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THE OFFICES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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PREFACE

This little book is offered to the Christian public without any apology. The subject is a very important one. If errors and defects shall be discovered in my manner of treating it, I shall not be surprised nor disappointed. The responsibility, both of the matter and the manner, rests solely with myself.

I have here discussed the Offices of the Holy Spirit in His relations (1) to the unconverted world, (2) to the individual believer, (3) to the visible Church. The treatise is by no means an exhaustive one; but it has been my aim to give, in small compass and in simple language, a clear, definite, and scriptural account of the Holy Spirit's work. How far I have succeeded in this object, the reader will decide.

If the sentiments expressed in the following pages are true, they must result in good. If they are false, God can overrule them to prevent evil.

The book is sent forth with earnest prayers that it may prove a blessing to very many souls, and promote, so far as its influence extends, the glorious cause of Christ.

D. C.
Worcester, England
1878

* * * * *

01 -- WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

I say who, not what, and by this mode of expression it may be understood at the outset that I am inquiring about a person -- not a thing. The Holy Spirit is not an influence, nor an attribute, nor an emanation, but a person. He is not merely a messenger proceeding from the Father and the Son, but one and co-eternal with the Father and the Son. He is not simply, as the etymology of the word spirit might imply, the breath of God, nor the abstract power of God, nor the life of God, nor the life of Christ -- but God Himself.

The Saviour uniformly uses the personal pronouns, he, him, whom, himself, in designating the Comforter or the Spirit of Truth, -- and although there are two or three passages in the English New Testament, in which the neuter forms, itself and it, are employed in reference to the Spirit, yet everywhere in the Bible His personality is recognized and His Godhead asserted. "Why," said Peter to Ananias, "hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? thou hast not lied unto men but unto God. "Whereof," writes the author of the Epistle to the

Hebrews, "the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us; for after that He had said before, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days saith the Lord." In the former of these quotations the terms, "Holy Ghost," and "God," in the latter the terms, "Holy Ghost," and "the Lord," are evidently used interchangeably to designate the same Almighty Being. And as the Holy Ghost is one with God the Father, He is also one with God the Son. In direct connection with the promise of the Comforter, the Saviour said to His mourning disciples, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you;" and His final parting words to them before His ascension were, "Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

The Holy Ghost is called Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ, and Christ. He inspired the writers of the Bible. He said to the Church at Antioch, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them." He forbid Paul to preach the gospel in Asia, and suffered him not to go into Bithynia. He determined for, and with, the first council at Jerusalem, what restrictions should be imposed on the Gentile converts. He is associated with the Father and the Son in the final commission to the disciples, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" and the attributes of Deity, eternal existence, omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, creative power, are all ascribed to Him.

And here I will venture to ask one or two questions. (1). Is not the practice of designating the Holy Ghost by the impersonal pronoun it, and praying for its influence and its work in our hearts, calculated to detract somewhat from that worshipful reverence which is due to His dignity, personality, and deity? (2). Is it not better to apply to this divine Being, some one of the appellations used in Scripture, such as, Holy Ghost, Holy Spirit, Comforter, or Spirit of Christ, than to employ instead the name of one of His attributes or workings, as "the light," "the truth," "the seed," or the "inward voice"? It would certainly seem to me, less ambiguous and more in accordance with the form of sound words, not to designate the Holy Ghost by any term which in the Bible is applied only to Christ or to God. The Spirit is truth, but Christ is the truth the Spirit quickens the dead soul into life, but Christ is the life -- the Spirit points the way, but Christ is the way -- the Spirit makes manifest, and "whatsoever doth make manifest is light," but God is light, and Christ is the light of the world -- the Spirit begets love in the soul, but God is love -- the Spirit testifies of the "seed of the woman" which shall bruise the serpent's head, and that "incorruptible seed" is Christ Himself.

The mystery of the Godhead will ever be incomprehensible to the finite mind. In approaching that "holy ground" we need to tread reverently and with uncovered feet. No fact is more clearly set forth in the Holy Scriptures than that God is one, and yet He has condescended to reveal Himself in the threefold character of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And as in the wondrous plan of salvation, the Son performs certain definite offices distinct from those of the Father, so the Holy Spirit also accomplishes a work peculiarly His own. It is to a consideration of the offices of the Spirit, that the following pages will be principally devoted.

* * *

Note To Chapter 01 -- I take pleasure in acknowledging my indebtedness for some of the thoughts in this chapter to an excellent treatise on the offices of Christ, entitled "The Morning

Star," by my beloved friend and fellow-laborer in the gospel, Luke Woodard, of Newgarden, Indiana, U.S.A.

* * * * *

02 -- THE SPIRIT'S WORK IN THE NEW BIRTH -- "Ye must be born again."

Every human being comes into the world with innate tendencies to sin: and every responsible human being has so far yielded to these tendencies, as to become an actual transgressor. Our first parents have sinned, and all their descendants have sinned, the man Christ Jesus -- the second Adam, and the seed of the woman -- being the only exception. We are born into this world possessed of physical life, and intellectual life, but destitute of spiritual life. In order to obtain that, we must by the Spirit Himself be quickened and born again. The Saviour in his memorable conversation with Nicodemus, insists upon the new birth as an indispensable thing. Whatever else may be done without, the new birth may not be done without. Whatever else may be desirable, the new birth is positively essential. Just as certainly as we get into this world by birth, we get into the kingdom of God by birth also. We do not get into that kingdom by growth, nor by culture, nor by money, nor by penances, nor by works of righteousness, nor by ritualistic ordinances, nor by anti-ritualistic observances, nor by improving our own virtues, nor by leaving off certain bad habits, nor by self-inflicted crosses or mortifications, nor by anything whatever which we of ourselves can be, or do, or suffer, or merit, but simply and only by the new birth.

And moreover, the spiritual birth, like the natural birth, is a definite process. There is a time when it takes place. The birth pangs may be slighter or more severe -- shorter or more protracted -- but as for every person upon earth there was a moment when the first breath was drawn and life began, so for every child of God there was a time when in a spiritual sense he passed from death unto life. Every Christian has his spiritual as well as his natural birthday. In some instances but by no means in all, the conversion is manifest to the consciousness of the individual at the time when it occurs, and distinctly remembered ever afterwards. "Where were you born?" said a church prelate to Summerfield. "In Liverpool and Dublin," was the reply. "Why," said he, "were you born in two places?" And the answer again was, "Art thou a master of Israel and knowest not these things?"

But whether distinctly recognized and definitely remembered or not, regeneration is to every one who experiences it, a crisis -- not less marked than that which happens to the child, when it passes from the darkness, and the confinement and the unconsciousness of its ante-natal existence, into the light, and the life, and the freedom, and the enjoyment of the wide, wide world. You see a living man -- you know that he had a birthday, even if neither himself nor anyone else can tell when it was. So many a Christian may not be able accurately to define the time when he experienced the new birth, but both he and others know, or ought to know, that he has experienced it, because he feels in himself and exhibits to others that Christian love which is recognized in Scripture as an unmistakable sign of spiritual life. It is not so important to be aware of the time, as of the fact of one's conversion. It is of far less moment to inquire, When was I born again? or, When did I begin to live? than to inquire, Have I been born again? and Am I living?

And why should a sudden conversion be deemed strange or incredible? Are not analagous changes constantly occurring in human affairs? A man ceases to act with one political party, and begins to act with another; he is converted politically. A citizen removes from one country to another-becomes the subject of a different sovereign, and is converted as to his allegiance. A little time is sufficient for such a change. And may it not be possible for a subject of the prince of the power of the air to change his allegiance, and become a subject of the King of kings, without being months, or years, or a lifetime, in making up his mind and deciding for Christ? A drunkard in some moment of sober thought, resolves to abandon his cups, and if he keeps that resolution, he is converted from intemperance. Every day decisions are made in a moment which influence a lifetime.

Nor are families and communities exempt from these sudden changes. A rich man by a single, unsuccessful speculation loses his property -- what a shadow falls upon his home! A poor man receives an unexpected legacy -- what joy is brought into his household! You visit the residence of a friend today -- it is gladdened by the prattle of children. You go again in a week -- an epidemic fever has hushed those young voices for ever. The stricken parents no longer have the same interest, or the same objects in life as before. All is changed -- it is a converted home.

And when we consider the transcendent importance of religious matters, as compared with secular, would it not be reasonable to expect that sudden changes should occur in the former as well as the latter? and so in point of fact we find it. A young Pharisee full of zeal for the extermination of heresy -- breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the followers of the despised Nazarene -- is smitten down at noonday-told whom he is persecuting -- led into Damascus -- visited by Ananias -- directed what to do -- receives the truth -- immediately confers not with flesh and blood -- and straightway preaches Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God.

And cases not wholly dissimilar occur in our own day. The following incident in point was related in my hearing. A series of meetings was held at a village in one of the Western States of America. When they began, a citizen of the place was heard openly and profanely abusing the men, the meetings, and the religion. Three days afterwards he was himself proclaiming at the corners of the streets that Christ hath power on earth to forgive sins, and seeking to build up the faith which before he reviled.

Again, a hymn was given out in a public service with the request that none would sing it excepting those who were Christians. An unconverted man was indignantly saying within himself that he would sing it though he were not a Christian. But the dishonesty of such a proceeding struck him, and he sat down a convicted man. As the singing went on, he reflected, "Why may I not believe on Jesus now?" And with the thought came the resolve: "I will lay my sins on Jesus." In that thought was involved both repentance and faith; and he rose to sing the remaining verses, a converted man.

* * *

How Is Regeneration Effected?

I answer, By the direct energy of the Holy Ghost. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." This may mean born of the Spirit under the similitude of water -- "the washing of regeneration," but more probably it refers to the water spoken of by the Saviour to the woman of Samaria, -- which should be in the receiver a well of water, springing up into everlasting life; -- or again, "the water of life," of whose fountain all are invited to come and drink freely -- and which signifies, as I apprehend, gospel truth -- salvation by faith in a crucified and risen Lord. To have this truth of the Gospel applied to the heart by the Holy Spirit, and received through faith, is what it means, to be born of water and of the Spirit.

Let us recur again to the fact that we belong to a fallen and sinful race; "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." "Children of wrath," "children of disobedience" -- "dead in trespasses and sins" -- such are we when the Holy Spirit takes us in hand.

And His first work in the heart of the sinner is that of conviction. He awakens him to a sense of his sinfulness, and of his danger, and of his need. He convinces him of his undone condition without a Saviour -- He reminds him that all his lifetime he has been slighting the claims of God and living in rebellion against Him -- He works within him not peace, but condemnation -- not repose, but anxiety -- not rest, but unrest. Truly and beautifully has Augustine said, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our souls are restless till they rest in Thee."

But the sinner needs to be convinced not only of his own lost condition, but also of God's forgiving love. If he must learn the plague of his own heart, and his own deadly sickness, let him learn also of the healing balm and the great Physician. Everywhere in the Holy Scriptures are revealed two things. (1.) Man's utter ruin, and (2.) God's sufficient remedy. To bring these truths home to the apprehension of the unsaved -- to produce in their minds a conviction of their reality, and of their infinite importance to themselves personally -- that is the work of the Holy Spirit. But even in this work of conviction, the Holy Spirit employs a great variety of methods, means, and instrumentalities.

First among these and pre-eminently blessed by Him in convicting sinners is the Holy Bible. God will honor His own book, and that book is profitable for reproof. Many a man has seen his own portrait when he has read, "All the imaginations of the thoughts of his heart are only evil continually," -- or, "The heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," -- or, "The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt," -- or, "There is no peace saith my God to the wicked," -- or, "From the head to the foot there is no soundness," -- or, "The works of the flesh are these," (a long and dreadful list), -- or, "All we like sheep have gone astray," -- or, "Having no hope and without God in the world."

Another instrumentality largely employed by the Holy Spirit, in convincing lost men of their true condition, and their need of a Saviour, is the ministry of the Gospel. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." All true gospel ministry is under the power and the anointing of the Holy Ghost, and it is He that makes it effectual for the awakening of sinners. Consisting principally of an exposition and application of truths, which are revealed in Scripture, the Holy Spirit imparts to it "that indescribable characteristic which we call unction," and gives it oftentimes wondrous power in convicting the unregenerate.

Thus it was on the day of Pentecost, when Peter's hearers were "pricked in their heart," -- thus it was when men and women shrieked with agony of soul, as they listened to John Knox uttering forth the threatenings of the law, -- thus it was when scores of persons fell from their seats, as though struck down by a sword, under the searching ministry of President Finney; and similar power attended the preaching of George Fox, of Edward Burrough, of John Wesley, and others not a few, of the anointed ambassadors of Christ.

But other and simpler instrumentalities may also be employed by the Spirit to accomplish His blessed purposes. A text of Scripture printed on a card, or uttered by the humblest Christian, or even one who is not a Christian at all, -- a simple question, Are you converted? Are you saved? Are you a child of God? -- the truths of the Gospel in a tract or periodical, -- religious instruction in a Scripture school or Bible class, -- the singing of a hymn, -- any means whatever by which God's truth is brought in contact with the sinner's heart may be used by Him with convicting and converting power.

Nor must I fail to mention that the Holy Spirit can work, and does work, effectually for the conviction of sinners, without any outward instrumentality whatever. He operates directly upon the hearts of the unsaved, showing them their wretchedness and their sin, and pointing them to the Saviour. Which of my readers has not experienced many and many a time the visitation of the Holy Spirit? He has come to you, it may be, in the stillness and the darkness of the night, or in some lonely hour and some retired spot by day, or even in the crowded street, or the gathered assembly. He has reproved you for sin. He has shown you the corruption of your heart. He has convinced you of your need. He has invited you to come to the Lamb of God and be saved. He has pleaded earnestly with you, "My son, my daughter, give me thine heart." Has He already been long knocking at the door of your heart? Has He waited till His head is wet with the dew, and His locks with the drops of the night? Oh! delay not to arise and let Him in. He will not force an entrance. The door of the heart opens inwards, and is subject to your own control. He may be very patient and long-suffering with you, -- He may tarry long, and go away and come again, but He will not save you without your own consent. He invites and entreats, but you must decide. He recognizes your moral agency and your power of choice. Your will must be put on His side. He will not take possession of your heart till you are willing to receive Him. Be willing now.

A young Frenchman, -- brought up a Roman Catholic, but at the time I speak of an infidel, -- while walking alone on the banks of the Hudson, not thinking at all of serious things, was suddenly arrested by the words, "Eternity, Eternity, Eternity"! sounding through the very recesses of his soul. Immediately he was convinced that whether there was a Heaven or not, there was certainly a Hell, for he seemed to feel it burning in his own bosom. He found rest by accepting in living faith the offers of salvation through a crucified and risen Saviour. Such was the conversion of Stephen Grellet.

"The wind bloweth where it listeth," and the Holy Spirit knows how to adapt His operations to the temperament, the dispositions, and the circumstances of every individual, and by what agencies each one may be successfully wrought upon and won to Christ. For the variety of character and condition among the unsaved is very great. There are some -- alas! many, so

deeply sunken in sin -- so abandoned in their wickedness -- so low in vice and poverty and degradation -- that they do not need to be told of their wretchedness, but rather how to escape from it. They need to be convinced, not that they are miserable sinners -- they know that all too well -- but that there is hope for them, that the Gospel is really good news -- glad tidings of great joy to all who will hear and receive it, that there is indeed even for them "a Saviour which is Christ the Lord." The proper thing for them is not so much the message of their own ruin, as the message of God's love.

It is said, that at the time of the great fire in Chicago, many persons whose families had thus suddenly become homeless and destitute, walked about in a kind of sullen despair -- almost stupefied by the calamity that had befallen them, -- not softened, but hardened and angered by the hopelessness of their circumstances; but when the news came flashing over the wires that the heart of the world was throbbing in sympathy with them, and that help was coming from every quarter; then the fountain of love and tenderness in their own souls was reached, and strong men wept like children. Despair hardens the heart; -- love melts it. It is, I believe, generally, if not universally true, that those who, in the Providence of God, are called and qualified to labor among the intemperate, the abandoned and the vicious, find it their proper place, under the leadings of the Holy Spirit, to go to them with glad tidings; to present before them the love of Christ; to convince them of His tender compassion towards our lost race, and to employ the language of invitation rather than of reproof.

The case is very different when we come to deal with respectable sinners, -- moral, upright, law-abiding in their outward conduct; some, Pharisaical professors, who are not like other men; some, traditional Christians, members of a worthy and influential religious organization; some, "measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves," and deciding that they are, at least, as good as their neighbors; some, whole and having no need of a physician; some, trusting, partially at least, in a rigid adherence to forms and observances. For such as these the important thing is, that they should be convinced of their own "exceeding need;" that whatever may be their outward conduct, and the advantages of their position, "there is no difference, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God;" that they are leaning upon a broken reed; that their self-righteousness is "filthy rags;" that they must be stripped of every false covering, and every refuge of lies; that they are hopeless, helpless, bankrupt sinners, wholly dependent upon the mercy of God in Christ Jesus; and that they must cast themselves as humble, unworthy supplicants at His feet, pleading only His infinite merit for their pardon and acceptance.

Whether the work of conviction shall be short or long, gradual or sudden, depends largely upon the amount of resistance that is made to it. If the voice of the Spirit is unheeded; if His reproofs are slighted; if His visitations are repelled, or if He is told again and again to wait for "a convenient season;" then His convictions may be long-continued, and oft repeated, and may involve much suffering and sorrow. Hence, some persons tell us that their conversion was gradual, because they struggled weeks, or months, or weary years against the Holy Spirit, before the point was reached of submission to God, and trust in Jesus. When that point is reached, however, conversion follows at once. There may be a gradual work of development and preparation before birth; and a gradual process of growth after birth; but the birth itself, whether natural or spiritual, is a sudden change which brings the individual into a new world, and imparts

to him a new life. Conviction may be gradual and protracted. Conversion is definite and immediate.

And let no one imagine that long, severe strugglings and conflicts are always essential to a sound conversion. It is not our remorse nor our suffering; not the length of time we are under conviction, nor the amount of agony we endure from the sense of our guilt; but it is the surrender of the will that brings about the blessed result. In the great plan of salvation, man receives by giving, and conquers by yielding; every victory is by surrender. It was not Jacob wrestling, but Jacob ceasing to wrestle, -- Jacob humbled, subdued, helpless, halting, trusting, asking -- that obtained the blessing from God.

Conviction, if yielded to, produces "godly sorrow," -- sorrow for sin as such; not because it has injured us in health, reputation, or estate, but, primarily and chiefly, because it has offended our gracious Heavenly Father; "and godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of."

Repentance is not penance; not remorse, -- which, etymologically, is biting again, and belongs to despair, -- not agony of mind; not conviction; not "godly sorrow;" but that change of mind, and purpose, and will, which results from godly sorrow. It is not simply the forsaking of one's sins; because that may be done from various motives of self-interest; whereas, repentance is in the heart, and has respect to our obligations to God. Nevertheless, beginning in the heart, it works out also into the life, and produces "fruits meet for repentance." Following conviction, it is the after thought, -- the new resolve; the choosing to be the Lord's; the decision in favor of Christ; and true repentance does involve the abandoning of all known sin.

While it is the goodness of God, or, in other words, the influence of the Holy Spirit, that leads men to repentance, nevertheless, all men are commanded to repent. "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand," was the primary message not only of John the Baptist, but of the Saviour Himself; and the same injunction is repeated, in one form or another, in many places, both in the Old and New Testaments. An express command of God implies the power to obey, and hence, repentance must be, in an important sense, an act of the will. God desires our co-partnership in the work of salvation, to the extent that we shall put our wills on His side, submit to Him, and consent to be saved. Without His grace, doubtless, we shall not be able to repent; but His grace will not be withheld if we are willing to repent. He commands us to repent, and requires us to repent; and He will not do our repenting for us. Let no one, therefore, who is convinced of his need of a Saviour, be waiting for deeper convictions, or more sensible manifestations of his undone condition, but let him at once, by a voluntary act, put himself into a state of submission to God; yielding his heart, including his will, into His hands. And whoever does this, repents.

But, in order that the sinner may be born again, he must experience not only repentance towards God, but also faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ; and every Gospel blessing which the Lord promises to give us, is to be received only with the hand of faith.

Faith signifies nothing more nor less than believing God's truth. It is the substance of things hoped for; because it makes them real. It is the evidence of things not seen; because it

convinces the mind of their existence and importance. It is the confidence which the human soul reposes in its Creator. It is taking God at His word. It is the acceptance of the glad tidings. It is trust in the Lord. It is rest in Jesus.

All men believe something, and therefore, all men have faith. But it cannot be said, with truth, that all men believe God; nor, that all men have religious faith, or saving faith.

It is not sufficient to believe, historically, what is written about the Lord Jesus Christ; nor to believe, in a general way, that He was the Son of God and that He came into the world to save sinners. It is needful for each individual to believe in Him as a personal Saviour, and to grasp Him with that appropriating faith which uses the first person singular, and the possessive pronoun. This God is my God. This Saviour is my Saviour. "My beloved is mine, and I am His."

Faith is either the power of believing, or the act of believing. In the former sense it is given to all. In the latter it is exercised with the consent and choice of the human will. God presents us with this truth, and gives us the capacity to believe it; just as He gives us food, and the capacity to eat it. The act of believing, like the act of eating, is our own. Surrounded by plenty, men can starve their bodies by neglecting or refusing to eat. Surrounded by the saving truth of the Gospel, they can starve their souls by neglecting or refusing to believe.

A ship, hoisting signals of distress, was spoken by another vessel and asked what was wanted. Feebly and beseechingly came the answer from famishing throats -- "Water! water!" "Let down your buckets and dip it up," was the reply. "You are in the mouth of the Amazon." Fresh water all around them, and they perishing with thirst! And, with the water of life flowing freely for their refreshment, multitudes of souls are doing the same thing.

The proper business of a truly convicted soul while he is praying for repentance, is to repent; and, while he is praying for faith, is to believe.

"Faith," says Dr. Upham, "considered as an element of the Divine mind, is a nature and not an acquisition. In man, also, faith is a nature; but in God, it is nature eternal, -- in man, it is nature given. God, without faith in Himself, could not be God; and man, without faith in God as his Father, could not be the child of God. When man, therefore, was originally created, he was created with faith in God. If man was originally created in faith, he could not have fallen from his original state, except by ceasing to have faith; in other words, by unbelief. And he cannot be restored to the state from which he fell, except by the restoration of faith. Provision for this restoration is made in Jesus Christ; and this restoration is actually realized in the case of all those, who, in ceasing to have faith in themselves, have opened the door of their hearts for the faith which is in God."

Our Saviour has told us that all who would get into the Kingdom of Heaven, must enter it "as a little child." Now the child lives in the constant and easy exercise of faith. He readily believes what is told him about natural things, With the same readiness also, if rightly instructed, he believes what is told him about spiritual things. He is wholly dependent upon others for the supply of his daily needs; but he has faith in his parents and care-takers, -- he trusts them; he is not careful; he takes no anxious thought; he expects them to provide for his wants, and he is not

disappointed. According to his faith it is unto him. If a certain good thing is promised him, he does not think of doubting that he shall receive it, but begins at once to enjoy it by faith. If certain things are required of him, or certain restraints imposed upon him, even though he may not be able to understand their reason, yet he quickly learns to obey; because he is certain that his father knows what is right and proper much better than himself.

And every one, -- man or child; old or young; male or female, is to receive the Kingdom of Heaven in a similar spirit of unquestioning faith, and implicit obedience. There must be faith in God's promises; obedience to His commands, -- which commands, at this stage are, repent and believe, -- and submission to Him, even in things we cannot understand; because our Father knows.

And, just because of this easy faith, it is especially incumbent on Christians to use all proper endeavors to secure the conversion of their own children, and of children generally. Still, as of old, the language of Christ is, "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not." Of all the Christians in the world today, there can be little doubt that a large majority were converted in childhood and youth. The Holy Spirit begins His work of conviction upon the heart, at a very early period of life.

If a child, even when very young, comes to his parent grieved and distressed, because he has done wrong; the goodness of God is leading him to repentance. Embrace the opportunity thus presented by Providence for instructing him in the plan of salvation, and for bringing him to Christ. Do not give him any false comfort on the one hand, nor unduly discourage him on the other. Do not divert his attention from the subject too hastily, nor persuade him that he is not very bad after all. Tell him that he has indeed a naughty heart, because Satan has had possession of it, and by means of it has led him into sin. But, tell him also that Jesus died, that he might be forgiven and become God's child. Instruct him how to pray in the name of that Saviour, for pardon and a new heart, and then, to believe he receives what he prays for. In this simple way, even a child, being justified by faith, will have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ.

And not the child only, but everyone that is seeking salvation, should be instructed to ask, that he may receive. While naturally and properly desiring the prayers of others on his behalf, he is not to rely wholly upon them, but pray for himself. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Do not be satisfied with exercising good desires in your hearts, but turn those good desires into words, and what you thus desire, pray for. The penitent sinner who humbles himself before God, assumes the attitude of prayer, and asks, vocally, for His mercy, seldom fails speedily to find pardon and acceptance at His hands.

It is quite true, indeed, that neither praying-whether silent or vocal -- nor anything else that man can do, will be of any avail in the work of regeneration, without the aid of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, however, works by and with the concurrence of the intellectual and moral faculties of man. He does not supersede those faculties, nor act independently of them. The intellect, the sensibilities, the conscience, and the will, are all operated upon and influenced by Him. Man is not an automaton, nor a machine, manipulated in such a way by the Holy Spirit, that he must be saved or lost in spite of himself. He is, on the contrary, a moral agent, possessing and exercising the power of choice. The Holy Scriptures constantly persuade him to choose

aright, but they clearly recognize his power of choosing wrong; and the Holy Spirit, who gave forth the Scriptures, does precisely the same thing.

It is He that causes the "godly sorrow" "that worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of." It is He that produces in the soul a hungering and thirsting after righteousness; and He does so in order that it may be filled. It is He that begets those longing desires after salvation, which can be satisfied only in Christ. It is He that inspires the prayer for mercy and acceptance; and a prayer thus inspired will most certainly be answered. It is He that enables the repenting, praying sinner to exercise saving faith in Christ; and "no man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." Man's part in the work of regeneration is to repent, to ask, to believe. God does the rest.

But, "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Whenever the word of God, the gospel of life and salvation, is heard by the sinner -- whether through the instrumentality of the Bible, a sermon, a hymn, a tract, or in any other way -- that is a sufficient call to accept and obey it; and the Holy Spirit will not be wanting on His part, both to persuade and to enable him so to do. A sufficient reason to repent is, that God commands it. A sufficient reason to ask is, that you realize your need. A sufficient reason to believe is, that Christ is the Truth; and the repenting, asking, believing, should be done at once. If I may not invite a sinner to come to Christ now, it must be because Christ is not willing to receive him now; which is only saying that He wishes him to continue longer in his sins: a conclusion which the boldest advocate of delay and preparation would scarcely dare to adopt. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation."

If this book should be so fortunate as to be perused by any in the younger walks of life, I would here pause a moment to entreat all these to give heed to the admonition of the Preacher: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say I have no pleasure in them:" no pleasure in the follies, nor the gaieties, nor the sins of this world -- where, perhaps, you have hitherto been seeking all your pleasure. Oh! if only you can be persuaded now to heed the loving voice of your Saviour, who, through the Spirit within and the Gospel without, is inviting you to arise and come away -- away from sin, and away to Him -- how much bitter anguish and sorrow and remorse will be spared you in the future! While it is comparatively easy to believe, while it is comparatively easy to obey, before both heart and life have become thoroughly steeped in sin, before evil tendencies have become strengthened by constant indulgence, and evil habits fixed by constant repetition, before Satan has so completely enveloped you in his toils that you shall almost despair of escape, "While the evil days come not," oh, "Remember now thy Creator!"

God's purposes concerning you are purposes of love; His plans are plans of love; His means are means of love. He has His plan, also, for every man, yes, and for every child; -- a plan which, if carried out, will secure unmixed blessing to the recipient, and glory, as well as pleasure to Himself. What He wants to give you is infinitely better than anything you can seek for yourselves. If only the dear children, and young people, would let Him have His own way with them; if only they would not frustrate His grace, nor mar His work, nor thwart His plans, nor resist His will; what gloriously blessed results would He bring out in their experience. Into what delightfully green pastures would He guide them, beside what blessedly still waters would He

lead them. Not but that His dealings would be very different in different cases. He would make some, it may be, like vessels of gold and of silver; and some like vessels of wood and of stone; but all should be vessels unto honour, -- sanctified, and meet for the Master's use.

Men seek for pleasure, or for wealth, or for fame, or for position in the world. For these things they strive, for these they struggle, for these they burn many a time the midnight oil; and how very few, after all their efforts, ever obtain that one of these supposed good things which they have desired so earnestly, and striven for so long. And, out of the comparatively small number who do attain what the world calls success in life, how much fewer still are those who are satisfied therewith. Do they not find, by experience which is often bitter and sad, that,

"Things of earth were never yet designed
To quench the vast and deathless thirst of an immortal mind!"

and that the very objects which they fondly imagined would make them happy, are only -- like the apples of Sodom -- fair and beautiful to the view, but crumbling to ashes within the grasp?

Multitudes of disappointed men are in the world today; some disappointed because they have not attained what they desired, and some because, after they have attained it, they are still unsatisfied.

"Bubbles we earn with our whole soul's tasking;
'Tis only God that is given away, --
'Tis only Heaven may be had for the asking."

"One thing is needful."

"God seeth not as man seeth." Many a life which the world calls a success, will be found a stupendous failure when weighed in the balance of the sanctuary. Many a life which men count a failure, God will count a grand success.

A wealthy merchant was suddenly stricken with a fatal malady. Casting his dying eyes around the luxuriously furnished apartment in which he lay, and then fixing them upon his only daughter -- for whose sake, it may be, he had been eager in his pursuit of gain -- he simply asked, "Nelly, have not we made a mistake after all?" What a volume of instruction do these words convey; and how lamentable that in any case a mistake, whose disastrous effects may extend to eternity, should be discovered only when it is too late to rectify it!

Let us make a definite hypothesis. Suppose that God, by His Holy Spirit, calls you to surrender to Him and become a Christian at the age of fifteen years. You plead for delay. You wish a little more time for your own pleasures, and your own plans, you are young, you want to enjoy this world awhile, you must finish your education, you must settle in life, you must give yourself to business. A hundred excuses, your own ingenuity and Satan's can quickly invent, and you say to the Spirit, -- "Go thy way for this time." Suppose, however, that you stipulate that, at thirty years of age you will surrender your heart to the Lord. If such a thing were possible, suppose that He accepts your presumptuous proposition; leaves you to your own plannings, and

willings, and pleasures, for fifteen years; returns to you, and you keep your vow, -- close in with His offers and become His child. Even then, what have you done? You have simply deprived yourself of fifteen years of unmixed blessing. The Lord in His infinite goodness may, and will, make of you the best thing that can be made now; but not the best thing that could have been made if you had surrendered then. There is a loss in every day's delay to accept the blessed Spirit's call; and not even by double diligence can we, in any just sense of the term, redeem lost time.

But, unhappily, in point of fact the majority of mankind, even in gospel lands, pass through their childhood and youth without ever definitely exercising faith in Christ, and without being converted. And we often meet with those, in middle or advanced life, who, although greatly concerned about their souls, yet tell us they cannot believe. And yet, from their childhood they have had faith in the sense of the power to believe; but they have never put that latent power into actual use by definitely believing God's truth for themselves. Their faith is weakened and paralyzed by long disuse; just as sight would be weakened and paralyzed if the eyes were bandaged from infancy to manhood, and never employed in seeing anything.

Under these circumstances, the will must be brought to bear in aid of the debilitated faith. The convicted and prayerful penitent, must will to believe," he must choose to believe," he must determine to believe. Do not let it be objected that belief is not a matter of volition, but a matter of evidence. It is not from any lack of evidence, that such an one as we have supposed does not believe that Christ is able and willing to save him now, and that He does save him now. It is because Satan has got hold of his believing power and rendered it partially inert.

And now, let the will be put on the believing side, and let the individual resolve to obey God's positive command -- believe, as he would obey any other command. Let him grasp the promises of Christ and appropriate them to himself. -- "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." -- That means me, now. "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." -- That means me, now. "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt." -- That means me, now. "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." -- That means me, now. With a fixed determination, let him regard unbelief as a grievous sin and an infinite dishonor to God, and, while he prays for help from above, let him also strive to believe. The Holy Spirit will be present to his necessity; and as he entreats, like one of old, -- "Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief," he will receive the gracious response, -- "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."

On one occasion Jesus found a man whose right hand was withered. He gave him a positive command: "Stretch forth thine hand." The poor man might have answered, "I cannot. It is the very thing I would gladly do, but this right hand has long ago forgotten its cunning. To tell me to stretch it forth is a mockery." Do we not see that if he had reasoned thus he might have carried his withered hand to the grave? But he did not thus reason. The command came: "Stretch forth thine hand." Immediately he made the effort, and with the effort came the power. The hand was stretched forth, and became whole as the other. Let the convicted and penitent sinner, whose faith has become feeble by want of exercise, do likewise. By a determined effort let him stretch forth the hand of faith, and he also shall be made whole.

And now the same blessed Spirit who has thus wrought the new birth in the soul of the sinner, becomes a witness to his adoption. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." And, because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying "Abba, Father." "He that believeth in the Son of God hath the witness in himself."

And the forgiven, accepted, regenerated believer, can but utter from his heart the language of adoring praise, -- "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His Holy name."

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Remarks

1. -- Conviction is the work of the Holy Spirit on the heart of the sinner, by which he is made to realize his undone condition and earnestly to desire reconciliation with God. In order to bring the impenitent to conviction, the Holy Spirit may either operate directly, or He may employ a great variety of instrumentalities.

2. -- Repentance is change of mind, the after-thought, a firm resolve to turn away from sin and come to Christ. "Godly sorrow worketh repentance," and "Godly sorrow" is itself the result of conviction, produced in the unforgiven soul by the Holy Ghost. The amount of mental agitation and suffering that may precede, or accompany, repentance is very different in different cases. One is pressed down as with the weight of a mountain, under the sense of his guilt. Another is melted at once into contrition, as he gets a glimpse of God's infinite love. One exclaims with Charles Marshall, "Oh, undeclarable fall! Oh, endless wall of partition and separation! Oh, gulf unutterable!" Another with the Psalmist cries, "Because Thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee." One hears the threatenings of Sinai; another the invitations of Calvary. One is aroused by the terrors of impending judgment. Another responds to the voice of love, as an infant awakened from slumber by its mother's kiss. And let us not give heed to any heresy that would weaken a single motive, either of fear or of love, which may draw men to Christ.

3. -- Faith is the acceptance of God's mercy and grace in Christ Jesus. The grace of faith, or the power of believing, is the gift of God. The act of faith, or actual believing, is the exercise of that power. When God presents His truth to us it is not a matter of indifference whether we accept or reject it. He holds us accountable for the exercise of the faith which He has given us. "He that believeth not, is condemned already." And to every contrite, anxious soul that wills to believe, the power so to do will be given by the Holy Ghost.

4. -- Prayer is asking God to fulfill His own promises and to give us what we need. It is turning the good desires which the Holy Ghost has begotten in our hearts into words and addressing them to the throne of grace. This may be done either in vocal utterances, or by the whispered or silent aspirations of the soul. Whether prayer shall be silent or vocal in any given case may be left to the leadings of the Holy Spirit, but I believe the sinner who comes to Christ

for pardon will often find it both necessary and effectual to call with his voice upon the name of the Lord.

5. -- "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee." That state of heart which makes it proper and right for God to forgive one sin, makes it proper and right for Him to forgive all sins. The broken and the contrite heart He will not despise. Whoever comes to God in penitential prayer, believing in Jesus, receives justification. This is pardon, forgiveness, remission, absolution. All guilt, all condemnation, and all penalty on account of past transgressions are removed from him for ever. His indebtedness is canceled. "Jesus paid it all."

6. -- But in justifying a sinner, God has respect to his moral condition. He not only removes his guilt but He changes his nature as well. Conversion, or Regeneration, always accompanies Justification. These terms are used synonymously -- the one indicating, in its etymology, a change of heart, the other a new birth. Spiritual life is imparted to the soul by the Holy Ghost; and this life, however feeble it may be in its incipiency, is a life in the, image of Christ, so that every justified soul, even if not wholly cleansed from the stains of its inward corruption, is yet partially sanctified; and whoever experiences "the washing of regeneration" begins to be made holy. The process is completed (in most cases at a later period) by the "renewing of the Holy Ghost."

7. -- The witness of the Spirit is explained by John Wesley as follows, viz.:- "By the testimony of the Spirit I mean an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God immediately and directly witnesses to my spirit that I am a child of God, that Jesus Christ hath loved me and given Himself for me, that all my sins are blotted out, and I, even I, am reconciled to God. I do not mean hereby that the Spirit of God testifies this by an outward voice. No, nor always by an inward voice, although He may do this sometimes. Neither do I suppose that He always applies to the heart (although He often may) one or more texts of Scripture. But He so works upon the soul by His immediate influence, and by a strong though inexplicable operation, that the stormy wind and the troubled waves subside and there is a sweet calm, the heart resting in Jesus, and the sinner being clearly satisfied that all his iniquities are forgiven and his sins covered."

8. -- I do not believe that either election, reprobation, or the perseverance of the saints is unconditional. If we take the whole tenor of Bible teaching instead of basing important doctrines on isolated texts, I think we shall find that the elect are those who hear the gospel and accept it; while the reprobate are they who hear and reject, or neglect, the great salvation.

In point of fact, we may well suppose that very few who have really been born again have been finally lost. If they backslide, the Lord follows them with His tender invitations to return, Backsliding is soul-sickness, but not soul-death. But as among the millions of people who have inhabited the earth, a very few in the full possession of their faculties and exercising their own choosing power have committed suicide, so it is possible for the believer, in the exercise of his moral agency, suicidally to sunder himself from Christ. But who would wish or choose so to do?

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03 -- THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST

This is Christ's Baptism. When the son of Zacharias came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, his first message was, "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." His second message was, "I indeed baptize you with water, but there standeth one among you whom ye know not; He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

I am not writing a controversial work, nor a treatise on systematic theology; but a book, intended to be practical, and to exhibit, in simple language, the offices and work of the Holy Spirit in God's plan of salvation. It is not at all my purpose to discuss the necessity or the propriety of water-baptism, as a so-called Christian ordinance. Not baptism with water, but baptism with the Holy Ghost will be my theme in the present chapter.

I think it proper to remark, however, that two of the Evangelists expressly state that John "preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." This remission, as none can doubt, was experienced by faith, not in John, but in Jesus. Whatever may be our individual opinions, therefore, in reference to the use of water, it is plain that the thing typified and signified by the baptism of John, is precisely what I have already been describing in the second chapter, as the Holy Spirit's work in producing conversion, or regeneration through "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

If, then, John's baptism means simply the new birth; it follows that Christ's baptism must have a different meaning and a different purpose. John's baptism is repentance and remission; Christ's baptism is consecration and holiness. John's baptism is for the unconverted; Christ's baptism is for Christians. John's baptism is out of Egypt; Christ's baptism is into Canaan. John's baptism is freedom; Christ's baptism is riches. John's baptism is deliverance from punishment; Christ's baptism is victory over sin. John's baptism confers justification upon the sinner; Christ's baptism imparts entire sanctification to the believer. John's baptism gives life; Christ's baptism gives power. John's baptism is the betrothal; Christ's baptism is the marriage. John's baptism is the "washing of regeneration"; Christ's baptism is "the" renewing of the Holy Ghost." John's baptism begins what Christ's baptism consummates, and both are wrought by the agency of the one Divine Spirit.

"I baptize you with water; He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." So said John; and Christ's own words to His disciples just before His ascension, are almost identical, -- "John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence." He told them to wait for the promise of the Father, which they had heard of Him; and that promise was, that the Father would send, in Jesus' name, the "Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost."

Long before this, on the last great day of one of the Jewish feasts, Jesus stood and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." "He that believeth on me," as the Scripture hath said, "out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." And then, that the Church in all subsequent ages might not be left in doubt as to what the Saviour meant by saying that out of the inmost spiritual self of those who believed in Him there should flow rivers of living water, the Apostle puts in a parenthetical explanation, which is exceedingly interesting and important, viz.:

"But this spake He of the Spirit, Which they that believe on Him should receive, for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified."

Now, no one will dispute that the Holy Spirit has been in the world from the beginning. When primal chaotic darkness invested the void and formless earth and rested upon the face of the deep, even then, "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." He inspired the writers of the Old Testament, for "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." He came upon individuals at different periods and empowered them for special services, as in the case of Gideon, Jephthah, Samson, David. Notwithstanding these facts, however, it is quite certain, if the above text is to be interpreted according to its plain and obvious meaning, that the Holy Ghost was given to the Church after the glorification of Jesus, and in consequence of the glorification of Jesus, in a sense and to a degree which had never been experienced before. And this is the baptism with the Holy Ghost.

The Old Testament prophecies themselves distinctly mention this baptism as one of the blessings to be enjoyed under the Gospel dispensation. "I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." And the well known prophecy of Joel, which was quoted by Peter on the day of Pentecost, asserts that the Lord will pour out His Spirit upon sons, daughters, old men, young men, servants, handmaidens. Under the old dispensation, therefore, the Holy Spirit, except that small measure of His influence and light which is given to all men in all ages, was imparted only to certain individuals and on special occasions, but under the Gospel it is God's gracious purpose that the Spirit should be poured out universally and generally upon all His children, and that He should abide with them for ever.

In the sixth chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah, we find an experience so marvelous in itself, and so clearly foreshadowing the baptism with the Spirit, that I think it proper to allude to it. Isaiah prophesied in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. In his first chapter he describes most vividly the sinfulness of the Jewish nation and exhorts them to repentance and amendment of life. He tells them to wash them from their sins, to put away the evil of their doings, to cease to do evil, to learn to do well; and, on condition of their doing so, he promises them, in the name of the Lord, that "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." His prophesying at this stage, just like John's preaching and John's baptism, is concerning repentance, amendment of life, and remission of sins.

How long he had thus been a preacher of righteousness before the death of Uzziah, we do not certainly know. But he tells us, "in the year that king Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim; each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of Him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts."

Now, who told the prophet that he was a man of unclean lips? Had he not been powerfully preaching to those around him, repentance and the forgiveness of sins? Yes. But when he caught only a glimpse of the infinite purity of Christ (for on this occasion, John tells us that Isaiah saw His glory and spake of Him), his first thought was about his own uncleanness. To get really a nearer view of Christ does not tend to engender pride, nor boastfulness, but, on the contrary, it takes the self-righteousness, and the self-sufficiency, and the self-dependence, and the self-glorification out of a man.

So it was with Job, when the Lord answered him out of the whirlwind; and the patriarch, ceasing to justify himself, exclaimed -- "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." So it was with Daniel, when a wondrous vision was vouchsafed to him, -- "There remained no strength in me, for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength." So it was with Ezekiel, when "the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord" was shown to him, -- "And when I saw it, I fell upon my face." So it was with Saul of Tarsus, when on his journey to Damascus Jesus appeared to him in the way, and he fell to the earth, tremblingly inquiring -- "Who art Thou, Lord? What wilt Thou have me to do?" So it was with John in Patmos, when he saw the glorified Redeemer, -- that same Jesus with whom he had been so familiar on earth as to lean upon His bosom; but now, -- "fell at His feet, as dead." And, so it was with Isaiah.

But mark what followed. -- "Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar; and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, "Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." Now, no one, I apprehend, will venture to deny that Isaiah was already a forgiven and accepted child of God; and yet, this was to him a new experience. He had received the pardon of his past sins before; but now the iniquity of his nature was taken away, and his in-bred sin was purged. He had known justification before; now he obtained entire sanctification. He had already had the baptism of repentance and remission of sins; but this was his baptism of fire, yes, and of the Holy Ghost.

And is it too much, to believe that we can trace the effects of this baptism everywhere upon the glowing pages of his prophecy? Isaiah is preeminently the evangelical prophet of the Old Testament. He describes the blessings of the gospel dispensation, almost as forcibly and accurately as if he had lived under it himself. How vividly, and how pathetically, does he delineate the vicarious sufferings of Christ. "He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed." How beautifully does he set before our view, the desert blooming, and the wilderness rejoicing; and the highway of holiness, over which the unclean shall not pass, and in which the wayfaring men shall not err. How grand, and how lovely, are the visions, in which, looking down the centuries before him with the eye of a seer, he recognized the future glory of the Church, and calls upon her to, "Arise, shine, for thy light has come, and the glory of the Lord has arisen upon thee."

Let us now return to the Apostles. They were commanded not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit. The eleven, together with the converts -- male and female -- in all, one hundred and twenty, assembled in an upper room, and "continued, with

one accord, in prayer and supplication." From the best calculations we are able to make, they must have continued to hold these daily prayer meetings for seven, or possibly ten days, before the promise was fulfilled. If the vision tarried, they waited for it. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place; and suddenly there came a sound from Heaven, as of a rushing, mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

We need not wonder that the effect was marvelous. The multitude of Jews, "out of every nation under Heaven," assembled together at the strange news, and, hearing unlearned men -- and shall we not say women as well? -- speaking the wonderful works of God in their different languages, could only look into each others faces and exclaim, -- "What meaneth this?" While others, mocking, said, "These men are full of new wine." Then Peter arose, quoted in their hearing the prophecy of Joel, preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection, assured them that what they heard and saw, was the baptism of the Holy Ghost -- the promise of the Father shed forth by the Son, -- and exhorted them, with wonderful success, to accept the offers of salvation through a crucified and risen Lord.

Again. When, at a subsequent period, in obedience to a heavenly vision, Peter went and preached the gospel to Cornelius and his household, the Holy Ghost fell on them also, and they spake with tongues and magnified God. As this is not an argumentative work, I shall waive the question of the propriety and necessity of the administration -- under Peter's direction -- to these Gentile converts of baptism with water, -- after they had received the baptism with the Holy Ghost. But thus God made choice among the Apostles, that through Peter's instrumentality, the door of faith was opened to Gentiles as well as Jews; and I see no reason to reject the views maintained, I think, by Dean Alford, that, (in a certain subordinate sense), the Church universal, composed of Jew and Gentile, was founded upon Peter as one of the "foundation stones," -- himself founded upon Jesus Christ, "the chief corner-stone," and having added to himself on the day of Pentecost, three thousand living stones beside. There is nothing in this remark, if rightly interpreted, to give the slightest countenance to the errors and assumptions of popery. The true rock upon which the Church is built, can be none other than the "Rock of Ages." "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus."

On the day of Pentecost, then, Christ's baptism was poured out upon the Church of the hundred and twenty. It was given to Christian believers, to converted persons, to those who had already accepted Christ in the pardon of sin. So/he of them had been followers of Jesus almost from the beginning of His public ministry -- a period of more than three years. Some, probably, had been only recently converted. But all alike received the Holy Ghost. And it is worthy of notice also, as showing the diversities of operations by the same Spirit, that the three thousand persons who were added to the Church on that remarkable day, probably, all received this baptism with the Spirit co-instantaneously with, or immediately after, their conversion. The power of the Lord is not to be limited in any way, and, although in most instances Christ's baptism is not received until some time subsequent to the new birth, yet this is not always, nor necessarily, the case. The work may be cut short in righteousness, and the newly regenerated soul may be baptized at once with the Holy Ghost.

Sometime after the martyrdom of Stephen, we are told that Philip, the deacon, went down to Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. Immediately a great revival began. "The people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake." They accepted the glad tidings of salvation, they believed in Jesus, they were baptized, both men and women. But this was not Christ's baptism. For "when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost." Then we have another most important parenthesis, showing very distinctly that to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus -- that is, to accept Him in repentance and remission of sins -- is one thing, and to receive the Holy Ghost in His baptizing power, is another, and a very different thing. "For as yet," says the evangelist, "He was fallen upon none of them, only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." "Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost."

Philip, we cannot doubt, was an anointed minister of Christ and a successful revivalist, but it was not given to him to be the means of imparting the Holy Ghost. For that impartation, the laying on of Apostolic hands, was, in this instance, required. But it was not always so. Paul himself received the Holy Ghost through the instrumentality of Ananias, and Apollos through that of Aquila and Priscilla. The power of conferring the Holy Ghost on believers was given, but not confined, to the Apostles; nor do I read anything, or know anything, about an "apostolic succession" in this or any other regard.

I have mentioned Apollos. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord, and spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, therefore, he must have been a converted man. He knew only the baptism of John, therefore, he had not received the baptism of Christ. But after Aquila and Priscilla had expounded to him the way of God more perfectly, and he had received the knowledge of Christ's baptism, and, no doubt, the baptism itself also, then "he helped them much which had believed through grace; for he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ." In addition to his gifts of culture and eloquence, he had received power when the Holy Ghost came upon him.

I presume it was twelve of the converts made by Apollos, when he knew only the baptism of John, whom Paul found at Ephesus, and to whom he addressed the question, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" I shall not enter into any argument about the translation of this passage, since, whatever be the translation, it clearly shows that to believe was, in the mind of the Apostle, one thing, and to receive the Holy Ghost was another. So fully was this distinction understood in those days, that it seems probable that some such question as the above was very commonly asked by the apostles when they met with strangers who claimed to be believers. After these twelve men had candidly confessed that they had not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost, and Paul had explained to them the difference between John's baptism and that of Christ, he laid his hands upon them, and they also received the Holy Ghost, -- "spake with tongues and prophesied."

And if the inquiry were made in our own day, whether of individual believers, or of the Church as a whole, -- "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" would not the Church, as such, and the great majority of its members, have to confess, like the Ephesian

converts: We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost, so far as His baptizing power is concerned. We have not known Him to fill us; to cleanse us; to energize us; to abide in us. And yet, what says the Lord Jesus? "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" Oh! when will the individual Christian, and when will the Church at large, learn the simple lesson, -- "Ask and receive?"

In the chapters that are to follow, it will be my endeavor to show what were the essential features and characteristics of the Pentecostal baptism. At present I will merely observe that the sensible miraculous phenomena which were manifested on that occasion, did not constitute those essential features and characteristics.

The principal miraculous power exercised by the disciples, and observed by the multitude, was the ability to speak in unknown tongues. Now, the gift of tongues; whether it means the power to speak in actual existing languages which the speaker had never learned, or whether it implies the giving forth of ecstatic utterances, not to be found in any language, and requiring a special gift of interpretation to understand it, was -- like the word of wisdom, and the word of knowledge, and the power of healing, and extraordinary faith -- one of the gifts of the Spirit, conferred by Him upon some, and withheld from others.

Christ's baptism, on the other hand, was the gift of the Spirit Himself and was designed for the Church universally, and every individual member of it in all ages. When Peter stood preaching on the day of Pentecost, with the new power of the Spirit upon him, the wondering multitude "were pricked in their heart," and said unto Peter and the rest of the Apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said unto them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." That is the first step in the way of salvation, and means simply the experience of the new birth. But he continued, -- "And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; for the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Here we have another and a different experience -- that of the baptism with the Holy Ghost -- and the positive assertion, that it is for every Christian; because most assuredly every Christian is one whom the Lord our God has called.

Let no one, therefore, suppose for a moment that the baptism with the Holy Ghost was a blessing granted only to Apostles, or to others only in the Apostolic age. On the contrary, it is the privilege of every believer to the end of time. Beloved reader, say then, It is for me, and, by the grace of God, it shall be mine.

The formula for a New Testament believer, whatever his name might be, -- whether Peter, or John, or Paul, or Barnabas, or Stephen, or Silas, was, "a man full of the Holy Ghost;" and the same formula ought to express, and does express the true Christian now. Not but that there are many true Christians, who have not yet received the Holy Ghost since they believed; but that all ought diligently to seek Him until they do receive Him, and that only thus can they enjoy the "fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ."

Nor has the Church, in any century of its existence, been without at least a few men and women who were "filled with the Spirit." So it was with Tauler, and the Friends of God, in the middle ages; so it was with such pious Roman Catholics as Fenelon, Thomas a Kempis, Lady Guyon, and Catherine Adorna; so it was with the Reformers of the sixteenth century; so it was with the Protestant Martyrs of England and other lands; so it was with the Moravians; so it was with the Covenanters; so it was with the early Friends; so it was with the early Methodists; so it is now with thousands of individual believers among the various sects of Christendom. God does not leave Himself without witnesses to His great salvation; and, even in the very darkest nights of apostasy, and in the fiercest storms of persecution, He reserves to Himself seven thousand who do not bow the knee to Baal, nor kiss his image. These are men baptized with the Holy Ghost; men full of the Spirit; men of whom martyrs are made in days of trial; and men whose light shines most sweetly and attractively in the days when the churches have rest.

If, as I have remarked, the miraculous phenomena attending the baptism received by the Church on the day of Pentecost are not to be confounded with the baptism itself, we need not be surprised if such sensible manifestations are sometimes absent.

This baptism does not come to all in the same way, though its effects are alike precious in all. With some it is a Pentecostal effusion -- the rushing of a mighty wind; the whirlwind and the earthquake, prostrating everything before it, and causing its recipients to speak with new tongues and glorify God, while the multitude wonder or scoff. With others the blessing comes in moments of quiet calm; when all outward commotions have ceased; when the faculties of the soul are hushed, and restful, and expectant; and it comes as a still, small voice, whispering to the inward ear, and diffusing a sweet and tranquil joy through the whole spiritual being. In either case it is the Holy Ghost, and we are to receive Him in the way of His coming. "The wind bloweth where it listeth."

The following quotation is from Fletcher:-- "But, if the Lord be pleased to come softly to thy help; if He make an end of thy corruptions by helping thee gently to sink to unknown depths of meekness; if He drown the indwelling man of sin by baptizing, by plunging him into an abyss of humility; do not find fault with the simplicity of His method, the plainness of His appearing, and the commonness of His prescriptions. Nature, like Naaman, is full of prejudices. She expects that Christ will come to make her clean, with as much ado, and pomp, and bustle as the Syrian General looked for, when "he was wroth and said, Behold, I thought he will surely come out to me, and stand and call on his God, and strike his hand over the place and recover the leper." Christ frequently goes a much plainer way to work, and by this means He disconcerts all our preconceived notions and schemes of deliverance. Learn of Me to be meek and lowly in heart, and thou shall find rest to thy soul, -- the sweet rest of Christian perfection, of perfect humility, resignation and meekness.

"If thou wilt absolutely come to mount Zion in a triumphal chariot, or make thine entrance into the New Jerusalem upon a prancing horse, thou art likely never to come there. Leave, then, all thy lordly misconceptions behind, and humbly follow thy King, who makes His entry into the typical Jerusalem, meek and lowly, riding upon an ass, yea, upon a colt, the foal of an ass."

In the light, and the joy, and the purity, and the power of the Pentecostal baptism, the disciples walked till the day of their death. It was never repeated to them. And yet, on one occasion afterwards, the place was shaken where they were sitting, "and they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake the word of God with boldness."

The power of the Spirit continuing in them constantly after the day of Pentecost, as a latent force, was brought into active exercise whenever it was required. They were specially energized for special emergencies, but the Spirit was with them all the time; yes, and in them. And so we must conclude that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is, in each case a definite experience, realized once for all, and not to be expected again and again; but there may be many successive girdings and fillings, according to God's free grace and the believers individual need, as well as the service to which he may be called.

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Remarks

1. -- The baptism with the Holy Ghost is the promise of the Father, and the gift of the Son.

2. -- This baptism is an experience distinct from, and subsequent to the new birth, but, in exceptional cases, the one may be imparted in immediate connection with the other.

3. -- The Scriptural expressions -- "baptized with the Holy Ghost," "the Holy Ghost fell on," "was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost," "Holy Ghost came," "Holy Ghost was given," "received the Holy Ghost," are used in reference to believers, and are precisely synonymous.

4. -- Christ's baptism does not always come in the same way, nor exhibit the same phenomena, either to the consciousness of the recipient, or to the observation of others.

5. -- This baptism is not one of the gifts of the Spirit, but the gift of the Spirit Himself.

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04 -- EFFECTS OF CHRIST'S BAPTISM -- ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION -- "Purifying their hearts by

The sound as of a rushing mighty wind, the appearance of cloven tongues like as of fire, and the speaking in unknown languages, were all miraculous accompaniments of the baptism received on the day of Pentecost; but they were not the baptism itself. The one item of transcendent importance in the whole history is, that then, for the first time, the church of the hundred-and-twenty "were all filled with the Holy Ghost." And, as a consequence of this baptism, a complete renovation and transformation were wrought in their interior, spiritual natures. They were entirely sanctified. Their hearts were made perfect in love.

Some years after this memorable event, a council was called at Jerusalem, to determine whether or not the restrictions and observances of the Mosaic law should be imposed upon the large numbers of Gentile Christians who had been converted by the preaching of Paul and Barnabas. On that occasion, Peter, in rehearsing the transactions in which he had had so large a share at the house of Cornelius, used the following language:-- "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith."

It must be quite evident, from this statement, (1), that just what the Gentiles received when the Holy Ghost fell on them at the preaching of Peter, that same thing the Apostles, and their fellow believers, received on the day of Pentecost; and (2), that, as the former received the purifying of their hearts by faith, so also did the latter.

But what does the expression, "purifying their hearts," mean? It means the removal of the remains of their carnality. It means the creation of a clean heart, and the renewal of a right spirit. It means the crucifixion of the flesh. It means the destruction of the body of sin. It means the casting out of the strong man, who was only bound in conversion. It means entire sanctification. It means Perfect Love.

Assuredly the eleven Apostles were converted men long before the day of Pentecost. They had, years ago, left all and followed Jesus. He had said to them, "Rejoice, because your names are written in Heaven," "I am the vine, ye are the branches," "I have called you friends." But it was not till the day of Pentecost that they experienced the "purifying of their hearts by faith." It was not till they had received the baptism with the Holy Ghost, that they were wholly cleansed from the stains of their inward corruption, and made truly pure in heart.

Let us for a moment look at the results of this wondrous transformation, as we can trace them in the subsequent history of some of the Apostles. Take the case of Peter. A very strong and earnest love had bound him to his Master from the first. He had been impulsive, and even forward in His service: he had been loud, and, we cannot doubt, sincere in his professions of devotion to Him; he had exhibited the strength, and along with it, the weakness as well, of an ardent, impetuous nature; he had attempted to walk upon the sea, and, through want of faith, had failed; he had boastfully asserted that he would never forsake his Lord, but had fled with the others when he was bidden to put up his sword; he had declared that he would die rather than deny his Saviour, but had been afraid to confess Him in the presence of a servant maid.

But how changed was Peter after his heart had been purified by faith on the day of Pentecost. Still active and energetic in his Master's cause, he was no longer timid and vacillating, but full of holy boldness. He did not hesitate to say to the amazed multitude, after the lame man had been healed, -- "Ye denied the Holy one and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of Life, whom God hath raised from the dead."

Looking into the faces of the very chief priests and Sanhedrin who had condemned his Master, he said, "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, WHOM YE CRUCIFIED, whom God raised from the dead, even BY HIM doth this man stand here before you whole." And, when commanded not to speak nor teach

in the name of Jesus; he gave utterance (with John) to that sublime aphorism which is ever the guide of the Christian, when his obedience to the civil magistrate comes in conflict with his duty to God, -- "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you, more than unto God, judge ye." On another occasion, when Herod was guarding Peter with four quaternions of soldiers, on the night before his intended execution, the angel who came to his rescue, did not find him weakly lamenting his approaching fate, nor striking his head in despair against the wall of his prison, but wrapped in that profound and tranquil slumber, which indicated the peacefulness of a spirit in harmony with God. Only once, in his subsequent history, do we find a little of the old vacillation, -- when he failed to pursue a strictly straight-forward course towards the Gentile converts at Antioch. But he would seem, even then, to have received the rebuke of his fellow-apostle in humility and meekness, and to have found it a precious oil, which did not break his head, because his heart was purified by faith; and he exhibits a spirit of true Christian magnanimity, by speaking afterwards in his Epistle, of his beloved brother Paul, and his mysterious writings.

And how was it with James and John? -- Boanerges sons of thunder; full of energy and zeal. They also, like Peter, were earnest and active in their Master's cause. But, mingled with their devotion to Him, there was also much fire that was not of His kindling; much self-seeking; much unholy ambition. They had schemes of personal advancement. They desired the first places, -- to sit, one on "His right hand, and the other on His left, in His Kingdom." They were ready to call down fire from Heaven to destroy a village that would not receive Him.

Their hearts had not yet been purified by faith. But after the Pentecostal baptism, how marked is the change. James meekly lays down his life under the sword of Herod, -- the first of the Apostles to seal his testimony with his blood; and John lives to an advanced age, becoming the very embodiment of love, talking about it, preaching about it, writing about it, telling us what it is to be made perfect in love; and in his latter years -- if tradition is correct -- he would sometimes be carried into the assembly of Christian worshippers, and looking benignly upon them would say, "Little children, love one another." He was not less a son of thunder after Pentecost, but vastly more a son of consolation.

The Apostle Paul, in his first letter to the Church of the Thessalonians, uses the following language:-- "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." "Faithful is He who calleth you, who also will do it." Now, it would appear, from a Comparison of the different Epistles, that these same Thessalonians constituted one of the most healthy and flourishing churches of the Apostolic age. In the first Epistle, the Apostle addresses them as a church whose members had been soundly converted by the power of the Holy Ghost, and whose work of faith and labor of love he could commend. In the words addressed to them, there is little censure and much commendation. He does not say to them, as to the Corinthians, "Every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ." He does not say, "Put away from yourselves that wicked person." He does not say, "There is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another." He does not say, as to the foolish Galatians, -- "Who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?"

And yet, even for these Thessalonians, Paul prays that they may obtain something which they have not yet obtained, something which they still needed; and that something was -- entire sanctification. "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly." They were already walking in the light of justification, and, being justified, they were also partially sanctified; but the Apostle desires nothing less than that they may be wholly sanctified.

When the second Epistle was written, we may well suppose that the Apostle's prayer had been answered, for he says: "We are bound to give thanks for you always brethren, as it is meet; because your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity (perfect love,) of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." Surely the church of which this could be said, had been baptized by the Holy Ghost, and received the purifying of their hearts by faith.

Justification and sanctification have often been confounded, both by writers and speakers; some regarding them as identical, and others failing to distinguish between them with sufficient definiteness and accuracy. While the terms undoubtedly express different states of grace, it must be admitted they have much in common. In both justification and sanctification, everything has to be received from Christ; everything has to be received in a spirit of entire submissiveness and self-abnegation on our part; and everything has to be received by faith.

Nor is it unimportant to remember that both these terms are used, in more senses than one, in the Sacred Scriptures. The word justify means, first, and commonly, to account just, -- i.e., to regard the offender, for the sake of Jesus Christ, as though he had not sinned. This is the same thing as pardon, or forgiveness. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." But it means, secondly, to approve; as in the texts, "But ye are washed," which means born again, "but ye are sanctified," which means made holy; "but ye are justified," which means, have received God's approval "in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." It will be seen at once, therefore, that this quotation from Paul furnishes no argument whatever in favor of the idea that, sanctification comes before justification, in the ordinary sense of that term.

Again, the term sanctify originally means to set apart for sacred uses; and thus, under the Law, it was applied to things as well as persons, -- to the furniture of the tabernacle, for example, as well as to the priests who officiated there. It is applied, technically, in the New Testament to all Christians. Even the Church at Corinth, to whom the Apostle writes, "Ye are carnal, and walk as men," are nevertheless addressed, in the beginning of the Epistle, as "sanctified in Christ Jesus." But, secondly, the term signifies to cleanse from all inward pollution; to deliver from indwelling corruption; to save from heart-sin; to make holy. It is in this sense that I employ it in the present work. We are now prepared to understand and to find the points of distinction between justification and sanctification.

First: Justification, while not excluding the present, has reference primarily and chiefly, to the past. If I commit a sin one moment, and am forgiven for it the next, it is, nevertheless, when so forgiven, a past sin. Sanctification, on the other hand, regarding the past as settled and canceled by the blood of Christ, has reference almost exclusively, to the present and the future. A soul seeking justification, inquires -- "How may I be forgiven for the sins that are past? A soul seeking sanctification, inquires -- "How may I be kept from sinning now, and in the future?"

Secondly: Justification removes the guilt and condemnation of sin; and sanctification removes from the heart that which brings guilt and condemnation, i.e., sin itself.

The term sin is used in the Bible, either in the sense of sin committed an actual transgression, in thought, word, or deed -- or sin indwelling, that depravity of heart which leads to all sinful acts; that inward cause, of which sins are the effects; that nature which we have by inheritance from our first parents, in the fall.

In the one sense, sin is a voluntary violation of the divine law; in the other it is an involuntary state of the heart. The one meaning implies guilt, the other, depravity; the former requires pardon or remission, the latter, cleansing or removal. The individual who is groaning under the burden of sins committed, wants to be forgiven; the one who is sensible of his indwelling corruption, wants to be cleansed. One seeks justification, the other sanctification.

Thirdly: Christ, and Christ only, is the efficacious cause, both of justification and sanctification. But Christ is our justification in that He hung upon the cross as our substitute, and bore our sins in His own body on the tree. He endured the penalty of the law instead of us, He gave Himself for us, He tasted death for every man, He trod the winepress alone, He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities. It is quite true that in every case of justification something is done inwardly as well as outwardly, nevertheless, the work in a peculiar sense is done for us, outside of us, instead of us, by our blessed Saviour.

On the other hand, Christ is our sanctification, as He baptizes us, and fills us, and dwells in us by the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, whom He purchased for us with His blood. Sanctification is, therefore, a work performed peculiarly and specially within us.

Fourthly: justification is done once for all; it is a completed work; it blots out for ever all past sins. It may have to be repeated if sin is repeated, but always, when it has taken effect, it is a finished work; it is not in any sense progressive. Sanctification, on the contrary, although it implies at the beginning the removal of that inward depravity which inclines us to evil, is yet always progressive, in degree. Entire sanctification, so far from excluding growth, is itself the best preparation for a healthful, symmetrical, and continuous growth. "There will never, says Upham, "be a period, either in time or eternity, when there may not be an increase of holy love."

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In sanctification, the tendencies to sin are removed, but the susceptibilities remain. On these Satan is ever ready to operate with his temptations, and, in the present state of being, it will always be possible for us, as moral agents, to yield to his suggestions. There will always be the liability to sin, but not always the unavoidable necessity to sin. We have a deliverer "mighty to save."

What says Paul? "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" And again, the words of the Holy Ghost, through that eminent Apostle, come down to the Church in every age with all the force of a positive command: "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin. but alive

unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord;" i.e., reckon yourselves dead to sin and trust in Christ to make the reckoning good. What you reckon, He will make real and true.

We have already spoken of sin as either an act or a state. Now, to be dead to sin as an act, is not to do that act. To be dead to sin as a state, is not to be in that state. Most men are dead to the sin of murder as an act. They do not actually kill, but the Apostle John tells us that "he that hateth his brother is a murderer;" and so, whoever cherishes hatred and malice in his heart is not dead to the sin of murder as a state. The illustration can easily be extended to other sins.

There is a being of sin, back of the doing of sin. There are germ sins in the heart, out of which spring actual sins in the life. Paul distinguishes between the flesh and the works of the flesh. The flesh, used in that sense, is the body of sin; the depraved heart, the aggregate of the evil propensities, dispositions, and tendencies of the carnal nature. Every evil deed in that long, dark, dreadful list enumerated in the Epistle to the Galatians as the works of the flesh, arises out of some tendency in the unregenerate heart, which tendency, under the influence of Satan's temptations, is liable to break forth into the corresponding act of wickedness. Now, in an immense majority of instances, to say the least, these dispositions to evil, which, collectively, are called sin, or the body of sin, or inbred sin, or indwelling sin, or depravity, or the flesh, are not wholly removed at the time of conversion. The Articles of the English Church are entirely correct in saying, "This infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated."

And yet, even in justification and regeneration, sin is brought into subjection. It continues in the heart, but it does not reign there. The promise to all Christians is "Sin shall not have dominion over you." Let no justified believer imagine for a moment that because he is not sanctified, or for any other reason, he has a license to sin. "Whosoever is born of God, sinneth not." "He cannot sin," without thereby incurring condemnation. The tendencies to evil may be strong within him, but the grace of God will be sufficient to keep him from falling into overt acts of sin, to enable him to walk in the light of justification, and even to grow continually in grace.

Still, however, there must be in such a heart frequent and protracted struggles. The strong man is bound, but not being cast out he makes desperate efforts to burst his bonds and re-assert his supremacy in the household. "The infection of nature" within, responds favorably to the temptations of Satan from without. When the individual would do good, evil is present with him. His will may be firm on God's side, his faith may be strong, and sin may be kept in subjection, but the contest is often so fearful, that the language is truly applicable, "Oh, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death?" (mar). And, in point of fact, while we do not for a moment limit or doubt the power of God to keep any of His children from failing, we believe the number to be very small, who, stopping short with the grace of justification, and not seeking and finding that of entire sanctification, do yet wholly escape being brought into captivity to the law of sin and falling into backsliding.

In direct contrast with the "works of the flesh," the Apostle sets before us "the fruits of the Spirit," -- love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, -- a blessed group of sweet Christian graces. Now, in Christ's baptism, the Spirit comes into the heart of the believer, that He may abide with him for ever. Such will be the result, if we do not

grieve Him by our unbelief and disobedience. And that man in whom the Spirit dwells, will enjoy in his heart, and bring out in his life, the fruits of the Spirit.

Thus the promise addressed by Ezekiel to the scattered, peeled sons of Israel, will be fulfilled in the experience of the consecrated, believing Christian, i.e. -- "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." Out of the heart are the issues of life; and the heart, entirely sanctified and renewed, brings forth the fruits of the Spirit, in accordance with its renewed nature; just as the unregenerate heart brings forth the works of the flesh, in accordance with its unrenewed nature.

In one of the American cities, a minister one day came into a meeting which was being held for the promotion of Christian holiness. He heard persons testifying to the cleansing power of the blood of Christ, and the keeping power of His Spirit, and was filled with wonder. At length he arose and said, "Brethren, I want to understand this thing; I am a minister of the Gospel. As I came to this meeting I passed by the race-course, where the trotting of fast horses is going on. I have a fast horse myself, and I felt a strong inclination to turn in and try him against the others. But I reflected that it would not be seemly for a minister of Christ to be engaged in such amusements with jockeys and gamblers, who were probably racing their horses for money; so I passed on. I wanted to go in very much, but I did not go. Now, tell me, brethren, is that sanctification?" "No, brother," was the reply; "sanctification takes the want-to out of the heart."

And this is true. Every one can see that a man who cherishes evil desires and passions in his heart, however he may restrain them in the outward act, is not a sanctified or holy man. Jesus, when personally on earth, compared the scribes and Pharisees to "whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness." And yet, these Pharisees were exceedingly scrupulous in their ceremonial observances and religious duties. To be religious is one thing, to be holy is quite another. Every holy man is religious, but not every religious man is holy.

A story illustrating the same point, has come down to us from the heathen mythology. Among the divinities, or semi-divinities, believed in by the Greeks, were the sirens, who dwelt upon an island on the west coast of Italy. They were gifted with wonderfully attractive voices, and sang beautiful songs. These siren songs, as they floated melodiously over the waves, lured the mariners who came within hearing, to their own destruction; for, so enraptured were these unhappy men by the unprecedented sweetness of the sounds which greeted their ears, that, in their infatuation, they would leap overboard in order to get to the songstresses. Thus they were either drowned, or, if they succeeded in reaching the shore, they were put to death by the sirens themselves. In all this we behold an admirable symbol of earthly and sensual pleasure.

On one occasion it happened -- as the legend informs us -- that Ulysses, the celebrated Grecian general, while performing his protracted and arduous journeyings, after the destruction of Troy, passed near the island of the sirens. Knowing the dangerous character of their deceitful songs, he took the precaution, before coming within hearing, to stop the ears of his men with

wax, and to have himself tied fast with ropes to the mast of the ship. When the ravishing sounds reached his ears, he made desperate efforts to free himself from his bonds, that he might leap into the sea; but his self-imposed restraint held him back, and all sailed away in safety. He wanted to go where the pleasant sounds invited him, but he could not.

At another time, the Argonautic expedition, led by Jason, was passing by the same place. Jason felt no necessity for stopping his men's ears with wax, nor for binding himself to the mast. He had on board his vessel the celebrated musician, Orpheus, at the sound of whose lyre -- according to Grecian fable -- the trees of the forest would bend in ecstasy. Jason had nothing to do, therefore, but just to set Orpheus playing upon his lyre. The sound was so much more entrancing, so much sweeter and lovelier than any that the sirens could produce, that, though their songs were still wafted over the deep, they fell upon heedless ears; -- there was better music on board. They could have gone to the sirens if they had chosen, but they did not want to go.

"ULYSSES, sailing by the Sirens' isle,
Sealed first his comrades ears, then bade them fast
Bind him with many a fetter to the mast,
Lest those sweet voices should their souls beguile,
And to their ruin flatter them, the while
Their homeward bark was swiftly sailing past;
And thus the peril they behind them cast,
Though chased by those weird voices many a mile.
But yet a nobler cunning Orpheus used:
No fetter he put on, nor stopped his ear,
But ever, as he passed, sang high and clear
The blisses of the gods, -- their holy joys,
And, with diviner melody, confused
And marred earth's sweetest music to a noise.

(Archbishop Trench).

From various motives, and by various means, both converted and unconverted men may restrain themselves from sinful indulgences which they may, nevertheless, ardently desire to partake of. They may force themselves to observe the right in outward conduct, when they have little love for the right in their inmost hearts. But, is it not possible to be so filled with the Spirit, -- to have Christ so dwell in the heart by faith, that the tempting attractions of this world, although presented to the perceptions, shall scarcely influence at all the emotions, the desires, or the will? The sanctified believer in Jesus has a music in his own soul, far sweeter than any siren-song of this delusive world. And, true it is; as the author of *The Christian Year* has beautifully written:--

"There are, in this loud, stunning tide
Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide
Of the everlasting chime;
Who carry music in their heart

Through dusky lane and wrangling mart;
Plying their daily task with busier feet,
Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat."

And as sanctification takes away the "want to" that inclines us to evil, so it puts in the "want to" that inclines us to good. God writes His law in the heart so that it may be loved.

His service then becomes love service, not task work. The language of the heart purified by faith is, "Here am I, send me." It meets every intimation of God's will with a may I, rather than a must 1. You may require your child to do your bidding, and secure his obedience; but his reluctance is so great, his brow so clouded, his step so tardy and unwilling, that the act of obedience gives you little pleasure. He does what you command him from duty or compulsion, but not with the joyful acquiescence of a loving heart. You feel that if you could get into his heart and make him want to do what you require, you would possess the secret of success in governing him. "I wish," said a thoughtful little boy, "that I could obey God as my dog obeys me. He just loves to do what I tell him." The language of the Psalmist is, "I delight to do Thy will, O, my God;" and that of the blessed Saviour, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work." In a like spirit should willing service be rendered by every devoted child of God. May it be the experience of every Christian who reads this book, to leave the position of a servant and take joyously that of a son.

* * *

Remarks

1. -- Justification is the beginning, and entire sanctification the completion, of the work of inward holiness. But there may be an indefinite growth in holiness.

2. -- Justification is "that act of God's grace in which He pardons our sins and accepts us as righteous in His sight, for the sake of Christ." The believer who has been thus pardoned and accepted is in a justified state.

3. -- Sanctification is that act of divine grace whereby we are made holy. The believer in whom this act of grace has been performed is in a sanctified state.

4. -- Sanctification is the result of Christ's baptism "with the Holy Ghost and with fire."

5. -- Sanctification, as a state of grace, "implies the whole heart and life devoted to God."

6. -- "Holiness is sanctification in perpetuity."

7. -- The natural appetites, propensities, and affections were not originally sinful, but became so when man fell. Sanctification does not abolish these sensibilities of our nature, but takes the sin out of them, so that they may be exercised rightly and properly and to the glory of God. This is what it is to keep under the body and bring it into subjection. Our Heavenly Father

does not require us to eradicate our natural propensities, but to control them. He does not require us to cease to be men, but He does require us to be holy men.

8. -- The appetites, propensities, and affections are readily susceptible of a wrong action, either in kind or degree. Satan, by his temptations, is ever ready to induce in them such wrong action, and thus to pervert them from their original purpose. It is here, chiefly, that the susceptibilities to sin remain, even in the sanctified believer. If he fails to watch and to pray and to abide in Christ, Satan will be on the alert to inject sin again into that heart which has been purified from its inward corruption, even as he beguiled Eve by his subtilty.

9. -- "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." The justified believer, though not wholly delivered from the remains of carnality, may be kept by faith in Christ from falling into outward sin. On the other hand, the sanctified believer may be tempted, and may fall. Nevertheless, to have the heart purified by faith certainly does not involve any peculiar danger of falling, but quite the reverse. It would be preposterous to maintain that where there is more holiness there is less safety.

* * *

AARON

Holiness on the head,
Light and perfections on the breast,
Harmonious bells below, raising the dead
To lead them unto life and rest:
Thus are true Aarons dressed.

Profaneness in my head,
Defects and darkness in my breast,
A noise of passions ringing me for dead
Unto a place where is no rest:
Poor priest thus am I dressed.

Only another head
I have, another heart and breast,
Another music, making live not dead,
Without whom I could have no rest:
In him I am well dressed.

Christ is my only head,
My alone only heart and breast,
My only music, striking me even dead;
That to the old man I may rest,
And be in him new dressed.

So holy in my head,

Perfect and light in my dear breast,
My doctrine tuned by Christ (who is not dead,
But lives in me while I do rest)
Come, people, Aaron's dressed.

-- George Herbert

* * * * *

05 -- EFFECTS OF CHRIST'S BAPTISM -- CHRISTIAN PERFECTION -- PERFECT LOVE

The inspired writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews begins the sixth chapter of that letter as follows, viz.:-- "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit."

It is evident that there is nothing here that should lead us for a moment to under-value the foundation, nor to under-estimate the importance of laying it aright. The Church of Christ, including every individual believer, is founded upon the Eternal Rock. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Whoever would be a good reader must first learn the alphabet. Whoever would be a mathematician must first learn the properties of numbers. Whoever would be an adept in any science must begin with acquainting himself with the elements of that science.

And thus every believer needs to be indoctrinated into the fundamental principles of Christianity. These are enumerated in the text as (1) Repentance from dead works, whether the works of the flesh in the unconverted, or the works of the Jewish law which could not give life. (2) Faith towards God, which is the acceptance of His plan of salvation in Christ. (3) The doctrine of baptisms, or rather of washings -- meaning the divers washings of the Jewish ritual -- and, as the epistle was to Hebrew Christians, it was particularly fit that they should know the typical meaning of their own ceremonial law. (4) Laying on of hands. In the Apostolic days the laying on of hands was employed in healing the sick, in setting apart the various officers of the Church for their respective positions and duties, and in conferring the Holy Ghost. (5 and 6) The resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment, which involve our hope and our fear for the unending future.

It is quite clear that these fundamental doctrines of Christianity are not to be regarded as of no importance, nor of small importance. What we are urged to do is not to get away from the foundation, nor to lay a new foundation, but to proceed to build on the foundation already laid -- not to spend all our lives in laying it again, but to go on unto perfection. The perfection here meant, I suppose, to be Christian perfection or holiness.

The word perfect, as applied to any man, is very generally regarded as odious and absurd, not only by the unconverted but by Christians as well. Yet from a very early period in human history down to New Testament times at least, there were men whom God called perfect. Nor

can it be disputed, as I think, that the same remark continues to be true down to the present age, nor that it will be equally true to the end.

"Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God." "Hast thou considered my servant Job, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil." "I am the Almighty God: walk before me, and be thou perfect." "Asa's heart was perfect with the Lord all his days." "And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy fathers, and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind." "Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." "Be perfect." "For the perfecting of the saints." "Whom we preach, warning every man and teaching every man, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

Now, I am very far from denying that even the most noted worthies of the scripture history sometimes exhibited such traits of character, and were guilty of such practices as were not at all perfect, when judged by the ordinary human standard; and I am equally far from suggesting for a moment, the preposterous idea that God's standard of perfection is lower than man's. Nevertheless, the undeniable fact remains, that, by the grace of God, these servants of His had been brought into such a condition of heart that He could, and did, call them perfect. Let us ascertain, if possible, what that condition was.

The word perfection is, undoubtedly, employed in the Scriptures in more senses than one. We have the expression perfect as pertaining to the conscience, where justification, the perfect remission of past sins is meant. Then again we read, "To make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering." Jesus took not on Him the nature of angels, but He took on Him the seed of Abraham, and was fitted for the work of human redemption by assuming our humanity, and suffering with and for us. In that sense, He was made perfect through sufferings; and in that sense also, the disciple, like his Master, may be made perfect, i.e., fitted for the work he has to do, or the place he has to occupy in God's building, by the discipline of suffering and trial. Still, again, in the third chapter of Philippians, Paul claims perfection in the fifteenth verse, and disclaims it in the twelfth. That which he claims is doubtless Christian perfection, or a clean heart. That which he disclaims, but which he is pressing towards, is the eternal perfectedness of the saints in light, when the resurrection body, joined to the soul in endless union, shall promote, instead of retarding, as does our corruptible body now, the unceasing exercises of holy love and holy joy.

Christian perfection is not the absolute perfection of Deity. God's perfection is infinite in degree, and applies to all His attributes. It is inherent in Himself, and wholly independent of all other existences. He stands alone, and is the only absolutely perfect Being in the universe. The holiest Christian has no perfection which is not derived from Christ, and which is not every moment dependent upon His merits. "We are nothing, Christ is all."

Christian perfection is not the perfection of the angels, nor that of the redeemed in glory. True it is, indeed, that holiness in its nature is ever the same, but in heaven its blessed exercises are not interrupted or suspended, as they are liable to be on earth, by physical and other causes.

Nor will those who are permitted to dwell in that happy place be any longer subject to the heavy and perpetual temptations which assail even the holiest believer here. Sanctification does not bestow upon its possessor freedom from temptation, but freedom from sin; not freedom from spiritual warfare, but freedom from defeat. And this only when looking unto, and abiding in Jesus.

Paul describes the true spiritual warfare, as a wrestling, "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." -- (Mar.) In order to wage this war, therefore, we have to get into heavenly places. The strong man who has possession of our hearts, must be not only bound, but cast out. The foes must be expelled from our own household; our hearts must be entirely loyal to our commander. If there are traitors within, they will be constantly endeavoring to open the door to the enemies without.

Entire sanctification, or Christian perfection -- a heart made perfect in love -- is one of the most important qualifications for the soldier who would do valiantly in the army of the Lamb. The armor which the Apostle so graphically describes in the Epistle to the Ephesians, -- armor for the head, for the breast, for the body, for the feet, and for each hand -- is an armor which the Christian must wear, and which he must use so long as he lives in this world. It is to be employed, however, not against the citadel of his own heart -- which is supposed to be already wholly surrendered to the Lord -- but against the hosts of Satan and of sin all around him.

Christian Perfection does not pertain to the physical system, nor to the intellect. It is not Adamic perfection. The progenitor of our race was doubtless created with a perfect body and a perfect mind. He was not omniscient; but so far as his knowledge was permitted to extend, it was right knowledge, i.e., a knowledge of things as they really were, and of their true relations to each other. He was not liable to be deceived either by his perceptions or his judgment, -- either in the acquisition of facts, or the deduction of conclusions from them. What he perceived, he perceived correctly; and what he knew, he knew correctly.

But with us, in our fallen condition, -- all our faculties and powers being crippled by sin, our bodies subject to disease and death, our minds intimately associated with them and partaking of their infirmity -- the case is entirely different. Our senses, the avenues through which information reaches us from the external world, may themselves deceive us. The supposed facts upon which our judgments about many things are based, may not be real facts. The premises from which we reason may be fallacious; the reasoning itself may be unsound; the conclusion may be incorrect.

And if our judgments are thus liable to error, our practice also will be liable to mistake. In our present state of being, a perfect knowledge of things, either as they are in themselves, or as they are related to each other, is wholly impossible. And God does not require such perfect knowledge, as the necessary condition of gospel holiness. Imperfections, infirmities, and errors, will cling to us so long as we are in the body. They are the effects of sin, -- effects inherited from Adam, our federal head, in his fallen condition -- and, if any one chooses to call them sins of ignorance, I shall make no objection.

Now, sacrifices were distinctly appointed under the Mosaic Law, not only for voluntary and conscious transgression, but for sins of ignorance as well. Therefore, even our infirmities and imperfections require confession, and the atoning application of the Saviour's blood, that their stains may be washed away. God has a right to require of each of us, all that we might have rendered to Him if Adam had not fallen; but, for the sake of Jesus Christ, He mercifully remits and forgives all things in which we unavoidably fall short of that standard. Without requiring mental or physical perfection, He confers upon His consecrated, believing children, the inestimable grace of Christian Perfection.

Dispossessing our minds, then, of all these erroneous ideas, having ascertained what Christian Perfection is not, let us now proceed to inquire what it is. A question so momentous can find a satisfactory answer no where else but in the Book which is "profitable for doctrine," -- the teachings of the prophets, of the apostles, and of the Saviour Himself. And the humble, candid, inquiring mind, searching the Scriptures daily "whether these things are so," will not be left long in doubt as to what it is that constitutes the Holiness, or the Perfection, which God requires of His people, and which He confers upon them as a grace and a privilege under the Gospel dispensation.

When, on a certain occasion, Jesus was asked, "Which is the great commandment in the Law?" His answer was, -- "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment; and the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." All the teachings of the Old Testament, therefore, we must infer, hinge upon these two commandments -- the first and second tables of the Law -- love God, and love man.

The same truth is expressed by the Apostle in his Epistle to the Romans, in one pithy sentence: "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Now, all that God requires of us, is the fulfilling of His law, and if that is comprised in love, then, he who loves aright fulfills the law, -- pleases God, and is, in the Christian sense, perfect. Again, he writes to Timothy, -- "Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." Love, therefore, flowing out of a sanctified heart, a conscience void of offense, and a sincere faith; that is the end of the commandment -- that is Christian Perfection. "A new commandment," said the Lord Jesus to His disciples, "I give unto you," -- a commandment which may supersede all others, because it includes them all -- "That ye love one another." And the beloved John tells us of a "perfect love, which casteth out fear;" and that if we love one another, "God's love is perfected in us." Christian Perfection, therefore, my dear reader, is nothing else than Perfect Love.

The man who loves God supremely, and his neighbor as himself, who enthrones God as it were in the very center of his heart, and allows Him to reign there without a rival, and who, while loving God above everything else, yet loves everything else also as God would have him love it, is, in the Scriptural sense of the terms, a holy or a perfect man. Such an one may be rich or poor; he may be learned or ignorant; he may have one talent or five; his body may be healthy or diseased; his mind may be active or sluggish; his judgment may be strong or weak; his involuntary imperfections and infirmities may be few or many; he may differ much from the

angels, and much from Adam, but he bears -- in his measure -- the moral image of God, for "God is love."

Thus, in the Sermon on the Mount, when the Saviour is contrasting human love, which only extends to friends and neighbors, with the love of God, who "maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust," He tells us, that in order to show by our likeness to such a Father that we are His true children, we must adopt His sentiments, and love in our degree as He loves; i.e. -- "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you." And it is in this connection that He employs the stupendous words, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." That is to say, -- Be ye perfect in love, and thus -- to the extent of your finite capacity -- like Him who is Perfect Love.

We do not hesitate to say that holiness, or perfection, in the sense in which it has just been explained, is required of all Christians. And, if required of all, it is the privilege of all to obtain it. Like every other Gospel blessing, it is the gift of God in Christ; and like every other Gospel blessing, it is to be received by faith. It is a part of our Father's legacy to His children. Let none despise it, nor fail to seek and find it.

In every age of the Church, God has had His experimental witnesses to the wondrous grace of perfect love. Not the least conspicuous among these were the founders of the Society of Friends. George Fox, and many of his coadjutors, not only taught the possibility of holiness -- through faith in Christ -- as a doctrine, but they claimed it for themselves as an experience.

"They asked me," says George Fox, in giving an account of his examination before some magistrates in Derby, "whether I was sanctified? I answered, yes, for I was in the Paradise of God. Then they asked me if I had no sin? I answered, -- Christ, my Saviour, had taken away my sin; and in Him is no sin. They asked me, how we knew that Christ did abide in us? I said, -- By His Spirit, which He has given us. Then they temptingly asked if any of us were Christ? I answered, Nay: we were nothing! Christ was all."

Equally explicit were the teachings of John Wesley and the early Methodists. In opposition to Count Zinzendorf, -- who maintained that all sin is removed from the heart in conversion -- Wesley upheld the doctrine, that sin still exists, as an "infection of nature," in justified believers. But he also clearly recognized the possibility of its entire removal; such removal being effected by an act of God's grace, and the result to the individual being entire sanctification, -- Christian perfection, or Perfect Love.

The questions still addressed to Methodist ministers at their ordination, indicate the same thing. The candidate is asked, -- "Have you faith in Christ? Are you going on unto perfection? Do you expect to be made perfect in love in this life?" Not -- Do you expect to be made perfect in knowledge, or in wisdom, or in practice? but, in love.

But we need not particularize the distinctive teachings of Christian sects. Every denomination has had its witnesses. Some of the most holy men and women of whom we have any account, have been Roman Catholics. Such were Tauler, and the Friends of God, Thomas

aKempis, Fene1on, and Lady Guyon. The names of many holy men and women adorn the annals of the Church of England. I need only mention Archbishop Leighton. Swiss Calvinists like d'Aubigne; Presbyterians like President Edwards, and James Brainerd Taylor; Baptists like Dr. Levy of Philadelphia; Congregationalists, Moravians, Brethren. All these, and other sects, have had among their members those who could bear testimony to the "perfect love which casteth out fear."

And never, since the Apostolic Age, have larger accessions been made to the ranks of these witnesses than in our own days. Thousands and tens of thousands throughout Christendom, have been awakened in recent years to an apprehension of their privileges in the Gospel, such as they had not known before; and coming to Jesus with consecrated hearts, they are entering by the open door of faith into the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel. To His name be all the glory. Amen.

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Remarks

1. -- To be holy is not to be perfect in body, it is not to be perfect in mind, it is not to be infallible; it is simply to be freed from sin.

2. -- Christian perfection makes its possessor perfect in his Christianity, not necessarily perfect in anything else.

3. -- Perfect Christianity, or Christian perfection, consists in perfect love. Perfect love is that which loves God supremely, and your neighbor as yourself. Such love is the fulfilling of the law and the end of the commandment.

4. -- Love is in proportion to faith. Little faith, little love; much faith, much love; perfect faith, perfect love. Perfect faith can only exist in connection with perfect surrender to God.

5. -- Out of a heart made perfect in love, there must necessarily flow a life devoted to God. "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit."

6. -- Knowledge, judgment, and practice will always be imperfect in our present state of being. But Christian perfection implies perfect submission, perfect faith, perfect love, and, up to the standard of knowledge, perfect obedience.

7. -- Christian perfection is a bestowment and an impartation, wholly derived from the merits of Christ and constantly dependent upon the indwelling Spirit. It cannot exist a single moment in any branch that is not abiding in the Vine.

8. -- Christian perfection does not exclude growth. Both in nature and in grace God's works may be perfect in every stage of their development, and yet constantly growing in their perfections.

9. -- Christian perfection in the sense explained in this chapter is required of all Christians; and what is duty is also privilege. Every believer may and should have a heart made perfect in love.

10. -- "Accepting our punishment is just being of one mind with God, in hating and condemning sin, and longing for its destruction. It is submitting ourselves to the process of its destruction, and setting our seals to the righteousness of God in the process. It is the death-pang of the crucified Head thrilling through the members, and accomplishing in them what it did in the Head." -- Thomas Erskine.

If instead of the phrase "accepting our punishment," we read Christ's baptism, these observations -- and especially the last -- will be equally impressive and equally true.

11. -- "Sins of ignorance" are spoken of in the Law of Moses, as possible, but not necessary. They might or might not occur. Ignorance of God's will, when the knowledge of it is within our reach, is itself criminal. And ignorance is no valid excuse for sins committed under such circumstances; although God, in His mercy, provides sufficient sacrifice for these, as for all other sins, -- in Christ.

Evils arising out of unavoidable ignorance, are not sins, in the sense of attaching guilt to the perpetrator. They are his misfortune, not his fault. Their penalty may be suffering, but it is not condemnation. Whoever "walks in all the light he has and can acquire," is delivered and kept by the power of God from all sin.

Father, Thy all-absorbing love
Draws out my heart in love to Thee;
Yet, save Thy love came down to me,
Mine never could have reached above.

Lord, I had nothing; till, within,
Thy grace revealed Thy blessed cross
My very righteousness was dross,
And all my life a trace of sin.

Thou asked for that which Thou had'st made:
My life, myself, my love, my heart;
Yet, when thou would'st Thy grace impart,
My gift, though poor, was long delayed.

At length surrendered to Thy call,
I scarcely knew then what I gave;
I cannot now know all I have,
But I have Christ, and He is "All."

W. C. W.

So let us love, dear love, like as we ought,
Love is the lesson which the Lord us taught.

-- Edmund Spenser

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06 -- HOW IS HOLINESS TO BE OBTAINED? -- CONSECRATION -- FAITH

If my reader has followed me through the preceding chapters, and if he has searched the Scriptures daily whether these things are so, he must already have decided in his own mind either that it is his duty and privilege, under the Gospel, to be holy, or that it is not. If he has adopted the latter conclusion, then he might as well close the book at this point, and, so far as he is concerned, I might as well not have written it. It is of no use to talk about how holiness is to be obtained to a man who does not believe that it can be obtained at all. The human mind is so constituted that it will not put forth a volition, nor an effort, nor feel under any obligation to do a thing which it believes impossible to be done, or to obtain a thing which it believes impossible to be obtained. A Christian believer may regard holiness as a thing to be very much desired, but if he regards it also as a thing not to be obtained, he is not likely to concern himself about the conditions on which it is bestowed, nor to determine to have it at whatever cost.

If, however, my Christian reader has been brought, by my feeble words or by any instrumentality whatever, to believe that holiness is required, and therefore possible, I trust that he has been brought also earnestly to desire it. A deep conviction of one's needs in this regard, is a preparatory state of mind very favorable to its reception. It is they that hunger and thirst who are to be filled; and if any one under a deep sense "of his inward corruption is saying with David, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God;" or, " My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God;" or, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me;" or with the poet,

"Break off the yoke of inbred sin,
And fully set my spirit free;
I cannot rest till pure within,
Till I am wholly lost in Thee"

To such an one I believe it may be said, This full salvation is "very nigh thee."

If, then, a proper beginning has been made in a fixed belief that holiness is attainable, and an earnest desire for it, the next step which the seeking inquiring soul will find it necessary to take is an act of unalterable consecration to God. Consecration is, by some, confounded with sanctification, but I shall employ the term in its usual acceptation -- that, namely, of entire surrender to Christ. Consecration in this sense is necessary to sanctification, but not identical with it. Sanctification implies consecration, but it also implies more. Consecration is our own act; sanctification is God's act. Consecration has the same relation to sanctification that repentance has to justification. It is a deeper repentance, a completer submission, a fuller and more detailed surrender.

Such an act of consecration in which we yield up ourselves and our all -- body, soul, and spirit, time, talents, possessions, all that we have, and all that we are -- in unconditional surrender to God, is necessary to everyone who would receive at His hands the priceless blessing of a clean heart. That blessing, like every other good thing promised in the Gospel, is to be received by faith; and it is only by entire surrender that we can come on to believing ground and be in a position to exercise faith for so great a boon.

We cannot, with any show of reason, believe that God will bestow upon us that wondrous blessing while we are living in a state of voluntary rebellion against Him. So long as we indulge any known sin, or omit any known duty, we cannot have faith to believe that God will sanctify us wholly; and without faith it is just as impossible for the believer to be sanctified, as for the sinner to be pardoned.

Christians are often complaining, and doubtless with justice, of their own lack of faith. There are comparatively few who have a faith so strong that, in the language of the Saviour, they can remove mountains. And if our faith is dim and weak, is it not because our consecration is imperfect? Is it not because we are keeping back part of the price? By retaining self-life in our hearts, are we not making it impossible to believe in God fully, and to trust Him confidently, and to obey Him implicitly? Absolute and unconditional surrender to God is a necessary pre-requisite to the faith that staggers not at the promises of God through unbelief. "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God."

In the sixth chapter of Romans, 13th verse, the Apostle clearly sets forth the consecration that is required of Christians: "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. He is now addressing Christian believers no longer dead in trespasses and sins, but " alive from the dead." They had already come in repentance as sinners surrendering themselves to be saved or forgiven, but now he calls upon them as Christians to yield themselves and their members in unconditional surrender to God and His service. Consecration is not simply a mass offering, but a surrender in detail.

Are my readers willing thus to make an inventory of themselves, their members, and their possessions, and hand all over to the Lord, saying to Him from their inmost hearts, each one for himself, "Not my will, but Thine be done." Have Thine own way with me and mine in all particulars. " I am willing to receive what Thou givest, and to want what Thou withholdest, and to relinquish what Thou takest, and to suffer what Thou inflictest, and to be what Thou requirest, and to do what Thou commandest."

Where shall we begin? Shall it be with your intellect, your brain-power, your gifts, and talents, and accomplishments? What have you been thinking about since your conversion? Have you been thinking little of yourselves and much of God, or much of yourselves and little of God? Have you been planning and devising how to promote God's glory, or how to serve your own interests and pleasure? Have your talents been devoted to the service of Christ, or to the service of self? Has God been in all your thoughts, and are you willing now to give up your thinking powers to the Lord, and allow Him to "bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of

Christ?" "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

The eye and ear -- those organs of sense through which Satan so often introduces his temptations from without -- will you surrender them to the Lord? Will you say with Thomas Ellwood,

"Oh, let mine eyelids closed be
To what concerns me not to see!
Oh, let me ever shut mine ear
To what concerns me not to hear!"

So far as the things of this world are concerned, "the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing." But rather let the Christian say, "Thine eye shall see the King in His beauty;" or, "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law;" and let him remember that " My sheep hear my voice." Give eye and ear unto the Lord.

The tongue also -- that unruly evil which no man can tame. Nowhere can it be kept safely, except in God's hands. How have your tongues been employed, beloved, since your conversion? Have they been telling what God has done for your souls? Talking about His wondrous works? Teaching transgressors His ways? Praising Him who hath taken your feet from the mire and clay and established them upon the Rock? Many Christians are possessed of a dumb spirit. They are voluble enough in praising their earthly friends or possessions. Yes; they will be heard day after day praising horses, dogs, books, birds, the landscape, works of nature and of art, but never a word of praise is heard for Him who redeemed them. And just here is to many the stumbling-block, the hindrance in the way of their consecration. They are afraid to surrender themselves wholly to the Lord, lest they may have to speak of Him before the people; and there are those who would almost as willingly surrender up their natural life, as open their mouths publicly in the Lord's cause. Here is one of the strongholds of Satan in too many hearts. But now, as of old, when Satan is cast out, the dumb speak -- nay, more, the tongue of the dumb sometimes sings. Did not the prophet say it would be so?

And again. The tongue that is mute in God's praise, is it not sometimes too busy with your neighbor's character? Is it more ready to confess other people's sins than your own? Does it never prevaricate? Does it not sometimes conceal your real thoughts, instead of expressing them? Have you not found it really "unruly? "Will you not put it into the hands of Him who is alone able to control it? If Moses -- that almost grandest character among the magnates of Scripture--instead of pleading his slow speech and slow tongue, had placed himself, without hesitation or reserve, tongue and all, into the hands of the Lord, might he not have been kept from that one sin with his tongue, which kept him out of the promised land? At any rate, the only safe place for our tongues is with the Lord; and let us give them to Him willingly and gladly, to be used by Him in any way that He may choose, or disused entirely if it be His will, to teach, to exhort, to testify, to pray, to praise, or to remain silent before Him.

And your hands, beloved, how have they been employed since you have been Christians? Working for yourselves? Accumulating the treasures of this world? Gathering together those things which please the natural man, but cannot satisfy the longings of the inmost soul? Give them to the Lord, to work for Him. Possibly, he might not change their employment at all; you may still pursue your lawful avocations; but you must make even your secular business religious business, and discharge it to the Lord, and not to men. And if He calls you to use your hands in another way entirely, they are His, let Him have his own way with them.

And your feet, which have been swift, it may be, to run upon your own errands, are you willing they should be both swift and beautiful to run upon God's errands. Surrender them to Him, and whether they are still permitted to carry you about in your lawful pursuits where you are, as heretofore, or whether He leads you far hence to bear glad tidings, or to wash His disciples' feet, or to minister in any way to His little ones, with firm and willing feet you are to follow "the Lamb whithersoever He goeth."

Your money also, your farms and your merchandise, all your earthly possessions must be given to the Lord. The silver and the gold are His, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. And wealth is a good thing when it is dedicated to the Lord and used in His service. We may be glad that He does not leave all the silver and gold in the hands of His enemies. He has His faithful stewards, who are diligently and profitably employing their Lord's money, using it in promoting His cause upon the earth and in doing good to the bodies and souls of their fellow-men. He knows the hearts of His people -- who of them can bear the peculiar temptations connected with great wealth, and who cannot -- and he allows some to be rich and others poor. He doeth all things well; and we must leave our riches or our poverty just as we must leave our health or our sickness, our happiness or our suffering, entirely in His hands.

I do not lose sight entirely of second causes, nor do I undervalue a proper prudence and forethought in reference to outward affairs. The husbandman must prepare the ground and sow the seed; and this is not less essential, because he will, after all, have no crop, unless God sends the rain and the sunshine. In like manner it is doubtless true that there are laws of business, the observance or non-observance of which tends to success or failure in the accumulation of wealth.

But God is in all and over all; and how often does He thwart the best devised schemes for obtaining riches, leaving one man, whose business qualifications may be of the highest order, comparatively poor, and pouring wealth into the lap of another almost without effort or thought on the part of the recipient. Reader, if the Lord has entrusted thee with great wealth, remember that it is His gift. He that giveth can also take away. Do not grasp it too tightly. Do not let the love of money take root in thy heart. If He permit thee to keep it to the end of thy life, thank Him for it, and glorify Him with it. If He take it from thee, say "Thy will be done." Consecrate thy possessions and thy business to the Lord.

And your time must be the Lord's. How easily He can say to each of us, Time to thee shall be no longer. And yet there are a great many Christians who find it hard to spare time from their outward business to attend to the claims of God. "Friend," said Anthony Benezet to a man who pleaded that he had no time to hear him, "Dost thou think thou wilt ever find time to die?" Those who devote all their time, even at great sacrifice of their earthly interests, to the Lord's

work, yet constantly find some, where they travel, who do not have the time to go and hear the message they have to deliver. Give your time to the Lord. Ask Him how to spend every hour to His glory. He may not take you away from your present mode of employing the moments that make up your lifetime; but if He should do so, remember that the time is His and He must have the direction of it. Spend your time to His glory here, and you shall spend your eternity to His glory hereafter.

You must leave your reputation in God's hands. A good name among our fellow-men, and especially among our fellow Christians, is not to be undervalued, but we must make it our first object to please our Father in heaven, and then trust Him for what men shall say of us, and what they shall think of us. It is not at all uncommon for the best and holiest men to be misunderstood, misrepresented, and maligned, not only by the unconverted but by other Christians, and sometimes even by those who are not less holy than themselves. When Jesus was personally upon earth He was followed at one time by hosannas, and at another with revilings by the fickle multitude. He was blasphemed, persecuted, and condemned to death by the Scribes and Pharisees who sat in Moses' seat, and He was never understood even by His own immediate followers, who were constantly in His presence and hearing the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth.

One of the most eminent of England's Christian jurists, Sir Matthew Hale, in the conscientious discharge of what he regarded his duty as a judge, sent one of the most eminent of England's Christian preachers, (albeit, he was only a converted tinker,) to prison -- the Bedford Jail -- the den where he dreamed his immortal dream. Nor could either of these excellent and pious men understand nor agree with the equally excellent and pious George Fox, nor the latter with the no less excellent and pious Richard Baxter. It is, indeed, a somewhat melancholy thought that many, even of the salt of the earth, know each other in this world only as opponents. In the other world, doubtless, they will be companions, and sit down to the same feast.

We cannot command the good opinion of our fellow-men. Even if we could do so, there is no reason to believe that it would be a blessing, for the Saviour says, "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you." The one necessary thing for the believer is that if men speak all manner of evil against him it may be falsely. " But if when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." Let us then seek the honour which cometh from God, and leave our reputation in His hands.

Our families and the objects of our tenderest affections -- parents, children, husbands, wives, lovers, friends must be surrendered to the Lord. It does not follow that He will be more likely to take them from us because we yield them up unreservedly into His hands; possibly, the reverse is true. But here also, our wills must be in entire submission to God's will.

The following cases, illustrating this form of consecration, are taken, slightly abridged, from a valuable little work, entitled "Sanctification Practical," by Rev. J. Boynton:--

1. -- "A lady, relating her experience in our hearing, said: "I had long prayed --
'The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,

Help me to tear it from Thy throne,
And worship only Thee."

But I little knew what I was praying for, until God came and took my child and then my husband away, and I was left alone in the world. Then I was brought to see that I had been loving the creatures more than the Creator. Oh, how my wicked heart rebelled! Oh, how I murmured against God! How cruel I felt He was, to take my loved ones from me! Still I knew it was wrong to feel thus, and I struggled hard and struggled long to sink into the will of God, and to feel that the death of these loved ones was all fight. Often before their death, as I would be praying for a clean heart, the thought was suggested, 'You must be willing to give up your family.' But I tried to believe that that was the temptation of Satan in order to destroy my peace, but when they died my eyes were opened. Then I could see what the idols were. Oh, how I wept! How I struggled none can imagine, but those who have had a similar experience! At length I was enabled to give up my loved ones, and say in reference to their death, 'Lord, Thou doest all things well.' Then my faith laid hold on Christ as my all-sufficient Saviour. Then, oh, what love, peace, and joy filled my soul!"

2. -- A minister, calling at a house where the husband and father was just dead, "found Mrs. Smith and her daughters and two neighboring women all quietly seated, as though nothing unusual had occurred. There was no consternation, nor any excitement, such as usually exists in families when visited by such a stroke. All seemed as calm as a summer evening. After a few moments' conversation, we said, 'Sister Smith, we understand you have met with a great affliction.' 'Yes, affliction it should be considered, I suppose. My husband is dead; but the struggle is all over.' 'How is that?' we asked. 'You recollect,' said she, 'I presented myself with many others, some months ago, as a seeker of the blessing of perfect love.' 'Yes, we know you did.' 'Well, you know, I had a great struggle.' 'Yes.' 'What the cause of the struggle was, I suppose you never knew.' 'We never did.' 'It was this: I had been praying a long time for the blessing. I thought I had given up all. I went to the Lord again, and asked Him to show me what, if anything, was yet lacking on my part, My husband was down the Mississippi in the service of our country, and was ill. The question was pressed home to me -- Should your husband die in the south, and you see him no more on earth, could you willingly give him up and say, 'The will of the Lord be done?' My heart arose in rebellion at once. I felt to say No; that will be so cruel. I said, Lord, I can suffer anything else; but give up my husband to die away off there, I cannot! Then I would try to make myself believe that it was nothing but the temptation of Satan. But every time I asked for the blessing, that question was asked me. Over this, I struggled for weeks. At length I triumphed through grace, and felt to say, Yes, Lord, take my husband, my daughter, myself, my all; but give me peace and purity within! Then I believed, and entered into rest. Oh, how sweet and abiding has been my peace ever since! My husband is gone; I mourn his loss here, but I feel that it is all right. The language of my heart is, 'The will of the Lord be done.' Deeply afflicted as I am, I was never so happy in God before in all my life."

3. -- "A lady, after seeking for some time the blessing of entire sanctification, thought she had obtained it; but desiring to be fully satisfied, she went again to the throne of heavenly grace. Earnestly did she plead for the witness that she was accepted and wholly sanctified. She had not pleaded long, when God led her in a way she had not known. The question was presented to her

as distinctly as if spoken by an audible voice -- Should your child be taken away in death, could you say Amen; 'Not my will, but Thine be done?'

Her affections clung to her firstborn -- a bright-eyed little boy. That boy was dearer to her than life. The thought of parting with him in death was heartrending. She felt to say, ' Take anything else, Lord, but give up my child I cannot.' Over this, she struggled for three long weeks. Every time she attempted to pray she met this question. Her desires for holiness grew stronger and stronger; but how to yield and give up her child she knew not. Finally, she felt the victory she must have or die. She began to cry, Lord, help I Help, Lord, or I die! Then she gained the victory over self, and could say, Lord, take my child, take my all if it please Thee, but give me full salvation. Then, said she, my load fell off; then I felt the blood of sprinkling applied, and that I was clean; then I obtained that peace which is like a river; and now I enjoy that 'perfect love which casteth out all fear.'

Well, that child did not die; he is alive yet. The mother had loved the child more than she loved God. Her will was opposed to God's will, in the event of the child's death. When she could willingly give the child to God for time and for eternity, her consecration was complete. She has no less love for her child and no less joy in him than she had before; but if he should be taken from her while she is thus fully given up to God, she will be able to say, ' The struggle is all over.'"

4. -- "In the course of a conversation with a lady of rich Christian experience, she asked if we thought it would be right for a Christian lady to marry an irreligious man. We replied that as a rule we should say it would not, yet circumstances might be such that she might be justified in so doing. We told her we thought so weighty a matter should be made a subject of prayer, and if she married such a man she should be sure that it would be pleasing to God. She remarked that she did not know but some might do it; but if she should marry an ungodly man, she would lose her soul.

She then gave her experience in substance as follows: Several years before, her attention had been called to the subject of sanctification. She resolved to seek it. She was engaged to an irreligious young man. She had not been long seeking for the blessing, when, as she was earnestly praying, something seemed to say, ' If you would be a sanctified Christian, you must give up that young man.' Here she stumbled for two years and a half. Every time she prayed for the blessing, that thought was suggested. At this point she would always cease praying, and commence reasoning the case with Satan. She tried to make herself believe that that was not necessary; that it was the temptation of the devil to destroy her peace.

At length she went to a camp-meeting, feeling that she could not, and would not leave until she received the blessing. She could reach this point, but could go no farther. One afternoon she went into her room and wrestled till nearly night, but found no relief. She sat down and soliloquized thus: ' I came to this meeting determined to obtain the blessing of sanctification. I felt that I could not, and would not leave without it. It is now evening; and we leave tomorrow morning; and, O, must I go away as I came? I cannot!' A prayermeeting was in progress in a large tent on the opposite side of the ground. She determined to go there, hoping she might hear something that would afford her some relief. Arriving in front of the tent, she heard a man

instructing those who were seeking perfect love. 'That,' said she, 'is just what I wish to hear.' As she listened to this man's remarks, she was brought to see that the impression that she must give up that young man was made by the Spirit of God, rather than the temptation of Satan. She then said, 'Lord, take him, if that is what is required; I willingly give him up; I will never marry him while the world stands!' Then she was willing to give up all for Jesus, and then she was enabled to lay hold of the blessing."

We must leave in the Lord's hands the decision of the question, What outward profession or calling shall I pursue? To illustrate this point, I abridge one more instance from the work already referred to:--

5. -- "A young man came to a minister at eleven o'clock at night and asked what he considered the evidences of a divine call to the ministry. After much conversation on the subject, he said: 'Three weeks ago I heard a soul-stirring sermon on the subject of sanctification. I concluded that the blessing was for me, and I would seek it with all my heart. I had not sought long, when, as I was earnestly praying for a clean heart, I was asked this question, Are you willing to devote all your time, talents, and energies to the work of the Christian ministry? I have decided upon another profession, and I feel I cannot preach. The minister answered, 'That is just what we expected you would say. Now, it is useless for us to talk about the evidences of a call to the ministry. We do not say you will ever have to preach a sermon, but we do say that you will have to become willing to give up the legal profession and be willing to enter the ministry, or you can never receive the blessing you seek.'

The young man saw the point, accepted the teaching, made the consecration, and rejoiced in full salvation through the 'blood of the Lamb.' After walking upon the highway of holiness for a few months, having the testimony all the time that he pleased God, he died in triumph, and passed away. He was a conscientious, devoted Christian. He was determined to serve God and get to heaven. He had set his heart on being a lawyer. He had said in effect, I will live religion, and I will be a lawyer. And just there his will had to yield, that he might be wholly the Lord's."

When the late President Finney of America was converted, having retired into a forest to pray alone and aloud, and then finding himself so suddenly and completely relieved of the burden and guilt of his sins that he did not know what had happened to him, he said to himself as he was returning home, -- "If I ever am converted, I shall preach the gospel." He was a young lawyer, just getting into a successful practice, and with brilliant prospects; but like Paul, "immediately he conferred not with flesh and blood;" and when, a few days after his conversion, one of the deacons of the church in the village where he resided said to him, "Mr. Finney, my lawsuit comes off this morning at ten o'clock, and I hope you are prepared to attend to it;" his reply was, -- "I have been retained by the Lord Jesus Christ to plead His cause, and I cannot plead yours;" and he never entered the court-room again as a lawyer.

It does not follow from this that every Christian lawyer is to do as President Finney did, -- abandon the law, and go into the ministry -- but simply that when God calls, we are to obey, and where God calls, we are to follow. He must have His own way in reference to our profession, or occupation, as He must have it in everything else.

Every one who enters in solemn earnest upon the work of consecration, will probably find more or less difficulty in surrendering one thing after another; but will come at last to the one thing over which his struggle will have to be made, and which is the very hardest thing for him to give up. Here self is entrenched as in a strong-hold, and when that point is surrendered, the whole citadel is surrendered. The thing most difficult to yield, will be very different in different cases, on account of the great variety of tastes, preferences, temperaments, and circumstances which exist among Christian people.

Sometimes the whole contest is over some comparatively trivial thing; and yet it is not trivial, if we hold on to it in antagonism with God's will. It may be only some ornament, or article of dress which is not quite in accordance with Christian simplicity. It may be some self-indulgent habit, indolence, reverie, novel-reading, or the improper gratification of some appetite, natural or acquired. Oftener, however, it is some duty to be done, or some cross to be borne, from which the individual shrinks. It may be to speak in public for the Lord; it may be to go as a missionary to some distant and undesirable place; it may be to be laid aside and not employed at all, -- prostrated by lingering disease, or rendered wholly incapable of active service by the pressure of one's surroundings.

And on these occasions Satan seldom fails to be present, using all his arts to magnify the difficulties of entire surrender, or to induce you, if possible, to postpone the desired step to a more convenient season. He may even suggest obstacles which seem well nigh insuperable, and persuade you that they are likely, or certain, to occur.

A distinguished American evangelist, when trying to surrender himself to the Lord, was constantly harassed by the thought that, if he did so, he would have to go as a missionary to Africa, -- a thing which was peculiarly repulsive to him. At length he yielded, and said, -- "Yes, Africa or anywhere else; the Lord's will be done." Since then he has never had the slightest intimation that it was his duty to go to Africa; while the Lord has given him a very rich harvest-field, and thousands of seals to his ministry, in his own land.

Now, beloved reader, if the Lord, by His Holy Spirit, is showing you your idols; if you have become conscious of your obligation to give up all to the Lord, and what it is that is hardest to give up; then you know where your battle is to be fought, and your victory won. And do not fail to remember that, in this warfare, every victory is by surrender. Yield up all to the Captain of Salvation, and you shall be more than conqueror through Him that loved you.

Is anyone thinking, while perusing this chapter, that the view of consecration thus far presented, is a discouraging one? -- that surrender to the Lord is represented as so very hard a thing to do, that many will shrink from making the attempt? I freely admit that such a consecration as I have been describing is no child's play. It does sometimes involve a fearful struggle. Self-will is strongly entrenched in the heart; and, of the man who, by the power of the Holy Ghost, persistently determines on its expulsion, it may often be said, as in the case of one of old, -- "The spirit rent him sore." I would not make the way easier or harder than the Bible makes it.

Consecration does mean actual business. It means cutting off the right hand and plucking out the right eye; it means crucifixion; it means death. And Jesus Himself tells us this in one of the beautiful gospel paradoxes, -- "He that saveth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life, for My sake, shall save it." "I lose myself that I may save myself."

Consecration, therefore, implies that the life of self, and the life of sin, are to be laid upon the altar of sacrifice; not to be kept alive, but to die. And let us urge upon every one who may read these pages, the importance of surrendering at once. Die suddenly! As the soldier who is shot dead in battle, experiences much less suffering than one who is only severely wounded, and who may survive through weeks, or months, or many years of physical pain; so, the soul that decides at once for full salvation, that surrenders now, that shrinks not from the sacrifice -- even unto death -- of its own self-will, knows much less of the struggle, and the conflict, and the torture, and far more of the rich joy and the abounding life, than one that hesitates; that lingers; that clings tenaciously and persistently to some darling idol, or darling sin; that withholds the severing-knife from some of the tendrils of the old nature; that refuses to die. May the Lord make a short work in our souls. May we yield at once, and entirely. May the contest be sharp, short and decisive, -- the victory, speedy and complete.

Thus far, I have been presenting to my reader the harder and sterner aspect of the subject before us; but I must not omit to state that there is another aspect, and that consecration is to the believer not only a duty, but the highest possible privilege. It brings with it a rest so sweet, a joy so full, a peace so abiding, that all we have to surrender is as nothing to what we receive. A boy may cling very tenaciously to the toys he is holding in his hands, but he will readily relinquish them if you offer to fill his hands with gold sovereigns. Consecration is exchanging ourselves for Christ and making infinite gain by the transaction.

The very best thing that can happen to any of us is that the sweet adorable will of God should be accomplished in us, and by us, and through us, and concerning us. "He has the program of my best possible future," says one who has committed all into His hands. "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ," says the Apostle, who knew, if any man ever knew, what it is to be wholly the Lord's.

"God's promises," as has well been remarked by another, "are always greater than His commands." The latter involve surrender, the former involve privilege. Jesus walks by the sea of Galilee and finds certain fisherman engaged about their calling. He first says, "Follow me." Here was surrender. They must leave families, business, means of living, all, that they might obey His command. But then he added, "And I will "make you fishers of men." Ah, here was the glorious privilege! It is a vastly nobler thing to catch men than to catch fish. How unspeakable was the gain they made by the simple transaction of forsaking all and following Him. And so it will be with all who do likewise.

And thus if consecration is, in one point of view, like dying, it is, in another, wondrously like marrying. It is entering into everlasting covenant relations with the Heavenly Bridegroom. Even the earthly bride does not become united to a husband without making some sacrifices. She becomes dead to her kindred and to her father's house, in that if her husband's interests require she must leave kindred and father's house to go with him. She becomes dead even to her own

name, and adopts the name of her husband. Many associations must be surrendered, many happy scenes abandoned, many joyous pursuits relinquished, that she may become a wife. Yet weddings are not usually regarded as very sad occasions. The bride does not usually go to the altar with a long face and a sorrowful heart. Some natural tears she sheds at the sundering of old ties, but she wipes them soon, and goes joyously, trustingly, unhesitatingly with the husband of her choice, and this because she loves him better than all.

And may we not count it a light thing, and even gladly surrender all else that we may enjoy the union, the indwelling, the companionship, the "everlasting love" of Him who condescends to call the Church His bride? "I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me also to His banqueting house, and His banner over me was love."

But in order to enter into the "fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ," or to obtain as a rich gift from God a sanctified heart, it is necessary that the act of consecration be followed also by an act of faith. We must not only make the perfect surrender that has already been described. We must also believe that the surrender is accepted. The faith here alluded to is not a different kind of faith from that previously spoken of at length in the chapter on Regeneration, but the same faith applied to a different object. It is believing, not for the pardon of past sin, but for purity of heart. It is taking Jesus as a Saviour, not only from sins committed, but from heart-sin.

"And this is the confidence we have in Him," says the Apostle, "that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us; and if we know that He heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions we desired of Him." The teaching of such passages is this: In consecrating ourselves to God, and praying for those things which are in accordance with the will of God, and certainly sanctification, clean heart, or Christian perfection, is one of the things which are according to His will. We may be confident, sure, that it will be given to us, nay, that it is now given to us if we have full faith in God's promises. While the result will not take place without our believing (because that is the condition on which it is offered), yet its certainty depends not on the fact of our believing, but on the veracity of Him that cannot lie. It is, then, the everlasting truth of God that forms the ground-work of our faith. Could it have a stronger basis to rest upon? Is there anything else so worthy of belief as the word of Him who is the Truth?

If, then, with entire and unreserved submission we lay ourselves and our all upon the altar of Christ, we are next simply to believe that the altar sanctifieth the gift. Consecrating everything we have and are to God, we ask Him to create within us a clean heart, and we must believe definitely for the thing we ask, and not for something else. If we ask for bread will our Father give us a stone? If we ask Him for a pure heart will he send us away with something else? "What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive" them, and ye shall have them."

And the same principles which are applicable to the seeking and finding of entire sanctification, are applicable to the seeking and finding of the particular graces that accompany it. These, also, are to be asked for in a spirit of entire consecration on the one hand, and of

perfect trust on the other. It may indeed be said, in a general way, that whoever possesses a holy heart will possess also the subordinate Christian graces that constitute holiness. In whomsoever the Holy Spirit dwells -- and with Him the Father and the Son -- He will, necessarily, bring forth in that individual the "fruits of the Spirit." If any one is earnestly seeking for more humility, more meekness, more patience, more wisdom, the infallible direction to such an one is -- "Get the Bridegroom, and you will get His possessions."

But, as there is an appropriate occasion for the exercise of each grace, if there should be, at any time, a special need of patience, or of gratitude, or of gentleness, or of humility, ask for it, submissively and believingly, in entire surrender and childlike trust, and, "according to thy faith it shall be unto thee." We should always make our approaches to the throne of grace in a spirit (1) of entire submissiveness -- offering up petitions, but never demands, -- and (2) with an unfaltering faith that God is willing to do, and that, if the present is in His view the appropriate time, He does now do that which He has promised, and which we desire.

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Remarks

1. -- In consecration we give all; by faith we take all.
2. -- Consecration is the pre-requisite of entire sanctification; as repentance is the pre-requisite of justification.
3. -- Consecration is the voluntary act of a moral agent, having the power of choice. Sanctification is an act of God's grace.
4. -- The act of consecration will not be performed without Divine aid; but that aid will not be withheld from any one who chooses and wills to consecrate himself.
5. -- Consecration implies sinking entirely into the will of God. In submissiveness to Him, we must be willing to abandon every known sin, to do every known duty, to give up every idol, to bear every cross, to endure every affliction.
6. -- Consecration means an entire willingness on our part, to be, to do, and to suffer, all that God wills.
7. -- Consecration is death to self-life and self-will.
8. -- Consecration is the condition of entire and permanent soul-union with Jesus.
9. -- Consecration is the highest privilege, and the richest joy; because, the best possible thing that can happen to us is, that God's adorable will concerning us may be done.
10. -- The act of consecration is to be followed by definite prayer for a clean heart; and then the act of faith, by which we receive what we ask for, and not something else.

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07 -- THE EVIDENCES OF ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION -- HOW TO RETAIN IT

If not an indispensable, it is certainly not an unimportant thing, that a child of God should be assured as to any work of grace that has been wrought in his soul. The sinner who is seeking Christ, in the pardon of sin, feels that if ever he is converted, he wants to know it; and the believer who is seeking a clean heart, feels that if ever he is sanctified, he wants to know it. And we believe it is not our Heavenly Father's purpose that His children should be in doubt, whether or not they are His children; nor yet in doubt whether, after fulfilling the conditions upon which He offers them special gifts, they do, or do not receive those gifts. "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength;" but, how can there be quietness and confidence, when our spirits are tossed with doubts, and fears, and questionings as to our acceptance with God, and our true relation to Him? "The joy of the Lord is your strength;" but how can there be joy without the settled assurance that we belong to God, and that He careth for us?

If, then, any of my readers have come to the conclusion that holiness is a duty and a privilege of the Christian believer; -- if they have, to the best of their ability, and in reliance upon Divine assistance, surrendered all to God, and asking, according to His will, that He will create in them a clean heart, and, humbly believing that He is faithful to all His promises, are now trusting Him for the fulfillment of their longing desires, -- these, surely, if no others, will be interested in the question: How am I to know when God has sanctified me wholly?

The first evidence that He has so done, is derived from the consciousness on the part of the individual, that he has really surrendered all to Christ. But how is one to know that he has really surrendered all? If he has gone through the struggle that I have elsewhere described; if he has come to the one thing which is hardest to give up, -- be it a besetting sin, or a self-indulgent habit, or an object of pride, or some idol of the affections, or some duty to be done, or some suffering to be borne, -- whatever it be, he knows by his own inner consciousness that he has laid it upon the altar, or that he has not. If his heart condemn him not in this matter; if it bear witness that he is not withholding any known thing from God, then he may trust Him wholly, also, for what is unknown; surrendering, first, all he does know, and then all that he does not know. And this is good evidence, as far as it goes, that God has given him a clean heart; for one of the marks or characteristics of such a heart is, that it loves -- above all things -- to do, and to suffer, God's will.

The second evidence is also derived from consciousness, and is the witness of our innermost heart that we love God better than any created object. Here, again, many will inquire:-- How am I to know that I love God better than all else? Ask the faithful, devoted wife, how she knows that she loves her husband better than any other person. She may not be able to answer philosophically, but her own consciousness will not leave her a moment in doubt as to the fact. And does not the consecrated believer feel that his love for his Saviour transcends all other love in his heart; that, just as he would prefer that every star should be blotted from the heavens, rather than that the great orb of day should cease to shine; so he would rather give up all subordinate objects -- however beautiful and attractive they may be -- than to lose his interest

in Christ? Does not his own heart tell him that he would esteem all other loneliness, and bereavement, and sorrow, a light thing in comparison with the hopeless orphanage that would be his portion, if he could look up to the sky above him, and down upon the earth beneath him, and upon animate and inanimate nature all around him, and be forced to say -- in the blankness of dark despair -- I have no Heavenly Father? He would be willing, if need be, that every subordinate light should be darkened, if only the beams of the Sun of Righteousness may continue to illumine his spiritual sky.

But while the testimony of our inner consciousness, that all is surrendered to God, and that we love Him supremely, is important, and entitled to great weight in deciding the question -- Am I, or am I not a sanctified Christian? yet, we are not to rest satisfied in so momentous a matter without having, in addition, the witness of the Spirit. We have already spoken of the witness of the Spirit to our adoption; but the Apostle tells us also, -- "Hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us;" and again, "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us." "Hereby know we that we dwell in Him and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit."

Now, we have stated in another place that, to have God's love perfected in us -- that is, to obtain perfect love -- is the same thing as sanctification; and the Scriptures just quoted tell us that we are to know that we have this perfect love, or this entire sanctification, or this abiding and indwelling of Christ, by the Spirit which He hath given us.

And, if it be difficult to define in what the witness of the Spirit consists, I think we may, nevertheless, be able to know under what circumstances, and on what conditions we may expect to receive it; yes, and even to be satisfied that we have received it. Suppose that an individual has been earnestly seeking a clean heart. So far as his consciousness goes, he has laid all upon the altar of consecration. So far as he knows, also, he has given God the supreme place in his heart, and allows Him to reign without a rival in his affections; i.e., he loves God better than anything else, but, wishing by no means to be deceived, he goes to the Lord in prayer, earnestly beseeching Him to give him the witness of the Spirit to his conscious cleansing.

Under these circumstances, I believe we shall not be disappointed in expecting that our compassionate Heavenly Father will do one of two things. He will either by His Spirit so search the heart of the person concerned, as to show him that there is still something wanting in his consecration -- something in which he prefers his own will to God's will -- or else He will give him a conviction that there is nothing separating his soul from Him, and fill him with peace, and even, mayhap, with joy in believing. If He shows him nothing lacking in his consecration, he may conclude there is nothing. If He fills him with quiet rest and peace and joy, that is the witness of the Spirit. Let him accept it as such, and joyfully believe that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth him now from all sin. Glory be to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

And if these be the evidences to ourselves that we have received the clean heart, what evidences will convince others of the same fact? An unbelieving world and a gain-saying church will not be convinced by any evidence. The Lord Jesus Christ himself was not regarded as a holy man by even the religious teachers of the day. Those who reject the doctrine of holiness, who do not believe that holiness is required of or privileged to the believer in this state of being, will not

be convinced by any evidence that they actually see holy men and women around them. Mistaking infirmities and weaknesses for sins, looking at the outward conduct and not seeing it perfect according to their own standard, they will find plenty of failures and defects, plenty of things to find fault with, even in the lives of those whose hearts may be perfect in love. The following quotation from Dr. Daniel Steele, of America, is in point, viz:--

"There are old residents of this country who are by no means favorites with me, and I cut their acquaintance as much as possible, such as ignorance, forgetfulness, mis-judgment, error, inadvertence, failure, and a large family by the name of infirmity. In fact, I have repeatedly cast my vote for their exclusion, but they insist that they have a right to remain since no statute lies against them. They say that they are grossly wronged when confounded with an odious foreigner called sin, who slightly resembles them in external appearance, but is wholly different in moral character. I must confess that a close observation, extended through many years, demonstrates the justice of this plea. Hence I live in peace with these old citizens, but do not delight in their society."

But the candid inquirer and earnest seeker after holiness will see in the lives of those who are really sanctified something that will constrain him to confess, These men, or these women, have something in their religious experience which I do not possess. And all have a right to expect from those who claim this great salvation such fruits of the Spirit, such holiness of life and conversation, such righteousness, and goodness, and truth, as may be in consonance with the good profession which they witness. God forbid that any sanctified believer should, by impatience, or jealousy, or malice, or ill-temper, or impurity, or covetousness, bring reproach upon the cause of holiness, which is indeed another name for the cause of Christ.

"And Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone" with the reflected radiance which it had received when he was in the presence of Jehovah. An influence conscious or unconscious, will emanate from the acts and words and countenances of saintly men and women which will impress the hearts of others, and draw them to seek for themselves the grace of holiness. They have the wine which maketh glad the heart, and the oil which maketh the face to shine, though like Moses they wist not of it.

But many persons when brought face to face with the fact that such an experience as entire sanctification is the privilege of the believer, through faith in Christ, hesitate to accept it definitely for fear they shall not retain it. They might hope to have it and enjoy it for a moment or a day, but it is too great a stretch of faith for them to believe that such a blessing can by any means be permanent. They are ready to ask, Can it be possible that holiness may be retained as a continuous experience? or, How can it be retained?

In the thirty-fifth chapter of Isaiah we have a glorious description of the blessings of the Gospel dispensation; and among other beautiful things we read, "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it," but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon; it shall not be found there: but the redeemed shall walk there."

I have spoken so much of holiness as a state, that some of my readers may have imagined that I am describing a kind of happy condition, which when you have attained, you have nothing to do but to sit down quietly, fold your hands, and wait for the messenger which is to summon you to heaven. But holiness is not only a state, but a way; and not only a way, but a highway, wherein the "redeemed" are to walk; and walking on it they shall be seen. God designs that through the great salvation in Christ Jesus, His children should both be "redeemed out of the hands of their enemies," and "should serve Him without fear in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of their lives."

And here, as elsewhere in the Gospel plan, Christ is Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. By Him we get into the highway of holiness; for "I am the door." By Him we walk upon the highway of holiness; for "I am the way." So far as the human side is concerned, by a definite act of consecration and faith we enter upon the highway of holiness; and then, by abiding in Christ, we walk upon that highway. Without Christ we cannot get on to the way, and without Him we cannot take a single step after we are on it. Again we must quote George Fox, "We are nothing; Christ is all."

It was but a single step, the work of a moment, a voluntary definite act of my own, by which I went on board the steamer in New York, purposing to come to England. Asking God's protection and care, I surrendered myself to the keeping of the steamer and her officers. I might have distrusted the boat or her commander, and declined to go on board. Then I should not have reached my destination. I might have jumped overboard after the voyage was begun. That would have been suicide. I went on board, and remained on board; that was my part. The steamer, under the command of her intelligent captain, brought me to my desired haven. I surrendered myself and luggage to her keeping. She did the rest. I did not go on board of her more and more, nor surrender to her more and more, but I simply gave myself up to her, and she brought me more and more towards the British coast until I arrived there.

In like manner by a definite act of surrender and trust, the soul of the believer is brought into union with Christ; and then if he abides in that union, he is brought along, burdens and all, toward the heavenly shore. He may fail, through unbelief, to experience the consummation of that union, and then, though redeemed, he will not walk in the highway of holiness, or only get on to it in the hour of death. After the union has taken place he still has the suicidal power of sundering it, but if he surrenders and abides, Jesus does the rest. He does not consecrate himself more and more, nor experience sanctification more and more, but he definitely gives up all to Christ; and He causes him to increase more and more in knowledge and in grace, makes him more and more like Himself, adorns Him more and more with all the graces of the Spirit, enables Him to adorn the doctrine of Christ his Saviour more and more in all things, and brings him more and more toward his heavenly rest. He has a pure heart all the time, but the graces of holiness are increasingly developed, and the fruits of the Spirit brought forth more and more abundantly in his daily life. He is sanctified, holy, perfect, in the Scriptural sense of those terms; but he grows in sanctification, he increases in holiness, he ripens in perfection.

Purity is one thing, maturity is quite another. Sanctification is soul-health. A healthy child needs but to be properly fed and cared for in order to grow rapidly and symmetrically and develop into a strong man. But if the child has some constitutional disease, such as scrofula,

malnutrition, or softening of the bones, his growth will be irregular, distorted, dwarfish, and may result in permanent deformity. But give him a medicine which shall permeate all his tissues, removing from them every trace of disease, and restoring him to health; then let him drink milk, and he will grow just as a child that was born healthy will grow.

Now, spiritually, we are all born with a constitutional disease -- the malady of indwelling sin. And, as before observed, the Church of England is quite right in saying that "this infection of nature continues even in those who have been regenerated." And so long as it does thus continue -- while there may be growth, yet it is not a healthful and vigorous growth, but tardy and irregular, the result being in too many instances, stunted, dwarfish, one-sided Christians. If, however, by the baptism with the Holy Ghost in connection with the cleansing blood of Jesus, this infection is removed, and spiritual health thus given to the believer, he is now in a condition to partake of the sincere milk of the word, and to grow thereby. He grows from strength to strength. Having clean hands and a pure heart, he grows stronger and stronger, ascends into the hill of the Lord, and stands in His holy place. "He shall bring forth fruit in old age, he shall be fat and flourishing."

In the Canticles we read, "I went down to the garden of nuts to see the fruits of the valley, and to see whether the vines flourished, and the pomegranates budded." The pomegranates are perfect in their budding, but not yet prepared to bring forth fruit like the vines. The vines are perfect and bringing fruit in their season, but not the rich ripe golden fruit of the garden of nuts. So in the Church of Christ there may be sanctified believers, who are yet in the infancy of their Christian life--pure in heart, but having little knowledge or strength. Christ will "gently lead" these young and tender lambs of His flock. He has many things to say unto them, but they cannot bear them now. "If men overdrive them one day, all the flock will die."

Then there are those who are further advanced in wisdom and strength -- living branches of the living vine -- bringing forth fruit to the praise of the Husbandman, strong men and women in Christ Jesus. And finally, there are some among every sect and denomination of Christians, who after much chastening which is child-discipline, after many temptations and trials of faith, after, it may be, many afflictions, and sorrows, and disappointments, are enabled to bring forth the sweet lovely autumnal fruits of a ripened Christian character. "The fruits of the valley" are always acceptable to the "Lily of the valley."

How absurd it would be to maintain that because a child has perfect health, it may not grow larger or stronger. Not less preposterous it is to argue, that because a heart is made holy, there is no longer room for a growth "in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Sound health, whether of body or soul, is the condition of rapid and successful growth.

Let us now return to the question, How shall the blessing of entire sanctification be retained? And the answer is ready: It is to be retained precisely as it was obtained. There is one text of Scripture that meets the case exactly. It is this: "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." Let me inquire of my readers, those who have accepted Christ as their sanctification: How did you thus receive Him?

You received Him first in a belief that holiness is for the Christian a privilege and a duty. You found it stated everywhere in the pages of the Bible that God requires His children to be holy, and that He makes it possible for them to be holy. In that same belief you must continue, if you would retain a holy heart. The doctrine of holiness has not yet found acceptance with a large portion of the visible Church. You will find many excellent and pious Christian people who reject it. And you are to remain fixed in the belief, continuing to search the Scriptures and to bow to their authority, whatever even wise and good men may say in opposition. If you begin to doubt the truth of the doctrine, you will soon doubt also your own experience, lose the evidences of your sanctification, and thus you may lose the grace itself. Walk on as you began to walk, in a firm conviction of the truth and scripturalness of the doctrine and experience of holiness.

And here perhaps I may be pardoned for one word of tender admonition to those disciples, and especially those ministers of Christ who reject the doctrine of holiness, as it has been taught in these pages. Surely no Christian will venture with the open Bible before him to say, I am opposed to holiness; and yet many are practically opposing it by suggesting theological and philological difficulties, calculated rather to bewilder than to enlighten the sincere inquirer and the humble seeker; for by plying with hard questions those who have surrendered all to Christ, and are trusting Him for a clean heart, they may engender doubts in their minds, and even overturn their faith. Perfect love, like every other gospel blessing, is to be received in the spirit of a little child, and the most wise and learned among us may well take heed how they offend or cause to stumble any of the little ones who believe in Christ as their sanctification.

You received Him, secondly, in an earnest desire for a clean heart. You longed for it, you panted for it, you groaned after it. Let those longing desires, that earnest hungering and thirsting, which are the condition and earnest of being filled, continue. Still pray earnestly and seek earnestly for the mind that would rather give up life itself than to commit known sin. Ask that the vessel may be enlarged, so as to contain more of God's infinite love. It is one of the gospel paradoxes, that the heart made perfect in love, is always satisfied and always wanting more.

"Insatiate to the spring I fly,
I drink, but still am ever dry."

You received Him, thirdly, in entire consecration -- an absolute unconditional surrender to His will. In that same consecration or surrender you must walk in Him. When you yield up yourselves and your all to the Lord, it is not that any part of the sacrifice may be taken back again. You place all on the altar today, not that it might be taken off again tomorrow, but that it may be kept on the altar for ever. If at any time, or in anything, you feel your will rising in opposition to God's will or providence, check such a rising at once. "Thy will be done;" let that be the constant attitude of the mind, and the frequent utterance of the lips.

If you voluntarily give place to any suggestion of Satan, if you cherish a single rebellious thought against God, you begin to lose the witness of the Spirit -- the crowning evidence of your sanctification; you begin to lose your faith, you will be quickly and easily tempted to disobey, and are too likely to fall into actual backsliding. As you get on to the highway of holiness only by entire consecration, you can walk on it only by a constant continuance of the same.

It is not that the act of consecration has to be made over and over again; but that we are to regard it as of unceasing and binding obligation-and of unending and glad some privilege as well-all our lives. It is but the work of a moment to unite a man and woman in the covenant of marriage, but in the force of that vow they walk together until death separates them. If there are moments of estrangement followed by reconciliation, they do not find it necessary to have the marriage ceremony again performed, but recognizing the fact that the obligations assumed on the wedding-day have never ceased for a moment, they forgive each other their mutual lapses, and never regard themselves as anything else but husband and wife. In the covenant relations entered into with our Heavenly Father at consecration, we assume like obligations. If any lapses occur, they are all on our side. Let us at once confess them, and seek forgiveness, and never allow ourselves to imagine that our vows have ceased to be binding, or that all is lost because by some fault of our own a temporary cloud has come between us and the face of our Beloved. Sink into self-nothingness and self-abnegation, and continually say, "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord in entire surrender, so walk ye in Him.

And let no one hesitate thus to surrender himself entirely, for fear that things too hard for him to bear will be required in the future. Does our Heavenly Father wish us to consecrate ourselves to Him, in order that He may have, and use, the opportunity of making our way peculiarly hard and difficult? Supposing a child should determine to yield its own will to that of its parents in all things -- to love them, to obey them, to strive in every particular to please them, and to submit uncomplainingly to their wishes, would the parents for that reason, inflict more suffering and sorrow upon it, and make its path of life exceptionally rough and disagreeable?

The idea is preposterous! Would they not on the contrary shield such a child with all possible care from every needless suffering, grant it every indulgence at all compatible with its best welfare, and to the extent of their ability, make its life a happy one? And is our Heavenly Father less loving and kind than an earthly parent would be? Dare anyone so dishonor His infinite love, as to imagine that because any child of His shall consecrate himself to Him, He will therefore inflict upon him sufferings peculiarly and needlessly severe? Oh, beloved, let us trust God entirely, and put our whole case in His hands, being fully assured that in all things He will care for us, with more than a mother's tenderness and more than a father's love.

You received Christ Jesus the Lord, fourthly, in appropriating faith, i.e., a faith that applied the promises of God to yourself at the present moment; and so you must walk in Him. "The Comforter for me now," wrote Daniel Steele, and taking the promises, determined to believe. It was after several days of trial, during which he held on to this simple assertion by faith only, that the witness of the Spirit -- the evidence made manifest to his consciousness that the blood of Jesus cleansed him then from all sin -- was poured into his soul with overwhelming fulness and joy. Whatever else fails, let us keep our faith in active exercise. Truly the Christian, and not less than others the sanctified Christian, must walk by faith. Believe that God is giving you the Holy Spirit, believe that He is sprinkling clean water upon you, believe that He gives you now a clean heart, believe that He is working in you to will and to do of His good pleasure. "All things are possible to him that believeth."

It happens in the experience of at least the greater number of believers, that the spiritual sky is sometimes darkened by clouds. I do not state this as a matter of necessity, but as a matter

of fact. These clouds may arise from our own physical or mental condition, from our surroundings, or from the temptations of Satan. Possibly they are entirely our own fault, and might be avoided altogether by watchfulness and prayer; possibly they are permitted by our Heavenly Father for our chastening and strengthening. The Holy Spirit is an abiding guest in the heart of a sanctified Christian, but He is not always present to his consciousness.

In these times of darkness and doubt, of tossing and tempest, the soul needs to be firmly anchored in Christ, by a fixed and determined faith. Let it be the unalterable resolve of the tried and afflicted one, "Though He slay me yet will I trust in Him." As when for days we are unable to behold the face of the natural sun, through the looming clouds, yet have no doubt that he is still shining, though we cannot see him, so in times of spiritual darkness, let us believe and have peace in believing, that the Sun of Righteousness shall again arise with healing on His wings, and that we shall again look upon the face of our Beloved One and hear the voice of His mouth.

Thus the retention of a clean heart, and the walking upon the highway of holiness, are found to be a matter of constant surrender and constant trust. If it depended on ourselves, however, vain would be all our efforts either to obtain, or retain, the wondrous blessing. The question is not what we are able to do, but what Christ is able to do. I would specially remind my readers of the following, viz.: "Able to save to the uttermost all them that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." "Able to keep you from falling," "Able to succour them that are tempted."

When Paul prays for the Thessalonians that they may be sanctified wholly, he also prays that their whole spirit, and soul, and body, may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. First made blameless and then kept so; and he adds, "Faithful is He that calleth you, Who also will do it."

In the fifty-sixth Psalm David exclaims, "Thou hast delivered my soul from death," -- words which in the gospel day would be a good profession of conversion, -- but he adds, "Wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living;" and this surely should be the heartfelt desire of every child of God, i.e., that his feet should be kept from falling. In the hundred-and-sixteenth Psalm we find David acknowledging that this prayer had been answered -- yes, and more than answered -- "Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling." "I will walk before God in the land of the living."

Faith is to the spiritual life what breathing is to the physical life. I take the oxygen of the air into my lungs this moment; it purifies my blood which goes coursing through the tissues of my body, giving life and nutriment to every part; but when another moment comes, I must take another breath, another moment, another breath, and so on, My life is made up of successive moments, and kept up by successive acts of breathing; so that, when I cease breathing, I cease living. In like manner I am trusting in Christ this moment, and He keeps me. "His blood cleanseth me from all sin." Another moment comes, and I trust Him, and it cleanseth still, another moment, and it cleanseth, and so on to the end. A constant succession of acts of faith is needful for the soul, as breathing is for the body.

Another thought about breathing. That which at first is difficult, becomes easy by habit. The first inspirations of the new born child are painful and hard. A man resuscitated from drowning or suffocation breathes gaspingly and laboriously. He must for a time devote his whole attention to his breathing, he must bring his will to bear upon it. He must exercise both his voluntary and his involuntary muscles to keep up his breathing. But when respiration becomes established, the process then goes on by virtue of the physiological relation between the nervous centers and the muscular system -- goes on without the attention of the individual, without any conscious exercise of his volition, while he is engaged about other business, and not at all thinking of his breathing, nay, even while he is asleep.

In many instances also, the exercise of faith in those who are just struggling into life, or those who are just being restored from backsliding, is exceedingly difficult. Their whole attention must be directed to the matter of believing. Their wills must be brought to bear in aid of their believing power; they must strive and determine to believe; and thus by degrees their spiritual respiration will be established, it will become the holy habit of the soul to trust in Christ, they will naturally turn their thoughts to Him when disengaged from other things, and He will not be unmindful of them when necessarily taken up with proper business. Consciously or unconsciously their union with Him will be maintained; and in the valley and shadow of death, when mind and memory are failing, when the departing one cannot recognize the friends around his bed, nor remember the covenants that he has made with God, He will remember it; He will look in mercy upon His dying child, and will receive him to the embraces of His everlasting love. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

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Remarks

1. -- The evidences to ourselves that we are sanctified Christians are, (1) The consciousness of entire surrender, (2) The consciousness of supreme love to God, (3) The witness of the Spirit.

2. -- The evidences to others that we are sanctified are to be found in a life and conversation such as becometh godliness -- the constant bringing forth of the fruits of the Spirit in all righteousness and goodness and truth. If a Christian believer is enabled to rejoice evermore, to pray without ceasing, and in everything to give thanks; and if the skin of his face shines with the radiance of the indwelling Spirit, candid inquirers will be constrained to acknowledge -- This man has the pearl I am seeking. But many will refuse to believe on any evidence that anybody is sanctified.

3. -- Holiness is not only a state to be obtained, a gift to be received, but also a life to be lived, a way to be traveled.

4. -- By a definite act of consecration and faith we get into the highway of holiness. By continuous surrender and trust, abiding in Christ, we walk upon that highway. He is the Door, and He is the Way.

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Quotations

1. -- "If then, kind reader, you would retain the blessing of perfect love, you must feel, continually, that it is both your duty and privilege to be sanctified. To enjoy at all times the cleansing efficacy of the Redeemer's blood, continually must you be consecrating all to God, and looking to Him for purity of heart; and, every moment must you believe you are accepted, and that the blood of Jesus cleanseth you from all unrighteousness." -- F. Boynton.

2. -- "It is both the Spirit and the blood co-working by the power of a perpetual faith in Christ, that avails for perpetual cleansing. This was taught -- in type -- in the manner of consecrating the priests. They were to be sprinkled not only with oil, but also with blood." -- Exo. xxix. 21. -- L. Woodard.

3. -- "The value of a thing is known by what it takes to preserve it, as well as by what it originally costs. Men may steal your diamonds, who would not trouble things of less worth. The cost of holiness was the blood of the Son of God; and greatly does he mistake, who supposes it can be preserved by anything short of eternal vigilance. -- Upham.

4. -- "A practical question some soul propounds:-- How to keep the Comforter? He will keep Himself and you too, if you will let Him. He is not so capricious as many imagine. He is in no haste to leave any bosom after so long an endeavor to get an invitation to enter it. Nothing but sin can dislodge Him. The soul which holds Him by faith, shall be upheld by Him. "Teneo et teneor." -- Steele.

5. -- "Year by year such Christians are seen to grow-more unworldly and heavenly-minded, more transformed, more like Christ, until even their very faces express so much of the beautiful, inward, Divine life, that all who look at them cannot but take knowledge of them that they live with Jesus, and are abiding in Him." -- W. Smith.

6. -- "When Christ is accepted, and enthroned in the heart as an indwelling King, and the government is laid over upon His shoulders, then, indeed, it is in the hands of one who can expel all His enemies, and only by the power of a new affection, even the affection for the new King, -- chiefest among ten thousand. Yes, and the will, -- that stiff-necked thing; oh, how He can make it willing in the beauty of holiness, and keep it so." -- Boardman.

Church of God, beloved and chosen,
Church of Christ, for whom He died,
Claim thy gifts and praise the Giver!
"Ye are washed and sanctified."
Sanctified by God the Father,
And by Jesus Christ, His Son,
And by God, the Holy Spirit,
Holy, Holy Three in One.

By His will He sanctifieth
By the Spirit's power within;
By the loving Hand that chasteneth,
Fruits of righteousness to win;
By His Truth, and by His promise,
By the Word, -- His gift unpriced,
By His own blood, and by union
With the risen life of Christ.

Holiness by faith in Jesus,
Not by effort of thine own,-
Sin's dominion crushed and broken
By the power of grace alone;
God's own holiness within thee,
His own beauty on thy brow, --
This shall be thy pilgrim brightness,
This thy blessed portion now.

He will sanctify thee wholly,
Body, spirit, soul, shall be
Blameless till thy Saviour's coming
In His glorious majesty!
He hath perfected for ever
Those whom He hath sanctified;
Spotless, glorious, and holy,
Is the Church, His chosen Bride!

-- Frances Ridley Havergal.

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08 -- GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE SUBJECT OF HOLINESS

1. -- Regeneration being the beginning, and sanctification the completion of the work of inward holiness, these are distinct states of grace, imparted by the Holy Spirit; but they need not be far apart in time. In some instances -- which, however, seem to be very rare -- the experiences are received at once, or at least, cannot be separated by the consciousness of the individual; and it is said that one man was converted, sanctified, called to the ministry, and entered upon the ministry -- just as in the case of the Apostle Paul -- within three days. But, if all persons are sanctified when they are converted, it follows that all Christians now living, unless they are in a state of backsliding, are wholly sanctified. And yet, the number is comparatively small, who even lay claim to such an experience, while the great majority, so far from claiming it or seeking it, do not even believe in it.

Furthermore, the idea that all persons are sanctified at their conversion, is quite unscriptural. The Corinthians were undoubtedly converted Christians, and yet, they were

"carnal," "babes," and far from being holy in their lives. The Galatians were Christians, yet seeking to gain perfection by the works of the law. The Thessalonians were Christians, yet Paul prays that the God of peace might "sanctify them wholly." The Hebrews were Christians, yet, the inspired writer exhorts them to leave "principles and go on to perfection." I have stated that sanctification is imparted in connection with the baptism with the Holy Ghost; and this baptism is evidently not always experienced at conversion. It was not experienced till Pentecost by the hundred-and-twenty, who, nevertheless, had all been converted before Pentecost. It was not experienced by the Samaritans who were converted by the preaching of Philip, until Peter and John Prayed for them, and laid their hands on them. Conversion, therefore, and entire sanctification, are separate and distinct experiences, which may, nevertheless -- and ought to -- come very near together; and not to be separated, as they often are, by forty years, or a life-time of wilderness wandering.

2. -- Some earnest Christians hesitate to believe that so great a blessing as holiness can be for them. It may be possible, they argue, for a few ministers or piously-disposed persons, who have leisure to devote themselves to religion, to receive and live out this great blessing; but for us, men of business, men of many cares, brought into daily contact with a sinful world, it is out of the range of possibility for us to be kept wholly free from its stains and corruptions. The man overwhelmed with worldly business, -- the woman fretted and worried with household cares, says, almost despairingly, "It is not for me."

Now, let these glance for a moment at the third chapter of Ephesians, and read what Dr. Steele has aptly called, "Paul's higher life prayer:" -- "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," &c. Who was it that Paul was praying for? Only a few ministers of the Gospel? A few piously disposed persons? A few men and women of leisure, who had all their time to devote to religion? The Ephesian Church was made up, principally no doubt, of laboring men, artisans, -- makers in former years, perhaps, of silver shrines for Diana -- and women, with, in all probability, families of children, and all the usual pressure of household cares incident to persons in their circumstances. They had evidently been addicted, before their conversion, to low forms of vice, for the Apostle exhorts them "to put away lying," and "let him that stole steal no more," and not to allow "any corrupt communication to proceed out of their mouth." And yet, for just such people as these, -- with all their cares, and troubles, and perplexities, incident to narrow circumstances, and the necessity of toil for their daily bread-Paul prays that they may be strengthened by the Spirit in the inner man; may have Christ to dwell in their hearts by faith; may be rooted and grounded in love; may understand and know the mathematical, solid contents of the love of Christ, and may be filled with all the fulness of God. And then, he doubles and triples, or squares and cubes, all these stupendous blessings that he invokes upon them, by stating that God is able to do more than all that we ask or think; -- yes, abundantly above all; and even exceeding abundantly above all.

If, then, any of my readers are disposed to think that the blessing is not for them; if they are full of worry and care; if the hindrances are many and great; if the burdens are heavy, and grievous to be borne; let them not yield to discouragement, and cease to ask or seek for the fulness of the blessing, but, let them rather say:-- 'Just because of cares, and troubles, and toils, and worries, therefore I must have this great salvation. If others can afford to do without it, I

cannot.' And so, casting their care -- outward and inward -- upon Jesus, let them believe, and enter into a sweet rest of soul in Him who careth for them.

And, if any think it a matter of temperament, and that the morbidly melancholic cannot obtain this boon of having an indwelling Saviour to save them from tormenting doubts and fears, let them read these words of David Brainerd:--

"Salvation from doubts that I am now and for ever wholly the Lord's. This is the most astonishing triumph of grace over a temperament naturally melancholic, -- an introspecting, self-anatomizing, and self-accusing style of piety, characteristic of my ancestry."

And these words of Daniel Steele:-- " Perfect rest from all apprehension of future ill. Salvation from worry is no small thing; especially in the case of one whose views of life are strongly tinged with indigo. I believe that Jesus, who is the Head over all things to His Church, has the program of my best possible future. My only anxiety, moment by moment, is this, -- Am I now led by the Spirit of God?"

3. -- Is holiness a condition of heart which is free from temptation? By no means. Anyone who accepts the plain Scriptural statements about the existence and personality of Satan -- the real, powerful, intelligent, malignant, spiritual adversary with whom we have to contend -- the devil, the liar, the tempter, the deceiver, the accuser, the destroyer, the roaring lion, the old serpent, the false angel of light, the prince of the power of the air, the god of this world -- will not expect to reach a state in this life in which he shall wholly escape the assaults of such an enemy. The Lord Jesus Christ himself was tempted. Yes, in all points in which His believing, sanctified followers are tempted, and yet without sin. There is, therefore, no sin in being tempted. The sin is in yielding, in cherishing the temptation till it takes root in the desires and the will, resulting finally, it may be, in the sinful word, or the sinful act. The disciple is not above his master, but every one that is perfect shall be as his master. And, therefore, even those whose hearts are perfect in love shall be tempted. But on the other hand, we have the blessed assurance, "In that He Himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to succour those that are tempted."

Temptations, or tempting objects, are presented by Satan to the intellect; and it is his purpose that they should pass through the intellect into the sensitive and volitional part of our nature, so as to induce in the appetites, the propensities, the affections, and, finally, the will, a wrong action -- wrong either in kind, or in degree. We are sometimes tempted to admit into our hearts, feelings and desires which ought not to exist at all. We are sometimes tempted to a perverted, or excessive indulgence of feelings and desires which, to a certain extent and with proper limitations, may be innocent and proper. In either class of cases we are to ascertain -- by a careful study of the Holy Scriptures, or by the immediate teaching of the Holy Spirit--just where it is that temptation ends and sin begins; and then we are to give heed to the intimations of a tender and enlightened conscience, which bids us at all hazards turn from the wrong and follow the right.

Conscience is a natural faculty, and given to all mankind. Every responsible human being has a sense of obligation -- a belief that he ought to do certain things, and to abstain from doing others. And this feeling of obligation is ever impelling him to a corresponding action. His

conscience is always saying to him, Do what you think is right. His ideas of duty are derived principally from education, and are liable to be exceedingly vague and erroneous, especially where there is no outward knowledge of the Gospel or of the requisitions of Scripture. But still his conscience urges him to do what he thinks is right.

From whatever source your convictions of right and wrong are derived, conscience bids you act up to those convictions, and condemns you if you do not do so. A man may do a thing conscientiously, which is; nevertheless, not a right and proper thing to be done, A man may, conscientiously, deprive himself of a thing which God has not forbidden, and which, therefore, is not wrong. The advantage, "much every way" to those who have the oracles of God, over those who have them not, is, so far as the question of duty is concerned, chiefly in this-that when a man acts conscientiously with the open Bible before him, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, he not only does what he believes to be God's will, but what is God's will.

It is not only true that the holiest persons will be subject to temptation through life, but it not infrequently happens that their temptations are greater in exact proportion to their holiness; that is to say, as they surrender themselves wholly to the Lord and trust Him for a clean heart, Satan's assaults upon them become not less frequent and less severe, but precisely the reverse. The more you resist his temptations, the more he will be induced to try his full strength upon you, which it will not be necessary for him to do if you yield easily. The children of Israel were not sent to Canaan the nearest route, because they were not in a condition to resist a determined warlike people such as the Philistines. As they became better acquainted with the Lord's dealings, and learned to trust Him more, He allowed them to meet their enemies in battle. But their severest and most protracted wars were after they came into the land itself.

And so very great temptations are often a sign, not of a low, but of a high state of grace; for if you are beset by "principalities and powers and wicked spirits," it is because you are in "heavenly places." Be not, therefore, discouraged. If the warfare is long and severe, it will, nevertheless, be true if you abide in uninterrupted union with your Commander -- the Captain of salvation -- that the victory will be constant and complete.

The temptations of a sanctified heart are principally from without. While the "infection of nature" -- the remains of carnality -- still continue in the heart, there will be a disposition to cherish the temptation and to make a favorable response to the suggestions of the evil one. But when perfect love has been wrought in the soul, when it has been sanctified wholly, then it reckons itself, and, through Christ, realizes itself to be dead to sin, and promptly repels the temptation. There is no Parley the porter, within, to open the castle gates to the enemy without. And yet it is possible still to listen to Satan, and to reason with him until he again injects sin into even a clean heart, just as of old he "beguiled Eve," whose heart was perfectly pure, "by his subtlety."

If the sanctified believer is liable to temptation, it follows that it is possible for him to sin. Sanctification does not destroy a man's moral agency. He is still to choose to be kept and saved, and is kept and saved only while thus choosing. It is possible for him to fall, but possible also -- let the Lord be praised -- not to fall, because Christ is able to keep him from falling. It is only by

abiding in Christ that he can be safe a single moment. Therefore he needs to watch and pray, and that continually.

But those who are wholly the Lord's watch Jesus more than themselves. "Looking unto Jesus" is the attitude of their soul. Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? is their constant inquiry. They are on the alert for the slightest intimations of His will, and move in response as the branch moves to and fro at the gentle touch of the breeze. They watch that nothing may separate them from Christ. They watch that they may retain possession of the goodly land. They watch for the approach of the enemy, and fly to the cleft of the Rock.

And do they not pray? Why, they dwell in an atmosphere of prayer. Their life is a continual prayer. They know what it is to pray without ceasing. They perhaps exhibit in their prayers less agonizing and more resting than others, less struggling and more believing, fewer importunate requests and more joyous thanksgivings; but none are oftener on their knees, either in the closet or the public assembly, whether for themselves or others, than the sanctified believers in Jesus.

And none take more delight than they in the prayerful perusal of the Holy Scriptures. They find them all aglow with the doctrine of holiness so precious to their souls. Every means of grace prized by the justified is prized the more when they are sanctified. There is no self-complacent resting in themselves or their attainments, as if there were no further danger and no more need of care. Their rest is not in what they have attained, but in Jesus. It is not that they have no need, but that their need is all supplied in Jesus. It is not that Satan has ceased to tempt them, but that they are victorious in Jesus. It is not that they have no sorrow, but that in Jesus their sorrow is turned into joy. It is not that they have no care, but that they cast their cares on Jesus. It is not that storms and floods do not come, but that they are fixed upon the Rock-Christ Jesus. They are nothing. Christ is all.

There is one of the devices of Satan which those whose hearts have been made perfect in love ought not to be ignorant of: this is, the suggestion by him of evil and blasphemous thoughts to their minds, and then discouraging them by accusing them of being themselves the authors of these wicked imaginings. Some earnest Christians are thus tempted, and, it may be, specially so when engaged in prayer; all kinds of vile and harassing thoughts coming into their minds and shutting out their communion with God. They are thus brought into great perplexity and discouragement, sometimes being quite ready to doubt whether they are even Christians at all, much more whether they are walking upon the highway of holiness. We can no more avoid these whisperings of Satan than we can avoid hearing the profane conversation of wicked men with whom we may be thrown in contact; and we should learn at once to repel the accusations of our enemy and to cast back his evil suggestions upon himself, fully assuring ourselves that he is the author of them, and not we. The Holy Spirit will be near to aid; and if we have a single eye to Him, He will enable us to distinguish between the thoughts of evil thus injected into our minds by the tempter, and voluntary evil thoughts originated and cherished with the consent of the unsanctified heart, which thus becomes the author of its own temptations. The former may be very harassing, but are not, in themselves, sinful. The same cannot be said of the latter.

4. -- I shall now group together a number of questions which are not infrequently asked, and endeavor to answer them as fully as their importance may demand, without losing sight of the brevity and conciseness which are so desirable in a work like the present. Some earnest souls ask questions with deep sincerity because they feel a sense of need, and want to know what it is that they are to seek and how to find it. Others apparently ask questions with a view of justifying themselves in not seeking anything. There is an amazing difference in the satisfactoriness of the best and most scriptural answers to questions, when the answers are given to these different and opposite classes of questioners; but I proceed:--

A. -- Is not sanctification received by all Christians co-instantaneously with their conversion?

B. -- Is not sanctification a gradual work and the result of growth in grace?

C. -- Can a soul be made holy until the hour and article of death?

D. -- Was not the baptism of the Holy Spirit confined to Apostolic times?

E. -- Is not this baptism now received by all Christians at the time of their conversion?

F. -- Does it not consist of certain miraculous gifts?

G. -- Is the sanctified believer always full of joy?

H. -- Does sanctification abolish the fear of death and make its possessor anxious to die?

I. -- What becomes of a justified believer who is taken away by death, not having been wholly sanctified?

A. -- In reference to the first question, as sanctification is a definite act of God's grace, there must be a definite time when that act is performed. There is a time when the penitent believing sinner is justified and regenerated, whether that time is manifest to his consciousness or not, and there is a time when the consecrated believer receives a clean heart, whether he is conscious of it at the moment of its reception or not. In point of fact, so far as the consciousness is concerned, experiences differ. Some begin to seek for a holy heart, and the light gradually dawns upon them, and, at length, without any very distinct perception as to time or manner, they find themselves wholly surrendered to the Lord, and perfectly trusting Him and loving Him supremely. Others, after a definite and voluntary surrender, and an equally definite and voluntary act of faith, are flooded to overflowing with light, and love, and peace, and joy, experiencing, like the believers on the day of Pentecost, a conscious and instantaneous filling of the Spirit and consequent cleansing of the heart.

B. -- Sanctification, being the work of the Holy Spirit, cannot be the result of growth in grace, There may be a growth before it, and a growth in it. The vessel may be filled today, but it may be so enlarged as to hold more tomorrow. Growth in grace does not consist in an increase of our own virtues; but an increasing sense of God's love to us, begetting a corresponding increase

in our love to Him. In order to grow in grace, we must be planted in grace; and grace is the rich, warm, genial soil of God's infinite love.

C. -- God's command to His people is, -- "Be ye holy;" and He nowhere tells them that they may put off obedience to this command until the day of their death. Zacharias says that we are to serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our lives. We are not informed that death is a sanctifier. Jesus is made unto us sanctification. We are sanctified by the Spirit of our God. Sanctification is used in direct connection "with belief of the truth," by Paul, and with "sprinkling of the blood of Jesus," by Peter. If a man is sanctified in the hour and article of death, it is because, renouncing all merit and all hope in every earthly thing, he casts himself, in entire surrender and perfect trust, into the arms of Jesus. The Holy Ghost fills him and cleanses him, because then, for the first time, he puts his case wholly in His hands. And would not precisely the same result follow a similar consecration and faith, if these were exercised a year, or ten years, or fifty years before the hour of death?

D and E. -- The propositions implied in the fourth and fifth questions cannot both be true. If the baptism was confined to Apostolic times, it cannot now be given to all believers, at conversion. But both these questions, we believe, have been sufficiently answered already. Peter told the multitude on the day of Pentecost, that the promise (of the Spirit) was to them, and to their children, "even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Moreover, there have been, and are still, many witnesses to the reception of this baptism, in their own conscious experience, and this -- in the very great majority of instances at least -- at a period subsequent to their conversion.

It is certain that Christ's baptism -- or the filling of the Spirit -- was not received by the church of the hundred-and-twenty, nor by the Samaritans who accepted the word of God through Philip's preaching, until after their conversion. As this is the baptism that cleanseth; if all receive it at conversion, then all Christians are sanctified at the time when they are born again, and the Church of Christ on earth must consist, in every age, of wholly sanctified members. But the testimony of tens of thousands, who cannot at all doubt their son-ship, who are sure that they have passed from death unto life, -- through faith in Christ, -- but are also conscious of the remaining corruption of their hearts, would palpably contradict such an assumption. And, if all Christians are made pure in heart at their conversion, why are these emphatic exhortations addressed to believers, in the Holy Scriptures, -- "Be ye holy;" "be ye perfect;" "go on to perfection," and "the God of peace sanctify you wholly."

And yet, I must not fail to mention -- however paradoxical and inconsistent I. may appear to my readers -- that every one does, in some sense, receive the Spirit, and is, in some sense, made holy at the time of his conversion. Whosoever receives the Son, has the Father, and the Spirit also. No man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Spirit. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." And, whosoever has been forgiven, or justified -- as has been remarked elsewhere -- begins to be holy. But, this reception of the Holy Spirit which is in connection with conversion, is not at all that baptism and filling of the Spirit to which believers are called. And this partial cleansing which occurs at conversion, is only the beginning of what is consummated when, -- by Christ's baptism -- the believer is sanctified wholly.

F. -- The gifts of the Spirit, whether consisting of the power to work miracles of any kind, or in something less wonderful, were, and are, given to every man severally, as He will. They are given to some and withheld from others; but the baptism of the Holy Ghost, is the in-coming and indwelling of the Spirit in the heart of the believer. And, if He first gives us Himself, we can be content -- so far as other and minor gifts are concerned -- to receive what He gives, and want what He withholds; though still not neglecting to "covet earnestly the best."

G. -- Holiness is undoubtedly a rich field. There is much joy in it. He who is holy cannot be miserable. The Saviour spoke certain comforting words to His disciples, that your joy might be full. We are told to "rejoice evermore;" that "the joy of the Lord is your strength;" that, "your joy no man taketh from you." But, it is not to be understood that the joy of the sanctified believer is unceasing rapture, or ecstasy. It is rather characterized by a feeling of quiet peace; a rest of soul, -- the tranquillity of a spirit poised in harmony with God's will.

Perhaps a distinction may justly be drawn between happiness and joy. This distinction, if it has a real existence, may be stated as follows, viz: joy -- and the same is true of peace, which may indeed be regarded as one form of joy -- arises from the inner-being, welling up from the heart itself; while happiness is more of an outward feeling, having reference to the circumstances under which we are placed at the time. Holy joy is found in communion with God; in eating the hidden manna; in dwelling in the secret place of the Most High; in abiding under the shadow of the Almighty; in having the mind stayed on God. Happiness, on the other hand, is found in agreement between our wills and our surroundings. It very often happens that we cannot bring circumstances to our wills, and then, the only resource we have, in order to avoid unhappiness, is to bring our wills to circumstances. God's hand is in the circumstances and occurrences of our daily life, as it is in everything else, and we must learn to recognize it there.

Events are providences, and our Heavenly Father either permits or causes every thing that happens to us. To see, in even the heaviest calamities, a manifestation of God's will, and to bow, in humble resignation, to that will; -- these are the means of obtaining relief from the pressure.

"Thy will be done!" -- 'Tis this which rolls
Their agony from suffering souls."

If the above remarks are entitled to consideration, it will follow that joy, or peace, being an inward principle, is more permanent; while happiness, depending upon outward circumstances, is more transitory and uncertain. Bearing in mind the distinction already given between the two terms, we might say then, a man's happiness may be disturbed, and even greatly disturbed, by many things which do not at all disturb his inward peace or joy.

The Christian -- and even the holiest Christian-is subject, like other men, to the restrictions and limitations of humanity. He hungers and thirsts; he suffers physical pain; he meets with afflictions and bereavements, crosses and disappointments; he is tried and tempted; he finds many occasions of sorrow and mourning, just as other men do, and he feels them as other men feel them. But, if his mind is kept fixed upon God, while these agitations may greatly affect his outward enjoyment, they do not disturb his inward rest. Every cistern may fail; one by one the sources of his earthly hopes and enjoyments may be cut off; prop after prop upon which

he has leaned may be forced from under him; he may be bruised, and scathed, and peeled, but still the language of his heart is, not only, -- "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him," but even -- "I will rejoice in the Lord; I will joy in the God of my salvation." In the midst of sufferings and trials, labors and distresses, persecutions and afflictions, such as have scarcely been the lot of any other man, the Apostle could say, -- "None of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy." Outward commotions did not disturb the Sabbath keeping of his soul.

When storms come down upon the Atlantic, when the sea roars and is troubled, when men's hearts are failing them for fear, and the waves are threatening to overwhelm the frail vessel that is tossed up and down upon them, even then but a few feet below the surface all is calm as a summer's sun. At the very time that the tempest is raging so fearfully above,

"Then, far below in the peaceful sea,
The purple mullet and goldfish rove,
Where the waters murmur tranquilly
Through the bending twigs of the coral grove."

And thus the severest trials that are permitted to overtake the sanctified believer are but surface storms, which, however terrible they may be without, are scarcely able to agitate at all the inward tranquillity of a soul that is anchored in God.

Instances occur not infrequently of individuals experiencing quiet rest of soul, and even joy of heart, while enduring intense physical pain. "In the most peaceful state of every corporeal function," says Dr. Abercrombie, "passion, remorse, and anguish may rage within, and while the body is racked by the most frightful tortures, the mind may repose in tranquillity and hope." And if physical pain is entirely compatible with inward peace and joy, so also are sufferings, afflictions, and sorrows which are mental and not physical.

Tribulations are a part of the legacy left us by our Master. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." He himself was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." At one time He said in the depth of His mysterious anguish, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." But even in that dark hour, love triumphed. While He prayed that if it were possible the cup might pass from Him, He also said, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." In the hour of intensest agony there was yet no resistance to His Father's will. And thus we learn that affliction and sorrow of the most poignant character are entirely compatible with perfect love, while rebellion is not thus compatible.

Sanctification, then, does not purchase for its possessor exemption from trial and suffering, neither does it so blunt his sensibilities that he shall not feel them, and feel them keenly. And if he looks at his surroundings he will very often find feelings and emotions arising in his mind which are very much the reverse of joyful; but if he looks unto Jesus, in Him he will have peace, and the tender exhortation will come home to him, "Let not your heart be troubled" Sorrow is one thing, trouble is another.

"His blessed angel, Sorrow -- she hath walked

For years beside me; and we two have talked
As chosen friends together.
Thus I know Trouble and Sorrow are not near of kin.
Trouble distrusteth God, and ever wears
Upon her brow the seal of anxious cares.
But Sorrow oft hath deepest peace within.
She sits with Patience in perpetual calm,
Waiting till heaven shall send the healing balm."

Joy, like love, regarded as a religious affection, can only exist in connection with faith. It is those who are justified by faith who have peace with God--the sweet rest of forgiven sin; and it is those who are strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man, in whose hearts Christ dwells by faith, who enjoy the still deeper and fuller soul-rest of perfect love, or a clean heart. Hence, whether in judging of our present religious state or in seeking after a better one, we need to look more to our faith than to our feelings, and more to Christ than to either. Right feelings are by no means to be undervalued, nor considered of no account in the believer's experience, but right feelings are the result of right faith. Where there is little faith there will be little love and little joy. Where there is much faith there will be much love and much joy. Where there is assurance of faith there will be perfect love and fulness of joy.

If we make joy only the object of our seeking, we shall be very likely to fail in finding even that. Not joy, but holiness -- not feeling, but faith -- not happiness, but Christ is what we need. And if we have Him we shall have all the happiness and all the joy that are best for us. The child that is not satisfied without being fed all the time on sweetmeats has very inadequate conceptions of a parent's love. To use in my own words an illustration borrowed from another, the man who is governed by his feelings only, is like a sailing vessel whose moving power is without, which is sometimes getting on rapidly, sometimes very slowly, sometimes not at all, and whose course is a zig-zag one towards her destined haven. But the man whose governing principle is faith, is like one of those magnificent steamers which cross the Atlantic, whose moving power is within, and which pursue a steady, rapid, and undeviating course alike through storm and calm, through cloud and sunshine.

H. -- In entire sanctification the believer is brought into soul-union with Jesus, and this must take away the fear of death, so far as the future judgment is concerned. There is no condemnation, all slavish fear is removed, while there still remains an awful, reverential, filial fear -- a fear of offending our Heavenly Father, or of grieving His Holy Spirit. But the mere physical fear of dissolution and lying down in the grave is not necessarily removed.

The holy man is yet a man with all his physical and mental infirmities still existing, and, according to his peculiar temperament, may have much or little dread of death as death. There is, doubtless, even here, in many cases, a remarkable deliverance. I have heard a dear friend, who is wholly the Lord's, say that he was entirely free from the fear of death. "If," said he, "an angel from heaven should tell me that I was to die within ten minutes, I should have nothing to do but write a letter to my wife." But such is not always the case. Nor is such entire exemption from the mere physical shrinking from death a necessary test of entire sanctification.

It is equally true also that the sanctified believer is not always anxious to die. While holiness is a preparation for dying, it is also a preparation for living and the needed qualification for successful labor in the cause of Christ. And when we see how white the fields are for harvest and how few are the laborers, we ought to esteem it a great privilege to live and work, and, if need be, to suffer for Jesus, yea, and count ourselves immortal till our work is done.

Let not the sanctified Christian who is strong and in the midst of labors, however abundant, grow weary and be in haste to quit the field and put on his wings, nor, on the other hand, allow himself to be brought under bondage by any undue fear of death. Let no one spend his time in crossing bridges before he comes to them, or in seeking dying grace to live by. The point is to be able to say with Paul, "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." "Whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord. Therefore, living or dying we are the Lord's." "What thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Work while it is day, and then when the night cometh, dying grace will not be withheld.

I. -- A justified child of God cannot be lost; an unsanctified soul cannot be saved. If, therefore, a man who is walking in the light of justification and growing in grace, is suddenly cut off, there can be no doubt that the blood of Jesus avails to cleanse such a soul from the remaining stains of inward corruption, to sanctify it wholly, and to give it that "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." It is by the precious blood of Christ also that the souls of infants, idiots, and irresponsible persons who are taken away by death are cleansed from inbred sin.

But while the justified believer may be, and, doubtless, often is thus sanctified in the hour of death, this fact furnishes no sufficient reason for any Christian who is made to realize, by whatever means, that God requires of him and makes it his privilege to be holy now, to turn away from it and voluntarily to postpone it until the approach of death. He cannot neglect or reject the added grace that is offered him without incurring a grave responsibility. To continue in known disobedience to God because we may trust in His mercy at last is a "presumptuous sin." From such let us pray with David that the Lord may keep us back.

5. -- We do not find in the Holy Scriptures any countenance given to the idea that men are to keep their religion to themselves. There is scarcely a word indicating expression that David does not employ in showing forth the goodness of the Lord. He will pray, he will praise, he will bless, he will talk, he will tell, he will utter, he will declare, he will sing, he will shout, he will cry, he will call, he will give thanks, he will lift up his voice, he will make a joyful noise unto the Lord. In a few instances, it is true, probably for prudential reasons, the Saviour forbade those who had been healed by Him to make it known, but in others, He expressly commanded them to tell what great things the Lord had done for them; and when one only of the ten lepers returned to give Him glory, there must have been an implied censure in His question -- "Were there not ten cleansed? Where are the nine?"

God's people in every age of the world are His witnesses, and they are forbidden to withhold their testimony. They must not hide their light under a bushel. Not by their life and example only, but by their words are they to confess Him and declare themselves on His side. Such at least must be at times their privilege, and it would seem to be a duty as well. As they are to take with them words and turn to the Lord, so with the mouth are they to show forth His

praise. "We cannot but speak," says Peter, "the things which we have seen and heard." "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus," says Paul, "and believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Interpreting the text in the most natural manner, it would be difficult to see why it is not as necessary to confess with the mouth as to believe with the heart.

In the twenty-sixth chapter of Deuteronomy, we find the following instructive passage, "And it shall be when thou art come in unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, for an inheritance, and possessest it, and dwellest therein, that thou shalt take of the first of all the fruits of the earth, which thou shalt bring of thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shall put it in a basket, and shalt go unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to put His name there. And thou shalt go to the Priest that shall be in those days and say unto him, I profess this day unto the Lord thy God that I am come unto the country which the Lord sware unto our Fathers for to give us."

At first view this seems very remarkable. It would be regarded as very strange if one who has been known all his life as a resident of London should arise in a public assembly and say: I profess this day that I am a citizen of London. But this profession of the Israelite, made to the Lord in the presence of the Priest, and we may well suppose with more or less publicity, was not without an object. The Lord had promised that the land of Canaan should be possessed by the descendants of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, and the ceremony prescribed by the great Lawgiver was a verbal declaration that the Lord had been as good as His word. It honored Jehovah by setting forth in words His faithfulness to His own covenant.

And if any of my kind readers have been delivered as from Egypt, if they have escaped from the house of bondage and lifted up -- ah! Did they do so? -- the song of thanksgiving, or in any way the voice of praise, and if they have come up to the land of soul-rest and entered it at Kadesh Barnea, or been led about by a long and toilsome march through the wilderness, and at length have followed their invincible Captain across the Jordan and have entered upon their inheritance, will they not declare that He is faithful that promised? Will they not profess this day that they have come into the land, and are dwelling in the land which the Lord their God giveth them?

How instructive is the history of the woman who thought to be healed without anybody knowing it! She glided through the crowd with a heart full of faith, for she said, "If I may but touch the hem of His garment I shall be whole." She touched the hem of His robe, and immediately felt in her body that she was healed of her plague. So far so good. But mark what followed. The Saviour stopped--all the thronging multitude who were following Him to the house of Jairus stopped -- why? "I perceive that virtue is gone out of me." Somebody has been blessed, and whoever it is must tell it. And it was not till she had fallen down before Him and declared unto Him " before all the people" for what cause she had touched Him, and how she was healed immediately, that she received the comforting words, "Daughter be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace."

Jesus expressly tells us that them that confess Him before men, He will confess before His Father and the angels. And how is that confession to be made? Will He only confess them by His actions? Will He only show by His conduct and bearing towards them that they are His? Ah! we read that the King shall say unto them, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Yes, for ever magnified be His blessed and holy name, He will confess His people with His mouth! And shall they think it too hard a thing to do to confess Him with their mouth while here on earth? Shall they be ashamed of Him or of His words before men?

"Ashamed of Jesus! just as soon
Let midnight be ashamed of noon!"

But are we not told, "By their fruits ye shall know them?" Yes; and what are the fruits? Not only the fruit of the daily life and walk, but the fruit of the lips as well. God's people are a royal priesthood, and every individual Christian is a priest in His kingdom. If a priest, he must have somewhat to offer. And what shall it be? The expiatory and propitiatory offerings of the Levitical priesthood were abolished for ever when Christ bowed His head upon the cross and said, "It is finished."

It is, therefore, no longer the bleeding sacrifice of the old law that the Christian priest is called upon to offer. It still remains true, however, that "the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit -- a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." And by our great High Priest we are to offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually -- even the fruit of the lips, giving thanks unto His name; but to do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Therefore, beloved reader, let us remember that the good tree bringeth forth good fruit, and the good fruit is every good word, as well as every good work.

We read of certain "chief rulers" who believed on Jesus, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; "For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." Such are found in all ages of the Church. If Christians at all, they are very timid and feeble Christians. They do not openly and boldly declare their pedigree. They are not strong and efficient soldiers in the Lamb's army. They do not let their light shine, and thus bring others to glorify God. Motives of supposed self-interest hold them back from making a direct and public avowal of their allegiance to Christ. And the tendency of this vacillating course is to render them obscure and perplexed in their own experience, and a cause of obscurity and perplexity to those around them. It is a difficult matter to know where to place them, and on whose side they are to be enrolled.

How impressive are the Saviour's words, "He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Now there is a particular danger in our day of "being put out of the synagogue" to the man who confesses that God for Christ's sake has given him a clean heart, and this, added to a natural reserve, a fear of falling, and so bringing reproach upon the cause of holiness, and various other motives, hinder many consecrated believing Christians from confessing the grace of entire sanctification, even when they humbly hope and believe that the Holy Ghost has wrought that grace in their souls.

More persons testify to having lost the evidence of perfect love from failing to confess what God had done for their souls than from any other cause. John Fletcher, of Madely, informs us that he was in this manner deprived of his evidences to a conscious cleansing no less than four times. Again, I say, we must neither be ashamed of Christ nor of His words.

But this confession ought always to be a confession of Christ. Everything that savors of Pharisaical righteousness, or boasting, or self-exaltation, should be excluded from it; otherwise it were better not made at all. Encompassed as we are with infirmities, and liable always to sins of ignorance, no man dare say, -- "I have lived a year, or five years, or ten years, without sinning." Rather will he say, with the deepest humility, -- "My Deliverer has proved Himself mighty to save, and able to keep. To His name be the praise." Instead of saying, -- "I am perfect, I am holy, I am sanctified;" it is better, safer, wiser to say, -- "Christ is my sanctification. The blood cleanseth me." Or, with George Fox, -- "Christ, my Saviour, hath taken away my sin." The testimony should keep ourselves out of sight, and honour the Saviour only. It is not what I have done, but what Jesus has done for me. It is not what I have attained, but what Jesus has given me. It is the nothingness of self, and the glory of God, that are to be promoted by the confession, -- if it have any value.

The following is from Isaac Pennington:-- "Now, thus having met with the true way, I cannot be silent -- true love and pure life stirring in me and moving me -- but am necessitated to testify of it to others. As God draweth, in any respect, oh, give up in faithfulness to Him. Despise the shame. He that will come into the New Covenant, must come into the obedience of it."

Reader, these are true sayings. Let them have their due place in thy heart.

One word more about confession; and it is a word of caution. If anyone who has enjoyed the fullness of the blessing, and has witnessed to Jesus as his sanctification, finds his experience grown dim, his faith grown weak, his love grown cold; if he no longer realizes -- even at intervals -- the witness of the Spirit to his conscious cleansing; if, in short, he has lost the evidences of a clean heart, let him not confess, as a present experience, that which is only the memory of a former one. In other words, if he has ceased to possess perfect love, let him cease also to profess it.

But, on the other hand, such an individual should not be unduly discouraged, nor give up in despair, as if all were lost. That would be giving place to the devil. Let him humble himself, and seek to know if he does not know -- how he has lost the inestimable jewel of a holy heart; and, in renewed consecration and trust, let him beseech the Lord, once more to sanctify him wholly, -- to set his feet on the highway of holiness; to keep him from falling, and to establish his goings. While he sincerely mourns over his lapsed condition, let him nevertheless say, -- "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy. If I fall, I shall arise." "With the Lord helping me, I will try again.

* * * * *

This, as well as entire sanctification, is a result of Christ's baptism. When the Holy Ghost fell upon the Church of the hundred-and-twenty, on the day of Pentecost, they received not only the purifying of their hearts by faith, but the enduement of power as well. The Apostles, for more than three years, had been in almost daily companionship with Jesus. He had instructed them in the doctrines of the Gospel. He had opened to them the Scriptures concerning Himself. He had expounded to them His own parables. He had given them "power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases." He had sent them "to preach the Kingdom of God, and to heal the sick." They had been present at His miracles; and after His public crucifixion, they had seen Him alive, -- thus becoming witnesses of His resurrection, and, afterwards, of His ascension.

And yet, all these advantages -- unspeakably important as they were -- did not qualify them for the work of evangelizing the world. Something else was needed. The Saviour had given them their commission, and their field:-- "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature;" but He also told them, just as definitely, to tarry at Jerusalem, till they should be endued with power from on high: and to "wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of Me." And that "promise" was the baptism with the Holy Ghost. By that, and that only, were they to expect the needed qualification to perform their appointed mission. "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

At the time when Christianity was introduced into the world, the mythological religion of the ancient Greeks prevailed, with greater or less modifications, throughout the Roman Empire. That religion, was an idolatrous polytheism. It recognized gods many, and lords many. It had become incorporated with the institutions of almost every country. The common people accepted without question, the absurdities and superstitions which this religion inculcated; while they practiced, without scruple, the sensual vices and bacchanalian revels which it sanctioned.

But this was not all. Learning and genius were also consecrated to the heathen divinities, and "exhausted their efforts" in laying "exquisite offerings" upon their shrines. In every principal city, some magnificent triumph of architecture would be exhibited to admiring converts, in the shape of a temple in honour of one of the gods or goddesses. With brush, or chisel -- on canvas, or in marble-the most beautiful representations of the human form "or face divine," were produced as likenesses of a Jupiter or a Venus, an Apollo or a Diana, a Cupid or a Mercury.

Poets and musicians obtained a world-wide reputation by perpetuating, in verse or in song, the beautiful stories of legendary lore; wherein the divine and the human, the natural and the supernatural were strangely but skillfully blended. The interests of the ordinary artisan were likewise bound up with the idolatrous religion of the world. Thousands of image-makers in many cities, could say with Demetrius, -- "By this craft we have our wealth:" and oppose everything calculated to bring discredit upon the religion whereby they earned their daily bread, with the angry and despairing cry, -- "Great is Diana of the Ephesians."

There are some evidences, indeed, that the Lord was preparing our fallen race for its Deliverer; that many were growing weary of the vague and unsatisfactory superstitions of the day; that the world was, as it were, pausing in expectation of some great event, when Deity became incarnate in the Lord Jesus Christ. However this may be, the Apostles were to make no compromise with idolatry. If they had been only "setters forth of strange gods;" if they had had

nothing to bring before the world, except "questions of their own superstition, and of one, Jesus, who was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive;" if they had simply preached Jesus, as another god in addition to the many gods whom "Asia and the world worshipped;" if they had simply asked for a niche in the heathen temples, where a statue of Christ should be placed beside those of their Olympic deities or of their heroes and demi-gods, it is very possible that they would have encountered but little opposition.

Paul told the Athenians that he perceived that they were very much disposed to the worship of divine beings,* [*Archbishop Whately] and, to add another to their already long list of divinities, would have been no great matter.

But the Apostles were to proclaim the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom He had sent. They were to call upon people "to turn from these vanities, unto the living God, which made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein." They were to boldly assert -- even when surrounded by splendid edifices, and works of Grecian art, dedicated to the heathen divinities -- that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, because He had written His law in their hearts; and that the Godhead must not be regarded as "like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device." They were to preach, to Jew and Gentile alike, that there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved, except the name of a crucified and risen Jesus; and that God now commands "all men everywhere to repent, because He hath appointed a day wherein He will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom He hath chosen." At the name of Jesus, every knee was to bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth; and every tongue to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

These doctrines necessarily struck at the root of all false religions, and were a declaration of war-uncompromising and exterminating war -- against idolatry. They aimed at nothing less than the overturning of superstitious opinions and practices, which had descended from antiquity, which were established in the popular mind and heart, which were identified with the interests of a large number of the community, and in honour of which had been produced the loftiest creations of genius and art which the world has ever seen.

Now it must be confessed that for a dozen unlearned Galilean fishermen this was no small undertaking. One man of learning indeed was afterwards added to their number, but even he, in addition to his culture and his talent, was filled with the Holy Ghost, that he might be qualified for his special office -- that of the Apostle to the Gentiles.

Before going forth to win the world for Christ the Apostles were commanded to wait at Jerusalem till they were endued with power. And immediately on the occurrence of the Pentecostal baptism Peter began to preach to the multitude. His words were simple -- consisting principally of, quotations from Scripture and witnessing to Jesus and His resurrection: but he had now received the tongue of fire, and at once his hearers were pricked in their hearts and began to inquire, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The result was that the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

Now Peter had been preaching before the crucifixion of Christ, so had all the Apostles, so had the seventy disciples whom Jesus had sent forth into every town and village whither He Himself would come. To what extent these had traveled in the ministry and how much time they had occupied in it, we are not informed. Nor are we prepared to say how many converts had been made in all the region where they had preached. But it is safe to say that more souls were converted under Peter's first sermon after the Holy Ghost had come upon him than by all the disciples together by all their ministry before that time.

On that wonderful day there were 3,000, two days afterwards there were 5,000, and then the number is no longer stated, but we are informed that " multitudes were added to the Lord, both men and women." The Saviour's words had indeed been fulfilled. They had received power by the baptism with the Holy Spirit. They had become witnesses throughout Judea, and Samaria, and Galilee, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth: for it is supposed that the gospel was preached, during the Apostolic age, to every nation known to the Jews.

The promise of the baptism, with its consequent enduement of power, was, according to Peter, to "all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." In other words, it is to all Christians, in all ages. And, although all are not Apostles, and all do not need the special qualifications which the Apostles needed for evangelizing the world; yet, it is just as true of Christians now, as it was of them, -- and true of all Christians--that they are not qualified for their life-work in the service of Christ, until they receive the enduement of power, by Christ's own baptism.

Every justified believer may, and should, do something for Christ. Some may even do much for Him, through His grace: as the Apostles had power to heal the sick, to cast out devils, and to preach the Gospel, with some success, even before Pentecost. But, none can do all that God would have them do, until they receive power by the incoming and indwelling of the Holy Ghost.

The enduement of power is something totally distinct from intellectual cleverness, from learning, and from eloquence. It is best symbolized by the tongue of fire. It enables its possessor to speak burning words, which make their way to the hearts of his hearers. It is not power to tickle the ear, nor to please the fancy, nor to engender pleasurable feelings in the mind: but it is simple power to impress men's hearts, and win their souls to Christ. It may be added to gifts of learning, as in the case of Paul: or to gifts of eloquence, as in Apollos: but it may also be given to unlearned and ignorant men, like Peter and John. It may be possessed by a babe in Christ, if he has received the Holy Ghost; by the poor and illiterate; by those who can scarcely speak a grammatical sentence; by sons, daughters, old men, young men, servants, hand-maidens.

It is sometimes exerted without any words at all; but oftener it accompanies the word spoken, whether by the cultivated or the uncultivated, and renders it effectual, -- like an arrow in the heart of the King's enemies. The late President Finney, of Ohio, on one occasion went into a manufactory in the State of New York, simply to inspect the machinery, and see the work that was going on. He was accompanied by one of the proprietors, and, on entering the weaving room, he noticed two of the operatives, in a distant part of the chamber, laughing. He fixed his eye upon them, calmly and solemnly, and gradually approached the place where they were. They

soon appeared to be in great trepidation. Their laughter was changed to tears, and, when he came near them, an indescribable influence overpowered them. They ceased working, and went down on their knees, and began praying. Others followed: it spread from one room to another: and finally, the proprietor ordered the works to be stopped, and President Finney preached the gospel to them. Many were converted, and a great revival followed. Truly, "the wind bloweth where it listeth."

I do not at all undervalue the importance of learning and talent, when consecrated to the Lord, and employed in His service. An educated man or woman, when really baptized with the Holy Ghost, and endued with power from on high, can doubtless render much more efficient and important service in the cause of Christ, than one who is uneducated; but, I must insist that Christian scholarship -- even of the highest order -- is something totally distinct from the power of the Holy Ghost. And I do not hesitate to add that, in many instances, a man of very little knowledge or culture, if endued with the power of the Spirit, will accomplish far more in promoting God's Kingdom on earth, than the most talented and cultivated individual -- earnest Christian though he may be -- will be able to accomplish, without this enduement.

Whoever receives Christ's baptism, receives with it the enduement of power: but this power may be very different in degree in different cases. It is sufficient for the work to which each individual is called. It does not "make Prophets or Apostles -- Isaiahs or Pauls, of all, but simply qualifies each for his allotted service. Nor is it always present to the consciousness, as a great reservoir of power laid up for every emergency. It exists, it is true -- though more or less latent -- in every Holy Ghost baptized believer, because the Spirit, who gives the power, and is the power, abideth in him: but, often he is conscious of nothing else so much as his own utter weakness. This feeling would indicate the very reverse of great power: but when such an one is called upon to engage in any service for Christ, and enters upon it trusting in the Lord, then he finds the power supplied as he needs it. A man in health would scarcely know, from his consciousness, the amount of strength that lies quiescent and unfelt in his muscles: but, if he finds it needful to lift a hundred-pound weight, the latent force of his muscular system comes into active play, and he easily accomplishes his task. So it is also with the power of the Spirit. It is often present to the consciousness, only when it needs to be exercised.

And surely, such an enduement of power is what the Church of Christ on earth, in our day, and its individual membership, particularly need. The prophet Isaiah, looking forward to Gospel days, exclaims, -- "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion! Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city! -- for, henceforth, there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean."

And in what does the strength of Zion consist? Not in numbers, unless her membership be baptized and filled with the Spirit. The so-called Christian Church that stands ahead of all others, in the number of its adherents, is the Roman Catholic; and we should hardly admit that it is, also, the strongest body of Christians, in spiritual strength.

Nor does Zion's strength consist in learning, nor intellectual gifts, -- highly important and useful as these are, when dedicated to the Lord and employed in His service. "It is not by might, nor by power, (human might or power of any kind,) but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."

Possibly, it is to remind us constantly of this fact, that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise: and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen: yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence." The strength of Zion does not consist in money, nor in splendid houses of worship, nor in legal or ritualistic observances of any kind, nor in beautiful and artistic music, nor in the many useful and clever appliances which are being used for the propagation of the Gospel.

What, then, is the strength which Zion is exhorted to put on? It is nothing else than the power of the Spirit, coming into the hearts of His children, sanctifying and energizing them for the service of Christ.

The Church of Christ on earth has plenty of intellect, plenty of culture, plenty of money, plenty of machinery: but these all need to be permeated and directed, and employed under the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Just as in a large manufactory the machinery is inert and powerless until the steam is applied, but when that is done, works most beautifully and efficiently in the production of whatever fabric it is designed for: so the zeal, and talent, and energy, and wealth, and appliances of Christ's Church are comparatively barren of results until they are manipulated by the power and wisdom of the indwelling Spirit.

If God's people would be the power in the earth that they are designed to be, they must march under the banner of holiness. For every believer that is sanctified, it is estimated that from seven to ten sinners are converted. Zion's "strength," and her "beautiful garments," are the same. Do we not find in the fact that the Church of Christ has, to so great an extent, failed to enter into the fulness of the blessing, and to receive the baptism with the Holy Ghost and the enduement of power, a reason for the tardy pace at which the glad tidings has been carried from nation to nation?

"Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word: that He might present it to Himself, a glorious Church, -- not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." Such must be the Bride of Christ, -- spotless, pure, "arrayed in fine linen, which is the righteousness of saints."

And it is the business of the Church, and its membership, now, as of old, just to tarry at Jerusalem, till they are endued with power from on high, and then to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. When Zion shall indeed thus awake, and put on her strength and her beautiful garments: when she shall shake herself from the dust of the earth, -- then she shall arise and shine; then she shall come up out of the wilderness "leaning upon her Beloved, clear as the sun, fair as the moon, terrible as an army with banners." "Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days."

The banner given her to be displayed because of the truth, shall not be allowed to trail in the dust; but waving it aloft clear and bright, she shall be so attractive that sons and daughters shall come to the brightness of her rising, from the north and the south, the east and the west,

flocking "as doves to their windows." Her holiness shall be her power. Her beauty shall be her strength.

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Remarks

1. -- The Enduement of Power results from Christ's Baptism with the Holy Ghost.
2. -- It is the power to impress men's minds, and win their souls to Christ.
3. -- It is wholly independent of, and distinct from, gifts of learning and eloquence; but when added to such gifts, it imparts to them wonderful effectiveness.
4. -- The believer who has been baptized with the Holy Ghost, and abides in Christ, always has power sufficient for any service to which he may be called: because the Spirit within, girds and fills and qualifies him at the needful time. But neither the power nor the presence of the Spirit is always manifest to his consciousness.
5. -- The individual believer needs the enduement of power to qualify him for his life-work in the service of Christ: and the Church as a whole, needs to have her various means and appliances energized by the Holy Ghost, in order to become really successful in spreading the Redeemer's kingdom.

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10 -- THE INDWELLING COMFORTER

Then Jesus was about to be taken away from his sorrowing disciples, He promised that after His departure, the Father would send them, in His name, another Comforter, who should abide with them for ever. He expressly told them that this Comforter should be the Holy Ghost, or the Spirit of truth, who was even then dwelling with them, and should be in them.

And we cannot doubt that the Comforter of whom He spake, did come into their hearts on the day of Pentecost -- purifying and enduing them; nor that He did abide in them the remainder of their lives. His incoming was accompanied by certain miraculous phenomena, manifest to the observation of all present, and to the wondering multitude; but the essential and important thing was the incoming itself.

It was because they were possessed and filled by the Holy Ghost that they spake with tongues and magnified God and preached the Word with such power that thousands were convicted and converted. The purifying of their hearts by faith was accomplished then, and afterwards they experienced a continuous cleansing. The enduement of power was conferred upon them then, and was a permanent enduement.

But what does Jesus tell them about the offices of the Comforter, as He was to dwell in their purified and energized hearts during their earthly pilgrimage? In other words, what does the Holy Spirit do in the heart of the believer with whom He abides for ever?

In answering this question, I remark, in the first place, that Jesus does not here make mention of any remarkable or miraculous gifts which the Spirit was to confer upon the disciples.

I have spoken in another place of the miracle-working power imparted in Apostolic times to one individual in one particular, to another in another, and withheld altogether, in all probability, from a very large majority: but the Spirit dwelling in the heart of a Christian cannot, and will not, be inoperative: and there are certain offices which, as an indwelling Comforter, He will discharge with greater or less power and distinctness in all.

And the first office that the Saviour designates as belonging to the abiding Holy Ghost is that of Teacher and Remembrancer. "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." Nothing is more clearly stated in Old Testament Scripture than that in the gospel days the Lord shall teach His children Himself. "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." And the Apostle John speaks of the "anointing which abideth and teacheth," doubtless designating by that term the Holy Spirit dwelling in the heart of the sanctified believer and teaching him.

For we must not fail to remember that it is "the children of the Lord," those who have been adopted into the family through faith in Christ, who are to ' be taught of the Lord. It is the sheep who hear the voice of the Good Shepherd, and know Him, and follow Him.

Of the very indwelling Comforter in regard to whom we are now inquiring, Jesus Himself said that the world -- the unconverted world -- "seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him." And we are told expressly that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

In reference to heathen nations and all those who have no outward knowledge of the Gospel, I have no doubt that God will deal with them both in strict justice and great mercy, and so many of them as are saved will be found to owe their salvation, as do others, to the Lord Jesus Christ. And, as I am not writing for the heathen, I leave them there, commending them with myself and all to the merciful disposal of an all-wise and all-gracious Heavenly Father.

The indwelling Spirit, then, is a Teacher: and, like Jesus Himself, He teaches as never man taught. He may, and often does, teach directly, by an impression communicated either supernaturally or through the ordinary operations of the intellect to the understanding; but in a larger number of instances, perhaps, His teaching is by instrumental means, and these we must neither ignore nor undervalue.

And here again the most important instrumentality which the Holy Spirit employs for the teaching of God's people is the Bible. The Scriptures "are profitable," with other things, "for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."

How often does a text of Scripture which we may have read scores of times without receiving any marked impression, become a rich feast to the soul as the light of the Holy Spirit shines like a sunbeam upon it. How often does the whole Bible become a new book when we read it again and again under the illumination of that blessed Spirit who gave it forth. It is as if the author of a book were sitting by your Side, when you peruse it, ready to explain all your difficulties and solve all your doubts.

Let no one, therefore, fail to search the Scriptures. It is a dangerous error to neglect, or reject, or ignore the teachings of the Holy Bible, on the pretext, however plausible, that the inward teachings of the Spirit are more valuable than the outward letter. It will always be found that those who love God most, love His Bible most. He who is taught by Scripture is taught of the Lord: and it is never by the Holy Spirit that anyone is induced to desert the outward revelation written by holy men whom He inspired.

Another agency of very great importance which the Holy Spirit employs for teaching God's people is the ministry of the Gospel. In every age of the Church the Lord has given to it men and women whose calling and qualification were to speak unto their fellow-believers for "exhortation, edification, and comfort."

There have not only been evangelists who might preach the glad tidings of the Gospel to sinners, and invite them to come to Christ, but pastors and teachers who should labor for the perfecting of the saints and the edifying of the body of Christ. The apostles and prophets being dead yet speak in the Scriptures, of which they were the inspired authors: and the Spirit still teaches the Church by conferring the gift of teaching upon some of its members and strengthening them to exercise it.

Not that the same degree of inspiration is given to any now as was conferred upon the authors of the Scriptures. Not that anyone is authorized now to proclaim new doctrines, i.e., such as are not found in the Scriptures, or clearly deducible therefrom. But the ministry is still a gift, and when exercised in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power, it will always be in accordance with the Scriptures, and reaching the witness in the hearts of believers, it becomes, through grace, a very valuable means of instructing them in the right way of the Lord.

And we should receive with thankfulness and childlike docility the teaching of even the humblest instrument whom the Spirit condescends to employ. How wondrous is the privilege of enjoying His instructions -- of being taught by Him, whether mediately or immediately, directly or instrumentally!

Another thing that the Saviour promised the Comforter should do, was to guide the disciples into all truth. Guidance, is one form of teaching. It is teaching us the right course to pursue. It is showing us what our duty is.

Divine guidance is distinctly promised both in the Old Testament and the New, and has been the experience of the saints in all ages. The following quotations are a sufficient proof:-- "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go, I will guide thee with mine eye."

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in His way." "The meek will He guide in judgment, and the meek will He teach His way." "He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." "These are they that follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth."

And yet, it must be confessed that it is often one of the greatest difficulties which beset the Christian's path, to ascertain, to his own entire satisfaction, what God's will is concerning him, in the particular circumstances by which he is surrounded. A few observations may possibly throw some light, both on the cause of this difficulty and the remedy.

In order to secure the Divine guidance in our daily life -- both secular and religious -- our minds must be brought into a proper condition for receiving it. And, in the first place, we must sincerely desire to be guided aright. God is always willing to supply all our real need in Christ Jesus; but it is the longing soul that He satisfies, -- it is the hungry soul that He fills with His goodness.

And, as we need guidance continually -- moment by moment, and day by day -- so the desire for it needs to be permanent and intense; and David's prayer will frequently be adopted by the humble disciple, -- "For Thy name's sake, O Lord, lead me, and guide me;" or, "Lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies;" whether these be outward enemies, such as David had, or the enemies of our souls, within.

In the next place, we must believe that, since God has so distinctly promised us His guidance, therefore, when we utter such prayers as the above, we are asking according to His will, and that He heareth us, and that we have the petitions that we desired of Him. We must honour Him by believing in His veracity, and His faithfulness to His own promises. Without faith it is impossible to please God.

And, it is by faith that we must receive our answer to the prayer for guidance, as well as the answer to prayers for other things. Let me explain. It often happens that, after praying earnestly, to be guided aright in a difficult case, we do not feel at all differently, nor see our way any more clearly than before, and yet, the time comes when we must decide what to do. We hear, it may be, no voice saying, -- "This is the way, walk ye in it;" and, so far as any sensations that we may have are concerned, we may seem to be left as much in the dark as if we had not prayed at all.

Under these circumstances, our only resource is in faith. We have come to God with a sincere desire and purpose, to be directed aright, and to be guided by His will. We have asked Him to lead us as He has promised; and now, deciding upon the matter before us, with the best judgment we have, we are bound to believe that we have the petitions that we desire; that God does guide us; and that our decision is according to His will; and therefore, in child-like confidence, we should leave our ease in the hands of our Father. We are to believe that He has decided our course; though He may not have communicated His decision to our sight, but only to our faith.

The proper exercise of faith in seeking Divine guidance, implies the restraining and subordinating of all undue eagerness and activity of our own. I do not mean that we are not to act, nor that we are not to use, to the best of our ability, our own perceptions and judgments in determining the question, whatever it may be; but, having come to God, asking and seeking His guidance, we are not still to cherish a determination to guide ourselves: nor to give way to restless anxiety, which indicates an unsubdued will and a want of faith in God. We have committed our way unto Him, and now we must trust in Him, that He will bring to pass that which He knows to be best for us. To sincerely desire His guidance, is to desire that we may adopt His plans; and not that He may adopt our plans.

Our Heavenly Father communicates His will to us, (1) by the Scriptures, (2) by His Holy Spirit, (3) by His providences. By carefully interpreting the intimations received through these channels -- singly, or in connection with each other, the Christian will, to say the least, very generally -- and perhaps I might venture to say, always -- be preserved from serious error in reference to his conduct and pursuits.

In the first place, anyone who is sincerely desirous to know God's will as to his general course of life must not neglect to obey the Saviour's injunction, "Search the Scriptures." And we must not only diligently search them, but we must be willing to bow to their authority. Wherever the will of God is clearly revealed in the Bible in reference to any subject, our duty in regard to that subject is determined. And we are not to expect an inward revelation in addition to the outward one" to show us what to do.

If Jesus says "Do not kill, do not steal, do not bear false witness, defraud not, honour thy father and mother," we do not need any other revelation to instruct us as to our duty in these particulars.

And the Scriptures do go into more detailed directions than we should imagine, until we acquaint ourselves thoroughly with them. If the Christian lady wishes to know how she may dress so as to please God, she finds that women are "to adorn themselves in modest apparel:" and, although the standard of modest apparel might be different in different localities and with varying circumstances, yet, With God's providence and the Holy Spirit to assist the sincere inquirer in determining, I think few would be left long in doubt.

If we want to know what kind of talk is acceptable to God, we read (1) that we are to let no corrupt communication proceed out of our mouth, nor any foolish talking, and (2) that our talk ought to be "good to the use of edifying."

If we are in doubt how to treat our enemies and those who have injured us, we are told explicitly, "Love your enemies," "Pray for them that despitefully use you," "Avenge not yourselves." And if our civil or personal rights are invaded, we are asked, "Why do ye not rather suffer wrong than to go to law?" and told that charity, which is perfect love, "seeketh not her own." And the universal duty of Christians when praying is, "Forgive, if ye have aught against any man."

If we want to understand our obligation to the civil magistrates and rulers, we are told to honour them, to obey them in all things not in conflict with our duty to the King of kings, to pray for them, and to pay tribute to them.

If we are at a loss as to how far we may join in the pleasures and customs of the world, we are enjoined not to be conformed to the world, and assured that "if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

It is to the written revelation of God's will, then, that we are first to look for the knowledge of our Christian duties, as well as the knowledge of the way of salvation.

But there are still many questions arising in our daily life -- questions of propriety and duty about which we find no directions in Scripture, and the deciding of which often causes us no little perplexity. It is in reference to these matters that we are to seek and to expect the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit. He either makes extraordinary impressions upon the mind with more or less distinctness, or He influences the understanding and the will by an unconscious and imperceptible operation so as to bring about the right decision.

The instances are by no means few, in which God's children have been induced, by feelings and impulses wholly inexplicable to themselves at the time, to adopt measures which resulted in their deliverance from danger, the prevention of disasters to themselves, their families, or their business, and the successful accomplishment of formidable undertakings. And a blessed thing it is, indeed, to know the voice of the Spirit, to listen obediently to His gentlest intimations, and to make the Lord our Counselor in things temporal as well as in things spiritual.

But not all the impulses and intimations that come into our minds are from the Holy Spirit. Satan also can originate impressions, and is transformed into an angel of light. Thus, as we are to interpret the Bible in the light of the Holy Spirit, so we are to interpret inward impressions upon the mind by comparing them with Scripture truth, with sound reason, and with the outward providences of God.

As the Scriptures were given by inspiration, and dictated by the Holy Spirit, any impression claiming to be revelation from God, which is contrary to the Scriptures, must be rejected as a delusion. The Holy Ghost will not contradict Himself. As sound reason, also, or a sanctified judgment, is the gift of God, nothing that is really from His Spirit will be contrary to such judgment, although it may be quite beyond it.

In the daily events of our lives we are to look for and to see the providences of God. Everything that takes place, with the sole exception of sin, is either permissively or causatively His will and sin itself is permissively providential. In other words there would be no sin if God did not permit it, although He is never the author of sin. In everything that happens to us, then, God is present. And our daily lives are made up of what we are bound to regard as providential events; and we are to meet God where He meets us, and allow Him to guide us by His providence as well as by His Spirit and His Bible.

As there is an exact and mutual correspondence between the power of vision and the phenomena of light and color, between the power of hearing and the phenomena of sound, between the sense of touch and the material forms which are presented to it for recognition, so there is a precise adaptation of the providences of God without, and the intimations of His Spirit within. Both are expressions of His will, and each will be found to illustrate and interpret the other. And so we often hear Christians say, in effect, that " way opens" to do certain things, which they regard as right to be done, the meaning being that inward impressions of duty, made on the mind by the Holy Spirit, are confirmed by outward providences so shaping events as to facilitate the performance of the duty.

The earnest desire to be guided aright implies a willingness on our part to obey the intimations of God's will; however received. While there must be no eager impetuosity, which always indicates that self-will is still alive, there must be a constant seeking to know the mind of Christ, and a prompt and diligent obedience to His will, which are the reverse of slothfulness or carelessness. We must wait upon the Lord in the true spirit of a servant watching to receive His commands, and ever ready to execute them, and then to say, "What next wilt Thou have me to do?" Every moment meets us with a duty to be done, or a suffering to be borne, some active service, or some silent waiting; and let us have a spirit earnest while quiet, an eye watchful but restful, an ear attentive but patient, and move or be still as "the love of Christ constraineth us."

Another office of the indwelling Comforter is to bring to remembrance the words of the Saviour, which He may do when we are engaged in silent contemplation or about our needful avocations, or He may, as already stated, impress them with new life and power upon our hearts as we read them. "He shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." "He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you." "He shall testify of Me." "He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear that shall He speak."

The power of the Spirit has been treated of in a previous chapter; and He, dwelling in the heart of the believer as a constant strengthener, supports him in every time of weakness, and guides him for every required service. Paul prays for the Ephesians, that they "may be strengthened with might, by His Spirit, in the inner man;" and it was doubtless through Him that he expected his other petitions to be realized, i.e., that their comprehension might be so enlarged, that they might comprehend the solid contents of God's love; and their knowledge so increased, that they might know the love of Christ which passeth (human) knowledge, and be filled with all the fulness of God.

Finally; the designation, Comforter, applied by the Saviour Himself to the indwelling Spirit, expresses one of the most precious of His offices. He dwells in the heart of the sanctified believer; and with Him, the Father and the Son. Thus He keeps the soul in communion and fellowship with the "God of all comfort." "Truly," says the Apostle, "our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ."

He comforts those in whom He abides, in all their tribulation. He causes consolation to abound by Christ. He gives them to eat of the Hidden Manna. He brings to pass, that, out of their deepest sorrow, shall well up their richest, and fullest, and most permanent consolations. "Ye

shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy." The sorrow shall be transitory, even if it continues a life-time; the joy shall be everlasting. From God, in Christ, by the Holy Spirit, we have "everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace."

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Remarks

1. -- The offices of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the sanctified believer, are totally different from His work in convicting and converting the sinner, by leading him to repent and believe in Jesus.

2. -- These offices are distinct, also, from His work in the justified believer, -- showing him his heart-sin, and leading him to seek a clean heart, by entire consecration and faith in Christ.

3. -- The Spirit witnesseth:-- In the justified, to his adoption: in the sanctified, to his cleansing; in all, to Christ.

4. -- When the Holy Ghost has taken possession of the heart, and dwells there as an abiding guest, He operates as a Teacher, a Guide, a Remembrancer, a Glorifier of, and Testifier to, Christ; a Strengthenener, and a Comforter.

5. -- The indwelling Comforter teaches and guides the believer; either directly, -- by impressions, made perceptibly or imperceptibly upon the understanding and the will; or, instrumentally, -- by the Holy Scriptures, the preaching of the Gospel, and the outward providences of God.

6. -- If our Heavenly Father has clearly revealed His will by the written word, in reference to any point, we are not to expect another revelation from His Spirit to teach us our duty in that regard.

7. -- When God's will has not been thus revealed, we are authorized and enjoined to seek His guidance, and to claim His promise that we shall have it.

8. -- Impressions of truth and duty, are not to be regarded as coming from the Holy Spirit, if they are contrary to Scripture, to a sanctified judgment, or to the outward providences of God.

9. -- It is by faith that Christ, or the Holy Spirit, dwells in the heart. And we should seek for that form of faith that sees God's hand in everything, -- permitting or causing all that happens to us. "I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Comforter." John xiv. 17.

Our blest Redeemer, ere He breathed
His tender, last farewell,
A Guide, a Comforter, bequeathed
With us to dwell.

He comes, the mystic heavenly Dove,
With sheltering wings outspread,
The holy balm of peace and love,
On earth to shed.

He comes, sweet influence to impart,
A gracious, willing Guest,
Where He can find one humble heart
Wherein to rest.

And His that gentle voice we hear,
Soft as the breath of heaven,
That checks each fault, that calms each fear,
And speaks of heaven.

And every virtue we possess,
And every victory won,
And every thought of holiness,
Are His alone.

Spirit of purity and grace,
Our weakness, pitying see.
Oh, make our hearts Thy dwelling-place,
And meet for Thee!

Harriett Auber, 1809.

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11 -- THE SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH

It is by, and through, the Holy Spirit, that Christ exercises His Headship over the visible Church. Both the service and the worship of God's people -- the former typified in the Mosaic ritual by the work of the Levites; the latter, by that of the priests -- are to be under the direction of the Holy Spirit. Upon individual believers He bestows a variety of gifts, to be exercised for the good of the body. And He Himself presides, invisibly but really, over every assembly of true worshippers.

Under the former dispensation, the whole congregation of Israel made their offerings, and performed their worship through the intervention of an anointed priesthood. The whole congregation, likewise, performed the service of the sanctuary, through the Levites, who were purified and set apart, that they might represent all the tribes in that special office. "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord." And so, we find Priests and Levites -- the official worshippers and the official workers of the chosen people -- frequently associated in the sacred narrative.

But the Levitical priesthood, with its offerings. and its ritual, was abolished when Christ had offered "one sacrifice for sins forever;" "had entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us," and had "sat down on the right hand of God."

Nevertheless, God's people, under the Gospel dispensation, are still a "kingdom of priests;" and the Church on earth, by virtue of its union with Christ, -- the ever-living Head, through the Spirit-is invested with both regal and priestly dignity. Furthermore, as every individual believer is a priest, in God's kingdom, it follows that he can do his own worshipping, -- nay, must do it: for "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship Him in Spirit and in truth."

There is no need for the pomp and splendor of an outward ritual; and just as little, of the intervention of a human priesthood, to enable the believer to "offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, through Jesus Christ." Nothing whatever should come between our souls and God, but Christ, the Great High Priest, who has ascended up on high, and "ever liveth, to make intercession for us." True worship is spiritual, and is performed acceptably wherever the sincere heart is lifted up to the Father of Spirits, in adoring gratitude and love.

And is it not sad to see the extent to which the equality and priesthood of believers have been lost sight of in the Church of Christ? Instead of gathering immediately to Christ, and seeking the light and power of His Spirit, to qualify us to worship Him aright, we must still look -- virtually, if not actually -- to some human head or leader, pope or bishop, priest or minister, to do our worshipping for us. And we must have buildings, splendid in their architecture, and costly in their decorations; we must have beautiful attractions for the eye, and artistic music for the ear; and the time of our public worship must be taken up largely, with seeing, and hearing, and doing certain things which have been prescribed and pre-arranged by others.

Now, I am very far from saying that our Heavenly Father may not be worshipped acceptably, nor that He is not worshipped acceptably by many, in the midst of all these accompaniments and surroundings, -- which, in their nature, would appear to be more sensuous than spiritual -- but I am jealous of the idea, that it is only these, and only by human instrumentality, or under human leadership, that the Church of Christ may rightly and properly unite in social worship.

If Christ, by His Spirit, is present with the two or three, or any larger number of gathered worshippers, then it is to Him, above all and beyond all, that we are to look. And, whether in vocal utterances, or in the silent adoration of the humble heart, it is in dependence upon Him, and under His guidance that we are to offer up true worship.

While, then, right worship may be in silence, it is not necessarily so; nor do I believe that it will often be the case that an assembly of Christians, gathered under the influence of the Spirit, and every one truly led by Him, will perform their worship wholly in silence. For, while the Holy Ghost is ever present, and -- as representing Christ, the living Head -- is always to be sought unto first of all, He also graciously bestows His gifts, dividing to every man, severally, as He will. And it is, especially, when gathered for public worship that these gifts are to be

exercised; sometimes for the profit of the whole assembly, sometimes for the special need of individuals.

These gifts, as they existed in the Apostolic age, are enumerated in the twelfth chapter of 1st Corinthians. I shall not discuss them here, but leave my reader to examine for himself the disquisitions of Christian scholars, upon the nature and peculiarities of these bestowments of the Spirit.

In the fourth chapter of Ephesians we find the Apostle employing the following language:-- "And He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints; for the work of the ministry; for the edifying of the body of Christ." I infer, from these inspired words, that God gives to His Church, in every age, gifted men and women, whose calling and qualification are from the Holy Spirit, and who, under His guidance and direction, may "prophesy" or preach, with the result -- by Divine grace -- of converting sinners and strengthening believers.

I use the phrase men and women advisedly, because, here again, the Church of Christ has been, and continues to be, quite too slow of heart, to accept the fact that -- "there is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female, but ye are all one in Christ Jesus." By so doing, she is evidently limiting the Holy One, who pours out His Spirit upon daughters as well as sons, handmaidens as well as servants -- that they may prophesy. I shall not argue the question, but simply express my firm belief that the authority of Holy Scripture, and the example of the early Church, recognize the ministry of women, and place it on precisely the same ground as that of men; and that is -- the calling and qualification of the Spirit.

The "apostles" and "prophets" spake to the men of their own generation, and under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost; and they wrote the Books of the Bible, through which they continue to speak to the men of all generations. The apostolic and prophetic gifts -- as they were possessed by the writers of Holy Scripture -- have ceased to exist in the Church. Since the book of Revelation was written, no man has claimed, or could justly claim, that he was inspired in the same sense in which the writers of the Bible were inspired.

But evangelists, pastors and teachers, are still continued to the Church. The evangelist preaches glad tidings. He proclaims salvation through a crucified and risen Lord. When baptized with the Holy Ghost, he speaks, as with a tongue of fire, to the unregenerate; and the thing he is engaged about, above all things else, is the conversion of sinners.

The pastors and teachers, on the other hand, though receiving their qualification from the same Spirit who energizes the evangelist, are especially concerned, and empowered, to build up believers in the most holy faith; to administer milk to babes, and strong meat to strong men; to impart new truth to the inexperienced Christian; to expound the Holy Scriptures; to reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine.

The evangelist, the pastor, and the teacher, are not infrequently combined in the same individual, but oftener this is not the case; and it is very important for every one to keep to his own gift, -- improve it, grow in it, and use it to the glory of God, and the good of His Church;

while he should not be seeking, restlessly, to imitate others, or mistakenly suppose that he must be, and do, in all things like those whose gifts may be wholly different from his own.

On the other hand, a Christian believer who is diligently occupying the gift which the Holy Spirit has bestowed upon him, must not judge another who is led, it may be, by the same Spirit into a line of service entirely different from that to which he may feel called. Every one's proper business is, not to be inquiring, "What shall this man do?" but, to be carefully heeding the injunction, -- "Follow thou Me!"

Prophecy, or preaching, is ranked by Paul as the highest of the gifts of the Spirit; and this consists in power to speak for "exhortation, edification, and comfort." He tells us, especially to covet this gift. And Moses was of the same mind, when he said:-- "I would to God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them."

The call and qualification for the minister, then, is from the Holy Ghost. It may be given to, and exercised by, the same or different individuals, in the way of evangelizing, teaching, exhorting, edifying, or comforting; but the Spirit gives power and unction to the truths which are spoken, and renders them effective in persuading and influencing the minds of the hearers.

Now, when the church is assembled for public worship, there is a special opportunity, as well as a peculiar fitness, for the exercise of these various gifts of the Spirit. First and foremost, let the minds and hearts of the worshippers be gathered to Christ Himself, who, by His Holy Spirit, meets with them according to His own gracious promise, and is their real, though invisible Head. Let the attitude of the soul be an attitude of receptivity and expectancy; and let every one say with the Psalmist, -- "My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from Him."

A meeting thus gathered in the name of Jesus, and consisting entirely of Christian believers, will sometimes find that they are tendered, and strengthened, and instructed, and comforted, and edified by the direct working of the Holy Spirit Himself upon their hearts; and without any human ministry whatever. Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton called such precious seasons of stillness and waiting upon God, "divine silence."

"Yea," says Robert Barclay, "though there be not a word spoken, yet is the true spiritual worship performed, and the body of Christ edified; yea, it may, and hath often fallen out among us, that divers meetings have passed without one word, and yet our souls have been deeply edified and refreshed, and our hearts wonderfully overcome with the secret sense of God's power and Spirit, which, without words have been ministered from one vessel to another."

Much oftener, however, even in gatherings of believers, such silent waiting -- unspeakably precious though it be -- is but the preparation for vocal utterances by some, and for the reception and assimilation of the truth thus conveyed, by others. Very generally, if all are truly waiting upon God, He will put forth one or more of His servants or hand-maidens, in the exercise of some one of the precious gifts of the Spirit. And, as He puts thoughts into the hearts, and words into the mouths of these, their doctrine does indeed "drop as the rain;" their speech does indeed "distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the shower upon

the grass;" and wonderfully refreshing to the souls of the hearers are these messages of heavenly love.

Accordingly, in another place, we find Robert Barclay again saying: "And God is not wanting to move in His children to bring forth words of exhortation and prayer when it is needful: so that of the many gatherings and meetings of such as are convinced of the truth, there is scarce any in which God raiseth not up some or other to minister to his brethren: and there are few meetings that are altogether silent."

In meetings of Christians, the exercise of the ministry will consist principally in words of exhortation, testimony, comfort and encouragement, or vocal prayers and praises. In meetings appointed for the unconverted there is a special field for the exercise of the gift of the evangelist, telling men the glad tidings of salvation, and persuading them to accept it. For this good news is indeed like cold water to the thirsty soul.

But most of our gatherings for public worship are mixed assemblies, consisting of both the converted and the unconverted. And this being the case, the anointed minister of Christ will often find it necessary and proper to address different states and conditions in the same discourse. He must always preach Christ crucified and Christ arisen; but he must present Him to the sinner as his only hope of pardon; to the believer as his sanctification; to the desponding and discouraged, as his burden-bearer and sin-bearer: to the feeble, as his power: to all as their only Saviour. He who thus ministers, under the leading of the Holy Spirit, does indeed bring forth, out of the inexhaustible treasury of God's grace, "things new and old." Like the Benjamites he can "sling stones at an hair-breadth, and not miss."

There is not, so far as I have discovered, the slightest sanction in Scripture, for confining the ministry, in any meeting for worship, to one person. "Ye may all prophesy one by one," says Paul. The necessary point is to leave everything to the direction of the Holy Spirit. If He lays the service all on one person, let that person faithfully perform it in His strength: and let the rest pray for him, and thankfully receive his message. But "if anything be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace." In other words, let the Spirit have His own way, and let His gifts be exercised by one or another as He puts forth. Thus all things in public worship will be done decently and in order, and all things to the glory of God.

In point of fact it will, and does, occur that in some meetings (and this, I believe, is especially the case with those held on the morning of the Lord's day) the service will, to a large extent, devolve on one minister, or on a very few. The gospel needs, on such occasions, to be preached intelligently, in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power; and the word so divided as to be adapted to the different conditions of the minds of the hearers.

But in other meetings it will sometimes happen that if all are in their proper places, and remain so, the Apostle's language will be applicable, "Every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation." In other words, very many voices will be heard telling one by one what the Lord hath done for their souls: exhorting others to seek Him: praying to Him; or praising Him, even, it may be, with a song or a psalm.

For we must not forget, and this remark is especially worthy of note by members of the religious Society of Friends, that there is such a thing as singing with the spirit and with the understanding also; just as there is praying with the spirit and with the understanding also: and both mean, as I apprehend, singing or praying with the human spirit and understanding of the believer operated upon and influenced by the Divine Spirit.

I have nothing whatever to say in favor of "the formal customary way of singing," nor in favor of those uniting in the singing of public worship who cannot from the heart adopt the sentiments of the psalm or hymn.

"Speaking to yourselves," says the Apostle, "in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord." And again, "teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

It will be seen at once, therefore, that singing, under the influence of the Spirit, is an acceptable and proper mode of worship; and not to be ignored or discarded; and to be able to sing the gospel, or to praise God in melodious words, may be as certainly a gift of the Spirit, as to preach the gospel, or to pray to the edification of the church.

Again, I quote from the author of the "Apology for the true Christian Divinity": "As to the singing of psalms, there will not be need of any long discourse: for that the case is just the same as in the two former, of preaching and prayer. We confess this to be a part of God's worship, and very sweet and refreshing, when it proceeds from a true sense of God's love in the heart, and arises from the divine influence of the Spirit, which leads souls to breathe forth, either a sweet harmony, or words suitable to the present condition; whether they be words formerly used by the saints and recorded in Scripture, such as the Psalms of David, or other words; as were the hymns and songs of Zacharias, Simeon, and the Blessed Virgin Mary."

Under the gospel dispensation, the believer receives, with the baptism of the Holy Ghost, the tongue of fire; and the tongue and voice are the Christian's instruments of praise. I certainly do not regard instrumental music, therefore, a necessary, nor indeed scarcely an admissible part of public worship. It is neither enjoined nor sanctioned in the New Testament, and I believe that it were quite better that worshipping congregations should confine themselves to vocal utterances of praise.

And, singing itself, as intimated in the above quotation, should be placed on precisely the same ground as preaching and praying. It should be the result of the constraining influence of the Spirit. And, to exercise this gift does not necessarily require the thoroughly artistic ear, nor the trained voice. It is lamentable to hear of Christian churches committing their singing entirely into the hands of an educated choir; whose qualification is, not that they are earnest, whole-hearted Christians, but that they are good singers; and of whom it is at least sometimes said that some of them are unconverted, nay, even unbelievers.

I do not enter into the question of the time and trouble needful to acquire reasonable skill in singing, nor the many difficulties which, as I admit, attend the practical carrying out of the

general principles I have expressed. But, if the Church is really filled with the Spirit, these difficulties become much less than at first sight they would appear to be.

One who has some knowledge of singing, feels in a meeting for worship, a gentle impulse from the Spirit to sing a hymn or a psalm. He obeys in the same meekness and dependence on Divine aid, that he would exercise if the impulse were to preach, exhort, or pray. Who shall say him nay? And if another, and another, feel the same influence impelling them to join in the singing, who shall condemn them? And if the whole congregation, constrained by the Holy Spirit, shall unite in these songs of praise, is not God as certainly glorified thereby as by any other exercise engaged in under the same promptings?

And let none be offended if the melody thus breathed forth from the humble devoted child of God is not of the most scientific character. There is a great deal of preaching and praying which would not commend itself to learned theologians either as to matter or manner, but which, nevertheless, is blessed of the Lord to the saving of those that believe; and for the reason that it contains God's simple truth applied by the Holy Spirit. And must there be no singing that is not in the very highest style of the art?

An educated musician once remarked that Sankey's singing was "beneath criticism." The remark was doubtless unjust, even from an artistic point of view; but even if it had been true, hundreds of souls have, by Sankey's singing, been brought to Christ. Is not that better than the most artistic music and no conversions?

I do not mean that to sing properly and artistically is not a matter of importance; but that it is not indispensable to true worship, any more than logical and eloquent preaching, -- both being, nevertheless, very desirable. The one thing needful for preaching, praying, or singing, is that it be under the direction of the Spirit.

A minister of the Society of Friends once felt it right, in a large meeting, to sing the well-known hymn, -- "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by."

He had no sooner completed it than a young man rose in the assembly and begged that he might be prayed for, as he regarded this as God's last call to him, a hitherto impenitent sinner. The result was, I believe, his conversion.

The reading of the Holy Scriptures, as a part of public worship, is oft times most appropriate and edifying. This practice has the sanction of the Saviour, of the Apostles, and of evangelical Christians generally. The Book which is given by inspiration of God; which is profitable for so many things; through the patience and comfort of which we have hope; "which is able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus;" and which we are commanded to search; cannot safely be excluded from our public assemblies.

The public reading of Scripture is, however, to be placed precisely on the same basis as preaching, praying, and singing -- that, namely, of the leading of the Holy Spirit. If engaged in formally, and as a matter of course, it may, and often will -- just as any other act of worship -- speedily become a dry and useless thing. It is the Spirit that giveth life to the letter. But the Spirit

does operate with peculiar power in connection with His own Book. And if any child of God feels impelled by the Spirit to read a portion of Scripture in the assembled church-which I am confident will very often be the case, if all are in their proper places -- he or she should do so, without let or hindrance.

Neither the reading of the Bible, nor the exercise of any gift of the Spirit, is to be forbidden or repressed in any of our meetings; yet a due regard must always be paid to the proprieties of time and circumstance, and the suggestions of a sanctified judgment must be received as interpreters of the mind of the Spirit.

The spirit of the prophets must be subject to the prophets, and all things must be done decently and in order. "God is not the Author of confusion."

And, as already intimated, some meetings are, as a rule, more appropriate for the exercise of one kind of gifts, and others for another kind. Most congregations of the Society of Friends hold a morning and an evening meeting on the Lord's Day, and also a meeting in the middle of the week. And, without presuming to prescribe any fixed rule, I would suggest that the morning meetings on the first day of the week (Sunday) are usually occasions on which, in alternation with silent, united worship, there is a special fitness in preaching the Gospel, with its adaptations to different states and conditions.

Might not the evening or afternoon meetings on the same day, as a general rule, be profitably occupied in part, at least, with reading and expounding the Scriptures; and would it not be well, very frequently, for those who meet in the middle of the week to edify one another by many short and lively testimonies, praises, and prayers? "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it"!

Again I say, however, that everything in all meetings must be left to the guidance of the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. We must not allow ourselves to be brought into bondage by the observance or non-observance of any specific rules.

My readers, who are not members of the Society of Friends, will notice and kindly excuse the few remarks I have made in this chapter, which have a special reference to my own sect.

But I proceed now to state that the Spirit in the church is the great Unifier.

All true fellowship between individual believers -- and the word implies union of heart and purpose -- is the "fellowship of the Spirit." "Our fellowship," says the Apostle, "is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." And the Spirit is striving still to bring all God's children into that blessed fellowship with the Father, and with the Son, and with each other. "If we walk in the light [of the Spirit] we have fellowship one with another."

And as Christ, dwelling in the heart of the believer by faith, and strengthening him by His Spirit in the inner man, is the foundation for union and fellowship between individual Christians, so it is the Spirit abiding in the Church that is to form the basis of union between the sects.

The doctrine of holiness is sometimes accused by its opposers of tending to divide and distract the Church of Christ. But Gospel holiness is the work of the indwelling Spirit, and surely it cannot be said of Him that He is the author of heresies, divisions, or schisms among God's people.

The Church has undergone many lamentable divisions and separations, it is true, but it was not so much because of its holiness as because it wanted more holiness.

As individual Christians and Christian sects are baptized with the Holy Ghost they are brought nearer to Christ, and, like the radii of a circle or the spokes of a wheel, as they get nearer the Center they get nearer to each other. Their union is in Christ, and in Him alone, through the Spirit.

I do not see any sufficient reason to accept the views of those who suppose that the Church of Christ on earth must, during the present dispensation, become non-denominational, i.e., that all sects of Christians must be merged into one outward and visible Church. God's chosen people of old were twelve tribes, but one Israel. In like manner His people now are many denominations, but one Church. I do not know why it should not continue to be so, until the Son of Man cometh in His kingdom.

And when the Israelites marched, or when they encamped, it was not in disorder, nor at random. Every tribe had its own place assigned in the march, in the battle, and in the encampment; and every man was to march, to fight, and to pitch his tent under his own standard, and with his own tribe. There was beauty, there was order, there was strength. But the secret of it all was that God dwelt in the tabernacle, and the tabernacle was in their very midst.

And when the prophet, covetous of Balak's gold, would fain have cursed this Israel of God, when he even changed his position again and again that he might see them from a different stand-point, if peradventure he might curse them from thence, on every occasion the curse was changed into a blessing in his mouth, and he was compelled to exclaim, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river's side, as the trees of lign aloes which the Lord hath planted, and as cedar trees beside the waters;" nay, even to petition for himself, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

Beautiful in their encampment, terrible in their march, irresistible in their attack upon their enemies -- such were the Israelites of old when the Lord dwelt among them.

And such would the Church of Christ be now, if thoroughly baptized, and filled, and abode in by the Holy Spirit. She would indeed be "beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, fair to look upon." And she would be to the enemies of God and His truth "terrible as an army with banners." And the attempts, which might be made from many different stand-points, to curse her would all be in vain, so that even her enemies would be compelled to acknowledge with Balaam, "How goodly are thy tents and thy tabernacles." "Let me die the death of the righteous."

And is not the good time coming and nigh at hand? Is not the Holy Spirit indeed taking possession of the Church to a larger extent than ever before since Apostolic times? The dividing lines between different sects of Christians have hitherto been too much like high walls of separation, across which they could only shoot arrows at each other. Now they are becoming, as I trust, more like hedges, across which they can shake hands and wish each other God-speed on their heavenward journey.

Moreover, instead of spending their time and their talent, their brain-power and their learning, in controversies and persecutions, instead of waging angry and interminable wars with each other, they are beginning to see that it is no longer the province of Ephraim to vex Judah, nor of Judah to judge Ephraim, but Judah and Ephraim are to unite with each other, and with the other tribes, in smiting the common enemies of God and of Israel, and, shoulder to shoulder with one common front, they are to wage war with Amalek, the Canaanite, or the Philistine, as the case may be.

Yes, beloved, we are living in the Dispensation of the Holy Ghost. May He be received by faith to dwell in the hearts of believers, and to vivify and unify, and sanctify, and energize the Church, until Jerusalem shall indeed be a praise in the earth, and millions shall be gathered into the fold of Christ. Gird up your loins, ye servants of the living God, and run like Elijah of old. "There is a sound of abundance of rain."

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Remarks

1. -- Christ, by the Holy Spirit, exercises His headship over the visible Church.
2. -- Christ, by the Holy Spirit, meets with every assembly that is gathered in His name.
3. -- All true worship is performed in spirit and in truth. It may be either with or without vocal exercises.
4. -- The Holy Spirit, if waited upon and sought unto, will rightly direct all the exercises of the worshipping assembly.
5. -- The gifts of the Spirit may be rightly exercised under His direction in the assembled Church.
6. -- The call and qualifications for the ministry of the Gospel are from God alone. But while the Church has no power nor authority to make a man a minister, it may rightly recognize the gift he has received and record him a minister.
7. -- The gift of the ministry may include evangelizing, teaching, and prophesying, which is speaking for exhortation, edification, or comfort.

8. -- The priesthood, equality, and brotherhood of believers result from the headship of Christ over His Church.

9. -- A one-man ministry is not taught in the Bible.

10. -- Women, as well as men, may be, and are, called and anointed by the Holy Ghost for the work of the ministry.

11. -- Preaching, praying, singing, and reading the Scriptures are all appropriate and edifying acts of public worship, when engaged in under the leadings of the Holy Spirit.

12. -- Christian believers who have been baptized with the Holy Ghost are brought into fellowship with the Father, and the Son, and with one another.

13. -- The Holy Spirit in the Church of Christ binds together the different sects of believers in the acceptance of a common salvation, and harmonizes them in a common purpose to extend the Redeemer's kingdom.

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12 -- THE SPIRIT IN PRAYER

Nothing is more positively inculcated in the Holy Scriptures, both by precept and practice, than the duty of prayer. Nor is there any law of nature more universal in its application, than that which impels all men, in times of great danger or emergency, to pray to some superior Being, known or unknown, for aid.

The man Christ Jesus was not only a man of sorrows, but a man of prayer. Not many prayers of His have been transmitted, it is true, and these few are, generally, very short; but we are told, nevertheless, that "He went up into a mountain and prayed"; that "He withdrew from the multitude and prayed"; and that His prayers were sometimes protracted ones, we may infer from at least one instance in which "He continued all night in prayer to God." Taking upon Him the form of a servant, exhausted by His labors for others, which through the day were so pressing that He sometimes had no leisure even to eat bread, it was indeed true of Him, that

"Cold mountains, and the midnight air,
Witnessed the fervor of His prayer."

The apostles, prophets, and holy men of old, were all mighty in prayer. As princes they had power with God, and prevailed. And we have not the slightest reason to suppose that they ever doubted for a moment that they received blessings from God, in answer to their prayers; which blessings they would not have received without the prayers. It was reserved for the skepticism of more modern times, to deny the real efficacy of prayer.

And yet, this is a very mysterious subject! God is an unchangeable Being, "with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." How, then, can the petitions of His feeblest child avail to move that Almighty hand that moves the worlds?

Some persons believe that the only influence of prayer is a subjective one, i.e., that it brings the individual into a humble, receptive state of mind, suitable for the acceptance of the blessings desired; or, that he is stimulated by prayer to increased exertion to secure the things he asks for, and thus to bring about the answer to his own prayers. And very much ingenuity has been expended in trying to prove the hopeless orphanage of our race, and bring discredit upon the simple truth that we have a Heavenly Father, to whom we may and ought to pray with the expectation of receiving definite answers to definite requests.

In the first place, I remark, that there is no real incompatibility between the unchangeableness of God, and His willingness to hear and answer prayer. The very condition upon which He promises to give the things we need, is that we ask Him. When, therefore, we bring ourselves to the point of asking Him for the things we desire, and when we receive them, it is not He that changes His mind, but we who change ours. We come to His terms, we comply with His conditions, and He does precisely what He has promised to do, without the slightest change of purpose.

A father may say to his little boy, "You shall have this orange, if you ask for it in a proper manner." But the child is obstinate and self-willed; he tries to obtain it without asking. He may say, perhaps, "It is no good to ask;" and by various means he may manage to deprive himself for a long time of the coveted fruit. But, when he comes to the prescribed terms; when he says, -- "Please, father, give me the orange," he at once obtains it. It is easy to see in this case that it is the child, and not the father, who changes his mind.

It cannot be denied, however, that prayer -- like everything else which God has instituted and prescribed -- has its conditions, its laws, and its limitations. I cannot make request, selfishly and indiscriminately, for any blessing, real or supposed, which I may desire, and expect to obtain it. I cannot say to the Lord, -- "Give me a hundred thousand pounds today;" or ask Him for anything and everything which it might please me to have, and hope to receive it.

This would be making God's will subject to my own will, and would thus reverse that divine order which His omnipotence has established. To pray, means to offer up petitions; not, to make demands. And the very idea of a petition, recognizes the right, and the power, on the part of the sovereign to whom it is addressed, to grant or deny the things asked for, according to his own will. And so, all true prayer includes, whether by expression or implication, the words, -- "Thy will, not mine, be done."

The first condition, then, upon which prayer is answered is, that it is according to God's will. "If we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us." The second condition is, that the prayer be accompanied by faith. "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." The two conditions are intimately connected with each other, and both comport entirely with the unchangeableness of God. We can only utter a believing prayer for things

which are according to God's will. And, to grant what is according to His will, involves, on His part, no change of purpose.

But who are these to whom it is promised that they shall receive the things they ask for believingly and according to God's will? Doubtless the children of God. There is one necessary thing for the unpardoned sinner to ask for first of all, and that is mercy and acceptance in Christ Jesus.

And he may, if sincerely penitent and desirous of salvation, offer up his prayer for forgiveness with entire confidence that he shall be heard and accepted, because "God willeth not the death of a sinner."

Having thus become a child of God by faith in Jesus Christ, he will now find many things, both temporal and spiritual, about which he will need to seek his Heavenly Father's counsel and aid during the remainder of his earthly pilgrimage.

Believers themselves, however, are often at a loss to know what things are according to God's will, and what things, therefore, they may believingly ask for. Here, as elsewhere, they should first try to find a solution for their perplexities by searching the Scriptures. It may be laid down as an axiom that whatever our Heavenly Father has promised us in His will we may pray for, as we feel them to represent our own needs.

If Jesus has said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," that is sufficient ground for one who has not found pardon, to ask and receive it. If the inspired Apostle says, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification," the Christian may, and ought to, pray for sanctification.

If the Saviour says, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost," the believer may, and should, pray to be thus baptized. If we are told that Jesus carried our sorrows as well as our sins, we should, in prayer, give Him our sorrows as well as our sins. If we are told to cast all our care upon Him, because He careth for us, we should do that thing. If we are commanded to "Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks," we should pray for that state of mind and heart, in which God's grace may enable us to do so.

But I need not particularize further. Whatever we find in the precepts, the promises, or the prophecies of the Bible revealing or indicating God's will and purposes towards us, will be each, on its fitting occasion, a proper subject of prayer, which we can offer believingly, knowing that He will hear us.

And if He clearly shows, by His outward providences, His plans, purposes, and wishes concerning us, there also is a basis on which we can pray in faith, having confidence that we have the petitions which we desire of Him.

Now the promises of God include all possible good to the believer, -- "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." They exclude in like manner all possible evil, -- "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." They take in

also the supply of every spiritual and temporal need, -- "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." They recognize further, all events as providences coming from God and tending to the believer's good, -- "All things shall work together for good to them that love God."

Surely no Christian could ask more for himself than that all real good should be given him, all real evil kept away from him, all his real needs of every kind supplied, and all his circumstances and surroundings to be promotive of his highest interest and happiness.

But when we come to particularize and to inquire whether this or that specific thing is a real good, alas, we are brought face to face with our "infirmities!"

That which we esteem good may be in the eyes of Him, who seeth all things as they are, just the reverse. And so of evil. Samuel with all his prophetic wisdom did not see where real merit was, as the tall and goodly sons of Jesse passed before him. But he was told that the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. And it was upon the head of the shepherd stripling that the anointing oil was to be poured.

You stand beside the dying bed of a Christian. Tears fall from mourning friends; lamentations fill the room. The struggle with the last enemy seems dreadful to you, and you can but say that a real evil and calamity are falling upon that family.

But above all these tears and groans and sighs of sorrow, above the clouds that to your eyes seem so black and gloomy, is the eye of God beholding the same scene. And what does He see? A precious thing. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

And flow amid the perplexity arising out of our short-sightedness in reference to real good and evil, how blessed it is to know that it is our privilege to have the intercessory offices of the Spirit Himself. The nature of this intercessory function of the Holy Spirit is described in the eighth of Romans. "Likewise also the Spirit itself helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered; and He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

This is praying in the Holy Ghost. This is the true spirit of prayer, and true praying in the Spirit. What we do not know the Holy Spirit does know. He knows what is real good and real evil for us. And He works upon the heart of the believer, begetting an earnest longing and groaning after these things which He knows to be a real good, and those things which He knows to be according to the will of God. Oh, that Christians everywhere knew what it is to have the Spirit within them, helping their infirmities, showing them what to pray for, and begetting within them unutterable groanings and fervent petitions for those things which are according to the mind of the Spirit!

And when the Spirit thus helps us in prayer He produces also a corresponding faith, so that true spiritual prayer is always the prayer of faith, and brings the blessing down upon those that thus pray, because they ask believingly and must receive.

The same Spirit who begets in the believer's heart the groanings that cannot be uttered, and the faith that takes hold on God with a firm grasp for the thing asked for, also works either in the realm of nature or the realm of grace to bring about the answer to the prayer. And the obtaining or non-obtaining of answers to prayer does not depend at all upon the greatness or wondrousness of the things asked for, but rather upon the question whether or not the prayer and the corresponding faith have been begotten by the Holy Spirit.

God is Almighty, and can do great things just as easily as small things. And the Church of Christ, with its individual membership, needs to learn to trust Him more implicitly, for great things as well as small, and for small things as well as great. He not only "setteth up kings, and putteth down kings, and turneth the hearts of kings as a man turneth the water-course in his field," but He orders the momentary events in the daily life of His lowliest child, as well. Oh, that we might all learn "what is that exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe."

Sometimes the Holy Spirit secures the answer to a prayer, which Himself has inspired, by human agency. And, for this purpose, He may use either converted or unconverted men. Instances are not very rare in which one Christian man or woman has been impressed by feelings, not to be put aside, that it was right to visit some other Christian person; and on so doing, has found the family in distress, and praying to God for relief; which has, in this manner, been sent them.

In the following case, a man who was not a Christian, was used in a similar way:-- A carter, in the employ of a farmer in the south of England (both of them being ungodly men), had a praying, Christian wife. One day he was carried home to her, with his leg broken by an accident. After the surgeon had adjusted the fractured limb, and she had done all she could for his comfort, she said to him: "Well, John, I have long prayed for your conversion, and that -- if in no other way -- even by suffering, your soul might be brought to God."

He was very angry, and accused her of praying that his leg might be broken. After a few days, their means were exhausted. Saturday night came, and there was neither bread nor money in the house. "Now," said the man, reproachfully, "you have been praying that I might have to suffer; you had better pray that we may get some food." She kneeled down by the table, and continued half-an-hour in earnest prayer to God. The door opened. The employer of the carter appeared; made some short remark, to the effect that "he could not get Jack out of his mind this evening," and, laying on the table the full amount of what the man's wages would have been, if he had been able to work, he disappeared. And, not only that prayer of the poor woman, but the former one, was answered; for her husband gave his heart to God, and accepted Christ as his Saviour.

Sometimes the answer to the prayer is through the invisible operation of the Spirit who dictates it -- upon the human body, or upon the external world. Both Scripture and experience testify to the truth, that "the prayer of faith shall save the sick," and if the true relation of the Spirit to our conditions and needs were understood, there would be no reason for discrediting the facts of "prayer-cure" on the one hand, nor of perplexity as to why it is not always, or more generally available, on the other.

"It is appointed unto men once to die"; and it is certain that we cannot in our own will keep our friends from the fatal results of illness or accident. The point of limitation is precisely here. The Spirit knows when it is in accordance with the will of God that the sick should be restored in answer to the prayer of faith. He begets the earnest longings, the unutterable groanings, the fervent petitions, the living faith, in the heart and on the lips of some Christian believer, and then, by His own divine energy, He invisibly operates upon the body of the diseased person and restores him to health. It is the prayers, and these only, which are inspired by Himself, that are also answered by Himself.

It does not follow that the recovery would have taken place, without the prayer, any more than, in other cases, recovery would take place without the medicine; which, the physician justly assures us, saved the patient's life. Nor does it follow that God's will or purpose has been changed in the least? He makes the prayer of faith the condition of recovery in one case. He makes medicinal remedies the condition of recovery in another case. The condition is fulfilled. His will is accomplished, and no law is violated in one case, any more than the other.

Nor is there any inconsistency in asserting that the two methods of cure may be combined. Christian physicians, as I know by my own experience, are sometimes led earnestly to pray that God's blessing may rest upon the means they employ for the recovery of their patients. And I quite deny that there is any absurdity in supposing that He who gives to the animal, vegetable, and mineral productions of nature their medicinal qualities, may impart to them a special efficacy in particular cases, in answer to believing prayer. The Spirit that produces the prayer, confers also peculiar potentiality upon the means employed.

The following account is quoted from the Memoirs of Stephen Grellet; Vol. I., p. 275:-- "After one of these opportunities, Lavater, a physician, brother to the late Lavater -- told me, 'I have great reason for being fully convinced of these great and important truths that you have delivered. Once, I did not believe in them, and even ridiculed them; but the Lord was pleased to convince me of their reality in the following manner: My son, my only son, was very ill; I had exerted all my medical skill upon him in vain, when, in my distress, I wandered out into the street, and seeing the people going to the church, where my brother Lavater was to preach, I went also. He began with that very text that you have mentioned, -- 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, believing, it shall be done unto you.' He dwelt very particularly on the nature of prayer, -- in whose name, and to whom, it is to be offered. He described, also, the efficacy of that faith which is to be the clothing of the poor supplicants. I attended very closely to what my brother said, and I thought I would now try if it was indeed so; for my solicitude for the recovery of my son was great. My prayer for it was earnest. I thought, also, that I believed the Lord Jesus had all power to heal him, if He would.

"Now," said he, "in my folly I dared to limit the Almighty to three days, concluding that by this I should know that He was indeed a God hearing prayer, if my son was restored within that time. After such a daring act, all my skill as a physician seemed to be taken away from me. I went about, looking at my watch to see how the time passed, then at my son, whom I saw growing worse, but not a thought to minister anything to him arose. The three days had nearly passed away, when, with an increase of anguish and also a sense of the Lord's power, I cried out,'

I believe, O Lord, that Thou canst do all this for me. Help Thou my unbelief'; on which, some of the most simple things presented to me to administer to my son -- so simple that at any other time I should have scorned them. Yet, believing it was of the Lord, I administered them, and my son immediately recovered. 'Now,' said the doctor, 'I felt fully convinced that the Lord heareth prayer and that there is an influence of the Spirit of God on the mind of man, for I have felt it.' He added, 'To this day I feel ashamed of myself, that I, a poor worm, should have dared to prescribe limits to the Lord, and wonder how, in His boundless mercy, He should have condescended, notwithstanding my darkness, to hear me.' These are very nearly the words of the doctor. They were accompanied with brokenness of spirit."

Nothing is more clearly revealed in Scripture than that the Lord controls the operations of nature in such a way as to promote or to prevent the production of such crops as are necessary for human sustenance. It is He that sendeth the rain and He that withholdeth it, if the plain declarations of the Bible are of any value.

He may, and does, employ second causes, but He is not dependent on them, nor subject to them. They are His servants, not His masters. The prophet calls upon Israel to pray to the Lord about the weather -- a thing which is now regarded by many Christians as absurd. "Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain, so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain." Let the meteorologist explain the rains and the droughts as he may, it is the Lord that does it.

Now, as a rule, no doubt it is very well to leave the weather in the Lord's hands, with full confidence that He will still "cause His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and send rain upon the just and upon the unjust." But if the Holy Spirit begets in Christian hearts the true spirit of prayer in reference to the weather, whether it be in times of drought and famine, of storms and floods, or on more ordinary occasions, then the Holy Spirit also is ready to exert His divine power in bringing about the answer to the prayer. There also "He maketh intercession for us according to the will of God," and the result is sure.

Now it is very plain that this kind of prayer is not in our own wills.

Most certainly, in reference to the healing of the sick, and in reference to rain and sunshine, "we know not what to pray for as we ought." And the thing for the believer to do is to leave his heart in God's hands, to watch carefully the gentlest intimations of His Spirit, and when, and only when, He worketh in him the prayer and the faith, then give place to it, then utter it, and then realize that according to his faith it is unto him.

Sometimes, again, the prayer is for deliverance from some besetting sin or some enslaving habit. Here the Holy Spirit begets an earnest longing for deliverance and the prayer of faith, which is also as availing in these instances as in those already mentioned, and the answer may come just as suddenly. "Jesus came to save His people from their sins," "to redeem them from all iniquity, and to purify them unto Himself." Why should any Christian hesitate to accept Him as a present Saviour from all sin?

A little boy of five or six years, residing in the city of London, was possessed of a most irascible and ungovernable temper. In his fits of rage he would kick, scratch, bite, and in every way resist the efforts of his governess to secure his obedience. One day, having left him to sit alone in a room after one of his ebullitions of anger, she observed that he was quite silent for a time. Then coming to her with tears, he besought her forgiveness for his naughtiness, and observed, very firmly, "I shall not get angry again."

The governess inquired why he said so. "Why," said he, "I have been talking to Jesus about it, and He has promised to keep me from sinning again, and He will do it." The child had, probably, often prayed before that he might not get angry; but now he had uttered, under the influence of the Spirit, the true prayer of faith. He believed that Jesus would save him. The testimony of the governess, six years after these occurrences, was that she had never seen him angry since. I had this story from a prominent minister of Christ, now in London.

A Nonconformist minister of the city of London, having attended some meetings on the subject of holiness, was at first unable to accept the teaching, but afterwards light dawned upon him, and he accepted it, so far as he then understood it.

The results in his experience were good. He was a smoker of tobacco to a large extent. After a time, he became dissatisfied with this habit. He enjoyed it, but he thought God's will was against it. He continued the indulgence, though mentally uneasy, and he found that it lessened the sense of God's presence and smile. He hesitated as to his course, not wishing to make too much of what might seem to many a harmless habit. On one occasion, however, when a friend had presented him with some excellent tobacco of special qualities, he pushed aside his qualms and shut himself in his own room for the enjoyment of his favorite indulgence. He was, then and there, while smoking, clearly impressed with the conviction that the habit for him was wrong in the sight of God. He put his pipe aside, knelt in prayer, and gave himself, in a definite act of consecration, to God. He asked that, if smoking were wrong for him, his taste for tobacco might be taken away. He rose; and his testimony was, and is, that the taste, once so very strong, was taken away, and has not returned -- the period being from May, 1875, to January, 1878.

Not scores only, but hundreds of well authenticated cases could be collected, if pains were taken for the purpose, in which' the appetite for strong drink has been at once and permanently removed, in answer to believing prayer. Comment is needless.

Finally, the prayer of faith, begotten by the Holy Spirit with groanings that cannot be uttered, is available for the conversion of sinners, and for bringing varied blessings upon believers. The Spirit works upon one Christian's heart, producing an earnest longing and sincere petition that some soul may be saved, or that some neighborhood may be visited by a revival of religion, begetting a corresponding faith also, so that the prayer is uttered believingly. He next directs His omnipotent energy towards the hearts of those who are prayed for, and, convincing them of sin, turns them effectually to Christ, thus securing the answer to the prayer which Himself has originated.

And in these instances, as well as others, there is especial power in united prayer. "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven."

The following was related to me by the gentleman who was the subject of it. He was, and still is, a physician in active practice, in one of the interior towns of America. He was an ungodly man. At the time of a revival of religion in the town, a number of ladies met, by agreement, at a certain time, to pray specially for the conversion of this individual. He of course knew nothing of it. But on the afternoon, and at the very hour while they were praying, he told me that while engaged in his professional visits, a strange unaccountable feeling of panic came over him. The feeling was indescribable, but consisted in part of fear mixed with deep distress of mind.

This mental trouble, which was to him astonishing, grew and increased. He went home, examined himself as to his physical health, felt his pulse, looked at his tongue in a mirror, but could not find anything amiss with his bodily functions. The anxiety and uneasiness of mind continued, however, until he found peace, where only it is to be found in its fulness, by accepting free mercy and pardon in the Lord Jesus Christ.

When revivals of religion have occurred in different communities, which revivals are by no means to be contemned nor underrated, for it is in times of religious awakening like these that the majority of Christians have been converted, it will perhaps always be found on inquiry, that some one or two or more Christian believers, men or women, or even children, have been praying especially that the Lord would revive His work among them. And the Spirit who moves upon their hearts thus to pray, moves also upon the hearts of the people, bringing them to Christ, and fulfilling the petitions.

A Christian lady has sent me the following anecdote, which occurred in her own experience: -- "On one occasion, while engaged in ordinary duties, my mind was arrested by a feeling of intense sympathy with one of my dear suffering friends; as if she was then passing through extraordinary trial. So strong did it become, that I was constrained to retire to my own room, and pour out my heart more freely in prayer for her, accompanied by 'strong crying and tears,' under a sense of her condition. While thus pleading, the thought struck me, -- 'Could I not send her a telegram by way of Heaven?' and, in full faith, I asked the Lord to bring this passage to her mind, 'As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you,' -- with the power of the Holy Spirit. In a few days I received a letter from her, in which she told me that she had been passing through extreme trial, but that, about 7 o'clock, on such a day -- the very day and hour in which the telegram was sent -- that passage was so brought home to her, that her soul was sweetly calmed, and her mourning was ended, -- 'As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.'"

It is always to be gratefully remembered, that the Saviour, who prayed for His people when He was on earth, still ever liveth to make intercession for them in Heaven. It is only as He presents our petitions, with His own, before the throne of God, that they can find acceptance with the Father. All prayer, therefore, should be offered in the name of Jesus, and for His sake.

And, I believe it is both in accordance with Scripture, and, in some cases, eminently proper to address prayer directly to Christ Himself. It was continually done, when He was personally on earth, by those who had need of healing. It was done by the dying thief, with acceptance. It was done by the martyr, Stephen, as he sealed his testimony with his blood.

And those who are under conviction for sin, need oftentimes to get rid of a certain prejudice they may have had, against recognizing Jesus Christ as God. This they effectually do, when they pray to Him directly, as One who still has power on earth to forgive sins. Little children, also, may often -- now as of old -- be brought directly to Christ, and taught to pray to Him, we cannot doubt, with entire acceptance.

And, as the Holy Spirit is one with the Father and the Son, -- and therefore, God -- it cannot be regarded as wrong, or always inappropriate, as it seems to me, to address prayer to Him. We may pray to the Father to give us the Holy Spirit; we may pray to the Son to baptize us with the Holy Spirit; we may pray to the Holy Spirit Himself, to come and abide in our hearts. But, for Christian believers, the general rule, I think, should be to make our requests to the Father, in the name of the Son.

* * *

Remarks

1. -- It may be regarded as an universal instinct of mankind, to pray to some superior power in times of distress and danger.

2. -- It is the imperative duty of every Christian to pray to God.

3. -- The teachings of the Bible, and of experience, agree in establishing the fact that blessings, both temporal and spiritual, may be, and are, obtained in answer to the prayer of faith; which would not be received without the prayer. This is entirely consistent with the unchangeableness of God.

4. -- The condition on which blessings are promised, is that they be asked for. Ask, and ye shall receive.

5. -- Anything contained in the precepts, promises, or prophecies of the Bible -- so far as it indicates God's will towards us -- may be a proper subject of prayer.

6. -- To pray aright, we must ask according to God's will, and we must ask in faith.

7. -- When we know not what to pray for as we ought, the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and maketh intercession for the saints, according to the will of God.

8. -- Under the Spirit's leadings, Christians may pray for the supply of their wants, and obtain them; for the cure of the sick, and they shall be raised up; for rain, or for sunshine -- as

these are needed -- and have them; for the conversion of sinners, and blessings upon believers, which shall follow accordingly.

9. -- All these results follow unfailingly, because the Holy Spirit, who inspires the prayer, operates Himself, in nature or in grace, to bring about the answer. But, except when prompted by the Spirit, these prayers will be of no avail.

10. -- If we remain constantly surrendered to God, and looking to Jesus, He will show us, by the Holy Spirit, when and how to pray the true prayer of faith. And this is praying in the Holy Ghost.

11. -- Prayer should be addressed to the Father, in the name of the Son. On some occasions, however, we may properly pray directly to Jesus Himself; or even to the Holy Spirit.

12. --

"Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in Thy presence will prevail to make,
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take,
What parched grounds refresh, as with a shower!
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;
We rise, and all, the distant and the near,
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear;
We kneel, how weak, we rise, how full of power.
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong,
Or others -- that we are not always strong,
That we are ever overborne with care,
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy and strength and courage are with Thee?"

-- Trench.

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CONCLUSIONS

The offices of the Holy Spirit, as treated of in this book, may be summed up as follows:--

1. -- The Holy Spirit operates upon the hearts of sinners, to awaken them, to convince them of sin, to lead them to repentance, and to enable them to believe in Jesus. In direct connection with their justification He also, by His own divine energy, regenerates them.

2. -- Having now become children of God by the new birth, the Spirit witnesses to their adoption.

3. -- The Spirit dwells with the justified believer, strengthening him in the Lord, enabling him to grow in grace, showing him the remains of the carnal nature still existing, and causing him earnestly to desire a clean heart.

4. -- When the believer, following the Holy Spirit's leadings and receiving His divine aid, consecrates himself to the Lord and trusts fully to His promises, he receives the baptism with the Holy Ghost.

5. -- As the results of this baptism, the Holy Spirit "purifies his heart by faith," endues him with power, fills him, and abides in him.

6. -- The indwelling Spirit operates in the heart of the sanctified believer as a teacher, guide, strengthener, comforter, expounder of the Scriptures, and glorifier of Jesus.

7. -- By the Holy Spirit, Christ exercises His headship and authority in the Church. The Spirit leads and directs all true worship, and imparts His gifts to individual members, male or female. By the exercise of these gifts, God is glorified and the Church edified.

8. -- The Holy Spirit gives us the true spirit of prayer, enabling us to pray believingly, to have the petitions that He leads us to desire, to "ask and receive that our joy may be full."

And now let all my beloved readers unite with me in the ascription of heartfelt praise to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. AMEN.

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THE END