lord wants us to be; to do anything the Lord wants us to do; to suffer anything the Lord wants us to suffer. These embrace the subjective, the active and the passive forms of our existence, and to consent to all these three things, willingly, without a reservation, is the perfection of consecration. As each soul passes through these three things, there will come up, a panorama of possibilities and contingencies according to each one's condition, nature, or environment, upon which the principle of loyalty will be tested. Some will find their complete yielding the hardest on the willing to be, others, on the willing to do, and others, on the willing to suffer. Unless consecration reaches the point of entirety, the soul will slip back and be consecrating itself over and over again a thousand times, without gaining a distinct step of victory, or making any positive progress. We hear a great deal about reconsecrating ourselves, and making fresh consecration, which is mere delusive talk, and does not get the soul where positive results are brought to pass. When the soul is perfectly yielded to God on every point, and for all time and eternity as well, it can drive a stake down, and hold its position. It has then got to the end of making good resolutions, it is then done with going over the same ground of giving up, it has reached the place of anchorage, it can then truly say,

"'Tis done, the great transaction's done,
I am my Lord's, and He is mine."

A good illustration of entire consecration is that of tapping the car wheels. Many a time as I have been traveling on a sleeping car, I have been awakened in the night by the hammer of the wheel tester. At some principal station, where the engines are exchanged a man will pass along the train with a flaming torch in one hand, and a hammer in the other; with the light he first examines the wheels and axles under the cars, then with the hammer gives a sharp rap on the wheels. If there is a single crack, ever so small in a wheel, it will be indicated by the defective ring. That crack in a single wheel will stop the progress of that coach, it must be sent to the shop for repairs; and when every wheel gives a clear ring it can be sent on its journey at express speed. So in seasons of revival, at camp meetings or conventions, or with many a soul in retired life, God comes to

examine the inner wheels of our mortal being. With the torch of His Spirit He searches underneath, and the recesses of our hearts, the axle tree of our will, the wheels of our motives and propensities, and with the hammer of His Word He taps on every wheel. If there be a defect in our consecration, it will be indicated by a crack in some wheel which will fail to ring out clearly "Thy will be done." This will stop the progress of the soul, the great master mechanic will order us into the repair shop of grace, and when every wheel in US responds affirmatively to the stroke of His Word we are then sent on our journey to the celestial city on schedule time.

Some may ask " How can I know when my consecration is entire? " The best answer is, " You will know it." There is a tremendous inner sense of giving up, of letting go, of getting through with your trying, of cutting the last shore line.

There is an inward feeling that you have rolled yourself over on the Lord, and instead of trying to give up, you find yourself looking for something more to yield, and wondering at the littleness of what you have given. At the point where consecration is entire, perfect trust is spontaneous, easy and natural.

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14 -- EXCAVATION BEFORE EDIFICATION

The great prerequisite of perfect love is the thorough emptying of the heart of every principle and disposition contrary to love. No one can love God with all the heart, while original sin remains, for the carnal mind resides in the heart, and it is evident that if a part of the heart or moral nature is taken up with evil, the entire heart cannot, at the same time, be in conformity to God's will.

This seems a very simple and self-evident proposition, yet it is so difficult to convince the most of professing Christians of this truth when it comes to actual experience. I have observed the following things to be true:

1. That a great many will agree to the doctrine of loving God with all the heart, and many profess to be doing it who are utterly averse to the doctrine of heart purity, and repudiate the idea of being sanctified. If such persons understood the true Scriptural meaning of loving God with all the heart they would know that such language implied the thorough purification of the heart from the carnal mind. There is so much loose and disjointed religious thinking abroad in the church, that hardly one in a hundred seems to have any definite Scriptural view of actual and original sin, of regeneration, or heart purity, and kindred subjects. The whole of Bible doctrines seems thrown together in a sort of a theological hash, and it is common to hear people announcing and denying the same truth in the same breath, affirming that they want to be whole-hearted Christians (which really means holiness-hearted) and in the next breath denying the very condition of purification by which whole-heartedness is reached. If a glass of water contains one grain of sand, it cannot be filled with water, for to be filled with water it must contain no other substance.

2. I have observed that some teach the receiving of the full baptism of the Spirit, while at the same time, strongly denying the destruction of inward sin. But, according to the Word of God,

the two things are utterly contrary to each other, and I have never in all my travels found or heard of a person actually receiving the baptism of the Spirit under such teaching.

3. That the depth and perpetuity of religious experience is in proportion to the depth of heart excavation. The higher the edifice, the deeper and broader must the foundation be. This principle is true everywhere in nature, mind and morals. If the great work of heart sanctification were a mere blessing, which so many think it to be, it would not require such a deep foundation. Many think the work of holiness, like a traveler's tent, which can be readily pitched without a foundation, whereas it is a great palace of inward life built to last through the ages, and must needs have a foundation broad and deep in the very bed-rock of our nature. I have heard that when the great Corn Exchange of New York was built, the expenditure upon the foundation was so immense that the contractor reckoned the building about half done when the basement story was finished. The greatest part of the work of full salvation is the digging away the hindrance to God's grace out of our being. It is very easy for grace to fill a clean vessel.

4. To be filled with the positive graces of the Spirit, is always a popular thought among religious people; but to be crucified, emptied, cleansed in order to be so filled is exceedingly unpopular. If a reporter should go through the Christian churches reporting all the prayers offered, nearly all of them would be prayers to be filled and rarely would there be one offered for complete cleansing from inward sin. Mr. Wesley found that the people readily accepted his preaching on being filled with faith, resignation, hope, love, gentleness, good works and such; but when he expounded the necessity of being entirely cleansed from all sin in both root and branch, there was much outcry against his teaching. So it is now, and so it will ever be. Old Adam, the fallen nature, clings tenaciously for a little space in our being.

The story is told of an old Scotch lady, who thought that grieving over heart depravity was the highest possible state of grace, and is reported to have said, "If you take away my original sin, you take away all my religion." As odd and contradictory as this may seem, yet multitudes of professing Christians seem to view it in that light. When we read the lives of eminent saints whose graces and toils and triumphs made them the chandeliers in the visible church, who seemed more like celestial visitants than the plodding mortals of our world, we crave to be flooded with the warm fervor of their hearts, the bold heroism of their testimony, the fervency and faith of their prayers, and the luster of their dying triumphs. But are we willing to pay the price they paid, to go through such crucifixions, to endure the self-denials, the heart emptyings, the fastings and wrestlings in prayer, which laid the foundations of their loveliness and were the steppingstones to their heavenly greatness?

If we want Pentecostal power we must pay Pentecostal prices. To be filled with converting grace we must pay the price of giving up all our actual sins. To be filled with pure love, we must pay the "upper room" price, of giving up our whole being, life and destiny to the will of God. The deeper we die the deeper we live. The lower we excavate the higher we build.

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The misapprehension of the nature of perfect love is the basis of all the misunderstandings and false notions respecting it. There never has been a book written, or a sermon preached, against the experience of Christian perfection, that did not have for its starting point an erroneous and un-Scriptural view as to what it was. No one has yet been found to either antagonize or disbelieve the obtainability of perfect love, who had a correct view of it.

We have to say over again a thousand times, it is perfection of quality and not the perfection of quantity or ripeness. Concerning the nature of perfect love we may notice:

1. It is a perfection that applies to the heart, that is, to the moral, religious department of man's being. Man is a tripartite creature of body, soul and spirit. The body will never reach its perfection -- that is, exemption from all deformity, disease, pain, death, until it is resurrected and glorified. The soul, which is, properly speaking, the mind, embracing the sensibilities and intellectual faculties and appetencies, will never be perfect, that is, delivered from all disproportion of faculties, from all mistakes of judgment and defective apprehension, until it enters the celestial state of being. But the heart, which is the true spiritual part of man, is that zone of his being in which character resides. The heart embraces the conscience, the affections and the will. The conscience to feel right and wrong, the affections to hate or love the right or the wrong, and the will to choose the right or the wrong. All of these things enter into the composition of responsible moral character wherever it is found. All through the Word of God, the heart is the real man, it is called the "inner man," it is the spring out of which flow the "issues of life," it is the "tree" that bears the fruit of action, it is the center and citadel of character. It is in this region of man where the great work of salvation takes place, conviction, regeneration, sanctification and the manifestation of divine things. The heart uses the mind and the body as its instruments; hence God says, "Give Me thy heart," knowing that if He can get full possession there He can, through the moral nature, govern the whole man. How easy it is for all the powers of intellect and body to move with the current of the affections and do their bidding. The Bible invariably locates the principle of sin in the heart, and not in the body or intellectual faculties; but, strange to say, I have never found a person or a book antagonizing Christian perfection, that did not locate the carnal mind either in the body or mental faculties. As the heart is the lodging place of original sin, so in Scripture the cleansing power of Jesus is always directed there. Hence we read, "Blessed are the pure in heart," "He that loveth pureness of heart," "Purifying their hearts by faith," "Purify your hearts ye double-minded," "Having our hearts sprinkled (that is, cleansed) from an evil conscience," "Love out of a pure heart," "Love with all thy heart," "Let your heart be perfect with the Lord." David said to Solomon, "Serve the Lord with a perfect heart and a willing mind," but he does not say perfect mind. Perfection is predicted of the heart, but willingness, teachableness is required of the mind.

2. The perfection of Christian love consists in its unmixedness or simplicity. A thing is said to be simple when it is not mixed with other substances, as water is simple or pure when unmixed with other liquids or earth. Thus, we speak of pure gold, pure honey, etc., when these things exist in a clarified state. So when the love of God fills the purified heart, it is in a state of simplicity. There is humility without pride mixed with it; love toward God and man without any form of hatred; there is submission without any subtle rebellion; there is faith or trust without any skepticism or doubt; there is grace without the admixture of depravity. Some one may ask, does God put mixed grace into a human heart? No, never. But His grace, which is imparted in

regeneration, is choked and impeded by our original depravity. So it is not divine grace that needs to be clarified but we ourselves, our hearts need to be entirely cleansed so that God's grace can exist in us in an unmixed clarified condition. I was once riding with a friend in a western city, on a bright September day. He wished me to explain the nature of perfect love. I said, "Do you see that sunshine? Is not this a perfect day? What hinders the sunshine from being perfect?" He said, "It would be perfect but for the smoke and dust from the city!" "Exactly," I said, "but there is no dust and smoke in the sun, but that arises from the city and they get mixed, but not amalgamated. The sunshine remains sunshine and the smoke remains smoke, but they exist in the same atmosphere. Now, if a heavy rain should cleanse the air from all impurity and then the bright sun should shine out, you would have the sunshine filling the air without dust or smoke and that would be perfect sunshine. Now," I said, "When you were converted God put His love into your heart, but have you not had much dust and smoke in your experience?" "Oh, yes!" he said. "But where did the dust and smoke come from?" He answered, "Not from God, but from my own heart." "Now," I said, "if you should have a Pentecostal thunderstorm to wash the dust and smoke out of your nature, then the same love that you received in regeneration could exist in a simple and unmixed state within you." So that sanctification does not impart to us any new graces, but removes from us the antagonism to the graces, and, thus, all the graces imparted in regeneration can abide in a quiet, peaceful condition. God can make our hearts His quiet restingplace, when all the opposites to His will have been removed, just as Christian families can peacefully inhabit and cultivate the fertile plains of the West, when all the savages have been entirely removed to a distant part of the earth.

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16 -- THE EFFECTS OF PERFECT LOVE

Perhaps the most effectual way of inducing Christians to seek perfect love, is to show the great benefits resulting from the experience. This is what Mr. Wesley termed preaching perfection by promise, which he regarded as the most successful way of teaching it. Some may ask, What is the difference between the effects of love previous to, and after, full sanctification? The effects are the same in kind, but different in degree. Previous to the full baptism of love, the Christian graces are checked more or less by remaining carnality. There is a conscious limitation, impediment, embarrassment, timidity, shrinking, sluggishness and other forms of hindrance, which prevent the full, free, outflowing effects which would naturally spring from unmixed love. Christian perfection does not purify the graces, but purifies the soul-soil in which the graces grow. It is not another kind of religion, but the same kind we had before, with the internal hindrances removed, the same corn with the weeds extracted, the same fire with the smoke consumed; it is a converted life made easy. We can easily see the effects of perfect love if we apply it to Christian duties. The believer has no more duties resting on him after his full purification than before, but there is a marvelous difference in the promptness, ease, liberty and regularity with which the duties are performed. Justification binds on us the same law of life that sanctification does. We see this illustrated in Scripture. All the duties and laws given to the children of Israel were while they were in the wilderness, and yet over and over again, it is said, thus and thus "shall ye do when you come into the land of promise," showing us that it was entering the land of promise which was to render the keeping of those laws practicable and easy. The same truth is repeated in the New Testament. Jesus imposed on his disciples every precept and duty before their full salvation on the day of

Pentecost, but taught them that in order to the sure performance to all His commands, they were to " wait until they were endued with power from on high."

The same truth is repeated in our experience. After we are converted, we feel upon our spirits the pressure of many calls and obligations. A new world and a new life is open before us, convictions of privilege and duty often come to us, and we feel the need of an inward liberty and unction, and a bold, prompt movement to their performance. This is what the full baptism of love supplies. It lubricates all our moral machinery, it oils the secret wheels of action, so that we speak, or pray, or write, or decide, or give, or forgive, with an alacrity, firmness and conscious joy we never did before.

Justification says, "Search the Scriptures," but perfect love says, "Thy Word is sweeter than honey and the honeycomb." The first says, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together," the second says, " I was glad when they said unto me let us go into the house of the Lord." It often happens that the overflow of perfect love renders the ordinary duties of life a pure delight, as looking through the camera upon some ordinary scenery transforms it into a vista of beauty. We are not to hunt so much for new and extraordinary duties as we are for that pure fullness of love which adds a new zest to every old one.

Another emphatic result of perfect love is the wonderful deliverance it imparts from the fear of man. It puts us where we can love everybody, but cringe to nobody, fear nobody. We are not afraid of the criticisms, or threatenings, or the big majorities of our fellows. What an infinite boon such an experience is in this time-serving, man-fearing world! How many Christians there are, who, for lack of perfect love, fail to speak out, or vote, or act, or take the stand which their silent convictions call them to. The Holy Spirit has well said that "the fear of man bringeth a snare." Several instances have occurred under my observation, where ministers were timid about preaching full salvation, for fear of offending prominent hearers; when those same prominent hearers were thirsting for heart purity, and welcomed a full gospel with delight.

The fullness of love will also remove our fear of God's providence. So many Christians are distressed for fear God's providence will fail them. One is always afraid he will go to the poorhouse. Another is afraid to give his tithes to God lest he should never get them back. Another is afraid of sudden death. Another is afraid of certain forms of disease. Another is afraid of some imaginary calamity to his family. Until trust in God is complete, some imaginary lion puts the heart into a flutter of dismay. Perfect love clarifies the vision to discern the completeness of God's special providence. It makes the form of the fourth moving amid the fiery ordeals of life a positive reality. It is not a spirit of rashness, but an obedient doing of our best, and then resting all results on the bosom of God's care. It is not claiming that He will always do as we ask or plan, but it is a sweet repose in His wisdom and love that He will do the best for us. Perfect love destroys the fear of death. It enables the soul to see death in the true Scriptural light, and not only so, but to see through death in such a way that heaven is a reality. Love conquers all things, even death.

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There is a wonderful propensity in fallen human nature to be superficial. This disposition is manifest in every form of life-work and character. It is stimulated in every branch of life by an inordinate desire for speedy results and external show, instead of abiding reality. Thoroughness is a fruit of industry, but sin has so paralyzed man's nature as to produce idleness and inertia. While this statement will apply to every branch of life and achievement, yet it is pre-eminently true in the matter of religion. The religion of the Bible deals with the deepest part of our nature, the conscience, the will and heart. It deals with realities of the unseen and eternal world, it involves the profoundest facts, truths and experiences in the universe. In the very nature of things it is the most real and enduring fact in the creation, compared to which all other interests in time are as morning mists. If mere surface work is destructive in other branches of life, then anything that resembles superficiality in religion is fatal and ruinous in the extreme. And yet in this work of personal salvation, where we need the utmost thoroughness and reality, is where the great majority are flattering their souls that a shallow and ordinary work is sufficient. Instead of seeking how well we can be prepared for eternity, how holy can I be, how much of the love of God can I possess and manifest, the secret whisper of many hearts is, How little may I lean on for safety? Untold thousands have "healed their hurt slightly, saying, peace, peace, when there was no peace" (Jer. 8:11). We sometimes hear the expression, "If I can just barely get into heaven, I shall be satisfied." But such an expression reveals something terribly sad in the heart. It shows unbelief in the promises; it shows a lack of earnestness and thoroughness, in other words, it manifests the presence of the carnal mind. All such half-hearted expressions from the mouth, spring from a half-heartedness within.

One cause for so much superficiality in religion comes from regarding the mere external actions of life more than the inward state of the heart. In the Word of God we find that all conduct and action is traced back to the state of the heart, and reduced to its true character. Every act is measured by the character of the fountain far more than the outward appearance of the act. True religion has, as vehicles, such things as doctrines, the church, the ministry, ordinances, duties, vows, but all these put together do not make religion, that is something that is a life, a warm, real, conscious life in the soul, it is behind action and produces it; it is superior to duty, for it imposes duty, and, larger than ordinances, for it creates them.

Human beings look only at the external. They are disposed to think that there is no sin except in the outward act, overlooking the fact of the "body of sin" in the soul; they also look upon goodness merely in the outward act, consisting of certain church duties and not in the conscious, thorough loving of God and loving our neighbor. This is why there are so many Catholics, high churchmen, ecclesiastical zealots, formalists and moralists in the world who have no salvation.

Another reason for superficial religion is in not viewing it in its spiritual and immortal nature, but looking at it as a temporal and earthly advantage. Failing to look at salvation in its great spiritual and eternal nature, produces an infinite amount of vacillation and inconstancy in pursuing it. It is true that the life of Christ in the heart, has its incalculable advantages in this life. There is not a single good thing or blessing or advantage connected with the body, the intellect, the domestic life, civil government, business, -- commerce, education, science, discovery, or any form of earthly well-being, which is not purified, elevated, strengthened and adorned by the life of Christ in the soul. These are legitimate effects of salvation, but Christ did not institute His religion for the purpose of producing these temporal advantages. The true sphere of religion is in the

spiritual nature and its true end is eternal well being. Time is too short and earth is too narrow for the religion of Jesus to fully reveal itself. It scatters innumerable blessings in its flight through time, but its true destiny is eternal communion with God; and to judge of it by a few temporal and physical things is to utterly misunderstand it.

So many half-hearted seekers after God, expect religion to bring them ease, comfort, wealth, friends, honor, office or some other emolument from a temporal standpoint; and if it fails they peevishly doubt its true power. This is why so few ministers and Christian people can enter full sanctification; they cannot relinquish the preferment, the friendships, the temporal advantages, which they suppose belong to religion. Could they see the salvation of God in its purely spiritual and eternal nature, they would gladly count all things loss for its excellency.

A miniature rainbow may be found in a dew drop, but what is that compared to the full sized flowery arch that spans the heavens? In like manner, religion will show its benefits in the dew drop blessings of time, but to see and enjoy it in its highest state it must be seen in the magnificent form of eternity.

It is a singular fact that the more we look into the depths of eternity, the more we will be led to look into the depths of ourselves.

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18 -- ENVY

One of the most dangerous forms of inward depravity is envy. It is a form of sin which the world looks upon with great leniency, which fashionable people in society look upon as half a virtue, and which many professing Christians regard as a very ordinary defect. But according to the Word of God, it is the seed bed of unlimited misery and crime. Envy as an evil affection in the heart has two parts to it, consisting of hatred to others, because of their superiority in excellence, station or advantage, and at the same time, a certain degree of vexatious anger because of the inferiority of its possessor. Envy acts as a terrible cancer in the heart; it destroys the soul's own happiness; it prevents its owner from loving his neighbor; from enjoying the prosperity of others; it prevents him from enjoying his own blessing; it puts sourness into every blessing; throws gloom into the sunshine; and turns the soul ultimately into an engine of malice. It is in this sense the Bible declares that "Envy slayeth the silly one," and that "envy is the rottenness of the bones." Envy is manifested against those of superior amiability, as was the case against Joseph by his brethren. It is said that Joseph's brethren "envied him" and "through envy sold him." They recognized in him a loveliness of disposition, a loftiness of aim, a purity of motive, a winsomeness of character which captivated the father's heart, and signalized him so far above themselves that they hated him for his very excellences, called him nicknames, caricatured his most unselfish expressions. Had their hearts been thoroughly pure, so as to "rejoice with them that do rejoice," the very reasons for their envy would have been reasons for their love and appreciation. Another instance of envy is that against the success of Moses as a great leader and commander. We are told that they "envied Moses also within the camp."

And this mean spirit was not from the lowest ranks of the people, but among the high church officials and his own near relatives. Their envy could not brook any superior. His extraordinary abilities; his constant access to God; his quick and far-seeing insight; his divinely inspired sway over the people was a constant torture to those who envied him. This example of envy has been repeated thousands of times, not only among sinners, but in the highest ecclesiastical circles. There is a certain battle-scarred missionary from the Dark Continent, and when he appears among great bodies of Christians, a flutter of excitement passes over the assembly, and the multitudes instinctively rise to welcome him. But this very man, because of his unselfish triumphs for Jesus, is envied by some who are vexed at him because of the very things that make him good and great and beloved. Daniel was envied because of his superior talent. Paul was envied by the Jews because of his success in making converts. Jesus was envied by the Scribes and Pharisees because of His mighty, spiritual power over the people. If anyone doubts the statement that envy is the secret spring of crime, let him look at the Word of God and history. The Bible inquires, " Who is able to stand before envy? " As if, like a great forest fire, it burned down everything before it. Paul speaks of certain persons as being " full of envy and murder." Notice how the Spirit puts murder as the fruit sprouting from the seed of envy. Again, he says, " Whereof cometh envy, strife, railings." And again, " Where envying is, there is confusion and every evil work." Again Paul wrote to the Corinthians saying, "I fear lest there be envyings, wraths."

Envy hunts for defects in those who are above it, it endeavors to shine by beclouding the splendor of others, and tossing the luster of others down to its own darkness. It misconstrues the good in others to make itself seem good. It forms and industriously circulates slander against superiors in order to seem virtuous itself.

It was envy that slew Abel; sold Joseph; slandered Moses; put Daniel in the lion's den; crucified Jesus; stoned Stephen; persecuted Paul; built the Inquisition; mobbed Wesley; and in ten thousand ways tried to deface the form of goodness, to throw malicious vitriol into the face of loveliness. It is peculiarly a Satanic trait. Every atom of this disposition must be purged out of us before we can be Bible Christians or enter heaven. Envy is the utter reversal of the spirit of brotherly love.

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19 -- THE LEAKAGE OF LOVE

Love is the very substance and marrow of moral perfection. Faith is the condition of forgiveness and cleansing; and the removing of actual and indwelling sin is the condition of the fullness of love. Many seek only for partial holiness; they seek it merely as a cure for some besetting sin; others seek it as a boon for some sorrow; others seek it in a mere negative form of cleansing; but the true idea is, that the whole being shall be made complete in God's love.

There is a danger of the leakage of love out of the heart that many are not aware of. Love is like a flame or a volatile fluid; it is not like a rigid, fixed substance. It is ever in a fine, subtle motion, and needs constant feeding. A piece of wood is solid and stationary in its form, remaining the same year after year; but the soft quivering flame is very different. So you may have the clear, specific doctrine of sanctification fixed as an unchanging truth in your mind, and yet the quivering

flame of love in your heart is another thing; and persons who were once truly sanctified may go on holding the well-defined doctrine and testimony of holiness, while, unconsciously, the fragrance and warmth of holy love have leaked out of the heart. It is much easier to retain certain truths fixed in the reason, than to retain a fixedness in the affections. Our emotions glide away imperceptibly; our affections leak out of the soul unawares. It requires much diligence and the adding of heart fuel to keep a lowly, loving flame in the soul.

Occasionally you will find a person who has been sanctified, still holding the profession, and grasping the clear doctrine, but who has, from various causes, allowed the warm, loving spirit to leak out; and he is restive, impatient, and harsh under neglect, persecution and opposition.

Those things which are the sweetest are susceptible of being turned into the most sour; and perfect love, losing itself in the fermentation of spirit and turning into sour, is one of the harshest, bitterest things on earth.

As there is a physical law by which sweet juices can be kept from fermenting into sour, so there is a spiritual law to keep pure love from losing its love power, and turning into moral vinegar. When a soul is thoroughly sanctified, it is wondrously illuminated. It sees the church, the obligations of the ministry, the duties of religion, and human character, under an intensity of light and solemnity of conviction, almost indescribable; and it will act and judge and speak according to this intensity of vision. Other believers, whose hearts are still partially veiled by the carnal reason, can have no conception of the intense light of the fully sanctified. Hence, that which seems harmless to the partially blind, may be monstrous and offensive to the fully illuminated.

Now it will take an immense amount of love to keep the gentleness and charity of the heart up equal to the sharp discernment of the mind.

Mr. Wesley often observed that great light upon religious matters, without great love, was dangerous.

If the flow of love in the heart is not kept up to the measure of conviction, then the sharply defined convictions will assume a harsh and unkind edge that will cut contrary to the mind of Jesus. We must keep the affections pure, and warm, and tender, at any cost.

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20 -- THE INNER MAN

Throughout the Word of God there are frequent allusions to the five senses of the soul. It no more attempts to prove the existence of these senses than to prove the senses of the body, but they are assumed as a matter of fact, and the Holy Spirit speaks of the existence of an "inner man" as being just as much a matter of reality as the outward physical man. It would fill a little volume to collect all the Scriptures in which the senses of the soul are mentioned. Perhaps none of them would be any stronger than the fourteenth verse of the fifth chapter of Hebrews: "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." The marginal reading and correct rendering is, Strong meat

belongeth to them that are perfect, to those who by the habitual use of their senses (spiritual) can discern both good and evil. The idea of full age, or old age, is not in the text at all, and was put in by the translators because of the old notion that nobody could be a perfect Christian except by long growth and old age, whereas the reference is to a being having all its senses clear, strong, complete, without any reference to whether he be old or young. A young believer, as well as an old one, may be so alive to God, and have all his spiritual senses so cleansed and filled with the Spirit, as to be able to discern spiritual things, and by the exercise of the sanctified soul senses, detect readily and intuitively, the facts in the moral and spiritual realm, whether they be good or evil. The soul of the sinner has all the senses, but they are locked in the dark sleep of sin, and he can no more see or hear or feel the things of God and the heavenly world, than an unborn man can perceive the sights and sounds and magnitudes of the material world.

In order for the soul to have the use of its spiritual senses, it must be born into a spiritual world, its whole being and faculties regenerated by the Holy Ghost. In this age of loose theology and the paring down of the supernatural in religion, the great miracle of the new faith needs to be emphasized with the infinite "must" which Jesus attached to it. When the soul is first converted it is, in reality, a spiritual infant, introduced into a spiritual world, and under the dominion of laws, loves, longings, kinships and apprehensions, that are spiritual. And although it has all the senses and the graces belonging to the spiritual kingdom numerically, yet they are weak, limited, and often rendered dull and inoperative by remaining carnality. This is what the apostle declares concerning the Hebrew converts, when he says that they were "dull of hearing and could not take strong meat, and were inexperienced in the word of righteousness, when at the time they ought to have been teachers." He affirms the same concerning the converted Corinthians.

The vigor and perfection of the bodily senses (unless wounded by an outward force) depend on the purity and vigor of the blood; so the power and acuteness of the spiritual senses depend on the purity of the heart and the fullness of the Holy Spirit. A little infant can see, but he cannot discern shades of color, or distance; he can hear, but he cannot locate sounds; while the senses of touch, taste and smell are feeble. These facts are true of the spiritual babe; he cannot detect the shades of moral quality, he cannot measure accurately moral distances, he is slow to detect evil that hides itself behind apparent good; he does not readily discriminate the agency of Satan, nor has he an acute ear for the voice of God. The infancy of a Christian does not depend upon years, for there are thousands of sad cases where old Christians blunder along with exceedingly dull apprehension of spiritual things. The inner spiritual man is in a kingdom governed by the Holy Ghost, and not the slow laws of materialism. There are analogies between the different kingdoms, but it is absurd to make these comparisons go on all fours. A man under the reign of animal life will reach his maturity one hundred times quicker than the big trees of California reach theirs, and why should not the inner spiritual man, under the direct agency of the Holy Ghost, reach his moral maturity a hundred times quicker than the outward physical man?

There are three great facts to spiritual life. First, divine life imparted to the soul. Secondly, the life purified from all internal hindrances. Third, the life elaborated and utilized in actual service.

First, the corn must be planted. Second, it must be purified from weeds and grass, and thirdly, utilized into flour and food. We have gold first in the quartz, then purified and turned into

bullion, then minted into coin for service. In regeneration the gold of Christian life is imparted. In sanctification the flinty quartz of original depravity is removed, then under the fullness and guidance of the Spirit the faculties and powers become currency in the kingdom of God to do service for him. It is amazing to what an extent the spiritual senses may be carried in their refinement and vigor of apprehension.

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21 -- SPIRITUAL DISCRIMINATION

It is a fundamental law in the constitution of the soul, that spiritual understanding and discrimination is directly connected with the condition of the heart. Corruption in the heart inevitably produces disorder and darkness in the mind; and purity of heart clarifies the intellect and imparts to it strong and acute perceptions. This truth is abundantly referred to in the Scriptures. "To the upright there ariseth light in the darkness." The pure in heart see God. "I will cure them, and will reveal the abundance of peace and truth." There are scores of similar statements in which knowledge, revelation, vision, follow as a consequence upon the purification of the heart. So many attempt to reverse this order and have the understanding first and the experience afterwards, but God's unchangeable rule is a work of grace in the heart first, and the understanding of it afterwards. It is always growth in grace first, and then knowledge. One of the marvelous effects of full sanctification is the clearness and acuteness it imparts to the five senses of the inner man. To instance a few samples of discrimination under the full baptism of the Spirit:

1. The difference between things and beings. To such a soul the persons of the trinity, good angels, and evil spirits, are not merged in a tangled maze of indefinite things but they are perceived by the understanding with the same clearness they are spoken of in the Scriptures; and, on the other hand, the inanimate forces of nature are not idolized and enthroned as beings. It is a notorious fact that half illuminated Christians, and unregenerate church members, have a tendency to reduce spiritual personalities to the order of mere things, and have, on the other hand, a tendency to exalt a mere law of nature, into doing the work of the Saviour. This is done when growth, which is a law of nature, is supposed to cleanse the heart, which is the exclusive work of a personal Saviour. The fully purified soul, though he be unlearned, will never make such a blunder in his moral perceptions. To such an one how real is the promise, "Thine eye shall see the King in His beauty, they shall behold the land that is very far," which promise has direct, reference to the spiritual perceptions in this life, for the preceding verses describe conditions and experiences which can only be in this world.

2. It discriminates between temptation and sin. Such a soul may not always be able to define accurately the difference between the two, it may not have the gift of putting into language the clear-cut verities of the inner mail, but there is an inward sense of feeling by which it finds out the difference between a suggestion to commit sin and the consent of the heart to do it. It finds out by a silent, inward teacher the difference between evil thoughts and thoughts of evil; that evil thoughts are such as originate in the heart or are willingly entertained there, but that a thought of evil is a suggestion to the mind which can be repelled. The one is of the nature of a burglar, while the other is an admitted lodger in the tenement.

3. The purified spiritual senses discriminate between things learned and things revealed. We learn things gradually, but the Holy Spirit reveals truth to our hearts instantaneously. The consciousness of adoption is revealed, not learned, and so the certainty of heart purity is revealed and not learned. We learn through our outer senses, and in connection with these the use of our mental faculties; thus we learn distance, magnitude, form, color, number, how to trace cause and effect, and the relation of things. But when spiritual things are revealed to us, the Holy Ghost works upon our intuition, and knowledge so received is instantaneous. There are three kinds of knowledge, -- instinctive, rational, and intuitive. Instinctive predominates mostly among the lower animals; rational, mostly among men, and intuitive, mostly among spiritual and heavenly beings, but man has all three of these forms of knowledge in himself. The intuitive form of spiritual knowledge is not contrary to reason, but is just as far above reason as reason is above the instincts of the lower animals. To find a list of items showing the difference between what we gradually learn and what is instantaneously revealed to us, we can look at a concordance under the words "learn" and "now?"

4. It is the office of the spiritual senses to discern quickly the soul's enemies. God has endowed all creatures with the mechanism of instinct, by which they can each readily detect their peculiar foes. A hen with a brood of chickens will detect the flight of a hawk in the sky quicker than any hunter. A divine detective gift, similar to this, is imparted to the purified soul by the Holy Spirit. There was some difference between the foes which the Jews had in the wilderness and in the land of promise. Their enemies in the wilderness were their kindred according to the flesh, descendants of Esau and Ishmael, but their enemies in Canaan were of a foreign race. In like manner when believers are in their wilderness experience, their spiritual conflict has to do mainly with the carnal elements still remaining in them, but on entering the higher Canaan life, their warfare is more immediately with evil spirits, and the direct assaults of the personal Satan. This is the teaching of St. Paul where he says: "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in heavenly places." (Margin.) It is of immense advantage to the soul to recognize its foes, and to discriminate between them and the innocent frailties and infirmities, which are inseparable from our earthly stage of existence. This is what Paul means by saying those who are perfect have their senses exercised to discern good and evil. The activity and vigor of our spiritual senses depend on our union with Jesus through the Holy Spirit. What would the eye be worth unless it were united with the light? What would the ear be worth unless it could act in union with sound? In like manner what are all the marvelous senses of the soul worth until brought under the operation of the Holy Ghost, who alone can purify them, bring them into full normal action, and cause them to recognize and enjoy a whole world of divine and heavenly things?

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22 -- INSTANTANEOUS PURIFICATION

Jesus put forth His hand and touched him, saying, I will, be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed." Matt. 8:3.

The miracles of Jesus are photographs of the operations of His grace. Some of them are types of pardon, others of cleansing, and others of glorification. The miracle specified in the text in

a peculiar manner sets forth heart purification. Leprosy is nowhere a type of actual sin, but always emblematic of original depravity. Its perfect likeness to the carnal mind can be seen in the following items: It is hereditary and not so much contagious: again, it does not manifest itself so much in infancy as in later years; again, the offspring of leprous parents will inevitably have the malady; again, there is no known cure for it in the world, but it has been cured by miraculous mercy; again, in every instance where it has been cured, it was wrought instantaneously. In all these items it corresponds exactly with human depravity. The instantaneous cure mentioned in the text is worthy of special consideration, in connection with the operations of grace. Confounding the instantaneous and the gradual in Christian experience is the source of much theological nonsense, and of more objection to full salvation than all other things put together. In order to get a clear view of instantaneous heart cleansing, let us notice the following points:

1. It must not be confounded with the steps of entire consecration. Consecration is man's side of the work, which has various steps to it, and is gradual until the last item of it is reached. But purification is God's side of the work, and is wrought instantaneously. We work in time, in successive thoughts and feelings. Our faculties are so limited that they cannot all work at the same moment with equal intensity and concentration; hence there must be a series of acts in our minds, thought following thought, feeling succeeding feeling. Thus we approach a state of entire yielding to God by approximate steps. There is an increasing of conviction of our need, and increasing fervency of desire, and we yield ourselves in an itemized manner until the last point of consecration is reached. But God is not so limited in the operations of His Spirit, He does not have to think in successive thoughts. With Him, "one day is as a thousand years." We may be gradually approaching a telegraph office and gradually writing out our dispatch, but when the conditions are all met the electrical message goes instantaneously. In like manner, the gradual approaches to heart parity must not be confounded with the instantaneous cleansing of the Holy Spirit.

2. We must not confound heart cleansing with the process of natural law. Here is where many blunder, supposing that salvation is the out-working of some law. Salvation either in pardon or heart cleansing is never a process of law, but always a work of God, an act of the divine will, the result of an Almighty volition, that volition which is infinitely above law. In nature God works by an established order through agents and sub-agents which we call law. And in providence He uses manifold means and agents, but in saving a soul He goes above and beyond the laws of nature or the instruments of providence, and works directly on the subject; forgiving the sins of the penitent, and cleansing the heart of the perfectly consecrated by the action of His infinite will; speaking from His infinite self directly to the heart, "Go in peace, thy sins are forgiven," or "I will, be thou clean." Everywhere in the Scriptures we find salvation declared to be the direct work of God, and never of any law or agent. Thus we read, "I will circumcise thy heart," "I will sprinkle clean water upon thee," "I will purge away thy dross," "My Father cleanseth it," "Unto Him that loved us and washed us," in fact, there is not a verse in the Bible where salvation is delegated to ally angel, or saint, or Church, or ceremony, or law, or process, but always proceeding as an act of God. Men are so fond of magnifying nature and law that even in sermons and theological writings, in a thousand subtle ways, God has been dethroned, and some imaginary law or process or development, has been put in His place as performing the work of salvation; in every such instance salvation from sin is made gradual, whereas the action of the divine will is always instantaneous. We find no instance in Scripture where a divine act is spoken of as gradual.

3. All the Scripture emblems indicate that heart sanctification is instantaneous or occupies a very brief period. It is spoken of as a creation. "Create in me a clean heart." Creation is instantaneous. "He spake and it was done." It is spoken of as pouring out water, as washing, as circumcision, as purifying gold, as putting on clean robes, as crucifixion or making dead. Even the longest illustration used in Scripture does not include more than four or five hours; and most of them represent a work that takes place in a moment. But the old notion that prevails everywhere, that heart cleansing is a slow process, extending through months and years, is not even hinted in the Scriptures.

4. The act of heart cleansing must not be confounded with growth in grace. Growth and purification belong to two distinct realms of action. All growth belongs to the realm of nature and under the regimen of law; but purification is a divine act. The growth of the Christian previous to sanctification does not purify his heart, and on the other hand, after his heart is thoroughly cleansed, the soil of his nature is but prepared for continuous, rapid and unlimited growth in all the graces of the Spirit. In all the Scripture instances and emblems of growth, it is nowhere identified with the divine act of heart cleansing. The growth of a stalk of corn is one thing, but its purity of freedom from disease is quite another. All the stale illustrations and platitudes about the growth of the oak, and the broadening of the river, and the accumulation of muscle in the blacksmith's arm, and similar metaphors, are not to the point of heart cleansing. Purification has reference to the purity and health of the oak and not to its size, to the transparency of the liver and not to its enlargement, to the healthfulness and cleanness of the blacksmith's arm, and not to the size of its brawn.

5. Instantaneous heart cleansing is eminently essential to our state of probation. The very fact that salvation can take place only in this life, and that we are liable to (lie at any moment, makes it essential that salvation, whether in the work of regeneration or sanctification, should be an instantaneous work. Growth in grace can take place in the future world, and is nowhere stated in Scripture as a condition of admission to heaven; but the thought is repeated over and over again in many ways, that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. When we consider the brevity of our opportunities, the uncertainty of life, even for a day, the absolute necessity of having a pure heart before death, we see the infinite wisdom in arranging for us an instantaneous cleansing, and also the great presumption in our putting it off or relegating it to a slow, gradual process. It is very strange that there is such a widespread and inveterate prejudice against instantaneous purification. But the very fact of such prejudice is an infallible proof of a fallen, perverted state of mind. If we saw the truth in cloudless apprehension, we would rejoice that God has, in boundless mercy, provided a sudden sanctification as an emergency against sudden death.

Those who hold to gradual sanctification do not bear testimony to its experience, but those who have found the experience uniformly declare in harmony with the Scripture that "immediately their leprosy departed from them."

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Holiness is the most essential thing in the universe to a moral creature. Holiness is not an action, but a state of being which lies behind the action. Holiness is a state of purity, of simplicity, of unmixedness with foreign elements. All sin is a foreign element to pure, simple human nature. It is to the moral nature what a fever is to the blood. If purity -- that is, unmixedness -- is essential to having good water, good air, good bread, good health, good soil for growth of crops, it is infinitely more essential to the soul. Holiness of heart is more essential to the well-being and destiny of the soul than knowledge, or power, or great talents. A holy nature will wonderfully utilize a small amount of knowledge, power, or wealth; but, on the other hand, the principle of sin in the soul will pervert and squander a vast amount of learning or riches, or opportunity. Whatever hinders the attainment of complete moral purity blocks the train, strangles the life, and forfeits the true end of our being.

Perhaps the first great hindrance to holiness is a failure to apprehend its necessity. So many locate all goodness in the activities of life, and fail to discern the true state of being. So many think there is no sin except in the act, and not seeing that all inherent darkness, perversity, crookedness or impurity embedded in the nature itself is of the quality of sin, do not realize the necessity of being purified in the very substance of the inner nature.

It is comparatively easy to lead Christian people to appropriate Jesus as a sanctifier when they once fully realize the absolute need of cleansing. Hence one of the most successful methods of preaching holiness is to analyze the heart, to delineate the features of the native inner man, to show his characteristics, his pedigree, his behavior, his moral complexion, not only as he acts in the sinner but also as he acts in a restrained and subtle way in the believer. If such a portrayal is made in a wise and scriptural manner, every honest and truly converted soul will see more or less his need of a deeper work of grace, and, at the same time, his conscience and judgment will side with the truth, though the carnal elements in him may rebel.

Another hindrance to attaining heart purity is the lack of being clear in justification. Sanctification begins in justification, and if we are not dearly pardoned we are below the point where holiness begins. To say that the people who are fully cleansed have just been restored from backsliding, is not only a slander on the work of God, but reveals great ignorance concerning the doctrine of Scripture and the deep facts of the soul. Persons who most intensely hate inward sin, and most fervently desire the whole mind of Christ, are those who are in the clearest light of justification. A backslidden state dulls the apprehension respecting the need of holiness; it veils the pure nature of Christ from the understanding; it blunts the inward sensibilities to the touch of divine truth; it opens the mind to the reception of all sorts of heresies respecting divine things.

Another hindrance to holiness is viewing it in an unScriptural light, and holding unScriptural views respecting it. Among such unScriptural views is that of being purified from original sin at the same time we are pardoned from actual sin, and confounding the two. Also the error that our sanctification is located in the person of Christ, instead of being imparted to our nature by the Holy Spirit. Also that of confounding the cleansing of the soul with growth in grace, and also the theory that inward sin is only to be repressed and not purged out of our being. The persistent holding of any one of these unScriptural views will effectually prevent the soul from entering into that rest of heart of which Canaan is a type.

There is a notion afloat among the churches that people can believe most anything respecting salvation, that they can hold several views about grace, or no definite view at all, and yet in some way blunder into deep religious experience. But the Holy Ghost never works along lines of error. It is true, thousands are saved and fully cleansed who do not understand the theology of it, but they do always apprehend the cardinal facts in the case.

There are many other hindrances, such as an unwillingness to get light on the subject, a prejudice against the Scripture terms, stumbling over other people, being frightened at a stray fanatic, an unwillingness to give up self at some point. But whatever the hindrance may be, it must give way before we can enter the paradise of God. If we as God's children will keep our eyes on the main facts in the case, our need and Christ's supply, if we have a teachable and obedient heart, God will find many ways to break down barriers, to send us help from unexpected quarters, and make the seemingly impossible melt away to an easy and simple thing.

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24 -- THE THREEFOLD EVIDENCE IN GRACE

The Apostle Peter, in calling our attention to the certainties of experimental salvation, mentions three forms or three degrees of certainty. "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye witnesses of His majesty. For he received from God the Father, honor and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day-star arise in your hearts." 2 Pet. 1: 16-19.

In analyzing these verses we see the contrast between fables and revealed religion. Fables exist only in imagination based on tradition, but Christian salvation exists in experience, springing from divine revelation. The next item of analysis is that the certainties of this salvation touch the whole threefold torture of man, body, soul and spirit. It would be interesting to enumerate how frequently the idea of the trinity comes out in religious life. Three things constitute religious life -- the doctrine, the experience, the outward practice. There are three elements in divine guidance -- the revealed Word, the direct conviction of the Spirit, and the indications of Providence.

The three evidences mentioned in this passage by Peter are the testimony of the senses, the inspired Word, and the direct assurance of the Spirit. The first in order here is the testimony of the senses. We were "eye witnesses of His majesty," a "voice from the excellent glory," and "this voice we heard." Seeing and hearing are the primary sources of acquired knowledge.

There are two hemispheres of knowledge; first, the hemisphere of what we learn through our senses; secondly, the hemisphere of knowledge revealed intuitively by the Spirit. In the order of nature the knowledge through the senses comes first. Many people think if they could only see and hear the historical facts of the New Testament repeated, they could readily believe. But the wisdom of God has so arranged it that these facts are virtually repeated to each generation. There

are yet transfigurations, the casting out of demons, Pauline conversions, and similar phenomena of grace which appeal to our eyes and ears, if we are willing to turn aside and see the sight. Have we not seen the wretched drunkard turned into a neat and earnest saint? Have we not seen the blurred face of sorrow or the gloomy face of despair made radiant with joy? Have we not heard the voice of blasphemy turned into a voice of prayer and praise, or the voice of complaining turned into that of thanksgiving? If we have not heard or seen, it is because we have not gone to the spiritual mountains or the gracious valleys where such things are enacted. The voice of praise that breaks from a saved soul is like the prolongation of that voice which Peter heard in the holy mount. The luster that beams from every saintly countenance is the outshining of a part of that uncreated light which glistened through the raiment of Jesus at the transfiguration. They are effects from the same great cause referred to by Peter in the text.

When we sit on the seashore and see the white-capped rollers coming in, and hear their melodious dashing on the sand, we know that the cause which produces these sights and sounds is far off on the great deep; and that far out on the sea, beyond our sight, these breakers were set in motion. In like manner, far across on the sea of time, the living historical Jesus, who was visible and audible to the people of that generation, has by the perpetuity of His Word and Spirit so wrought on human souls, that the waves of grace He has set in motion still manifest themselves to our eyes and ears.

The next form of evidence is that of the inspired written Word, which the apostle declares is stronger than the testimony of the senses. "We also have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place." The natural man thinks that the testimony of the senses is the highest possible; but, as in many other instances, that which is the highest in nature is the lowest in grace. It is possible for our senses to deceive us, and very many instances might be cited to prove this, such as color blindness, double or triple vision, where persons see objects multiplied; also where disease in the auditory nerve reports sounds to the brain which do not occur in the vibrations in the air. The Word of God is absolutely free from such imperfections.

It is more sure than the senses, because so fitted by infinite wisdom to the mental and moral mechanism of the soul, that the very announcement of Scripture truth to the human mind, in any age of the world, whether among civilized or savage men, will carry conviction to the heart. No human being has ever lived whose soul would not respond to the truth of God's Word, unless it has first been tutored to unbelief, or morally stupefied by satanic opiates. You may select any congregation from the millions of earth, whether cultured or barbarous, and a simple announcement to them in their own language, of the ten commandments, the sermon on the mount, and the means of salvation through Jesus, if such congregation had not been tampered with by false teaching, their unbiased hearts and judgments would feel the truthfulness of the Word of God. The Word of God properly addressed to a human heart, carries its own evidence as really as a lamp, and finds a faculty in the soul that must respond to it as really as the organ of the eye responds to the light. Just as the Creator has fitted each bone to its appropriate socket, or the waves of the air to the drum of the ear, so He has fitted the truth of Scripture to the reason and conscience of man; and as the inner faculties of the soul are more authoritative than the senses of the body, so the Word of God is more sure to the inner man (if he is in harmony with it), than the testimony of miracles to the outward man.

The third and highest degree of evidence is that of the Holy Spirit working directly on interior consciousness. This form of evidence is indicated by the apostle in the words, "Until the day dawn, and the day-star arise, in your hearts." The words "dawn " and "arise " are both in the aorist tense, and indicate two distinct, instantaneous events. The life of the Holy Ghost in the soul is emphatically the daylight of divine life in man. But inspiration is accurate enough to indicate the pre and post Pentecost life, by the difference between the light of day and the full-orbed manifestation of the day-star. The Word of God shines in a "dark place," or, more emphatically, a "filthy place," until the day dawn; that is, Scripture truth shows us our sins and continues to manifest the filthiness of the heart, until the Holy Spirit regenerates us and scatters the gloom of guilt by an inward attestation of God's favor. We sometimes hear it said that the moon shines as bright as day; and we also hear it said of some moral but unregenerate persons, that they are about as good as Christians. But there is almost an infinite difference between the one and the other. A thousand moons shining at their full would not equal the light of day, though the sun were concealed behind a cloud or mountain; and all the morality -- be they ever so moral -- of a million unregenerate souls would not equal the life of the humblest believer truly born of God. The difference is not that of quantity, but quality. The highest morality apart from the new birth is like moonlight, borrowed and reflected from a cold, dead nature; but the inward life of the Holy Ghost, like the light of day, issues directly from its warm, living fountain. Religious certainty has not reached its climax until the personal Jesus, the day-star, has been unveiled in cloudless manifestation, as the full and perfect Saviour in the heart. And how true to experience are the words in the passage, that the Word of God will continue to shine and disclose the impurity of our nature, not only until we are regenerated, but until a fully manifested Christ purges us, and reveals His ineffable personality in our purified hearts.

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25 -- THE THREE MANIFESTATIONS OF JESUS

In the third chapter of the first Epistle of John we have presented to us three manifestations of Jesus, each one of which is directly connected with our salvation and glorification. In verse three, "When He shall appear we shall be like Him." In verse five, "He was manifested to take away our sins." In verse eight, "The Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil." Each step in the elevation of man is directly connected with some revelation or manifestation of the Lord Jesus as the direct cause. It would be an interesting study, sufficient for a volume, to trace out in history all the moral upliftings of the race, and find the connecting link between such upliftings and some revelation of the Lord Jesus.

Let us notice these three manifestations as they occur in the history of experience.

1. "He was manifested to take away our sins." Here are several suggestions. One is, the sins are emphatically ours. The law is broken by our wills, our choice, our consent; the evil dispositions are indulged in by our hearts; our faculties and powers have been the instruments of transgression. They are not Satan's sins, and if they were necessitated, they would be God's and not ours. Another suggestion is the divorcement of us, ourselves, from our sins, which, to be Scripturally understood, does not imply that the act of sin is annihilated, or that an event of sin can

be non-evented, for what is done as an act can never be undone, but that the guilt and offensiveness of our sinful acts are removed from us. So that while the act of sin does not cease to be an act, yet the quality of the act is taken away, the color, the odor, the morale, is removed from the actor. Another suggestion is that this taking away of the quality of action from the actor is by the manifestation of Jesus. He was manifested on the cross historically to the world, to bear the death penalty attached to committing sin, but in addition to that He must also be manifested as our personal Saviour and sin-bearer by the Holy Spirit to the eye of faith. Here is one of the deepest and most scientific truths in salvation, namely, that the quality of sinful actions can never be removed from the actor until Jesus is disclosed to that soul as its sin-bearer, and when such disclosure is made, and the soul truly apprehends Jesus by saving faith, instantly all the moral turpitude of its thousands of sinful acts vanishes away, and while the act remains as an unchangeable event, yet the essence of the act is gone, its color has been, as it were, bleached out. A beautiful illustration of this is given in the Scripture where God says, "I have blotted out thy transgressions as a thick cloud." Many a time on summer mornings you may notice a thick cloud in the sky, but when the sun ascends the heavens, and is manifested in direct heat upon the cloud, it will rise to a higher altitude and be dissipated into viewless vapor, so that no telescope could find a part of it. Now, the atoms composing the cloud have not been annihilated, but the form, the color, the specific gravity, the motion, the quality of the cloud has been so wrought on by the manifested heat of the sun as to be taken away, while the atoms still remain. This scientific fact is equally true in the justification of the soul. Our actual sins form a cloud. But the word "sins" does not refer to the act itself, but to the moral quality of the act, so that when the bad moral quality of our actions are removed, it is emphatically true that our sins are taken away.

2. "He was manifested to destroy the work of the devil." In a great variety of ways the Bible sets forth the difference between actual and original sin. In this chapter this distinction is clear, concise and philosophical. Actual sin is traced to the sinner, original sin is traced to Satan. The greatest work of Satan was to corrupt the human heart, and the carnal mind is emphatically a result of his work. When believers are earnestly seeking heart purity, they are distinctly conscious of a defection of nature, a corruption within which they clearly distinguish as not being of their own choice or work. They are conscious, in the language of Scripture, that "an enemy hath done this." Superficial or backslidden Christians often speak slightly of true believers groaning after heart purity, but it is because they have never gone deep enough into spiritual things to find the strata of inherent human nature or the mining processes of the Holy Ghost. Every Christian who has gone through with perfect inward crucifixion knows that we can be conscious of having every Christian grace, and, at the same time, conscious of an inherent perversity, which is the opposite of every grace. We feel it and hate it. We know it is in us but not of us, that it is a foreign element to our true normal human nature. Now the question is how this inward corruption can be destroyed. So many try growth, development, repression, and any and every subterfuge except the remedy mentioned here, a special manifestation of Jesus as the direct cause of heart cleansing. But what can it mean to destroy the carnal mind? It will be easily understood if we remember that sin is not an entity, that it has no substance or existence apart from a moral creature, that it is of the nature of a pain, or a fever, or a dream, none of which can exist apart from some living being. Thoughtless persons sometimes ask, "Where does inbred sin go when cleansed away?" The sufficient answer is Where does a fever go, or a headache go, when the body is restored to normal health? Just as fever can exist only in the derangement of the blood, so the carnal mind exists only by some fundamental derangement of the moral heart, which is to the soul what blood is to the body. And when the

earnest Christian, struggling for perfect heart rest, apprehends Jesus as the only and all sufficient and present Cleanser, the Holy Ghost will so manifest him as a Sanctifier,. that the leprosy of inward sin instantly vanishes as darkness when a light enters a room.

3. "When He shall appear we shall be like Him." This is the final manifestation of Jesus in His capacity of Redeemer. According to the Scripture, redemption is not complete till the body is raised from the dead and soul and body glorified in the beatific presence of the Lord. Though our sins are taken away, and though the carnal mind is destroyed, there are yet a multitude of infirmities, limitations, afflictions, which beset and load down more or less the saintliest persons. The pure in heart are conscious of these hindrances, and yet, at the same time, conscious that they are not sin in the Scripture sense of that word. There is a transcendent work, utterly beyond our thoughts, which is to pass like seraphic lightning over our whole being at the glorious appearing of our Saviour. We may conjecture a thousand blissful changes such a sight will produce in us, but it is all summed up in the words of the Holy Ghost: We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

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26 -- WALKING IN LOVE

Love is the central, animating force in true religion. It is to the moral system what the sun is to the solar system, the warming, illuminating, moving power to every part. In the natural world every growing tree, flowing stream, breeze of wind, floating cloud, falling shower, opening bud, tossing wave is produced by the force of the sun. So in the spiritual realm every fervent prayer, act of charity, resistance to evil, gentle word, courageous act is a product of love. It is to the soul what blood is to the body. As the health and vigor of the body depend on the blood, so the health of the soul, the vigor of its righteousness, the bloom and color of its excellences depend on the quality and degree of love that pervades the spirit and prompts its movements. The term "walk " applies to all the movements of the spirit and life; it is the ever-going, never-ceasing locomotion of the moral and mental nature. We walk in our words, our desires, our tempers, plans, purposes, prayers, sermons, opinions, business dealings, every unfolding of the spirit in an outward act, or an intention to act, constitutes a distinct step in the everlasting march of the soul on its journey through eternity. Footprints on the ocean shore may be erased by the next wave, but our souls are putting footprints into the passing hours which are indelibly preserved in our history.

To walk in love, to speak, to act, to purpose, with the love of God pervading all our movements, is the best and sublimest form of existence. To do this there must be a thorough abnegation of self-will, self-opinion and self-desire.

It is so easy for us to indulge in a spirit contrary to Christ's love under the guise of zeal or some other form of virtue. Let us apply walking in love to our preaching, teaching, exhortation, reproving. In all such deliverances we may be rigidly orthodox, severely truthful, forgetting that we break the truth the very moment we cease to hold the truth in love. How long it takes us to learn that "the letter killeth," that is, the exact, strict, doctrinal truth, when separated from the proper spirit which should go with it, becomes the instrument of death. Even the doctrine of holiness may be held and taught in such a spirit as to break the law of holiness. Without love the doctrines of

salvation may be presented in a ruinous way, and with love the doctrine of hell may be presented in such Scriptural unction as to save souls. Apply this walking in love to prayer. Are not a great many prayers worse than wasted because uttered in a sharp, condemnatory or peevish and in spirit? Have we not heard prayers which sounded like judging others or reprimanding others, or addressed to some individual in the company more than to God?

Do we ever catch ourselves uttering a prayer for the gratification of self, or either for the commendation or the condemnation of some one present? Let us remember that no prayers ascend to heaven with prevailing effect except in the same proportion as they have the spirit of heaven in them. That which comes from heaven will return thither. This is just as true of prayers as of persons. It is the love force in our prayers that makes them telling with God or with men. If we pray thoughtfully, God will give us an inward light to detect any deviation from the spirit of love. It will often happen that we shall find ourselves about to utter some word or petition which is unwise or expresses a wrong sentiment, and before it escapes our lips the Spirit will lead us to utter something quite different, or else to so modify the tone of our voice and the manner of expression as to produce an effect just the opposite to what it would have been but for His gentle touch and illumination. To use either flattery or recrimination in our prayers may not be equally offensive to men, but it is equally offensive to God; and in either case poisons our petitions. The thoughtfulness which is requisite in prayer is not that of intense intellectuality, but that tranquil kind of thoughtfulness which watches the outgoings of our heart to see that they are in harmony with the Scripture and pleasing to God. If this form of walking in love were observed, how many kinds of prayers it would weed out from religious services, and even from some holiness conventions and meetings. Apply this walking in love to our feelings toward and opinions of others. What my heart feels toward another, or what my opinion of him is, implies the activity of my moral nature and is a form of walking. Prejudice is an opinion formed beforehand, or without knowing the facts in the case, and if my mind walks in love, it will prevent prejudice, for love forms its estimate on the basis of knowledge. Ill our views of other people, other churches, other localities of country, other races, other forms of living, other kinds of meetings, other sorts of revival than those of our own, if our judgments were formed under the guidance of love, how tolerant they would be, how free from rash denunciation.

In that case our opinions would coincide with the Word of God. Apply this walking in love to matters of business, which would not only imply that we transacted our affairs honestly, but that the honesty and fair dealing were the outflow of a loving heart which, from its loving nature, preferred and delighted in fair dealing. We hear it said, that "honesty is the best policy," but the person that is honest for that reason is, at heart, a thief, for the same grounds he would steal, providing stealing was the best policy. To walk in love in buying and selling, in borrowing and lending, in begging and giving, in hiring and being hired, in being masters or servants would constitute an ideal society, and if all will not accept of this rule we can each have the privilege of forming one that does it, and if we should be the only one it will be to us just the same as if all the world did. The Holy Spirit has chosen to feed us with such verses as the following: "We should be without blame before Him in love," "Being rooted and grounded in love," "Forbearing one another in love," "Speaking the truth in love," "The church edifying itself in love," "Being knit together in love," "Esteem them highly in love," "Walk in love," "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God." When we look back over our lives, and see the times and places where another disposition has governed our words and actions, they look like salt spots upon which no lovely fruit has grown.

We may depend upon it no form of religion will succeed except that which springs from the blessed author of religion.

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27 -- HEAVENLY TREASURE

"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through, nor steal; for where your treasure is there will your heart be also." Matt. 6:20-21.

"Knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance." Heb. 10: 34.

The central truth in these verses is the statement, "where the treasure is there will the heart be." The author of the human heart alone knows all its boundless and mysterious workings. He does not say where the heart is there will the treasure be, but where the treasure is there will the heart be. The heart will follow its treasure as infallibly as the mother will follow her offspring, or rivers flow toward the sea. Let the treasure consist of anything, be located in any clime, or be ever so worthless to others, if it be really regarded as a treasure, thither will the heart fly and hover around it.

In saving and restoring man to the image of God, Jesus does not plan to destroy a single law or instinct of the soul, but to purge out of it every perversion of sin, so that with all its instincts purified and unimpaired it will act in harmony with the purpose of God. One of the earliest and strongest instincts of the heart is a certain definite attachment to our possessions. This attachment to possessions is not the result of education or a thoughtful estimate of values, but a powerful instinctive action of the mind. Among the first thoughts of childhood is this idea of possession, and when a toy is placed in an infant's hand he at once has the idea of ownership, and with that thought springs up an attachment for the treasure, manifested by his cries and loud expostulations on having it taken from him. His reason could not explain it, but he feels it as distinctly as a millionaire. It is also the dictate of reason, it forms a mighty stimulus to industry and inventions, it imparts an energy to society and prompts to economy, wisdom and care. Christ recognized this principle to be fundamental and right. But seeing the principle perverted by sin, and the heart thoroughly engrossed with fictitious treasures He commands that all His followers shall relinquish all passionate heart attachment for treasures which are imaginary, and have the heart thoroughly set on true riches; and in doing so proves Himself an infinite Friend to the soul. This command to the natural man seems very hard, but under the baptism of the Spirit it can be fully obeyed. When the early Christians lost their earthly estates by confiscation, the apostle tells us, "They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing that they had in heaven a better and an enduring substance." Let us notice some contrasts between earthly and heavenly treasures.

1st. Earthly treasure is only the instrument of pleasure, while treasure in heaven is the very essence and substance of pleasure itself. There is a vast difference between the instrument which secures a joy and joy itself -- just as the mill which grinds the wheat is different from the bread. All the riches of earth, in whatever form they may exist, can only serve as a means to an end, and

when riches are looked upon as an end, they prove to be apples of Sodom. And even as an instrument, wealth is often unavailing. There are times when all the abundance of gold cannot buy a drop of water, or a mouthful of bread, or avert calamity, or ease a pain; and while as an instrument it is capable of producing innumerable comforts and smoothing our passage through life in general, yet the richest often witness its inefficiency. But heavenly treasure is not an instrument; it is an everlasting fruition; it enters into the very body and substance of true happiness. It is an estate of a moral and spiritual nature. The wealth of earth is a machine which may bring us a few drops of transient happiness, but wealth laid up in heaven forms an ocean of unalloyed bliss in which the soul may bathe, with the certainty of never losing it. Earthly riches make to themselves wings and fly away, but the gold tried in the fire is imperishable.

2d. Earthly treasure from its very nature can never fill or satisfy the mind. It excites the faculties and inflames the passions, but can never satisfy them. They start a train of desires and ambitions which they can never fulfill; they start a feverish thirst for acquisition which they can never quench. A child may start a machine which it is unable to stop. Milton personifies Sin, the portress at the gates of hell, as unlocking those gates, but having no power to shut them again. So earthly riches open the gate of the desires but cannot shut or fill them. And this applies equally to those of great or little wealth. And then, the uncertainty of their duration, the anxiety of guarding them, agitates the heart, disturbs repose of mind, and turns what promised to be a blessing into a source of misery. On the other hand, treasures laid up in heaven will fill every capacity they create. Such riches excite the heart without leaving the least agitation upon it; they kindle desires but also satisfy them; they draw the soul out in longings and thirstings for more and more, but always keep the possessor in tranquillity. And the consciousness that such wealth is unchangeable and immortal banishes all anxiety. A small fortune with the absolute certainty of its never being diminished is far more satisfactory than great riches held in uncertainty. So heavenly riches do not contract the soul or unduly excite it, while accompanied by the principle of eternal security.

3d. Earthly wealth used only for earthly purposes can never enter into union with the Spirit, but must always remain external to the soul; but when used for the glory of God it passes, as it were, into a heavenly state, it becomes identified with the immortal spirit, and incorporated with everlasting character. It is the apotheosis of wealth. True, the gold itself remains material, but being used in the divine will it represents holy character, accomplishes holy results, and is, in a certain sense, glorified. It is in this sense that Jesus says, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." Luke 16: 9.

That is, take earthly riches which when used sinfully become the idol mammon, but when used under the direction of the Holy Ghost in doing good to the bodies and souls of mankind, we make immortal friendships for ourselves, and when we fail on earth, these friends we have made, whether among the heathen or at home, and have been the means of saving them through our money, will welcome us at death into everlasting habitations. So that in a sense the eagle stamped on every dollar we give to God will be transformed into an angel to welcome us to the portals of bliss.

Riches when used only for the present life are like the clouds that shine brightly during the brief day of our earthly existence, but when the sun of life is set, they turn to cold lumps of

darkness and fade into everlasting night; but when used for the glory of God, they resemble the vapors around the sun, which are always bright with an internal and intrinsic light.

4th. Earthly wealth is not really our own. Our possession of it is more of a fiction than a reality; it belonged to others, it will soon belong to others again. We borrow the garments of animals to clothe ourselves, we proudly deck our bodies with silk which has already served the silk-worm for a shroud, and will soon serve us in the same capacity. How emphatic the language of the Holy Ghost, "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." We make our advent in nakedness and poverty, we assume control of all earthly treasures for a brief period, we claim the earth and the sea, we contest for trifles, and then pass out leaving all behind us, except that character which we have formed while passing across this narrow stage of being. But the treasure which we have laid up in heaven, is, in a high and proper sense, our own. The industry that worked, the act of giving, the love that prompted the act, the prayer that accompanied the act, are emphatically our own. This species of wealth can never be transferred to another; it is a kind of wealth that was never borrowed and will never be relinquished. The increase of this wealth does not impoverish another. How sad to think that not only worldlings, but vast numbers or professed Christians are using this world in such a way as to lay up no good store for the time to come.

We can lay up treasure in heaven by observing three things.

1st. By giving the best we can. The best of time, of thought, of health, of influence, and by giving the best percentage we can of our earnings or our income.

2d. By giving everything in the best spirit. Cheerfully, gladly, without grumbling or grudging; by giving regularly, religiously, rejoicingly; by giving in the love of Jesus, for the love of our fellows, looking for more love as our greatest reward.

3d. By giving to the best ends, to save the souls of men; by giving for immediate relief, instead of giving for long results in the ages to come; by giving in such a way as to accomplish most directly and immediately the best results first to the souls and then to the bodies of mankind. What we give, we save. We are emigrating to a distant world and the treasure we send ahead of us will form our best estate.

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28 -- MAKING FRIENDS WITH MAMMON

Sin perverts every legitimate faculty of the soul. It also poisons and perverts every species of earthly treasure and activity. Just as divine grace can save and purify the worst of human beings, so grace can, through human beings, lift money from being a curse into making for us everlasting friendships in heaven. Many persons inquire what our Lord could mean by commanding us "to make to ourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when we fail, these friends may receive us into everlasting habitations." Luke 16: 9.

Satan and Jesus are both bidding for the use of our money. Satan holds out to us earthly pleasure, fashion, fine raiment, luxurious ease, and transitory amusements; and money used for such purposes, and worse than wasted on tobacco and sinful indulgences, or miserly hoarded, will be turned into an infinite curse. Every dollar so wasted, the eagle stamped on the dollar, will turn into a fiend whose talons will claw the heart in the future world. Jesus offers us the privilege of helping him save the world, of relieving the poor and needy, of investing in the spread of holiness, of putting our means into salvation agencies, and every dollar so used will be eternally saved in heaven; and the eagle stamped on every such dollar will be turned into a bird of Paradise, and the Goddess of Liberty will be as an angel of love to welcome us to portals of bliss.

It is thus that money represents character. In itself a gross piece of materialism, yet by the use it is put to, it becomes the incarnation of moral quality. It is invested with the attributes of either sin or saintliness, industry or idleness, prayer or prodigality. The liberal use of money for the Lord is one of the great needs of Christian training. The selfishness and stinginess of professed Christians is absolutely appalling. There are thousands and thousands of men and women in the churches, with from twenty-five to one hundred thousand dollars, who do not give fifty dollars a year to God. There are even some rich preachers who are notorious beggars, but who seldom give a dollar. Is not such penuriousness just as great a crime in the sight of God as what is commonly termed gross immorality? The most appalling thing about stinginess is, that it seems so respectable; instead of being looked upon as a positive, disreputable sin, it is quietly winked at as a mere weakness.

In order to make friends out of money, it should be used as much as possible for direct results in soul saving. It seems to me this is always the teaching of Jesus. Instead of endowing great establishments, and piling up millions in some institution, to bless far off generations, if more money could be used in the immediate work of carrying on revivals, conducting soul-saving conventions, opening up missions, both abroad and for the non-church goers at home, God would be more glorified. How this thought will impress us, when we look at the great cathedrals in Europe, in which hundreds of millions of wealth is entombed, which can never have a resurrection. Enormous piles of grandeur in which only a debased or very shallow form of religion is taught. There is coming in the American churches the same craze to entomb great fortunes in cold stone, where neither God nor man will get more than a bare pittance out of it for direct soul saving. I know many will disagree with me, but it is just this popular drift of the mind which I affirm is contrary to Christ. Men that can be induced to put tens of thousands into some cold, formal monument, would not give a hundred dollars to carry on a great revival where hundreds of souls could be saved.

The financial columbiads are loaded with greenbacks, and fired off at long range, to bless unborn generations; when the same ammunition fired at short range, could mow down the enemies of the Lord, and capture multitudes for Jesus in the living present. Another way to make heavenly friendships out of the use of money is to administer on our own estates before we die. There seems a terrible blunder in the settling up of the estates of dead people. Why should Christian men and women, who have wealth, feel bound to leave it all to their children? Why should not God come in for a share? The Bible begins with, "In the beginning God," but the lives of most professed Christians read, "At the last God." How many fortunes, even among church members, are utterly squandered and wrecked. What quarreling among heirs, what smashing of wills, what a carnival

among tricky lawyers, to help such things along! How many thousands, hardly earned and saved by industrious and plain Christians, are worse than squandered by godless children, or smoking and whisky-drinking sons-in-law. Oh! how Christian men and women will wish in eternity they had settled up their own estates, and given God his portion before they died. What we give to the Lord we save. The only treasure we can lay up in heaven, is what we send on ahead of us; and this is the thought suggested by our Saviour. He does not represent us as welcoming our money to heaven, but oil the other hand represents our money as having gone on ahead of us, and transformed into immortal friends, standing at the crystal port of light, to welcome us to everlasting habitations. God help us whether we are rich or poor, to give wisely, willingly, regularly, gladly, according to our several ability.

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29 -- THE FAITH OF THE SYRO-PHENICIAN WOMAN

The most wonderful truths and thoughts are those which are wrought out in living experience. No definition of any trait of character can at all compare with a sublime exhibition of that trait in life. In the fifteenth chapter of Matthew there is recorded an instance of victorious faith which, though so unlike in outward detail to common experience, yet the inner secret principles involved in it enter the lives of all Christians.

"Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And behold a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto Him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David, my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and besought Him, saying, Send her away, for she crieth after us. But He answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped Him, saying, Lord help me. But He answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread and to eat it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour." Matt. 15: 21-28.

A thoughtful analysis of this incident will give us many suggestions concerning the spiritual life.

The first thought is the coming together of want and supply. "Jesus went," the "woman came." Jesus foreknew her need and her seeking faith. She had heard of Him and was eager to find Him. Here is an instance of a seeking Saviour and a seeking soul. Is it not true, as a rule, that people get what they seek? There is a tremendous meaning in the words, "He that seeketh findeth." Ten thousand incidents and evidences in nature, history and grace confirm it. From the ends of the earth, from the depths of eternity and space, want and supply come together. Prayer is the expression of want, when the want is overwhelming the prayer is prevailing. The spirit of Jesus moves toward a great crying want with more accuracy than air moves toward a vacuum.

Another suggestion is the discovery and honest confession of the malady. "My daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." She did not cover up the malady with fictitious and Latinized

names. She had enough discernment to trace the malady directly to the demon, and then she had the humility and transparency to confess the whole thing to Christ with all its mortifying reality. Here are two things that stand in the way of the salvation of millions. They do not trace their maladies to sin, and are not honest enough to make a perfect, unvarnished confession. We see here four great barriers her faith had to surmount, namely, divine silence, human coldness, caste and prejudice. If we look at these in detail, we find that they illustrate the vital issues in many lives today.

1. Her faith surmounted divine silence. In response to her cry, "He answered her not a word." How many thousands of souls have been balked at this point in their prayer and faith. Jesus moved on with His calm dignity as if deaf to her cry or insensible to her need. Has it not often been so with us? The heavens have seemed brass, the Lord seemed to be indifferent. God has spoken so many things in His Word and providence, all the earth and times seem filled with divine utterances, and yet in our particular case, and on the one vital point at issue with us, there seems to be so little said. There is such an utter silence on the one point so vital to us. There seems no answer to the one dominant question of our hearts. This unanswered question is a great test of faith. To keep on praying and believing, though God calmly and unansweringly moves on, is where the faith of many break down.

She apprehended a benevolent, loving nature in Jesus in spite of the apparent indifference of His conduct. Have we a similar apprehension of God? If there be something upon which the written Word gives no special utterance, if providence gives no satisfactory answer, does our faith penetrate the mantle of silence and apprehend the nature of God, do we still believe in Him against all unpropitious seeming?

This principle of divine silence will form a test in every life, and in multiplied ways, and if we want to know the inexpressible joy of hearing His voice and having Him speak to us some special and particular word that will perfectly satisfy our personal need, our faith must endure the testing of His silence.

After all, the very silence of Jesus is a sort of an unwritten word, an unspoken truth, by which He teaches us how to pray and how to trust. If our hearts go out after Him, His very silence will draw us on in more urgent petition, for as long as He is silent He does not refuse or repel. Had He spoken too soon the fullness of her petition would not have been uttered, and so He held his voice back that the depth and volume of her cry might be poured forth. God waits that we may utter all the fullness of our heart before Him, that over and over, in every possible form and feature, our need may be expressed. And thus oftentimes' His not answering us a word becomes a magnet to draw us on to a longer and louder cry. Blessed are those who make the silence of God not a source of discouragement, but the basis of faith.

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30 -- THE FAITH OF THE SYRO-PHENICIAN WOMAN

After her faith had withstood the test of the divine silence:

2. The next barrier her faith met was the coldness of the human heart. His disciples came and besought Him, saying, "Send her away for she crieth after us." We are not to understand from these words that the disciples had ally hate or ill-will, but their words indicated that her crying embarrassed them, that they had but little sympathy and could not enter into her distress or appreciate the fervor of her prayer. Her faith pushed its way persistently over their ecclesiastical fastidiousness, their false taste of propriety. Her conscious need was so desperate it burst its way through every barrier of etiquette, human opinion, false modesty, whimsical prudence, human criticism, and like a mighty torrent tore its way through banks of human coldness across the fences of social opinion, across the nice gardens of fastidious feeling, and did not stop until it emptied itself in the great ocean heart of Jesus.

This must be so with every earnest seeker after God. Our faith must surmount the coldness, the lack of sympathy, the foolish notions of propriety, whether in our friends or in cold, stiff ecclesiastics.

It often happens that souls who are seeking God either for pardon or heart-purity are too eager for human sympathy. They seem to waist a little human nursing, but oftentimes such human sympathy only hinders the work of thorough crucifixion and is an impediment to true faith.

When we see our malady in its depth and awfulness, and get a holy desperation for complete deliverance, we will not go hunting for the little plaster of human sympathy, nor be thwarted by any amount of innuendoes, or red tape, or ecclesiastical forms, but will push our way through to Jesus, right through mountains of dignitaries or forests of etiquette, or deserts of neglect. As in the case of this woman the very withdrawing of human sympathy and the tender regards of others only removes the props from the soul and accelerates its speed to Jesus.

3. The third barrier her faith had to surmount was that of caste. Jesus answered and said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Here was the great mountain of eastern caste put across the track of her faith.

The Jews were then the high caste, and she belonged not even to the high caste heathen, but to the lower caste of Syrians. Her faith had to climb over the difficulty of an ill-favored race, of race distinctions, of mixed heredity, with all the environments and unfortunate prejudices belonging to them.

Instead of being discouraged and turned back in her prayer, these very words of seeming repulsion only intensified her yearning cry. Then she came and worshipped Him, saying, "Lord help me."

How many thousands in all ages have been turned back in their faith by these very things involved in this principle of caste. Some have thought they were not of the elect, others have been discouraged by prejudices, by low and unfortunate birth, or by some terrible heredity, or by poor and unpropitious environments. True faith is born of deep want. If souls could only appreciate the desperateness of their disease, their cry after a complete remedy would bound over all the distinctions of race, caste, predestination, birth or training, and turn every seeming repulsion into the fuel of fervor and make every seeming discouragement only u cause of more earnest prayer.

4. The fourth barrier her faith surmounted was the mortification of being called a Gentile dog. Jesus answered and said, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to the dogs."

If she had any pride, any unbelief, any faintness of heart in seeking, it would have retreated into this last ditch of being called a dog. She had in her that true heart metal which Jesus had when He "despised the cross and endured the shame." Instead of being discouraged by this epithet of common degradation, her intense soul intuitively found in it an argument for the answer of her prayer. She said, "Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table."

She would rather be a dog than to have her daughter possessed of a devil. Such humility of heart never fails to touch the heart of God.

What a contrast to thousands who would rather be possessed with all sorts of demons than to take the place or the epithet of a dog. This woman would be content with even a dog's share. One crumb from the master's table would satisfy her longing heart. The essence of her response unveiled boundless humility and the willingness to receive whatever God would give.

This is the secret to the answer to prayer, to lose all pride, to receive meekly any epithet that God or men may apply to us, to stop dictating terms to the Lord, to yield up the form or the manner of blessing we shall receive, to receive gladly the will of God whether it comes to us in crumbs or loaves.

This is the spirit of victorious prayer. It was the bursting forth of such a faith that harmonized with the very spirit of Jesus that so pleased and honored God as to cause Jesus to say, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt." He gave her the key to inexhaustible treasures. She could now have her own will when that will had passed over to God. It was safe to let her have her way when that way was in the perfect agreement with the spirit of Jesus.

In various forms and degrees our faith must surmount corresponding barriers and difficulties in hers. Blessed are they who, like her, turn all apparent discouragements into encouragements, who turn all rebuffs into spurs of pursuit, whose faith gathers strength at every difficulty, from the silence of God down to the mortification of being classed with dogs.

Her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

How speedily, how beautifully, how perfectly the power of God accomplishes results when everything in us is taken out of the way of the sweep of His love and power.

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THE END