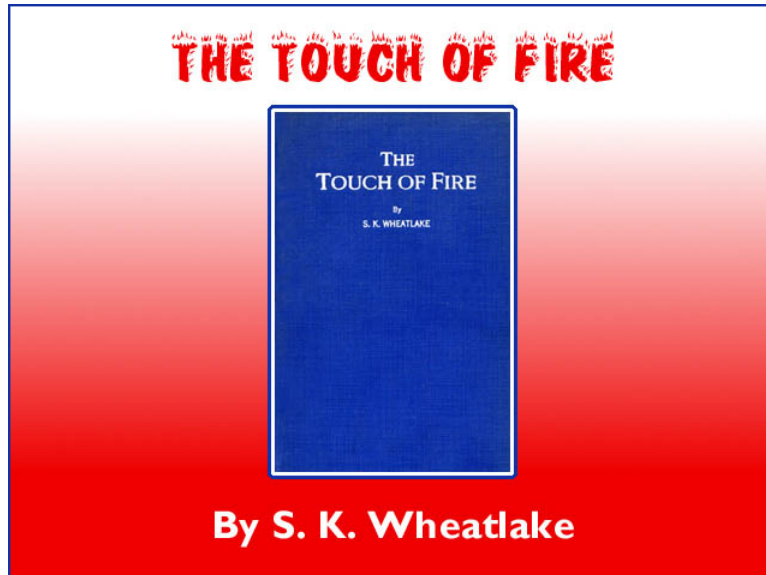


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**THE TOUCH OF FIRE
By S. K. Wheatlake**



Sermons on Holiness

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DEDICATION

**To My Wife,
Emma Burnap Wheatlake,
whose cheerful self-denial and devotion
have been an inspiration to my ministry**

for many years, and whose prayers have added much to my success as a minister, this volume is affectionately dedicated.

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PREFACE

In the publication of this book of sermons I do not feel that I have any more need of making an apology for so doing than I would have if I had preached them from the pulpit as I have done many times. The idea of writing them for publication was first suggested to me by Rev. W. B. Rose, our beloved but departed publisher.

In mercy God has been pleased to use them in the years gone by in bringing at least a few souls into the kingdom of divine grace and in the entire sanctification of believers. Now that my day is far spent and my sun is bending low in the western sky and the night is at hand, hoping that after my departure they may remain in the midst of a lost world to shed some degree of light upon its darkness and reap more sheaves in the harvest, in the fear of God I submit them to the care of God and the consideration of men. I have not poised as a homilist in their arrangement, but only desire to get the truth they contain before the people.

S.K. Wheatlake

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01 -- THE TOUCH OF FIRE

"Then flew one of the seraphims 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" (Isa. 6: 6,7).

We learn, from the conclusion of the paragraph in which the text is found, that God wanted some one to go for Him and to go as a volunteer. In fact, He wanted Isaiah to go, but he was not ready for his work. God is very particular whom He sends forth to do work for Him, as His work is very precious in His sight. While talents and education are very desirable qualifications, yet spirituality seems to be the supreme requisite in His sight.

Isaiah, as yet, had not received the baptism of fire. So, instead of sending him forth into His work, He led him to attend a service in the temple and there gave him a vision. The vision was made up of four visions in one, namely, a vision of God, a vision of himself, a vision of the remedy for sin, and a vision of service.

(1) In the vision of God, he saw the supremacy of God, for he saw Him "sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up." This signified the loftiness of His position as the Almighty King. This placed Him as the King of all the kings and the Lord of all the lords, and "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy." He not only saw Him as the supreme One, but, also, as the omnipresent One, for His train or robes filled the temple. Robes indicate royalty and His royal presence was filling immensity. In other words, His center was everywhere and His circumference nowhere. There was a revelation of the divine character. This was revealed to him by the utterance of the seraphims. There were times when holiness preachers were scarce, so He called the seraphims into service and their subject was the holiness of the divine character.

By way of a preparation for service, with four wings they covered faces and feet, and with the remaining two wings they flew through the temple and responsively cried, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord: the whole earth is full of His glory," thus indicating the final and universal reign of holiness in the earth. Another phase of the vision was, he saw the "house was filled with smoke." The smoke, more or less, enshrouded the place, and all that Isaiah saw was rendered indistinct, thus signifying the invisibility of God. There was enough seen in the vision, however, to produce the desired effect upon Isaiah, and yet he was given to understand that there was much about the omnipotence, omnipresence, and holiness of God that would remain a mystery to him.

(2) This vision of God, especially the revelation of God's holiness, revealed to him, by way of contrast, his own moral condition. The vision was not given to entertain Isaiah, but rather for his betterment and edification. The brighter the

sunshine, the darker the shadow, and the more clearly we see into the holiness of the divine nature, the darker becomes the depravity of our hearts. Holiness sermons ought to move things in a moral sense and they do, when properly preached. The declaration of God's holiness by the seraphims, on this occasion, not only moved the inanimate door post, but it tremendously moved Isaiah; so much so, that he leaped all over the temple and shouted "Glory." No, indeed! Hear him! "Woe is reel for I am undone." But you ask, "What is the matter with you, Isaiah?" "I am a man of unclean lips," and, 'I am undone' and ruined for two worlds, unless there is a remedy that will conform me to the divine image; for my unclean lips would unfit me for my calling in this world, and my unclean heart would bar me from the presence of God in the next world." He mentioned his lips, but his lips were only members of his body and were "instruments of unrighteousness." They were no more to be blamed for their uncleanness than the carpenter's tool was for the misfit. There is a wonderful connection mentioned in the Bible between the heart of man and his lips, mouth, and tongue. Hence we read, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." "The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity," "it is set on fire of hell," but this hell of iniquity proceeds from the heart.

"But, Isaiah, by what means did you discover your unfitness for service?" "Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" One of the greatest reasons for man's becoming holy is found in a consideration of God in the light of His holiness. This is brought out in the following Scripture, "Be ye holy, for I the Lord thy God am holy." The word "for," in this connection, is a reason why. This consideration of God's holiness constituted a reason why he should be holy and became the ground of his convictions.

Note that his convictions were deep, and caused him great anguish of soul; so much so, that he cried, "Woe is me." These words border on the language of despair. The word "woe" suggests to us that all the God-appointed woe, associated with the stain of sin, was resting oil him and would remain there in two worlds, unless the sin of his soul be taken away. Note, further, that this deep and pungent conviction produced in him a very definite expression as to his condition. He did not express himself as I have heard many, who were presumably seeking the blessing of holiness, express themselves, such as, "Lord, bless all the missionaries; bless the President; bless the Sunday-schools, and all the poor, and afflicted, and, Lord, bless us, for we need more religion." If Isaiah were with us today and should pray that way, any honest worker would say to him, "Hold on, Isaiah. What about those unclean lips of yours, and the heart that defiled them?" Hear him, "Woe is me! for I am undone"; i. e., I am the one with the unclean lips, and the awful woe is upon me. Real conviction for a clean heart will, Isaiah-like, make us definite in seeking that experience.

(3) The third part of the vision was that of a remedy for sin. How awful would have been his feelings and condition had the vision ended there, with no remedy in

sight. When the devil gets us into trouble, as a rule, he leaves us there, or gets us out by getting us into more trouble. But when God gets us into trouble, as He did Isaiah, it is always for a good purpose, and He has a blessed way of getting us out, as He did in this case. Isaiah saw an altar. The altar stood for fire and blood, God's great remedy for sin. Blood is the great vicarious element in the plan of human redemption, and fire is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, who is the executive of the Godhead and who came to execute the provisions of the atonement, made possible by the blood. So it is proper that they should be associated with the altar. In the mind of Isaiah there was something more than a theory of fire. There was also a contact with the holy fire, for the seraphim announced, "This hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." A young man was asked if he enjoyed the blessing of holiness. He replied that he had experienced the blessing of holiness for a long time. It is to be feared that this is about as far as many have gone, for they have never received the purging touch of fire; but have only received the light that comes to us from the theory. The touch of fire implies that we may know when we receive the blessing. It would be impossible to have a live coal of fire touch you and, at the same time, not be conscious of what had taken place. If the song had been in vogue in those days, he would have exultingly sung, "Wondrous grace, it reaches me." When the moral caustic touched the carnal proud flesh which polluted his soul, he was not under the influence of a moral anesthetic, but was able to sense what was taking place. The coal that touched him was a live one, in contrast with a dead, powerless, burnt-out one, signifying the unfailing energy of the Holy Ghost that was to remain a living, divine, purifying power within his soul. It is worthy of note that the seraph did not lay his hand upon the live coal while it was on the altar, but lifted it from the altar with a pair of tongs and then took it in his hand. This indicates to us the sacredness and exclusiveness of the provisions of the atonement, for the seraph was a sinless creature and had no need of the benefits of redemption. But, as one of God's ministering spirits acting in the interest of humanity, he was allowed to hold it in his hands and apply it to Isaiah's lips. It will be seen that Isaiah did not touch the live coal, but that it touched him, indicating that it is best for us to keep our hands off, and not to permit the human unnecessarily to become connected with God's all-sufficient plan of salvation. If the hand of a holy seraph be permitted to touch the altar, or anything connected with it, what must be the guilt of the sinner who has "trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing"? The precious blood upon his feet instead of his soul will draw divine lightning in the day of judgment. No doubt the angels look upon such a scene with holy pity and horror. If Isaiah entertained a doubt as to the ability of God to remove the sin from his heart and lips, he should have been encouraged by the thought that God was preeminently present and the power that cleanses was even then shaking the door post. If there is any doubt as to what took place in the heart of Isaiah at this time, it is settled by the announcement of the seraph, who said, "This hath touched thy lips, and... thy sin is purged."

(4) The last phase of the vision was that of service. Isaiah saw the seraphims ministering under divine directions. The manner of their service gave Isaiah an

object lesson of how he should perform God's bidding. They went about it humbly. Each had six wings and each used four for covering and only two for service. Depravity loves to go with all wings spread; but holiness goes covered. How natural for Isaiah to think, as he beheld them, "See how those sinless beings cover themselves as they perform the biddings of their Master. How much should I humble myself in His service with all of my sinfulness and unworthiness." They went with covered heads. Covered heads do not mean empty heads, for however large the brain caliber may be, holiness does not parade its intelligence at the expense of effective service for God. Rather it "condescends to men of low estate." The sainted Bishop Roberts was an educated man, yet I never heard him preach a sermon every word of which a ten-year-old boy could not understand. His head was covered. Their feet were also covered. Feet stand for activities. This means that we should never be disposed to make a man-show out of our doings at the expense of God's glory. I have heard some preachers, when there was obviously more whole-I-ness in their sermons than holiness. God never asked Isaiah to go. Holiness puts a divine energy into us, and as soon as we learn that there is any kind of service to be rendered for the Master, there is an inner impulse to volunteer at once by saying, "Here am I; send me." Guns used to be fired by using a percussion cap, which often caused the gun to hold fire and the hunter to lose his game. Depravity will often hold fire, even when duty is clear, and the blessing that goes with prompt duty is lost; but, under the same conditions, with a clean heart, the snap of conviction and the bang of duty are simultaneous and the blessing is ours.

(5) In conclusion, we will note the consecration involved in the case. As Isaiah hears the call of God, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" his fire-touched soul quickly responds, "Here am I; send me." Let me imagine that I am there and witnessing his hasty departure and I interrogate him thus: "What is your hurry, Isaiah?" He responds, "The King's business demands haste." "But where are you going?" "I do not know; He knows all about that." "But, Isaiah, you had better find out, for it may be the hardest work in the conference." "He knows all about my task, and I will trust His love and wisdom." He is rapidly disappearing and I call after him, "How much will your salary be?" "I had not thought about that, but He is just," he replies. He is almost out of sight. If they had had microphones in those days, I would have seized one and called after him, "When are you coming back?" Faintly, in the distance, would echo back the answer, "I do not know." In disgust, I would exclaim, "One more fanatic has left the country." But such is the consecration of all who have received the touch of fire.

* * * * *

02 -- THE REMAINING REST

"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God" (Heb. 4:9).

The fourth chapter of Hebrews is devoted to the rest of the children of Israel in the land of Canaan after their journey through the wilderness. Their rest in

Canaan was a type of the rest of God's children from inbred sin. Some seem to think that it was to them a type of heaven, but a careful consideration of the chapter does not justify us in forming such a conclusion. John Wesley and his brother Charles, who are very good authority on the subject, added their testimony to that of St. Paul when they sang,

"Come, oh, my Joshua, bring me in,
Cast out Thy foe, the inbred sin,
The carnal mind remove."

This hymn does not describe the longings of one who is seeking a rest in heaven, but, rather, it is the language of one seeking deliverance from sin. Let us notice the natural homiletical division of the chapter:

(1) We learn from the third verse that the rest spoken of may be enjoyed in this life. "For we, which have believed, do enter into rest." Mark you, not enter into heaven, but "into rest." If I say that I do a thing, it denotes a present state of action. There are many who seem to suppose that being holy is the final outcome of being in heaven, while the fact in the case is that the divine plan is just the reverse; being in heaven is the final result of being holy. Holiness is set forth in the Bible as a preparation for heaven and, as such, it must precede a state of being in heaven. This being the case, the way to heaven, in point of character, is just as holy as heaven itself; for it is written, "And it shall be called the way of holiness... the redeemed shall walk there"; i. e., they shall walk in a state of holiness on their way to the heavenly Zion. All of the commands and promises pertaining to holiness of heart and life require and offer purity of heart in this life.

(2) Notice the nature of this rest, as set forth in verse ten. "For he that is entered into His rest, he, also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His." This "rest from his own works" is not a rest from religious activities, for holiness of heart will have a tendency to increase and intensify them. One has quaintly said, "I enjoy the rest that keeps me in perpetual motion." It is said that a certain king offered a prize to the artist who could paint the best picture representing rest. One painted a beautiful lake nestled among the hills, surrounded by roses and undisturbed even by a zephyr; and he was told that it represented stagnation. Another painted the picture of a bird calmly seated upon its nest, which was built on the limb of a tree, swayed by a passing gale, and which extended over a raging cataract. He drew the prize, for it was rest amid great activity. The works from which we cease are called our "own works," for the reason that inbred sin is a part of ourselves -- all of its inner and outer manifestations are, strictly speaking, ours. As a complete system of moral evil, it is properly called "our old man." His "lust," "hate," "pride," "greed," "anger," and "impatience," all are ours and are spoken of, as such, in the Word of God. Since he is "our old man," there is a serious sense in which we are accessory to him in his disposition and deeds, and they are accounted as ours. The Word says, "The works of the flesh are manifest."

In a state of grace they are not openly manifest; but there is still an inner manifestation, or uprising, which would indicate that they are still "the works of the flesh." They are our works, and will be, as long as our sinful nature remains uncrucified and, being ours, it can only be crucified by our consent.

(3) We learn again from the tenth verse that this "rest" from sin is to be a complete one. We are to rest from our works "as God did from His." The completeness of God's rest from His works on the seventh day is used as a type of the completeness of our rest from all sin. In the fourth verse, we are told that "God did rest the seventh day from all His works." In the first verse, this typical rest is called "His rest." Hence, we read, "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." According to this verse, His Sabbatical rest not only typified our rest from sin, but, likewise, "From everlasting to everlasting" "rest" from sin that dwells in the bosom of God Himself.

His rest is to be our rest. There is not, and never will be, any carnal disturbance in the nature of God and, if we enter "into His rest," there will be no more sin in our hearts than there is in the divine nature. Our rest will only differ from His in that He is the fountain of our holiness, and has never had any need of cleansing from sin. Our Beulah is a divinely appointed, moral Sabbatical rest from sin, unbroken by any roots 'of bitterness springing up and troubling the holy quietude of the wholly sanctified soul.

(4) This "rest" is to be sought and experienced as a second work of grace, as taught in the ninth verse. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." It can not be received by one who is an avowed sinner. The Bible makes a marked distinction, in point of character and privilege, between "the children of the evil one" and the "people of God." The possibility of being a child of God, and at the same time not possessing this rest, is clearly set forth in the text; for if they obtained this rest at the time they first became the "children of God," there would be no sense in which it would still remain for them. The young convert has "peace," and "peace" implies the absence of condemnation; but he is soon made conscious of the fact that there still remain roots of bitterness which spring up and trouble him. Consequently, he does not have rest, for trouble and rest are very contrary to each other. These roots are by no means dead roots, for they possess a carnal life which causes them to spring up; but in a state of grace they do not spring out, for then they would incur condemnation. While the justified do not have this rest, they are heirs to "an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" and it "remains" to them. In a state of justification we have "peace with God," but, in the experience of heart purity, we not only have "peace with God," but the "peace of God." "Peace with God" means an undisturbed relationship between God and man; but to have the "peace of God" removes from the heart all of the restrained enmity that would cause a disturbance between man and God, thus granting unto man the same undisturbed "rest" that prevails in the moral quietude of the Godhead. Hence, it is called "the peace of God." In the sixth chapter of the epistle, and the first verse, we

are taught that there remains a perfection for those who, in moral progress, have left the "principles of the doctrine of Christ." Just as the children of Israel were the regularly constituted church of God before they entered into their rest in Canaan, so this "rest" from all sin remains only for God's people.

(5) We learn from the third chapter, and the eighteenth verse, that this rest must be received by faith. "And to whom sware He that they should not enter into His rest, but to them that believed not?" In the third verse we read, "For we which have believed do enter into rest." While prayer and consecration always precede heart purity, yet the culminating act is faith. There came a time in the journeyings of the children of Israel when the only thing that remained to be done was for the priest, who represented all Israel, to step into the Jordan's rushing flood, and God, who had promised, brought them dry-shod across the river bottom. Just so, there comes a time, in seeking a clean heart, when all that remains is to step out on the promises of God and cross over into the land of promise.

(6) We learn, from the eleventh verse, that this "rest" must be sought, and that it does not come to us by accident. "Let us labor to enter into that rest." The word "labor" is a strong word and indicates that there is to be nothing casual about the effort to "enter in." If we should begin to lose our interest relative to "entering in," by way of renewing our zeal and gathering a new inspiration, we might read the first verse of the chapter: "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it"; i. e., the search must be so diligent, and the entering in so definite, that there will not be even the appearance of coming short of it. Another incentive, prompting us to earnest search, is found in the seventeenth verse of the third chapter of this epistle, where Paul speaks of those who failed to enter into the Canaan rest and, as a result, their "carcasses fell in the wilderness," even though they previously had "all drunk of that spiritual rock that followed them, which rock was Christ." That old bone trail in the wilderness ought to be a sad warning to all who refuse to "labor to enter into" the rest of perfect love.

(7) We notice the source of the conviction of our need of this rest from sin. This we gather from the twelfth verse: "For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." There is a conviction which is confined mostly to the operation of the Holy Spirit; but this conviction may not be attended with very much knowledge, for the reason that we may be ignorant of the teaching of the Word. There is a conviction produced by the divinely illuminated Word of God and it is then that the Word becomes the "sword of the Spirit." This "sword" is "quick," because it is "sharp," and, therefore, does not tear or smash its way into the depths of the soul, but is piercing and cutting in its operation. It is "powerful" and is thus able to divide and to lay asunder the soul and spirit, even to entering between the moral joints and reaching the very marrow of spiritual bones in its work of discerning the moral quality of our inner spiritual being. In this manner, we are

sanctified by the Word, as it becomes the enlightening cause of our entire sanctification.

* * * * *

03 -- THE BEAUTY OF HOLINESS

"Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness" (Psalm 29:2).

Sin is represented in the Bible as a thing of moral heinousness. In its inner condition, it is likened unto a cage of unclean birds; while in its outer manifestations, it is spoken of as leprosy, with all of its loathsome and unmollified sores. In fact, it is so repulsive to the divine sense of moral propriety that Christ is disposed to cast it away from His presence, in His final disposition of it, as the scavengers of the city of Jerusalem took the filth of the city and cast it into the valley of Hinnom, which was used by the Master as a figure of hell. On the other hand, the principle of holiness is a thing of moral beauty in His sight; so much so, that He is represented as receiving to Himself those who possess it as a bridegroom would receive a well-adorned and beautiful bride. When describing a thing of beauty, it is common to portray its distinctive features.

(1) The beauty of holiness is seen in its power. There is always something majestic and admirable about power in its natural manifestations. We are filled with awe as we stand on Table Rock and behold the wonderful power of Niagara Falls. We gaze with admiration at the mighty roll of the ocean waves and the awful sweep of the passing storm. There is great beauty in the act of divine power that suddenly redeems the profligate, cleanses the soul from the darkest moral defilement and then preserves from moral relapse. In these respects, we are witnessing just as great exhibitions of divine power as were manifested in the case of Daniel in the lions' den, or the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace.

(2) Holiness is beautiful in its unity. Friction in the operation of machinery is always annoying to the ear of an expert machinist. When we see complicated mechanism operating smoothly and in perfect harmony, it becomes a thing of mechanical beauty. The beauty of holiness is seen in its enabling people of all degrees of light, different talents, temperaments, and constitutionalities, to live and work together, so lubricated with holy oil that there is no moral friction. It was this beauty that attracted David's attention and caused him to exclaim, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." To "dwell together" means more than to call on the brethren once in a while.

(3) Holiness is beautiful in its ardent love. Love, with its devotion -- be it seen in bird, beast, or man; be it found in a humble cottage, or in the stately, gorgeously furnished palace -- is beautiful to behold and has received the expressed adoration of poets of all ages. Holiness is called "perfect love" because it eliminates from the

soul all of the unlovely and the unloving traits. Those who possess it, from the standpoint of heaven, are the most beautiful people in all the world.

(4) Holiness is beautiful in its ability to give happiness and contentment, amid all of the vicissitudes of a life of conflict and disappointment. What could be more beautiful than the form of the Fourth, calming the fears of the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace? What could be more beautiful than Daniel, calm and composed in the lions' den; or Paul and Silas, singing in jail, with their lacerated backs and their feet bound in the stocks? How beautiful, also, Madame Guyon, so happy in the Roman Bastille that she declared that the stones in the wall of her cell looked to her like jewels. Consider such a beautiful scene as John Bunyan, in Bedford jail, calmly writing "Pilgrim's Progress."

(5) The beauty of holiness is an inner one. Human beauty is only skin deep, is easily marred, and soon fades away. The beauty of a holy life radiates from a heart made whiter than snow. It is the outbreking of soul health. It is written, "The King's daughter is all glorious within," but this inner beauty so affects her outer life that "Her clothing is of wrought gold." Peter called it, "The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit." This outer beauty is but the wondrous unfolding of the "Christ in you" who is, in point of moral beauty, "the Lily of the valley" and the "Rose of Sharon." When we have "Christ formed within," there will be no need of frequent visits to the world's beauty shop to receive religious painting, church membership, penciling, or moral cosmetics to improve our moral condition.

(6) The beauty of holiness is an inherited beauty. Human beauty is often a family distinction which has been entailed upon its fortunate possessors by their parents or past ancestors. This is so concerning moral beauty; for it is one of the distinctive attributes of the "household of faith" and the "family of the living God." God Himself is the Father of the household and family. Our Elder Brother, "the only begotten of the Father," is said to be "The brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person." Because of this, "He is altogether lovely." David said, "The beauty of the Lord our God be upon us"; and we are to be "conformed to the image of His Son." Hence, the divine beauty is transferred to the children. In nature, we often notice breaks in the family resemblance. Not so, however, with those who are of the divine family; for, notwithstanding they are "a great number that no man can number," this distinctive family beauty will be the great mark of recognition sought by the Lord, when He comes to claim His own, for we read, "But we know, that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him."

(7) The beauty of holiness is distinguished from all other beauty, in that it is unfading and ever-increasing. All other beauty -- be it found in botany, geology, zoology, astronomy, art, or the human form -- is subject to change and decay. How soon is personal beauty gone, in spite of all the expedencies used to retain it! Touched by the ravishing hand of time, the once beautiful, luxurious hair becomes thin and faded; the bright eyes become dim; the well-rounded and beautiful face becomes wasted and wrinkled; the erect and shapely form stooped; and, at last, all

ends in the nauseousness of death and the mildew of the grave. But the beauty of holiness is ever maintained by a moral principle called life. It is continually revived and refreshed by the water of life, ever flowing into the soul, from the fountain of life.

If a beautiful lady could find a fountain of perpetual life, and could drink continually of its water, she would be able to ever retain the freshness of her beauty. The saints have found the fountain of eternal life, and while, by faith, they drink of its waters, all the attributes of holy beauty will be in evidence. No frequent beholding themselves in the mirror of divine truth will ever reveal to them any of the wrinkles and blemishes of sin -- the signs of moral waste and retrogression.

(8) Natural beauty seems to be a matter of taste, more or less controlled by custom and environment. The Indian thinks he is beautiful, when he is adorned with a profusion of feathers and has his face painted. Heathen women seem to think that it adds to their beauty to have their hair daubed with mud, and their ankles and arms loaded down with iron rings, and a ring in their nose. In this country, the votaries of fashion are sacrificing their health, their God-given sense of propriety, and much of their character, in carrying out their idea of beauty. Hence, what seems to be beautiful to some, to others appears absurd and ridiculous.

Divine beauty is also a matter of holy taste. God and all of the inhabitants of heaven, and the saints on earth, look upon holiness as an element of moral beauty. On the other hand, there are millions -- and many of them are church members -- who see no beauty in it whatever. The Prophet Isaiah, clothed with prophetic vision, looked down the ages and saw the coming Christ. Judging from the standpoint of sinful men, he said, "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him." This is due to a perverted moral vision. The grace of God changes this perversion, and you may as well try to separate perfume from the rose, heat from fire, or weight from lead, as to attempt to separate a love for God from a love for His character, with all of its perennial beauty.

(9) In conclusion, we note that natural beauty may be improved. For instance, the ill-shaped nose or ear may be greatly improved and the skin may be made more beautiful by certain expedencies.

Just so, the outer lives of even holy people may be often greatly improved by the correction of certain errors and infirmities. These deformities do not pertain to the inner beauty of the soul, but to the things that have a tendency to bedim its moral beauty, in their open lives. This improvement is called "perfecting holiness" and belongs to a state of maturity, rather than heart purity. We are reminded that the modern sewing machine has been relieved of much that was formerly bungling in its appearance, without improving the stitch; so "perfecting holiness" adds to the beauty of the outer life, after the heart has been cleansed from all sin. I once saw a salesman arrange his stock of sample shoes in a salesroom. He adjusted them to

mirrors, set in beautiful frames, and decorated the tables with a profusion of tissue paper. These things did not, in any sense, improve the make of the shoes or the quality of the leather; but it did give them a better appearance. Just so, there are many whose hearts are washed whiter than snow, who have great need of moral tissue paper to give their holiness a better outer appearance and better circulation.

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04 -- COMMUNION OF THE HOLY GHOST

"And the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all" (2 Cor. 13:14).

God is a companionable being and He loves fellowship. When He created the sun, moon, stars, and all of the animals, fish, and birds, they were neither moral nor intelligent, and He, being both, had no earthly companion. He then created man and endowed him with a moral and an intellectual nature. Then God had a suitable earthly companion. When man fell in the garden of Eden and lost his holiness, he became unfit to associate with God and was cast out from His presence. The gospel is designed to restore mankind to his primitive fellowship with God.

(1) But what are we to understand by having "communion with the Holy Ghost"? Negatively speaking, it is not simply having a talk with Him, for He often talked to us and we to Him, before there was any communion between us. Neither is it a controversy; for God, while talking to us, said things with which we did not agree, and we said things that were very displeasing to Him.

Positively speaking, it supposes a holy intimacy between God and man, and when the word "communion" is traced back to its primitive etymology, it means, "to have all things common." When we consider, on the one hand, who God is, the holiness of His character and the loftiness of His position; and, on the other hand, who man is, and what he has done, in joining with devils in open rebellion against God's throne, it is no wonder the Psalmist exclaims: "What is man, that thou are mindful of him?" It is surprising that God will allow such a familiarity to exist between man and Himself. It is still more surprising to us that He was the first to make the advance toward reconciliation. Let us suppose that the President of the United States should invite you to visit him at the White House and, upon your arrival, should very cordially tell you to make yourself at home and to lay aside all of the conventionalities, belonging to a visit of that kind. Then you would sit down and talk out your hearts to each other. That would be communion with the President of the United States. To have communion with the Holy Ghost, who is the supreme ruling power of the universe, and the very God Himself, is infinitely a greater privilege.

(2) The communion of the Holy Ghost supposes that He is a person. We can not hold communion with an abstract idea, an influence, or a doctrine; for communion implies a personality. We often hear people speak of Him as "it." Let us

suppose, for argument's sake, that I should refer to one of my brethren in the ministry and say, "It is called to preach, and it is pastor at ____." What an insult it would be to his personality, for it would be putting him on a par with the clothes he was wearing, or the house he lived in. If such persons meant what they said in thus referring to the Holy Ghost, there would not be much communion between them and Him. The Holy Ghost is just as much a person as you or I, and His name, as such, begins with a capital letter.

Question! Do you know Him as a person? I do not mean, to know of His doctrines, His miracles, or His attributes; but do you know Him in the operations of His power to save and to sanctify? And has He entered into your life as a person as much as I have in writing this sermon, never to be got rid of in time or eternity? Has He done for you what only a personality could do? Some only know of Him, but do not know Him. An old Christian lady was unable to attend church one Sabbath morning and was seated on her porch, as the people were returning from church. One of them said to her, "Your preacher said this morning that there was no Holy Ghost." "Oh," she exclaimed, "I understand him, for he means that there is no Holy Ghost that he knows of."

As a person, He has a breath. How often, when we are tired in body and soul, and weary in mind, have we gone to Him. After a few moments in prayer, we felt a new inspiration coming to us; a renewed hope and courage filled our soul. He breathed on us.

As a person, He has a voice. An old Dutch woman said that God always talked to her in Dutch. Of course, He did; otherwise, she would not have understood Him; and to be understood, He must accommodate Himself to our understanding. Just as you can distinguish the voice of a loved one in a crowd of people, even though you are not aware of his presence, so, amid all of the carnal clatter and chatter of worldly voices, the heavenly Bride can distinguish the voice of her Beloved. Well may we sing:

"He speaks, and listening to His voice,
New life the dead receive.
The mournful broken hearts rejoice,
The humble poor believe."

Then again, as a person, He has a hand. Did He ever touch you? There is language in a touch. The blind can become so accustomed to the clasp of a hand, that they can speak the name of the person at once. During the Civil War, the only son of a widow went to the front and she not hearing from him for a long time, went to the South in search of him. She found him in a field hospital in a semi-conscious state. His condition was so critical that the doctor warned her not to speak to him for fear the shock might be fatal. As the doctor turned, the boy's mother merely laid her hand on his brow. Instantly he cried, "Oh, mother, I knew you would come." Doubtless the nurse had laid her hand on his brow many times that day, but that

was mother's touch. Just as there was "mother" in that touch, so there is divinity in the touch of the Holy Ghost.

(3) The communion of the Holy Ghost implies His immediate presence. How often have we been in meetings and heard the saints calling for Him to come, declaring that they were waiting for Him, when all the while He was preeminently present. They meant that they desired Him to manifest Himself and, sensing their meaning, He was pleased to do so. His presence is not localized. He does not confine His presence to great cathedrals or gorgeous palaces; but manifests Himself wherever His presence is honored with true worship. The Jews thought that the only place to worship the Lord was in Jerusalem; the Samaritans thought that the place to worship Him was in their mountains; but the Master told the woman at Jacob's well, that the place to worship was wherever there was one who worshiped in spirit and in truth. He was with the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace; with Daniel in the lions' den; with Paul and Silas in the Philippian jail; John Bunyan in Bedford jail; and Madame Guyon in the Roman Bastille. Madame Guyon sang:

"While blest with a sense of His love,
A palace a toy would appear;
And prisons would palaces prove,
If Jesus would dwell with me there."

His presence is not an organic one, i. e., He does not manifest Himself to us through some particular ceremony, religious ordinance, or great ecclesiastical dignitary, such as the pope, or some officious Father Flanagan; for God's salvation is strictly a personal matter.

(4) Before we can commune with the Holy Ghost there will have to be some moral adjustments, for He is very particular about the company He keeps. In wireless telegraphy we have this very uniquely illustrated. In order to get a message through there must be a powerful transmitter and a very carefully adjusted receiver. Just so, all of the Godhead is at the heavenly transmitting station above, and the divine adjustment is always in order. But any degree of divine power can not get a message to man, independent of human agency. There can be no communion with the Holy Ghost until every faculty of the soul is in tune with the divine will. In wireless telegraphy there are two codes, namely, the general and, the confidential. In the operation of the general code, all of the apparatus must be adjusted the same. Just so, moral nature is the same in all men, and God has but one condition to which all men must concede before they can have fellowship with Him.

This moral equipment in man differentiates him from the animal kingdom and so constitutes him that God can converse with him as He can not with a horse or a cow. It is wonderful to be a human being and be able to hold communion with the "Lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy." The confidential code is for confidential business and has to be deciphered to understand it. While sin did not totally destroy the moral apparatus by which man could hold communion with

God, yet it was so impaired that there can be no fellowship between them until there is a normal readjustment. This takes place in conversion, when man regains his spiritual mind, lost in the fall, by which he is able to understand spiritual things. He is then able to decipher God's moral code. Not understanding this moral code, "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." This is the man who knows the code. "But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man." There are some things pertaining to God and His salvation that we will never know until they are blest into us by the Holy Spirit. Hence we read, "Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." Only He who made the soul knows how to retune it in keeping with the heavenly symphony.

(5) Although the Holy Ghost is in constant communion with the saints, He is pleased to have seasons of special communion with us. Before the fall, God held constant communion with Adam and Eve; but it is said that God came into the garden "in the cool of the day." This must have been a time of special fellowship, and we can imagine that Adam and Eve looked forward with pleasure to this part of the day. To illustrate: The mother is busy with her work, but often looks toward a cradle containing her sleeping baby. It is very plain that she loves her baby. It awakens and stretches out its chubby arms. She quickly takes it up and covers its face with kisses. That is a "cool of the day" in a mother's love. The merchant is spending the evening at his store, taking an inventory of his stock, when his wife calls him up and complains of being lonesome; so he brings his books home and proceeds to do his figuring in her presence. It is very obvious from the way they exchange looks and smiles that there is love in their hearts. Late in the evening he closes his books and, putting his arms around her, plants a kiss upon her brow. That is a "cool of the day" in a husband's love. There is one baptism which cleanses the heart from all sin, but there must be frequent anointings to keep the baptism fresh. If these anointings are not experienced, the kingdom gold will soon become dim and the freshness will depart from the baptism. A preacher with whom I am acquainted used to work in the timber land in Canada. He told me that often, in the heat of summer, the company would give the men a day for recreation, at which time they would prepare a program of sports for the day. At one time, they arranged a foot race between the largest Indian and the largest white man. As the day was very hot and the race was to be long, it was very obvious that the man who could best endure the heat would win the race. The gun fired and they were off. The white man was taking the lead, when suddenly an Indian sprang up out of the brush and dashed a bucket of water on the Indian runner, giving him a much-desired refreshing. Soon, another Indian did the same and, suffice it to say that, by these frequent refreshings, the Indian won the race. If we fail to have these special seasons of communion, we are sure to fall behind in the heavenly race.

(6) In conclusion, it is the will of the Holy Ghost that His communion with us be uninterrupted. There is an evil one, known as the "old man," who is very much

opposed to our having any fellowship with God. He will prevent it if he can, but if he fails, he will do all he can to stop it, and if this can not be done, then he will do all he can to interrupt it. To illustrate. You and I are in company with several others and you call me aside for a few confidential words, when one of the company, who understands what we are doing, steps up and begins to address one of us about a very casual matter. Naturally this would be considered a breach of etiquette. This "old man" pays no attention to moral etiquette, for he is always trying to interrupt the communion between the Holy Ghost and the soul. The only safe way for us to do is to report these interruptions to spiritual headquarters, and have him officially cast out as a public nuisance in the city of man-soul. Holiness of heart puts an end to all of his carnal interruptions, since it rids us of this disturber of our peace; and while there may be a great deal of carnal commotion on the outside, there will ever remain a holy hush within, excepting the voice of the Beloved and the cooings of the dove of peace. Then shall we sing:

"Blessed quietness, holy quietness,
What assurance in my soul!
On the stormy sea Jesus speaks to me,
And the billows cease to roll."

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05 -- OUR OLD MAN

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him" (Rom. 6:6).

A great many figures are used in the Bible to represent sin in the hearts and lives of men. Two of them are mentioned in the text, namely, a man and a body.

(1) Doubtless, the reason why sin is called a body is because, as a body, it has a complete system of evil in itself, and will remain so until disposed of in the manner prescribed in the text. The brother who inadvertently said in his testimony, "I made the consecration, trusted in the Lord, and the Holy Ghost took the whole carnal nature out of me," was not very far from stating the facts in the case. Just as grace as a kingdom is in us, so is sin with its ruler, code of laws, subjects, system of moral government, and boundary lines. This does not imply that mankind is diabolical or as bad as sin, as an active principle, can make them; but that the seed of all sin is in the heart in embryo form, and there is no need of the introduction of any new principle of evil to develop it into any kind or limit of sinful action or disposition. Sin, as a body, is total, in that it can not be divided or subdivided. If any part goes, it all goes. This, of course, can not be applied to acquired depravity, accumulated by the practice of sin, which is removed by the "washing of regeneration." Consequently, the "old man" can not be disposed of, as some think, by moral surgery -- by taking out an eye, amputating a leg or an arm, or any other part of his moral anatomy. Some think this process can be carried out until he is at last reduced to an insignificant minimum of evil, or "the last and least remains of

sin," which is to be disposed of at sometime, somewhere, somehow, not knowing when, where, or how. Original sin is a unit and, as such, can not be separated. Science divides all things into mind and matter, but can not divide mind. Carnality belongs to the realm of mind, and can not be divided any more than a square foot can be taken out of a man's mind. Divisibility pertains only to matter. Thus carnality, not being matter but principle, can not be divided without renouncing the plainest teachings of the fundamentals of science. It is true that some phases of the "old man" may not be as conspicuous in the life as others, but, like vipers, they are there hidden down in the dark recesses of the soul.

(2) The phrase "old man," indicates that we are very closely related to him. This is shown in the fact that sin, for which he stands, is inseparably connected with our inner self, and, without the grace of God, our outer lives and future destiny are charged to our own account. The word "our" is therefore the proper word to be used. Paul knew him well when he said, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless, I live! yet not I." The personal pronoun "I" stands for the "old man" mentioned in the text. This Paul is the old Saul of Tarsus, full of murder, pride, and hate, who was unhorsed by riding into the Omnipotent advance picket line, which was thrown out in the interest of Damascus saints; and not the redeemed Paul of Mars Hill and the Roman jail. He said, "Nevertheless, I live."

Without grace we are greatly in love with "our old man." This is seen in the fact that we make his disposition and conduct ours by choice. When we repent, however, our feelings toward him **are** changed and we hate him and his deeds. In regeneration a new and heavenly principle is introduced which predominates in the soul. By our consent he is arrested as a traitor against God's government, but he is still "our old man," not by choice, but by nature and inner conscious existence. He is still there and will make us more or less trouble until he is cast out. "Our old man" on the inside is more to be feared than the devil on the outside, just as in a civil war a foe within is far more disastrous than the assault of a foreign nation. The difference between sin in a sinner and sin in a saint, is like the difference between poison in a rattlesnake and the poison of the snake in us; for in the snake it is natural and cherished, but in us it is resisted and hated. Hence, this "old man," before we are converted, is ours, loved and cherished. After we are saved he is still "old man," but hated and committed to the restraining grace of God. When we are wholly sanctified, he is still "our old man," but he is dead. The funeral of this "old man" ends in a very peculiar manner, by a very close relative joyfully singing, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

(3) We note that this man of sin is an "old man." There are three reasons for this: One is, his great duration, in point of existence. We can trace his pedigree as far back as the devil himself who, strange as it may seem, was his father, and who "sinned from the beginning." No one knows how remote, in the ages of a past eternity, this may have been; for there is no record of his moral birthday. Again, he is called old because he was in the hearts of men, and ruled them before Christ took possession. The righteousness of Adam and Eve, before the fall, was God-

given in their creation just as we were born in sin. While he was an "old man" prior to the fall of Adam, by virtue of the fact that sin had not as yet been incorporated into human nature, since the fall he has been emphatically "our old man." Lastly, he is "our old man" in a very personal sense, because of the fact that he was first in human hearts in point of possession, for we were all born in sin and conceived in iniquity.

(4) One thing very strange about him, as an "old man," is his remarkable vitality and activity. As a rule, when men become old, they are infirm and decrepid, and retire from their occupation; but not so with this "old man." He never seems to slow down in his activities and, as year after year goes by, it is the observation of those who allow him undisputed possession that he seems to increase his operations. As an "old man," it is also remarkable how much abuse and self-denial he is able to endure. After years of being denied what he demands and compelled to attend family worship and religious services, refused the things of the world which he dearly loves, abused by frequently slapping his face, cuffing his ears, blackening his eyes, and calling him a long list of harsh names, yet his vitality does not seem to become reduced, nor his carnal impulses to evil less susceptible. There does not seem to be any indications of his dying a natural death, of his having any thoughts of committing suicide. As an "old man," his solitary confinement does not seem to affect his activities, for, after years of confinement, notwithstanding all of the restraints to keep him incarcerated, he seems to be just as vigorous in his determinations to assert his carnal prerogatives and break jail as in the days of his early moral confinement. He can rattle jail bars as loudly as he ever could, and his jerks of anger and twitches of impatience, to all appearances, are as lusty as ever. After years of such vigorous activities, it is very obvious that he can not be disposed of gradually, or be reduced in size or action until he is at the minimum of the last and the least remains of sin.

(5) We will now proceed to notice the moral character of the "old man." It is true that in many places and with many people he has a very good reputation, but his character is emphatically bad. Jesus gives us a life-size moral photo of him in Mark 7:21, 22. Paul, who knew him well, gives us a portrait of him in Romans 3:10-18, and also Gal. 5:19, 20. Moses gives us one of his earliest profiles in Gen. 6:5. God has been pleased to place these pictures of the "old man" in His album of moral characters, so that honest souls might know him when he appears. In these descriptions of his moral physique, we are given over forty traits of the worst sins known in the catalog of evils. Judging from his conduct, we find that these photos of him are correct, and practically demonstrate his actions all the way from the nursery, with its veritable little, domineering Mogul, or its short-skirted tycoon, to the barnyard, with its proud, strutting peacock, billy-goat, and braying, kicking mule, and on down to the India jungle, with its forked-tongued serpent, and its red-eyed, man-eating Bengal tiger. As we study his nature, in the light of these illustrative human and animal traits, we can only conclude that they are true to the facts in the case, and that his character, in point of badness, is no mild affair. God, who has made a record of his biography in the Bible, has nothing good to say of

him. He mentions two phases of his nature which seem to include all the rest. He says that he is not only wicked, but desperately so, and "deceitful above all things"; so much so, that God has thrown out a challenge for human comprehension to drop its lead-line down to the lowest depth of wickedness in the use of the words "Who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9). We note that his desperate wickedness is arrayed against God and that he is not only at enmity with God, but is enmity itself, in all of its intrinsic nature, which can never be changed or in any way improved. The first recorded evidence of his evil disposition was that of a very bad case of jealousy, for which he and his father were cast out of heaven, and his first earthly deed was to instigate unbelief in the hearts of Adam and Eve. He thus tainted the entire human race with the virus of sin. Let the best of humanity, devoid of grace and without the introduction of any new principle of evil, yield to the impulses of the foe within; break with all self-respect and civil authority; ignore the pride of past good ancestry, and the dictates of their better judgment; and their rapid descent downward over the declivity of their depravity would soon land them on a lower plane of degradation than the brute creation. Such was the case during the Reign of Terror in France. In spite of all of our talk about the nobility of man, such are the fearful possibilities of his soul under the dominion of the "old man."

His wickedness is no periodical affair, for his biography reads, "Only evil continually." John Fletcher, in commenting on these words, says that "only evil" means, "without any mixture of good," and that the word "continually" means "without any intermission of evil." One of the most alarming features of the "old man" is his deceitfulness. He is, above all things, deceitful. This means that his deceit is unequalled. For this reason, many of his close relatives think that the Bible photo of him is a slanderous misrepresentation. There is another class who admit that he is very bad, but they feel hopeful that he may be reformed and made into a polished gentleman, by reading to him some fine essays on good behavior and giving him lessons on moral etiquette.

Like many other criminals, he often passes himself off under assumed names to accomplish his purposes. Pride he calls respectability; anger and impatience he is pleased to call nervousness or holy indignation; greed he calls economy; lust, even though it leads to shame, pain, poverty, and a premature grave, he is pleased to call personal liberty. Like the cunning opossum, when his death seems imminent, he will play dead to keep from dying. In so doing he will gladly submit to signing a card, shaking hands with an evangelist, being baptized, joining the church, or even erecting a family altar; but, with all of these religious activities, he ever remains the same, unimproved "old man."

(6) Many theories are in vogue as to what disposition is to be made of this "old man." The supreme court of heaven has not only convicted him as a highhanded rebel against God's holy government, but has sentenced him to die. He will survive all other methods except the one prescribed in the text, which is capital punishment -- the most excruciating type; namely, crucifixion. Just as he assisted in the death of Jesus on the cross, so he is to die. In the same manner, all who love

him and refuse to deliver him up to God's executioner, the Holy Ghost, are with him, under sentence of eternal death, as being abettors with him in crime. The time of his execution is fixed and, in keeping with the promise of God pertaining to his death, it is now. When he is delivered up, his death will be as sudden as the great Executioner, the Holy Ghost, is able to strike the death blow.

(7) We note that we may know when his death takes place. The text reads: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified." Mark you, not dying, but dead. The philosophy of this knowledge is seen in the fact that a sense of his presence within us is one of the incentives inducing us to seek his removal. In the case of an honest soul, there can be no end to a definite" prayer until he is just as conscious of his absence as he was of his presence. If we can be conscious of the presence of evil within, we can also sense the fact of a state of purity within. We are told that God gave the Holy Spirit "That we might know the things that are given to us of God"; and holiness of heart is one of His most precious gifts. The words, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself," are as applicable to the reception of heart purity as of pardon, by virtue of the fact that both of them are received by faith. Jesus said, "He (the Holy Spirit) shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you"; i. e., He will assure you of the fact that He has appropriated the benefits of the atonement. Heart purity is one of the products of the atoning blood. "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."

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06 -- PERFECTING HOLINESS

"Perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1). The text, at first thought, reads like a strange paradox, in that it seems to demand the perfection of a thing already perfect; namely, our holiness; and yet we find this principle taught in moral ethics, as well as demonstrated within the realm of Christian experience. The perfection mentioned in the text belongs to the natural rather than the spiritual nature of man, and consists in the regulation of those infirmities and errors in judgment which remain in our human constitution after we are wholly sanctified. It is a mistake to suppose that when we are cleansed from sin there is very little yet to be attained. The facts in the case are that we have just dipped our feet in the shore waters of a fathomless and untraversed ocean of divine love. There yet remains the development of that experience. It was one thing for the children of Israel to enter the land of Canaan, but it was quite another thing for them to proceed to subdue their enemies, who were still in the land. After we are purified, there must be an increase of knowledge and an enlargement of our heart. This knowledge consists mostly in a greater comprehension of the devices of the devil and of our mental and material imperfections. If it is properly utilized, it will be manifest in the correction of many of the mistakes of our lives caused by our mental and physical infirmities. There are many ways in which this perfection of holiness may be accomplished:

(1) It may be done by prayerfully reading the Bible and giving earnest heed to its teachings. As a revealer of our faults, and as a means of correcting, the Word of God read and expounded has no equal. How true the words, "The entrance of Thy words giveth light," As a matter of moral vivisection, the Word of God is "the sword of the Spirit," and cuts its way into the bone of human nature until it reaches the very marrow of our thoughts and intentions,/dividing even the joints; so much so, that at times we have to make a careful distinction between our convictions and condemnation, or fall into the confusion of soul. Condemnation is the result of refusing to walk in the light, but if there is a hearty "yes" in our hearts to God, when the light of the truth shines on our mistakes and errors in judgment, there will not be any condemnation.

(2) Another way in which we may perfect our holiness is by the humble reception of reproof. Those who are in the advance of us in "a knowledge of the truth" are able then to help us by turning on us the light which they have received. We should receive reproof just as we would receive any other favor from others. How gladly a farmer would receive any information regarding the improvement of his methods in farming! He would gladly abandon an old method for a better one; for he desires, as a farmer, to be at his best. It was this idea that prompted David to say, "Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities," Solomon said, "He that hateth reproof is brutish." To get the best out of reproof, always thank those who seem to take sufficient interest in you to tell you what they think is wrong in you, and always ask yourself the question: "Do they have that right, and am I at fault in this matter?" and thus give the reproof your prayerful consideration. It matters not who gives the reproof, as far as their character may be concerned, for the great question should not be, "Who is he?" or "What is he?" but, "Is it so?"

(3) Again, the confession of our faults will go a long way in helping us to perfect our holiness. The Bible requirement of every one is this: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." Such a confession will, of course, be very humiliating; but, that, of itself, will become a means of grace. A confession of this kind will tend to put you on your guard, when you are tempted to repeat the act; for you will remember that, having confessed the fault, others will now expect you to improve at that point, since you have already acknowledged before them that the light is on you. You will thus find that open confession is good for the soul.

(4) Frequent and close communion with God will greatly aid us in perfecting our holiness. To be in frequent companionship with great and wise men, and to have the privilege of studying the secret of their greatness will greatly assist us in the matter of elevating ourselves to a similar plane of usefulness. Just so, frequent seasons of communion with the Holy Ghost will help us to see things in ourselves as He sees them. "For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." The more we commune with him, the more we will become subject to His teachings

and admonitions. When those, who make a practice of taking everything to God in prayer, have the least intimation that anything in their lives should be corrected, in their very honesty, they will lay the matter before the Lord for light and direction. Such a person will soon make rapid progress in a knowledge of spiritual things. The distance we are able to see into the heavens, depends upon the power of the lens and the proper adjustment of the telescope. When the lens is strong and the telescope properly adjusted, we can make discoveries in the heavens, which others with a weaker lens and improper adjustments are not able to make. So, frequent communion with God will enable us to see into our lives and discover mistakes, which other people with less light will even laugh at, as needless corrections. In many cases, we have known the latter to draw near to God and make the same discoveries and, under God, make the same corrections.

David, at one time, became greatly perplexed; so much so, that he said: "My feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped," but he "went unto the sanctuary of God," and there had communion with God. Then he said: "It is good for me to draw near to God." The Holy Ghost is a great teacher and He will not only teach us great things about God and His religion, but He will also reveal to us things about ourselves. In this matter of communion with God it is not supposed that we will do all of the talking, for there will be times when we will hear God say, "Be still, and know that I am God."

(5) In conclusion: Afflictions, when properly endured, will become a great means of grace and will wonderfully assist us in perfecting our holiness. Afflictions will drive a humble soul to God for light and help. There is no promise on the part of God to get us through to heaven and exempt us from trouble. In fact, we are told to expect trouble, and it is His purpose to sanctify it to our betterment. As we pass through trials, we often discover the devices of the enemy, and, by the testing we go through, we often catch glimpses of our own weakness and defects. It takes storms to make a good sailor, and the raging gale that puts the ship on beam end in the trough of the sea, if he be able to navigate his ship through the ordeal, will go farther in making him a good sailor than all the calm seas or peaceful harbors in the ocean. Coming out of a Gettysburg fight with a tattered flag, battered gun, and battle scars, will do more toward making a good soldier than reading all the books he can find on military tactics. If you want the experience of John Bunyan or Madame Guyon, you will have to pass through the same trials they passed through to get it, with the same faith and fortitude they had. They attained to a Christian maturity, wrought out by furnace fires, that was beyond the experience of heart purity. This being the case, our trials should not be considered as misfortunes any more than finding a gold mine; for we read that "the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire." No wonder Job said, "When He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Paul harnessed up all of his afflictions and put them to work on the very fruitful hill of his inheritance (Isa. 4:1), and declared that they worked for him "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Our trials are not, as a rule, pleasant, but they are wholesome and work on our moral nature something like quinine does on our physical nature. It

does not make a very agreeable dose, but it puts vigor in the muscle, fire in the eye, and color in the blood. God does not sugar-coat His moral quinine or pass us the water after we take the dose, and I am not sure that He is pleased if we make a face when it affects our moral taste. It is best to meekly submit as did the poet:

"Pains, furnace heat within me quiver,
God's breath upon the flame doth blow;
And all within my heart doth shiver
And tremble at the fiery glow;
And yet I whisper, 'As God will,'
And in His hottest fire hold still.

"I will not murmur at the sorrow
Which only longer lived would be.
The end will come, and that tomorrow,
When God hath wrought His will in me.
And so I whisper, 'As God will,'
And in His hottest fire hold still."

* * * * *

07 -- HOLINESS BY FAITH

"And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:9).

These words are part of an address made by Peter at a Council called by the early church to discuss the baptism of the Holy Ghost which fell on the house of Cornelius. It was quite natural that Peter, being the divinely-appointed leader of the meeting at Caesarea, should be allowed to explain the nature and import of the occasion. He told them that what the Holy Ghost had done for them on the day of Pentecost, He also had done at the house of Cornelius. The word "us" referred to Pentecost, and the word "them" referred to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius. He declared that God did not make any difference between the works accomplished by the Holy Ghost on those two occasions, and that the works done were the purifying their hearts by faith. A study of the fact that purity of heart is by faith, will lead many to a better understanding of the doctrine of holiness.

(1) Holiness by faith implies that holiness may be enjoyed in this life. Christian faith not only believes in God, but it believes God. It is regulated by the promise of God as expressed in His Word, both as to the thing promised and the time prescribed for the promise to be fulfilled. It is noticeable that all of the promises of God, offering the experience of heart purity are expressed in the present tense. They are for the living and not for the dead or the dying only, and the exercise of faith must be in keeping with the time stated in the promise, and can only be exercised in a realm where unbelief is possible. It thus becomes the moral

pivot on which our responsibility turns, which constitutes it a creature of time, the only place of human probation.

Prayer and faith go together and faith must be exercised where prayer is possible. We read: "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Note that the desire is the one we have when we are in the act of praying, and includes the God-given desire for a clean heart. Thus, faith for heart purity must necessarily end with the expiration of the time prescribed in the promise. This does not leave us any hope for heart purity beyond the confines of time. It is written, "The Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins." In the use of these words, He is pleased to limit His power to pardon sin to this world only. If this be the case regarding the pardon of our sins, is it not the case also relative to the cleansing of our hearts from sin?

The only way in which some doctors can put an end to certain diseases is by killing their patients. But not so with the great Physician in treating the malady of sin; for He proceeds to kill the complaint and then give the happy patient an "abundant life" to be enjoyed in this world.

(2) Purity of heart by faith implies that heart purity is an instantaneous work of grace. There is a "now" in the promise of God to sanctify us, and God's purposes are just as much connected with the time mentioned as they are with the thing promised. The "now" of the promise covers the entirety of the blessing offered and makes a gradual work of heart cleansing an impossibility. This is due to the fact that the moment we believe the promise we receive all that it offers us. God's veracity is at stake, pertaining not only to the fulfillment of His promise, but also to the time He has been pleased to mention in the promise. In commercial life, many contracts are made on the instalment plan. This plan more or less retards the appropriation of the goods on the one hand, or the reception of the price on the other hand. But God, sensing man's immediate need of heart purity, in the exercise of His wisdom has not arranged an instalment plan, but graciously offers us the blessing now. We do or we do not believe. There is no gradual process in faith, for the slightest degree of doubt makes the act one of unbelief. This drawn-out process of receiving heart purity is entirely too slow to be in harmony with a present faith which point of time that it is not conceivable, but faith can grasp a "now" and in that small point, of time, appropriate the cleansing blood to our hearts.

The reception of a clean heart is not an attainment, but we instead, obtain it as a gift. The word "attain" differs widely from the word "obtain." Webster defines the words thus: Attain, "That which is attained to or obtained by exertion; as a man of great attainments." Obtain, "To get; to gain; in a general sense, to gain possession of a thing." The word "obtain" seems to pertain to the end of a process; while the word "attain" pertains to the method employed in reaching the end. Growing into holiness would naturally mean that depravity could be crowded out of the heart by the gradual incoming of the principle of purity. The remedy prescribed in the Word is not suppression by crowding out, but by instantaneous cleansing by

the blood. We may grow in the matter of our increased convictions for the experience, and these convictions may gradually overcome many errors that we may entertain regarding the philosophy of seeking or the nature of the experience, until they no longer exist; but faith in the promise offering purity now forbids such a lingering process. On both of the occasions referred to in the text, the Holy Ghost did the work suddenly; on the day of Pentecost the purifying came "suddenly," and when it came on the house of Cornelius, it came while Peter was yet speaking. A man fed his dog every day with scraps of meat from the table. One day he discovered that a whole ham had spoiled and he laid it before the dog. The dog looked at it, walked around it a few times, dropped his tail between his legs and with a sad look walked away. He missed a fine meal just because he could not make himself believe that the whole thing was for him then and there. Rich and great as the blessing may be, all those who meet the conditions may have it now, just as the people did upon the two occasions mentioned. Years ago, one of my district elders was assisting me in a tent meeting, when an old gentleman came forward, seeking the blessing of holiness. After we had labored with him for several hours, he arose and said that he believed in growing into the blessing, very much to the disgust of the district elder. The next time the elder called an altar service he uniquely said, "If you expect to grow into the blessing, do not come, for you will not have time to do it here." Amanda Smith, the colored holiness evangelist, was seeking a clean heart at a camp meeting. She heard John Inskip say in a sermon that God would one day change our vile bodies in the twinkling of an eye. "Well," she exclaimed, "if that is so, He can change my vile soul in the twinkling of an eye," and then and there she put her claim in and received the blessing. A little girl at the Ocean Grove camp meeting asked her mother what the people were doing at the altar. She was told that they were seeking a clean heart. Then she said, "But why do they wait so long, if Jesus has promised it to them now?" Her childish trust was in direct line with the promise of God.

(3) Holiness by faith implies that we may know that we have received and that we have come into possession of the experience. "He that believeth on the Son hath the witness in himself," may be applied to heart purity as well as to pardon. One of the incentives that prompts us to seek a clean heart, is the consciousness of our uncleanness. It stands to reason that we can not intellectually stop seeking until we are as conscious of our purity as we were of our uncleanness. David could not have ceased from praying, "Create in me a clean heart," with any degree of consistency, until he had realized that such a creation had taken place.

Well might the poet sing:

"I know the crimson stain of sin
Defiling all my heart within,
But now rejoicingly I know
That He has made me white as snow."

In the following scriptures Paul very clearly teaches the possibility of knowing that we are wholly sanctified: "For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost is also a witness to us." And again, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him." Once more, "I am crucified with Christ." This is the language of very definite assurance. The personal pronoun "I" referred to the carnality that constituted the Saul of Tarsus. The witness of the Spirit of our pardon and that of our cleansing differs only in that in the case of our pardon, it will produce a sense of innocency, and in the case of our cleansing, a sense of purity. This assurance is a matter of faith and not of emotion. It may be attended with an almost uncontrollable emotional stir, or there may be only a deep, sweet sense of rest pervading the soul. The one who shouts when he receives the blessing, may seem to others to have a clearer sense of purity than the one who does not. Such is not the case. The holy shine on the face of the one who does not shout, often stands for all that the one who is shouting may feel, for the effect of his inner fullness of righteousness is quietness, although no less definite assurance.

(4) If heart purity is received by faith, it stands to reason that it is likewise retained by faith. That which is received by faith can not be retained by works. While good works is one of the evidences of our justification, it is not an evidence of our entire sanctification, for the reason that justified souls, before they are purified, live a holy life. The very fact that the experience may be lost by doubting, as well as by an open act of sin, implies that it is retained as well as received by faith. There is an important sense in which we are not wholly sanctified for believing, but only while we are believing. We are "kept by the power of God through faith," in any state of grace, and the only medium of connection between the power of God and the soul is our faith. When it fails to act, there is no keeping power. Retaining a condition of heart purity is not like putting the vinegar in the pickles and then putting them aside, as they do not demand any more attention or the renewal of the keeping element. The power that once wholly sanctified must be "renewed day by day." When we are going to have a picture taken, we dress for the occasion and then get into position. As soon as the camera snaps and fixes our profile on the plates of the camera, we may get out of position at once and forever remain so; but the picture retains for many years a record of the position in which we were placed. On the contrary, in the realm of grace we must ever maintain through all the following years of Satanic assault the attitude of the faith that purified us.

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08 -- THE SPIRITS OF JUST MEN MADE PERFECT

"But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the

Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling" (Heb. 12:22-24).

We have, in the text, a description of the character of those who compose the "general assembly and church of the firstborn," to which we come when we accept the gospel of Jesus Christ. Among other advantages we receive when we are numbered among "the firstborn" is that of coming "to the spirits of just men made perfect."

(1) We learn from these words that we may be perfect in our spirits in this life. This perfection is not the perfection of those in heaven, for "the general assembly and church of the firstborn," to which we come, is not the church triumphant, although their names are written in heaven, but the church militant. This is seen in the fact that the church referred to in the text still has need of the mediation of Jesus Christ, for it distinctly reads that they are coming to Jesus Christ as a mediator "and to the blood of sprinkling." When we come to Jesus in heaven, the days of His mediation will be over and "the blood of sprinkling," as a saving, sanctifying, and preserving element, provided in the atonement, will no longer be needed; so the church to which we are said to come is the church on earth, still in need of the blood through the mediation of Jesus Christ. Moral perfection is spoken of in the Bible, by way of command, precept, and example, as a present experience. The Master said, "Be ye perfect." Paul told of speaking "wisdom among them that are perfect." He also declared that the work of apostles, prophets, and teachers was "the perfecting of the saints." He wrote to the Colossians that Epaphras fervently prayed that they might "stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." He declared that one purpose of his preaching was that he might be able to "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." There are several persons mentioned in the Bible as being perfect, and there is no reason to suppose that their perfection was of a different kind than that enjoined in the preceding scriptures.

(2) We will notice the nature of the perfection referred to in the text. This perfection was the "spirits of just men." It was not a mental perfection which would have exempted them from all error in judgment, or a physical perfection which would have excluded all of their bodily infirmities; neither was it a perfection in moral development, for moral progress is associated with any state or degree of grace in this world or the next, and Christian perfection only tends to increase its progress; but rather a perfection of spirit, i. e., the perfection of the spiritual nature, which is the realm of moral quality in man, be it good or bad, and the ground work of the Holy Spirit's operations in man.

(3) This Scripture very clearly defines Christian perfection as a second work of grace. Two states of grace are mentioned in the text; namely, that of the "just," indicating a condition of Bible justification, which is the lowest state of grace in existence, and a second condition denominated being "made perfect." These two states of grace cover the minimum and the maximum possibilities of grace in this life. The text states the divine order of procedure prescribed as to the attainment of

this perfection. First, justification, which always includes the work of adoption and regeneration, is followed by the work of heart or spirit perfection. The words "made perfect" signify that the "just" were not made perfect when they were made "just," but rather that being "just," they were afterward "made perfect." So, in this case, the work of Christian perfection followed that of justification, and we have no reason to believe that it was an exception to the divine order. If their perfection was coincident with their justification, then why make the distinction between being "just" and "perfect," if the two words signify one and the same state of grace? This would be out of harmony with not only good English, but also the Bible and Methodist theology.

(4) The word "made" suggests to us a process by which the "just" are "made perfect." There are four agencies mentioned in the Word of God as the cause of our moral perfection; namely, the blood, the Word, the Holy Spirit, and our faith. The procuring cause is the blood of Jesus. The enlightening cause is the Word of God, by which we are informed of our moral condition, and the remedy provided in the atonement for its correction. The operating cause is the Holy Spirit, the Almighty Executive of the Godhead, who executes the provisions of the atonement. The ultimate and appropriating cause is our faith. First of all is the blood, for had there been no provision made in the shed blood for our cleansing, there would be no promise of purity in the Word. The Holy Spirit, who only does for us what has been provided in the blood, would be restricted in His operations in this respect, and without the promise, faith would be impossible. So, back of the Word, the Holy Ghost, and our faith, is the blood. Hence, the "just" are made "perfect," as stated in the text, by "the blood of sprinkling."

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress:
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

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09 -- A HOLY CHURCH

"Christ is the head of the church: and He is the Savior of the body... Christ also 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; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:23, 25, 26).

If I should canvass any community in an effort to ascertain from each person his idea as to what a church should be, in point of character, in all probability, I would glean a variety of opinions. But God has not seen fit to leave such a momentous question to the mere caprice of human opinion. He has brought His own wisdom into exercise and has given us, in the words of the text, His idea of

what a church should be. I do not know of a verse in the Bible containing more qualifying words on the subject of holiness than the text. Negatively speaking, God has a church that is without spot, wrinkle, or blemish, and if these words do not cover all the traits of sin, the clause, "or any such thing," does. Positively speaking, God has a church that is "washed, cleansed, sanctified, holy," and, of course, it could not be otherwise than glorious.

(1) We learn from the text that God has a church which is holy in its outer life. This is signified in the figurative form of speech "not having... wrinkle." Wrinkles, as a rule, are outward deformities on the surface of the body, caused by the inner shrinkage of the tissues of the muscles. Wrinkles usually indicate that the vigor of youth or good health is waning. In morals, they signify that man is wrong at heart and has lost his primitive fulness of righteousness. The gospel is designed to completely remedy the outward irregularities of human lives so that God may have an unwrinkled church, whose moral physique is so regular and symmetrical that she will be as fair as the moon and God can see in her the beauty of holiness. How the society lady hates to see the wrinkles appear! She resorts to all kinds of cosmetics, but, as a rule, to no avail, for the wrinkles continue to become wider and deeper, until at last she becomes a back number, as far as her beauty is concerned. Just so, many are trying to find a remedy for the moral deformities of their lives in the use of outer moral appliances; but their only hope is in God. The devil has a moral beauty shop, which is largely patronized by those who are trying to make their lives better than their characters. A Chinaman, in San Francisco, once heard a sermon on wrinkles. Seeing the irregularities in his own life, he rushed to the altar. Being unable to find suitable words in his vocabulary to express his need, it occurred to him that he was a laundryman and had been dealing with wrinkles for a number of years; so he cried out, "Oh, Lord, flat-iron me." He, like many others, seemed to think that his inner trouble could be removed by a hot pressure on the outside. Not so! I have known many to attend hot meetings, join a hot church, listen to hot sermons, and subject themselves to tremendous moral hot pressure; but it only practically blistered the wrinkles, thus making them more conspicuous than ever. It was not a hot outer application, but a hot dose, they needed.

(2) We learn from the text that God has a church which is holy in heart as well as in life, for the text says that it is "without spot." Isaiah conceived of a wonderful experience when he spoke of being made "as white as snow"; but if David had been with him in a class meeting at that time, I can imagine hearing him say, "Brother Isaiah, if I succeed in securing the desire of my heart, I will have to have something greater than that." Lifting his eyes toward heaven, I hear him pray, "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." A wholly sanctified heart is whiter than snow. The revolutions of the earth fill the air with small particles of dust, and the snow passing through the atmosphere, gathers these particles, causing the purest snow to become spotted. After we are saved, we often sense the fact that spots of anger, impatience, pride, and self-will remain. Wesley sang of them thus:

"The seed of sin's disease Spirit of health remove,

Spirit of finished holiness, Spirit of perfect love."

(3) The text teaches us that this spotless experience is a second work of grace. Note the language of the text: "He gave Himself for the church, that He might sanctify it." God's church differs from all other churches, in that He does not have a sinner in it. All of its members have their names inscribed in the church register, which is called "the book of life." This book, being the book of life, does not record the names of those who are dead in sin. Thus, "He gave Himself that He might sanctify" those who were alive from the dead. This clearly implies that the church, for whom He gave Himself, was not wholly sanctified when it was first constituted the church, for He would hardly have made a provision to sanctify that which was already sanctified. This would have been superfluous and absurd. To be consistent, some will have to refrain from singing some of our most familiar hymns, or else believe in a second work of grace. Toplady, a Calvinist Baptist, wrote:

**"Let the water and the blood
From Thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Save from wrath and make me pure."**

William Cowper sang:

**"Thou dying Lamb! Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Are saved to sin no more."**

**Mark you, this is work done for the already "ransomed church of God."
Charles Wesley sang,**

**"He breaks the power of canceled sin,
He sets the prisoner free;
His blood can make the foulest clean;
His blood avails for me."**

Canceled sin is sin that is blotted out, and the power of canceled sin is the roots of bitterness that spring up in our hearts, after the actual transgressions are forgiven.

(4) We wish to notice some reasons why the church should be wholly sanctified. She should be purified because it has been provided for her in the atonement. The text says, "He gave Himself for the church, that He might sanctify and cleanse it." The words, "He gave Himself," contain the whole provision of the atonement for the purification of the church. This provision puts the church under solemn obligation to secure this experience. There are those who seem to think that, although holiness of heart is provided in the atonement, there is no obligation

resting upon them to seek it -- that it is a sort of wayside entertainment, or an unnecessary luxury, as an ice cream stand, by the wayside, to which they may turn aside and have enjoyment or pass by and reach their destination just the same; and that it does not come in the way of a regular Christian experience. Be it known to all, that when Jesus "gave Himself" on the cross, He was in no sense providing mere non-essentials, but rather necessities, whose appropriation means heaven, and whose neglect means hell.

This brings us to the question: "After all that has been done to sanctify the church, can the Holy Ghost, the Almighty Executive of the Godhead, notwithstanding all opposing forces, sanctify, or are the provisions of the atonement merely an ideal?" We often judge what can be done by what has been done. For instance, let us suppose that I am on my way to a certain place, and I inquire of one as to the direction and the distance. He declares that it is useless to direct me, for the reason that it would be useless for me to attempt such a trip because of the difficulties connected with the way. I proceed to tell him of the difficulties I have overcome, such as crossing stormy waters and barren deserts, climbing high mountains, and passing through regions infested with wild animals and robbers. He would probably encourage me to proceed and finish my journey. What has been done to sanctify the church? Jesus came from heaven, took upon Himself human nature, became a servant among men, suffered poverty, endured reproach, sweat blood in the garden, died the death of a criminal on the cross, entered the domain of the grave, and, on the third day, arose and chained the monster, death, to his chariot wheels, rode forth all triumphant over death and hell, and ascended on high, leading captivity captive. After all of this has been done to sanctify the church, to say that He can not do it, would be a slander on Calvary and a burlesque on the wisdom of God.

(5) Then again, the jurisdiction of Jesus Christ over the church supposes her entire sanctification. The text says, "Christ is the head of the church and He is the savior of the body." The head is the seat of the mind and, metaphysically speaking, mind moves matter. To illustrate: I am crossing a meadow in deep reverie. Glancing down, I perceive that I am about to tread upon a snake. At once the medium of sight communicates to mind the thought of danger, and, instantly, over the nerve wires from mental headquarters, to every muscle which moves the body, travels one word, and that word is "jump." Immediately one hundred seventy-five pounds of matter are moved five feet from the point of danger. Thus, mind moved matter. We are riding on a ball of earth, rock, and water at the rate of twenty-five thousand miles every twenty-four hours, and we are doing it so majestically that the motion does not jostle a dew drop or upset a cup of coffee. You may ask, "What moves matter in such a manner?" The answer is, "Divine mind." Christ is the head of the church, i. e., He plans for her best present and eternal good. But what is the mind of the church concerning her purity? The answer is given in these words: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." Again, "Be ye holy, for I am holy"; and the body, the church, responds, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven," and goes to the blood for her cleansing. As we dehorn unruly cattle, so God will "de-head"

that church which turns against the plain command, "Be ye holy"; for the reason that He will not preside over a holiness-fighting church or preacher. I have noticed that when anything loses its head, it soon dies. A headless church is a dead church. It is true that there may be senseless church struggles, like the flops of a hen with its head chopped off, in the form of what they call "church work"; but the life and power of godliness will be gone. It is said that Pat once caught a turtle. He cut its head off and laid it at the back door. The next morning he noticed, with surprise, that its legs were still moving and he cried out to Bridget: "It is the awfulest thing I ever heard of, for it is dead and does not know it." Dead things, as a sanitary measure, ought to be buried. One of the most dangerous things in any community, in point of morals, is the unwholesome putridity of a dead church.

(6) The ministration of the church supposes that she should be holy. The church in heaven is called the church triumphant, in that she has fought all of her battles and won her last victory. The church on earth is called the church militant, for she is still in the conflict. "What," you say, "is there a war?" If you have not found that out, in all probability, it is because there is not enough difference between you and Satan to quarrel over. But you say, "Is not God's religion peace on earth?" "Yes, but not peace at a compromise with sin, for it is first pure and then peaceable," i. e., peaceable only in conformity to the principles of purity. War supposes two contending principles. The principle in the world is sin, and the principle in the church is holiness. There is no compromise between them. Holiness is a standing declaration of war and an indomitable fighting character with sin in the world and holiness in the church. While these conditions remain, there will be war. If the enemy can persuade the church to accept a sinning religion, then he has what he wants and the conflict ends, for there will be nothing to fight over. But as long as these two principles are together on the same planet where Jesus was crucified, there will not be a cessation of hostilities. Holiness is bound to win eventually in the conflict. But you may say, "My preacher committed a very shameful sin. Thus holiness was defeated." Very true, but that was only a local matter and you have your eyes on a few eddies in the stream which have a backward movement; but if you would lift up your eyes, you would notice that the main stream of holiness is still sweeping on with irresistible power to its ultimate and glorious victory. The holiness of the church is her only hope. The devil can handle her numbers, her talents, her zeal, and her money, but her holiness will out-general him. It is said that two men went bear hunting. One of them found a bear, and instead of using his gun, which was loaded for bear, he dropped it. Grabbing the bear, he called to his companion, "I have got him, I have got him"; but the bear ran away with him. Whenever the church abandons holiness and seeks to win sinners without it, it will very readily increase in membership. Then the church may say, "I have got them," in that she has had so many accessions instead of conversions. However, when the circus comes to town, the world which the church took into its arms, will take the church up bodily and go to the show, thus indicating which of the two was captured. If the church remains holy, the world will not, as a rule, desire to unite with it. We see a demonstration of this fact in the case of Ananias and Sapphira, who lied about their church quarterage. For the benefit of all such liars, by way of

example, God killed them; but it is said, "Of the rest durst no man join himself," i. e., the rest of the liars like Ananias and Sapphira. Holiness in the church today will have the same effect on the worldlings who are not ready to seek the Lord.

(7) The final coronation of the church supposes her holiness. Jesus came to earth to secure for Himself a bride. He found her clothed with the filthy garments of sin, but He loved her and won her, and she became His redeemed bride, arrayed in white linen. It becomes the duty of the bridegroom to make arrangements for the future comfort of the bride and to make ready for the wedding supper; so, after bidding the church, Christ's bride, not to flirt with the world, but ever to be watching for His return, Christ returned to heaven with the promise of coming back again. It is fortunate for the bride that her robes are made of linen, for linen has a smooth and somewhat flinty surface, so that the stick-tights and cockle burs of sin can not easily adhere to it; whereas wool is an animal product and denotes depravity, causing these things to cling to it easily. This unspotted robe represents her righteousness. She is ever arrayed in it, watching for the Bridegroom's coming, for He may come at any time. One of these days there will be a mighty trumpet blast which will vibrate throughout all of God's domain, announcing the coming of the Bridegroom to earth for His bride, and announcing to all heaven the coming of the bride who is to be presented to the Father, without spot or wrinkle. With a shout of joy, she will be caught up to meet Him in the air. Pressing a kiss of divine approbation on her fair brow, He will turn His face homeward and cry, "Be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in." Then, passing up through the gate and between phalanx after phalanx of angels, having harps of gold, He will approach the throne and present His bride to the Father. There she will stand before Him without wrinkle, spot, or blemish, cleansed, sanctified, holy, and glorious. In considering such a scene, my holy anticipation has taken away all desire to sing: "I want to be an angel, and with the angels stand"; for all of the angels, in all probability, will be on the back seats playing wedding music, Gabriel leading the high-sounding symphony of the skies. After the presentation will come the grand march to the royal banquet, led by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

"When that illustrious day shall rise
And all thine armies shine,
In robes of victory through the skies
The glory shall be Thine."

* * * * *

10 -- CORNELIUS SANCTIFIED

"While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word" (Acts 10:44).

These words describe a part of a holiness meeting held by Peter in the house of one, Cornelius, a Roman officer who lived in Caesarea. Cornelius had been

seeking holiness of heart for several days. As God has many means by which He is pleased to execute His purposes, He sent to him an angel who told him to "send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname was Peter." Peter, like many other preachers, was not just ready for the revival because of some preconceived notions of long standing which must be gotten out of his mind. This was accomplished through a vision which he had on the house top, which fully prepared him for the meeting. He immediately fell in line with divine proceedings and went with the messengers to Caesarea. While he was preaching, the Holy Ghost fell, and Cornelius was wholly sanctified.

(1) We note that Cornelius received the blessing as a second work of grace. But you may say, "How do you know but that he was converted at that time?" If Cornelius was a sinner, he was one of the most delightful sinners of whom I have heard. It is said of him that he was a "devout man." This alone, would constitute him rather a peculiar sinner. He was not as some, devoted to some church, or some system of theology, but he was devoted to God, and his devotion was a holy devotion. Then again, it is said that he "feared God." It is said of the wicked, "There is no fear of God before their eyes." We are told that "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," i. e., "the wisdom that is from above"; so he had the beginning of Bible religion. Then, he was a praying man, for it is said of him that "he prayed to God always." Adam Clarke comments on this Scripture as follows: "He was ever in the spirit, and frequently in the act. What an excellent character is this!"

It is also said that he was a "just man" and this signified, to say the least, that he was a justified man. Many others are spoken of in the Bible as being just, and we give them credit for being converted. Why should we not also give Cornelius the same moral standing? Then, too, he had an excellent influence at home and abroad. He was a Roman officer, in charge of a band of soldiers, whose business it was to assist Pilate, the governor, in keeping the Jew under Roman control. The Jews, for this reason, were, naturally, very prejudiced against Roman officers, but the godly influence of Cornelius among the Jews was so great that it overcame this Jewish animosity and he became "of good report among all the nations of the Jews." Peter adds his testimony, as to his piety, and says, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him." This was an acknowledgment that he was righteous and had a sense of divine acceptance. But the greatest evidence as to his moral condition was when Peter reaffirmed his testimony before a church Council, called to consider the meeting held in the house of Cornelius, and the part that Peter had in it. He said, by way of explanation concerning what took place on that occasion, "Putting no difference between us (at Pentecost) and them (at Caesarea), purifying their hearts by faith." This very plainly shows that the work done for Cornelius, while Peter was preaching, was not that of conversion but purity of heart.

(2) "But when was he converted?" you may ask. This matters but little, as the foregoing explanation shows, beyond a doubt, that at some time the work was done. Suffice it to say that, while the time of his conversion is all a conjecture, there

are strong probabilities in the case. He was probably converted under the labors of the evangelist, Philip, for we learn that after the conversion of the eunuch, he was found at Azotus, and, passing through, he preached in all the cities until he came to Caesarea. He was a proselyte of the gate, i. e., he had accepted the Christian religion, but had not, as yet, received the rite of circumcision.

(3) We will note how he secured the blessing. He fasted. There is a spiritual significance to fasting that very clearly illustrates the soul longings which accompany the seeking of a clean heart. Just as my material nature hungers for food while I am fasting, so my moral nature longs for heart purity. This soul desire must be greater than any other desire of the heart before we can secure the blessing; just as in the days when gold was discovered in California, the strong desire for gold induced men to leave their families and suffer the privations and dangers from wild beasts and robbers in the mountains. Such must have been the longings of Cornelius as he was fasting and waiting before the Lord for a clean heart. If they sang it in those days, he doubtless would have sung:

"My soul breaks out in strong desire
Thy perfect bliss to prove.
My longing heart is all on fire
To be dissolved in love."

(4) He implicitly followed divine directions. The orders were to "send men to Joppa." No other city in all that country could have taken the place of Joppa. In fact, it was Joppa, or fail. After reaching Joppa, they were to inquire for one Simon, and any Simon would not do, for this one's surname was Peter. He was lodging with one Simon. This particular one was a tanner, and it would only have been a waste of time to have called at the house of Simon the shoemaker, or the butcher. To make the matter as expedient as possible, they were to find this Simon down by the seaside. If all of these minute directions had not been followed out in all of their details, Cornelius would not have secured the blessing. One of the reasons that so many fail today in their search for a clean heart, is due to the fact that they have not carefully followed the leadings of the Holy Spirit in some little particular. Since it is a matter of obedience, the smallness of the thing has nothing to do in the case. It is not the thing to be done which is essential, but, rather, the principle involved in doing it. There is no substitute that can take the place of the thing God wants us to do. God will break us at the very point where we get stiff and unyielding on His hands.

(5) He received the blessing suddenly, for it came to him while Peter was yet speaking. This is in direct keeping with the fact as stated by Peter, "Purifying their hearts by faith." All of the promises in which God is pleased to offer us heart purity are written in the present tense, and the moment we claim any one of them, that moment all that is offered in the promise is ours. The veracity of God is just as much at stake, pertaining to the execution of the promise at the time specified, as it is in the fulfillment of the thing promised. In the fifteenth chapter of Acts, Peter

compares the experience which Cornelius received, while Peter was preaching, with that which he and the rest of the disciples received on the day of Pentecost; and we are told that it came suddenly.

"Oh, that I might at once go up;
No more on this side Jordan stop,
But now the land possess;
This moment end my legal years,
Sorrows and sins and doubts and fears,
A howling wilderness!"

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11 -- EVIDENCES OF HEART PURITY

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him" (Rom. 6:6).

The burden of thought contained in this sermon is taken from the opening clause of the text, "knowing this." Uncertainties in religion are fearful things and should not be tolerated. This is especially true regarding the fundamentals of Bible salvation. Holiness of heart is one of the most essential fundamentals within the realm of moral ethics. There is no need of any one's being in doubt as to whether he possesses the blessing of holiness or not. It does not stand to reason that an all-wise God would make a provision in the atonement for such an important experience and then not make it possible for us to know that we were in possession of that experience. Just as all types of plant and animal life have certain signs or marks which signify their species, so a state of heart purity has certain evidences which indicate the possession of the experience. We will consider them negatively and positively.

(1) The evidence of possessing entire sanctification should not be sought in the outer life. Living without sin is one of the unfailing marks of being freely justified. Hence we read: "He that is born of God doth not commit sin." The exalted state of heart purity can not exceed this, in point of obedience. There are those who say that before they were wholly sanctified, often they would pout and sulk, sometimes for a week at a time, and would get mad and kick the cow for fighting flies while being milked; or would cruelly beat a balky horse; but since they have been wholly sanctified, these bad traits have disappeared. This idea badly minimizes Bible justification, for a good, healthy case of regeneration, if maintained, would stop all such moral procedures in a ten-year-old school boy. Such persons are not candidates for heart purity, and should repent and be forgiven for such conduct.

All such teachers are not of the old John Wesley, John Inskip, Phoebe Palmer, J. A. Wood, and B. T. Roberts type, and ought to be backed into the holiness roundhouse and kept there until they undergo theological repairs.

(2) As a rule, one should not profess to be wholly sanctified unless he is able to look back to a time when he intelligently sought the experience as a distinct and separate work of grace from that of his conversion. The Word of God forbids such a profession. It does not tally with his own experience for, notwithstanding the fact that he may profess heart purity, he will feel within him the impulse of sin in the form of jerks of anger and twitches of impatience, as well as other evidences of remaining evil. To harmonize these things with a state of heart purity, he will be strongly tempted to apologize for them and allow them to pass under some other fictitious name, such as depravity, alias human weakness, or some other subterfuge. Hundreds have been deceived in this manner. It is noticeable that those who are only justified, and are the most blest and careful in their lives, seldom definitely profess to have clean hearts before they seek the blessing as a second work of grace. It is true that a few have been deeply convicted over the sin of their hearts and have sought definitely to have it removed. They have been cleansed from all sin and have enjoyed the blessing for some time, yet have not been able to give it a Bible name. I once knew a brother who thus sought and found the experience, and for some time called it "something else" until he attended a holiness camp meeting, where he learned the Bible name for his experience. God will make exceptions of this kind, but none whatever for those who do not seek definitely to be cleansed from sin.

(3) One should not profess the blessing of holiness unless such a profession is preceded by an intelligent conviction of one's need of the experience and a fair knowledge of the same. This is the reason why preachers, who do not definitely teach holiness, seldom have any one seek the experience under their labors. It takes definite teaching to produce definite conviction. Just as a sinner must sense to some degree his rebellion against God and his condition of soul before he can intelligently repent and seek God for pardon, so the saint, to some extent, must see the corruption of his heart, at least sufficiently to hate it, and be induced then to confess his depravity to God and, under certain conditions, confess to men his need of cleansing. This is what John Wesley called "repentance in believers." It is to be feared that some get a blessing, instead of the blessing, for the reason that they are not sufficiently convicted for the experience to define their need in their own minds. Consequently, their prayers are indefinite and, of course, do not end in a definite assurance of cleansing from all sin. It is to be feared also, in many cases, that souls are rushed through at the altar and prematurely urged to believe or take it by faith, before the Holy Spirit has an opportunity to do His work in producing clearer convictions and presenting to them the items connected with their consecration. Isaiah was so convicted that he felt the woe upon him, and cried: "Woe is me," before he received the touch of fire. David saw the moral condition of his "hidden parts" before he prayed, "Create in me a clean heart." The hunger and thirst after the fulness of righteousness, mentioned in Matthew 5:6, was preceded by a sense of poverty of spirit and a state of spiritual mourning. Hunger and thirst are two of the most intense passions of the human body and they stand for strong spiritual desires. In the ten days of waiting and prayer before the baptism of the

Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, the one hundred twenty had ample time in which to sense very keenly their need of the purifying fire. This, however, does not imply that there needs to be a long time of waiting and seeking between our conversion and cleansing. Where definite light is on the seeker's heart, I have known such to seek and obtain pardon and heart purity at the same altar service. This is especially true when the seeker has once enjoyed the blessing, or has had definite teachings on the subject.

(4) Positively speaking, there is a power, or deeper spirituality, associated with heart purity that is not found in the justified experience. While the wholly sanctified are "in heaviness through manifold temptations" (and an unvaried rapture is not a real test of heart purity), yet there is a sense in which holiness is power, which can not be applied to a state of regeneration. In a justified state, the depravity of the heart, notwithstanding the fact that it is in a restrained condition, will, irrespective of human choice, more or less, curtail the operations of the Holy Ghost. Just as our mistakes and bodily infirmities unconsciously hinder our usefulness, so the corruption of the freely justified soul will hinder its spirituality. If one profess heart purity and there is no more spirituality than there was before, there should be a careful search in the heart and life in order to discover the reason for it. Power is not a super-added quality of heart purity, or a separate gift tacked on to that state which we may lose and still retain the experience, but, like the inner sense of purity, it is one of the fundamentals of the blessing. The promise made by Christ to His disciples before the day of Pentecost, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you," clearly implies that the promised power was to supersede all the power they had possessed before that time. This idea was also brought out in His words to His disciples, uttered a short time before He left them, "Greater works than these shall ye do; because I go to my Father." The greater things to be done implied the greater power. Just as Samson, as a man, had power to accomplish the ordinary, but when the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, possessed a power that he did not have before; just as Elisha had power, as a man, to perform the ordinary, but after he received a double portion of the spirit of Elijah, was able to raise the dead, cause iron to swim, increase the widow's bulk of meal and oil, split the rolling Jordan and pass over dry shod, so there is a difference between the spirituality of the regenerated soul and that of the one who is wholly sanctified.

(5) There should be a more explicit faith connected with the state of Christian perfection, especially amid adverse circumstances, which is not found outside the cleansing blood. In a state of heart purity, the evil root of unbelief is completely eradicated from the very subsoil of the soul. A person with such an experience is better able to endure the furnace flame of trial, and to come out of it without even the smell of fire upon his garments, than the one who is not wholly sanctified, and who has the unbelief of his heart to contend with, under these conditions.

It is very unbecoming to the pure in heart to chafe and worry over matters they can not help. They should commit these things to God and then repose in His

love, wisdom, and power, and let Him know what they do not know, and do what they can not do. It is true that heart purity does not dehumanize us, and there may be times when tears will flow, and we will be in such heaviness through manifold temptations, that the physical may suffer, just as Jesus "suffered being tempted," and the devil's fiery darts may smart, but, at the same time, all can be calm and undisturbed in the depths of the soul, just as there is perfect calm in the depths of the ocean when a storm is raging on the surface. They "are troubled on every side, yet not distressed."

(6) In a state of entire sanctification, there should be the absence of carnal impulses, called the "Motions of sin in the flesh," or "roots of bitterness," which spring up and trouble us. We felt them before we were converted, but they did not trouble us. Yea, we often gloried in them and regarded them as traits of dignity and manliness; but after the love of God was shed abroad in our hearts, they became an annoyance to us and we were troubled at their presence. When we become wholly sanctified, there will be no more carnal pulsations in the soul, even under adverse conditions, than there will be pulsations of natural life in the dead who are lying in the graveyard. Justification is a state of peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Peace means the absence of condemnation. The wholly sanctified have rest in addition to their peace, which means the absence of the roots of bitterness which spring up and trouble them. Rest and trouble are, in no sense, counterparts. This is what John Wesley meant when he sang:

"Anger I no more shall feel,
Always even, always still."

This rest is not only a state of "peace with God," but it is the "peace of God"; i. e., there will be no more of the impulse of sin within those who possess it than there is in the bosom of God.

(7) In conclusion: A state of heart purity is always attended by the witness of the Spirit. In addition to a sense of innocency, there will be a sense of inner purity. Hence, the text says: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him," We know when he (our old man) is alive, and we can just as definitely know when he is dead. This knowledge is beyond the comprehension of the natural man, hence we read: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit. for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." Heart purity is one of the "deep things" that God has "prepared for them that love Him," and He is pleased to reveal by His Spirit such an experience to them that love Him. This inner evidence differs from a sense of pardon only in the things to which it witnesses, and not in the manner of operation.

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"Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness" (Psa. 97:12).

The remembrance of God in the light of His holiness is one of the most delightful contemplations for saints and angels. To forget His holiness is practically to forget Him, for holiness and God are inseparable. To associate holiness with God is to distinguish Him from all other gods. Among all of the man-made gods of heathendom, not one of them has been accounted holy. Too many of them have been given the other attributes of the Godhead, as well as those of a very degrading nature. No doubt the best among the heathen gods is the Roman god, "Jupiter." One has said of him, "Had a medal been struck delineating his character, on one side might have been engraved almightiness, omnipresence, justice; and on the other side, caprice, revenge, and lust." The poet has it right when he says,

**"Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust;
Whose attributes are rage, revenge, and lust."**

But holiness is the great central attribute of the God of the Christian, as compared with all of His other attributes.

(1) It is worthy of note that David called upon the righteous to be thankful at the remembrance of God's holiness. It would be needless to have called upon the wicked to do so, for such a remembrance to them would not have been a very pleasant contemplation and could not have existed with any degree of gratitude. The sinner is in love with his sin, but the holiness of God demands that sin be abandoned once and forever. The remembrance of God's holiness, on the part of the sinner, has a tendency to reveal to him his sins and the injustice of them against God. It is natural for the sinner to put the thought of God away from him until the habit has become a confirmed one and God is no longer in all his thoughts. The clearer God's Spirit shines the darker becomes the sin of man's heart and the iniquity of his life. It is not pleasant to consider something that has become the groundwork of his condemnation in this life, and of his punishment in the next. None but the righteous, whose sins are blotted out, and who are looking forward to the time when they shall meet Him in peace, can be thankful at the remembrance of His holiness. Adam Clarke says, "He who can give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness is one who loves holiness, hates sin, longs to be saved from it, and takes encouragement at the recollection of God's holiness, as he sees in this the holy nature which he is to share, and the perfection which he is here to attain. But most people who call themselves Christians, hate the doctrine of holiness and never hear it inculcated without pain. The Principal part of their studies and those of their pastors, is to find out with what little holiness they can rationally expect to enter the kingdom of God."

(2) The righteous are thankful at the remembrance of God's holiness, because it reminds them of the fact that His holiness is the source of their holiness.

They are thankful that, even though their holiness is not the same in quantity as His, yet, since it comes from Him, it is the same in kind. His holiness has become the sample by which they are to test theirs. Since the welfare of our eternal destiny depends upon possessing true holiness of heart, it is very gratifying to have the privilege of considering real holiness at its fountainhead. This is especially so when we consider the possibility of possessing a spurious article. What a pleasure to know that we do not have to accept a second-hand sample and proceed to measure ourselves by ourselves; but we may rest assured that, if we possess His kind of holiness, it will stand the test of time, the ravages of death, and the scrutiny of the day of judgment. This is the kind of holiness that God required of Abraham when He said, "Walk before me, and be thou perfect," i. e., possess a holiness that can bear the divine inspection here and stand acquitted before God in the day of final inspection. The poet struck its key-note when he sang:

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

(3) The righteous are thankful at the remembrance of God's holiness, in that it reminds them that His holiness is unchangeable. It is as changeless as His immutability. It is a comfort to know that, amid all of the vicissitudes of life, we may derive from Him a quality of holiness that will remain unsullied and unchanged. All that will be needed on our part will be to maintain the faith that will keep us connected with His unfailing fount of purity. While this continues, our holiness will remain as unfailing as His.

(4) To those seeking the blessing of holiness the remembrance of God's holiness ought to be with thankfulness; for the reason that such a contemplation should naturally suggest to them that a God, whose very nature is holiness, and who is in love with them, and who hates sin in every form and at all times, is pleased to cleanse their hearts from everything which His holiness hates. This remembrance of God's holiness should induce them to seek the experience, not because it is their duty to do so, but, rather, because of the exalted privilege of becoming fully conformed to the divine image.

(5) The remembrance of God's holiness by those who are regenerated, but not wholly sanctified, will have a strong tendency to beget within them a conviction for a clean heart. This is due to the fact that those who love God love His character and, without an exception, desire to be like Him in nature. The consideration of His holiness will place their depravity in bold contrast with His nature, and, loving God as they do, they will loathe their sin and earnestly seek its removal.

(6) A remembrance of God's holiness should be a cause of gratitude in the hearts of the wholly sanctified in that it will greatly intensify their sense of a fitness for heaven, and they will feel that the precious blood has made them like Him, and

the heaven which they daily aspire to reach. Such a consideration, associated with heart purity, will cause them to rejoice in His appearing and gladly to watch for His coming. Only such can exultingly say, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." How different with the sinner, for, instead of rejoicing in His appearing, the depravity of his heart will cause him to flee from His presence, as did Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, and to call upon rocks and mountains to hide him from the gaze of Him that sitteth upon the throne. In view of the great event of His second coming, only the wholly sanctified can be thankful at the remembrance of His holiness.

(7) To the righteous, the remembrance of God's holiness will be a matter of thankfulness, in that it will be very definite and helpful in warning them that they will never be permitted to see Him in peace without a clean heart. Just as a sailor in the storm is thankful when he hears the clang of the warning bell, or sees the glare of the light over a hidden rock; or the engineer is thankful when he sees the red light ahead at an open switch; so the saints are glad when a consideration of God's holiness reveals to them the danger of appearing in the judgment without being fully conformed to the image of the Judge. If there is sin in their hearts, this remembrance reminds them of such depravity, and of the oncoming judgment, and naturally suggests to them the remedy for the sin of their souls. All this will be suggested as a matter of self-preservation.

(8) In conclusion: The grateful remembrance of His holiness implies that we love His nature. This love will prevent us from ever trying to apologize for sin or to advocate a sinning religion. It will also enable us to gladly and humbly confess our faults and infirmities to God and to each other. Thus, it will become one of the greatest safeguards against falling into sin and a state of self-deception.

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13 -- CALLED TO BE HOLY

"For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us His Holy Spirit" (1 Thess. 4:7, 8).

The calls of God may be divided under two heads-particular and general. God, in the exercise of His wisdom, has called one out of many to some specific work in His vineyard. Some are called to rule, others to teach, exhort, or give; some to be a foot, an eye, a hand, or an ear, in the spiritual body of Jesus Christ, "according to their several ability." However, some things are so vastly important and universally needed that God has issued a general call along these lines. Take, for instance, the call to repent. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"; therefore, God "now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." But repentance is only a preliminary act, and is designed to lead us on to higher attainments. The matter of being holy is so essential and generally needed that God has called all men to be holy.

(1) The call to be holy implies that we may be holy in this life. The call does not pertain to the future, but, rather, to the present. The Word says, "Be ye holy." This command places on man a present responsibility. God never lays obligations on men, when the possibility of complying with the divine mandate does not exist, for it would be mocking men and exposing the divine administration to their ridicule. We note from the text that the holiness to which we are called is to be actuated in the midst of those who may despise and reject the call. This condition can only exist in this world for there will be no holiness to despise in hell, and no one to despise holiness in heaven. Then, again, it seems that God is so determined to make Himself understood, concerning this call to holiness, that He is not only pleased to mention the positive, but also the negative side of holiness, and declares that we are "not called unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." By such a declaration, He places holiness in contrast to uncleanness. Such a contrast, in point of existence, can only take place in this life. It is not supposable for a moment that Jesus would come from a holy heaven, have a holy birth, live a holy life, work holy miracles, preach holy sermons, die a holy death, and have a holy resurrection, in order to inaugurate a sinning religion, to bring sinning mankind into companionship with a holy God. The idea is preposterous in the extreme. God is not confined to any one particular method in issuing His calls. His resources are many.

(2) He calls by His Spirit! He who is the executive of the Godhead and the third person in the Trinity, in keeping with His own nature and the heaven He came from, calls us to be holy. Consequently, the call to be holy is issued to us by the highest authority. He calls by producing with the justified believer a definite desire to be fully conformed to the image of God, which desire amounts to a hunger and thirst after the fullness of righteousness. He also shines upon and thus emphasizes that part of the Word of God, which requires and offers us the experience, and also inspires within us a definite prayer which will be as natural as the calls of the physical body for food and drink when hungry and thirsty. This special light on the Word, the intense desire, and the inspiration to prayer, should be considered as a call to be holy and is of sufficient consequence to induce one to proceed at once to seek a clean heart. Such can not be misleading, and they who follow their dictates never go at a venture.

(3) God calls us to be holy by a consideration of His own character. He is under no obligation to give us a reason as to why He should require this or that of us, for it should be enough for us to know that an all-wise God has made the demand. The matter of being holy, however, is so vastly important that He not only requires it, but in mercy is disposed to give, with the requirement, one of the greatest reasons why we should be holy. Hear Him! "Be ye holy." He might have stopped with the declaration, and then the obligation would have been upon us with all of its sacred import. He then proceeds to give the reason why: "for I am holy." We are thus invited to consider Him in the light of His holiness as an incentive for being like Him. The brighter the sunshine, the darker the shadow. The more clearly we see into the holiness of the divine character, the darker becomes the depravity

of the human heart. It was a consideration of God's holiness that brought the prophet, Isaiah, under conviction for heart purity. He heard the seraphim crying in the temple, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts." This declaration of the divine nature so affected the prophet that he was led to confess his own uncleanness. He considered this revelation of the divine character a call to be holy. If these sinless beings, prompted by a consideration and the proclamation of God's holiness, covered themselves with their wings, should not all who consider the same great theme, and who feel the motions of sin in the flesh, join Isaiah in acknowledging the woe that is on them, until the touch of fire removes their sin, as it did in the case of Isaiah?

(4) Should a justified soul consider his inner self, he would feel the call to be holy. Soon after they are converted, young converts sense the fact that they are not cleansed from all sin, because of experiencing at times the uprisings of pride, anger, self-will, and impatience in their hearts. These frequent impulses to sin in no sense imply that they are not saved, but they do clearly indicate that they are not wholly sanctified. In the Southland there are many beautiful ponds and lakes nestled among the hills, scarcely ever disturbed by even a zephyr to break up the smooth regularity of their surface. They are fringed with beautiful wild roses which fill the air with fragrance, and spotted with pond lilies blooming upon their bosom. As one would view the scene from a hillside, an alligator would be the last thing of which he would think, and yet, crawling about in the mud in the bottom of these ponds and lakes are monstrous alligators. If these ponds and lakes possessed sensibilities, they would feel the motions of the alligators underneath their placid surface. A state of Bible justification is a thing of moral beauty, with its holy fragrance and lily-white symmetrical surface, but, unperceived by others, the motions of depravity are often felt in the hidden depths of the soul. When the alligator comes to the surface, woe be unto the pond lilies and the beautiful regularities of the surface, as it churns the water into a foam. This well represents the sin of the heart, breaking into the open life and destroying the beauty and evenness of a justified life, thus making it necessary to repent. These inner impulses of evil and the outbreking of sin have a tendency to bring a soul under conviction for a deeper work of grace, and, with the removal of the sin of the soul, the convert answers God's call to be holy.

(5) God calls us to be holy by a consideration of the preparation for heaven. Justification gives us a title to the heavenly inheritance, but it requires holiness of heart to prepare us for heaven. We are not entitled to a home in heaven simply because we are innocent. Your dog, "Tag," or your cow, "Brindle," are both innocent, but they would not go to heaven if they should die. The Bible does not say, "Blessed are the innocent, for they shall see God," but, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Although the dog and cow are innocent, they are not morally pure. But you say, "Suppose a young convert, who has no light on holiness, should die without seeking the experience of heart purity; would he be lost?" By no means! He is a noncombatant and, as such, is not opposed to holiness. A provision has been made for all such in the sacrifice for the sin of

ignorance, offered by the Israelites once a year, of which Christ was the antitype. When we accept Him, we have in Him a provision for all of our mistakes and infirmities. Under the cover of this sacrifice, the depravity of those who have no understanding of their privilege to be made holy is removed at death, like that of the baby and the idiot. Those who reject Christ, of course, have no remedy for their sins of ignorance, and must take the consequence of their neglect.

(6) A consideration of the provisions of the gospel will be, to us, a call to be holy. A watch is of no value to us until we have discovered its central idea, namely, that of timekeeping. We do not know for what use the Roman figures on the dial are, or the hands, or why one wheel is going one way and the other another way, until we discover that the piece of mechanism is constructed for the purpose of timekeeping. The central idea of God's religion is holiness, and one great reason why so many place such absurd interpretation on the Word of God, is because they have not discovered its central idea. All of its doctrines and ordinances tend to that end, just as the operations of the different parts of a watch tend to timekeeping. Just as the other planets revolve around the sun, the great center of gravity, so all of the doctrines of the Word of God revolve around holiness. Let us notice this phase of God's Word. A stupendous fact stands out in the Word. A Savior has died! But why? "That He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify us unto Himself a peculiar people." A moral finger-board points to the cross and says, "This way to holiness." We learn that a fountain has been opened. But to what intent? "For sin and uncleanness!" And on its brink another finger-board points to holiness. We have a Bible. But what is its divinely appointed mission? "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Here we have another finger-board directing us to holiness. Another great means of grace is the ministry. But what is the purpose of its calling? Let Paul answer. "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." In connection with this most holy calling we find another finger-board pointing toward holiness. Then we have the ten commandments. But in which moral direction do they point? Here we have it. "The end of the commandments," i. e., the purpose or intent, "is charity out of a pure heart." Here we have a cluster of finger-boards all pointing up the highway to heart purity. If I were desirous of finding my way to a certain town, and came to a fork in the road, where I found fourteen finger-boards all pointing the way to this town, as these fourteen means of grace point us to holiness, I do not believe that I could be persuaded to proceed in any other direction.

(7) We are called to holiness by a consideration of the promises and commands of the Word of God. They represent the law and the gospel. The law says, "Be ye holy," and the promise says, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." Therefore, what the law requires, the promises offer, and what the law demands, the gospel provides. It is true that the "commandment is exceeding broad"; so much so, that its requirements cover every principle,

affection, motive, inspiration, aspiration, and act of our lives; but we should rejoice in that the promises offset the "exceeding" broadness of the commands in their "exceeding" greatness, which make it possible to meet every requirement prescribed by the law. The law condemns our sin and requires us to abandon it, while the gospel offers to forgive us our transgressions and to cleanse our hearts from its pollution.

In the days before the game laws were enacted in Michigan, we used to catch fish with a seine. On the bottom of the seine we placed pieces of lead to hold the net close to the bottom of the river, so that the fish could not escape under the net between the net and the river bottom. To prevent them from going over the top of the net, we placed cork at the top of the net. So we caught fish between the lead and the cork. To prevent them from going around the net, there were men walking on the bank of the river and beating the water with poles; so the only way of escape was for the fish to turn away from the net. This well illustrates God's method, as far as moral obligation may be concerned, of getting souls into the blessing of holiness. The law, like the lead, holds them down and there is no escape from its moral obligation. The promises, like the cork, are to keep them from getting discouraged because of the severe obligation of the law; and the preachers, like the men on the bank, stir up the situation by preaching "holiness or hell." Thus, the only way for souls to keep from becoming wholly sanctified is to turn away from God's appointed means. How often we have felt them struggling in the gospel net but soon were made sad to know that they were gone.

(8) A consideration of our usefulness is a call to holiness. Depravity is a weakening element in moral nature in the battle between right and wrong, and puts one at a great disadvantage in the conflict. Holiness is power and is a great winning element in the battle. No wonder Tennyson wrote, "His strength is as the strength of ten because his heart is pure." Let us suppose that during a battle there is in the rear Of one army, five hundred prisoners. Since they belong to the foe, it would be a mistake to turn them loose, for they would at once organize a flank movement in the fight. To prevent this, fifty men are taken from the firing line to guard the inside foe, thus weakening the firing line. It takes a great deal of grace to control depravity in the justified soul and it will never do to let it go unguarded. The thing to do is to dispose of the foe within and then put the guards on the firing line, thus reinforcing it, with no foe in the midst.

(9) In conclusion, we note that it is a very serious matter to oppose holiness. It is not so much a matter of opposing God's appointed messenger as it is of despising God for His holiness, which is an attribute of His nature. Saul of Tarsus assumed that he was opposing only a few in the city of Damascus whom he supposed to be fanatics, but Jesus said to him as he lay in the road under the restraining hand of God, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Those saints possessed the divine nature, and to oppose them was to oppose and despise God.

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14 -- CLEANSED FROM ALL SIN

"But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

The text contains two promises, offering to us the minimum and the maximum provisions of the atonement, namely, "fellowship" and "cleansing from all sin." As God can not make unqualified promises to men without subjecting His glory to the infringement of human selfishness, these two promises are no exception to the rule. They are conditioned in the use of the word "if," i. e., we have fellowship "if," and we have cleansing from sin "if" "we walk in the light as He is in the light." The word "if" is a sort of moral hinge on which these two promises and our destiny swing. A backward movement on this hinge will swing us from light, fellowship, and cleansing, and eventually into hell. A forward movement will swing us onward into light, fellowship, holiness, and heaven.

(1) Let us notice the promise of "fellowship." You may ask, "Is it to be fellowship with God or the saints?" It is both, for we can not have fellowship with the saints until we first have fellowship with God. We read, "That ye may have fellowship with us and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." One has said, "Let us suppose that there is a circle of saints around Christ, who is the center of Christianity. There are two methods by which they might attempt to get closer together. One is by drawing up closer toward each other, with no advance toward Christ, the center. This would break up the circle into several fractions and leave more or less of a breach between the fractions. The other is for the entire circle to move toward Christ, the center. In the very nature of the case, the nearer they approach to Christ, the closer they would get to each other.

But what are we to understand by this important thing in the text called "light," in which we must walk to have this fellowship? The answer is, "Whatsoever doth make manifest is light." To make a thing "manifest" is to make it plain or clear. So the light mentioned in the text is a revelation of the will of God. The proper use of the light is suggested to us in the word "walk," and the word "walk," in this connection, means agreement. Amos said, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" To walk after the flesh is to agree with the sinful propensities of our nature. To walk after the Spirit is to agree with the dictates of the Holy Spirit, and to walk in the light is to agree with our God-given convictions. But you may say again, "How much light must we walk in to have this fellowship?" The text answers, "As He is in the light." You may say, "But how is He in the light?" The fourth verse reads, "In Him is no darkness at all." To maintain the character of the Godhead, God must walk in all the light that He has; and man, to maintain his character as a Christian, must walk in the light as He is in the light, i. e., in all the light and in no darkness at all. Man has infinitely less light than God has; but, Godlike, he must walk in all that he has. Every creature must move in its native element or die -- the

fish in the water, the bird in the air, and the Christian in the light; or lose his spiritual life, thereby forfeiting his fellowship.

(2) We will now consider the attainment of the greater blessing, i. e., cleansing from sin. We note that it is a second work of grace and is subsequent to regeneration. This is seen in the use of the conjunction "and," which means in addition to, or over and above, the previous sentence. It supposes that the previous sentence is a complete one in itself. So the word "and" is used in the text. The blessing denominated "fellowship" is a complete experience and "the cleansing" is in addition to it. Note that John is writing about the cleansing of those who not only have the light, but are also walking in the light. Two distinct works of grace were taught the Jews in the offerings. One of their offerings was the "trespass" offering, and another was called the "sin" offering.

The "trespass" offering was for the trespasses of their lives, but the "sin" offering was to provide a remedy for their inborn sin, or the sin of their hearts. Christ, the great antitype of these two sacrifices, has become our Savior and Sanctifier and the New Testament offer of pardon and purity, as found in Him, is just as separate and distinct as that which was offered to the Jews in the two sacrifices mentioned in the Old Testament. Only our sins can be pardoned, as mentioned in the previous verse, as we are responsible for their existence; but our sin, which was born in us, can not, in the very nature of the case, be forgiven, as we are not responsible for its existence, only as we deliberately reject the remedy provided for its removal. We can not, so to speak, be brought as criminals into God's criminal court and be condemned for its existence, as it does not of itself incur guilt. But we are brought into God's civil court and accounted diseased, and with our consent handed over to the great Physician to be healed. The very term "physician" implies a second work of grace, as his work is to doctor neither dead people nor those who are well. It is not the dead but those who "are alive from the dead," but who still possess what John Wesley called "the seed of sin's disease," to whom He says, "Wilt thou be made whole?" He quickens the dead and heals the morally sick. A child disobeys its parent and, as a consequence, contracts a very dangerous disease. The father forgives the offense, but he can not forgive the complaint, for this must be healed.

(3) We will next note the completeness of the blessing promised, "cleansing from all sin." The word "all," in the text, stands for everything that the word means in material matters. For instance, I have ten dollars in my pocket and you take all of the money out of my pocket. I would then have no more money in my pocket than there would be sin in my heart after the blood had cleansed me from all sin. In the beginning, God made the heart of man as pure as He could, and He could do no better if He should cleanse it again. He will not be satisfied until the heart of man has been restored to its primitive state of purity, this restoration to take place in the very same world where man's heart became defiled. We hear much today about "a deeper death." The expression itself is an absurdity. A death is a death and can not be a deeper one. There are many who, instead of professing the experience of the

text, qualify their testimony by saying, "As far as I know, I am cleansed from all sin." They are afraid to say that they are cleansed from all sin for fear that the test of tomorrow may show up some sin in their hearts that they are not conscious of today. This idea makes human understanding the gage by which God controls His operations. The "all" of the text, in point of knowledge, is not ours but His, for it is not all the sin that we may know about, but rather all the sin that infinite wisdom can discern. Our cleansing would be very limited indeed if God cleansed our hearts from only the sin of which we had knowledge. Instead of making a criterion of human knowledge, in the matter of removing sin from our hearts, He is pleased to set it by the limit of His attributes. It is "according to His riches in glory." "His riches" mean His boundless resources provided in the atonement. His limit of operation is "according to His mercy." This pertains to the greatness of His love and benevolence. Again, it is "According to the power that worketh in us." This calls our attention to the greatness of His executive ability. Question! Has He made a provision in the atonement to cleanse us from all sin, and is He rich in those provisions which are sufficient to meet the demands of human needs? Does He love us sufficiently to make Him disposed to cleanse us from all sin, and is His power sufficient to execute the provisions of the atonement? We are compelled to answer these questions in the affirmative. There will be no sin remaining in our hearts after He, in our behalf, has gone, if need be, to the full limit of these attributes. The unavoidable conclusion is, that we will be as free from sin as the wisdom, love, and power of God can make us.

(4) Let us consider the divine process prescribed in the text. The text declares that it is done by the blood of Jesus. But some may say that it is the light that cleanses from sin. Light is knowledge. Any degree of knowledge, pertaining to the existence of any evil, will in no sense correct the wrong. It is very true that a correct idea of holiness may greatly assist us in discovering the roots of pride, impatience, and anger in our hearts; but any degree of light will never bleach out the stain of sin from the moral fiber of the heart. For instance, I am in a dark and very dusty room, but, because of a lack of light, I am unable to know of its filthy condition. I touch a button and the room is instantly flooded with light and I am at once able to sense conditions, but if the light were increased to any degree, it would not remove a single particle of dust. A young man, on one of our camp grounds, was asked if he enjoyed the blessing of holiness. He replied by saying that he had experienced this blessing some time ago. It is to be feared that that is about as far as many have gone. They have experienced the blessing of holiness and are so enthused over it that they seem ready to fight for it with dirk and shotgun, but have never really sought and obtained it. Others may say that it is the walking that does the work, and that it is consequently a progressive work. The removal of sin can not be a gradual process, by virtue of the fact that original sin is a unit and can not be divided, and if any of it is removed, it all goes. This reminds us of the absurdity of the drunken butcher who told his hired man to kill the hind quarter of a fat steer and let the rest live until it was needed. Holiness is progressive in its approach, but instantaneous in its reception. Some years ago I changed cars on the National Line between the United States and Canada. I saw a

white line running across the depot platform. On one side of it I read, "The Dominion of Canada," and, on the other, "The United States." As I gradually approached the line, I was getting nearer Canada, but all the while I was as much in the United States as if I were standing in the center of this country. In no sense was I in Canada. At last I reached a point, in my approach, where I could take a step which I could not, in the nature of the case, have taken before. There is a sense in which that particular step was one of faith; for I had reasons to believe that it would place me as much within the Dominion of Canada, as if it had placed me in the center of that dominion. Just so, we gradually approach the step of faith that puts us in possession of a clean heart, and in no sense do we possess that experience until the step is taken.

The text takes the form of a promise, and the word "cleanseth," like the word "forgiveth," or "justifieth," indicates a present experience, as it is in the present tense. It is impossible to obtain a gradual experience when we are accepting the benefits of a present tense promise. The benefits of this promise, are only received by faith, and we believe or we do not believe. The moment our faith claims the promise, offering us cleansing from all sin, then and there, in keeping with the veracity of God, we receive all that the promise offers. This leaves no provision for a gradual work, for such a promise can not be meted out to us on the instalment plan. It is not the light or the walking, but the blood that cleanseth from sin. The light and the walking are only part of the means leading up to this great end. It is not the natural blood that is referred to, for the Jews did not think enough of it to save it. What, then, do we mean by the blood? It is the expression and embodiment of the fact of His suffering and death. It is called "precious death." The preciousness of any shed blood depends upon the dignity of the subject who sheds the blood; hence, the blood of a general is supposed to be more precious than the blood of a private, and the blood of a king more precious than that of one of his subjects. The blood of Jesus was the blood of the King of kings and differed from the blood of the malefactors, bleeding at His side, in that His blood was sacrificial blood and, although it was human, it was sanctified by being offered on the altar of His divinity. Note how completely the blood of Jesus covers all human needs. It flowed from His hands and feet, thus covering all of our sinful actions. It flowed from His thorn-pierced brow, thus atoning for all of our mental imperfections, and it flowed from His side and heart, thus providing for all of our moral heart troubles. Dr. Wood, of Andover Theological Institute, once told a class of students that if he knew of a hospital, where they were offering a cure for inbred sin, he would enter it as a patient. It is passing strange that this professor of moral ethics had not discovered the all-sufficient remedy offered in the text. But you must say that there is a contradiction in the use of the terms employed in announcing the remedy, for we are told that we are cleansed by the blood, by the Word, by faith, and by the Holy Spirit. No contradiction whatever, no more than when we speak of the size, shape, light, and heat of the sun. They are all distinct from each other, yet are part of the same sun and each has its distinctive function to perform. C. G. Finney states this problem very uniquely when he says, "Suppose I am standing on Table Rock, Niagara Falls, and I see a man, who seems to be in a deep reverie, approaching the

Falls, and as he is about to step over the edge and fall into the seething gorge below, I shout, 'Stop,' and he staggers back into safety. I follow him up town and find him, very much excited, describing his danger and escape to a group of friends. Seeing me, he exclaims, 'There is the man who saved me.' Then he says, 'I will never forget that word "stop," for had I not heard it, I would have perished in the gorge.' Then he says, 'If I had not stopped, I would have fallen over the edge.' Then he exclaims, 'Oh, the kind providence of God that prevented my death.' He attributes his rescue to me, to the word 'stop,' to himself, and to the providence of God, and there is no contradiction, as all of these entered into his rescue." The blood of Jesus is the procuring cause of our cleansing, the Word of God is the enlightening cause, the Holy Ghost is the operating cause, and our faith is the appropriating cause. Let us suppose that there had been no blood shed; then there would have been no provision made for our cleansing; then there would not be any promise in the Word announcing our privilege to be made holy. This being the case, there would be no provisions in the atonement to be duly executed by the Holy Ghost, and, there being no promise, there would be no foundation for our faith, so back of all is the blood, and every trusting soul may sing:

"The blood, the blood, is all my plea,
Hallelujah, for it cleanseth me."

John Inskip once said, in one of his testimonies, "Feeling the way I do now, if I should see all the trials that await me between now and my dying day, 'I would sing: 'The blood, the blood, is all my plea.' If, just beyond my last trial, I should see grim death coming my way, I would still sing, 'The blood, the blood, is all my plea.' If, now, I should see the opening heavens and the coming Christ, I would sing, 'The blood, the blood, is all my plea;' and if, at last, I could see the day of judgment in full array, I would still exultingly sing, 'The blood, the blood, is all my plea.'"

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THE END