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# SCRIPTURAL SANCTIFICATION

By

*Peter Wiseman, STD., D.D.*

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without  
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

**Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World**

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# **SCRIPTURAL SANCTIFICATION**

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## DEDICATED

To Dr. and Mrs. C. E. Carver, who so considerately made possible this series of lectures in memory of his father, Mr. Clarence D. Carver; to the devout and great theologian, Dr. H. Orton Wiley, President emeritus; to the learned and godly President, Dr. W. T. Purkiser; to the spiritual and scholarly faculty; and to the splendid and appreciative student body of Pasadena College, Pasadena, California to whom these lectures on this glorious subject were given.

\* \* \* \* \*

Also by Peter Wiseman

The Peerless Christ

Abridged Edition of John Fletcher's Checks to Antinomianism

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# SCRIPTURAL SANCTIFICATION

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## Lecture 1

### THE PROVISION AND PREREQUISITES OF SCRIPTURAL SANCTIFICATION

". . . It is just like the Almighty Heavenly Father to make ample provision for the deepest need of the human soul . . . ."

". ... not every person is eligible for God's best. There are prerequisites . . . ."

#### Scripture:

Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate (Hebrews 13:12).

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 (Eph. 5:25, 26).

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure (I John 3: 2, 3).

#### PART ONE: THE PROVISION

The statements of these texts of scripture reveal specifically the fact that the sanctification of His people, His Church, was included in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ; and this is not difficult to believe, seeing that the atonement of Christ must of necessity be equal to the deepest needs of the human soul.

Dr. H. Orton Wiley, speaking on the subject of sanctification, has well said, "All evangelical Christians hold that it is a Bible doctrine that it includes freedom from sin, that it is accomplished through the merits of Christ's death, and that it is the heritage of those who are already believers. They differ widely, however, as to its nature, and the time of its attainment." [1]

We begin by stating:

I. The Arguments from Personality There are seven of them, namely:

1. The need is that of "the people," God's people. Today this applies to Jew and Gentile who have found the Christ; for there is no difference in Him. Having found the Lord, they are singled out as "the people of God."

2. The need is that of personality: "sin.... in me," the person within; not in human flesh as such, but in the carnal nature within the person (Romans 7: 17, 18, 20).

3. The need is that of purification from the pollution of sin in the person: "sin that dwelleth in me" may give way to "Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2: 20).

4. The need is seen from the purity of Deity; "Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy." There could be no higher reason than this for the purification of God's creatures.

5. The need is seen in the proclamation of Deity as to His requirements, that we should love Him with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and "serve him. . . . in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life" (Matt. 22: 37; Luke 1: 74, 75).

6. The need is that of personal rest: "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God" (Heb. 4:11), and those who believe do enter into this rest, when they believe they enter (4:3).

7. The need is that of purification in view of service: "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (II Tim. 2: 21). Sanctification is therefore essential not only in order for future blessedness, but in order for acceptable service; "meet for the master's use." The quality of service is more important than the quantity of service; the motive, more important than the multiplicity of service. The spirit of it is the big aspect. Before Pentecost it was, "Who will be the greatest in the Kingdom? Who will be the leader?" After Pentecost it was and, we trust, is, "May I serve?" "Your servant for Jesus' sake." The change in moral value is obvious. While it reads that "with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus," it also reads, "and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33).

## II. The Argument from the Person Making the Provision

"Jesus"

He is our High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, who was without beginning of days and end of time; without pedigree, in order to be a true type of the endless Son of God as High Priest. Christ is greater than all typical characters who have lived, and His work is greater than that of all others; His blood "speaketh better things than that of Abel." Jesus is our Sanctifier!

The purpose of His mission would argue His ability: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (I John 3:8). He came to do it.

The power of His glorious ministry would argue His ability, the power revealed in the fourfold Gospel record -- Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Therein are revealed His potentialities: the almightiness of the Almighty to do all that is necessary to be done for a human being.

The present intercessory ministry of Christ would argue the same thing. He ever lives and maketh intercession (Heb. 7:24, 25). The following are clear:

1. He is greater than Melchisedec: the greatest Character in human history.

2. "He ever lives": the living Saviour.

3. He "continueth ever": the eternal Saviour.

4. He "hath an unchangeable priesthood": the unchangeable Saviour.

5. He maketh "intercession for us": the intercessory Saviour.

He is therefore able to save to the uttermost all men, the whole of all men, to the last degree of saving, and able to keep us thus saved under all circumstances, through time and to all eternity. So the original Greek word translated "uttermost" suggests.

If we fail to see in "Christ crucified," if we fail to see in the Person and the Cross, the glorious fact of Divine Personality and Perfect Humanity in the greatest deed of the ages, that unique death, in order to make provision efficient and sufficient to meet the deepest need of the human soul; if we fail to see on that sacred hill the centrality of the Person and the Cross with all its glorious inclusiveness and blessed comprehensiveness; if we fail to follow Him in His present ministry in the presence of God for us, then we have failed in our vision of Calvary and the glory that should follow.

### III. The Argument from Power

Christianity is a religion of power. No other force revealed to man can equal the moral force of the Christian religion simply because it is the religion of the almighty Christ of God.

There is the provision for the power of abundant life: "Life . . . more abundantly" (John 10: 10). There is more here than a continuous supply of life. There is that, of course, for the supply never runs out. There is here involved the mighty incoming of the Life-Giver, the divine fullness of life.

There is the provision for the power of perfection of love: "Perfect love casteth out fear" (I John 4:16-21). It gives boldness in the day of judgment.

There is the provision for the power of peace: not only peace with God (Romans 5: 1), but "the peace that passeth all understanding" (Phil. 4: 7); "peace like a river" (Isa. 26: 3).

There is provision for the power of the personal indwelling of Deity: an earthenware jar filled with Deity (II Cor. 4: 7); "filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1: 11); "filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). Here is power to be as well as power to do.

There is provision for perfect satisfaction: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matt. 5: 6). Present, perfect cleansing through the precious blood of Christ means perfect satisfaction of soul, not the end, but rather the good beginning of the process of a glorious life of devotion and inclusiveness and blessed comprehensiveness; if we fail

to follow Him in His present ministry in the presence of God for us, then we have failed in our vision of Calvary and the glory that should follow.

#### IV. The Argument from Protection

"Follow . . . . holiness [the sanctification] . . . . lest" (Heb. 12:14-17). Though the work of sanctification in the heart of a believer is an instantaneous act resulting from a process, it is not the end but rather the beginning of a life of great possibilities. It is the doorway into unlimited fruitfulness and usefulness through grace. The trouble with many is they stop at the crisis, and thus live in the doorway, which is a very poor place for a person to live.

In speaking of sanctification as a protection we do not mean that it is a stage of grace from whence one cannot fall. There is no state of grace in this life in which one may not be tempted to great evil, nor is there a state in which one has not the ability to do wrong.

In sanctification there is the ability through the grace of God to not do wrong; for "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."

The key word for here is the last word of the text, the word "lest." The word "follow" means literally to "pursue." It suggests great earnestness in the matter of sanctification; not only in the obtainment of the grace but in the use of it, and advancement in it. Let us consider:

##### **Protection Against Failure in Grace**

"Lest any man fail of the grace of God."

While failure is a possibility even in sanctification, it is not at all so probable and so common as it is with those without this experience; for sanctification is a glorious inward protection on this line. Purity within is a mighty protection against impurity without and all around us. "Preserved," said Paul.

##### **Protection Against Bitterness**

"Lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled."

This figure, "root of bitterness," is very expressive. We were nearly saying, "very common," and it is all right to say it, for it is true; but sad, nevertheless. Sanctification is the cure, for truly sanctified people have no "root of bitterness," no carnal infection, no blister in their disposition. And blessed is the church where this is not!

##### **Protection Against Spiritual Fornication**

"Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright"



Esau was not a fornicator or profane person in the sense that we know such today; but he was guilty of spiritual fornication and spiritual profanity, as unsanctified people often are. He lightly valued his birthright. Did Paul not speak of "covetousness, which is idolatry"? (Col. 3:5.) Sanctification is the cure and the protection. "Kneeling in utter self-abandonment," said Miss Frances E. Willard, "I consecrated myself anew to God. But I felt humiliated to find that the simple bits of jewelry I wore, gold buttons, rings and pin, all of them plain in their style, came up to me as the separating causes between my spirit and my Saviour. All this seemed so unworthy of that sacred hour that I thought at first it was mere temptation. But the sense of it remained so strong that I unconditionally yielded my pretty little jewels, and great peace came to my soul. All my friends knew and noticed the change." There is no protection comparable to inward purity.

## V. The Argument from Paul

There are those who make a good deal out of Paul's expression in his letter to the church at Philippi where he said, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend" (3: 12). But one need not leave the context to discover that Paul was speaking about his great objective, a resurrection out from among the dead, the resurrection of the body. In verse fifteen, however, he speaks of another perfection, a perfection obtainable in this life: "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." Those experiencing Christian sanctification should be thus minded. Could one read Paul's testimony in his Galatian letter and not realize that some marvelous experience had come into his life? "I am crucified with Christ." I live no longer, "but Christ liveth in me." Again, "The life I now live in the flesh." The contrast is not so much, if at all, between Saul the persecutor and Saul the convert as it is between Paul the converted man and Paul the sanctified man; the "I" of yesterday and the "I" of today; the "self I," or the "carnal I," and the "sanctified I," the "Christ-indwelt I": "no more I, but Christ."

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## PART TWO: THE PREREQUISITES

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (I John 3: 2, 3).

Sons of God have this purifying hope, not only of seeing Him but of being like Him -- pure, "even as he is pure."

### I. There Is the Prerequisite of Conversion

Jesus said some wonderful things about the experience of His disciples before He died on Calvary; such as, "Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." They forsook all and followed Him. Because of space, however, we must confine ourselves chiefly to the intercessory prayer of Christ for His disciples. Let us, then, note carefully some expressions revealing the experience of the ones for whom He prayed, as recorded in John 17.

1. They were given to Him by the Father: "The men which thou gavest me out of the world" (v. 6).
2. They received and kept God's word: "They have kept thy word" (v. 6).
3. They were God's own: "They are thine" (v. 9).
4. They glorified Christ: "I am glorified in them" (v.10).
5. They were kept: "Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition" (v.12).
6. They were hated by the world: "The world hath hated them" (v.14).
7. They were not of the world: "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (vv. 14, 16).
8. They were given the glory of Christ: "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them" (v.22).
9. They knew Christ was sent by the Father: "These have known that thou hast sent me" (v.25). See also John 16:27, 30.

Turn to Paul's first epistle to the church of the Thessalonians, and check carefully the outstanding marks of spiritual religion. Yet in the closing chapter, he prayed for their entire sanctification and that they might be preserved blameless unto the coming of Christ (I Thess. 5:23, 24).

There are those who would have us believe that the apostles and disciples of Christ were born again on the Day of Pentecost. To this we would say that, according to our Lord's prayer just reviewed, His apostles and disciples must have been a remarkable band of sinners. Luke records, in chapter 24 and verses 52 and 53, that "they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God." Some sinners indeed! If they were not "born again," then I certainly know not in what category to place a lot of professedly sanctified people!

## II. There Is the Prerequisite of Conviction

A conviction of need arising from the inner being, followed by a sincere craving after full deliverance. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matt. 5:8). A deep sense of need is necessary, and the Holy Spirit will give that experience of need. "It is necessary to be convicted of sin before you can be saved," says Dr. A. B. Simpson, in the pamphlet entitled *Christ Our Sanctifier*; "and it is equally necessary to be convicted of unholiness before you can be sanctified. Your unholiness is not a misfortune, but a great fault, a grievous wrong, something that Christ has provided against and that you yourself have no business to be satisfied with . . . . You must most earnestly desire His deliverance, His sanctifying grace, His coming into

your heart and life in holiness, victory and power. He will not come in an unwilling heart. The deep desire for entire sanctification is already half the blessing: it has been created in you by the work of the Holy Spirit and is the guarantee of its own fulfillment." [2] Isaiah's vision of God reflected on his own heart condition and he cried out, "Woe is me."

### III. There Is the Prerequisite of Consecration

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12: 1, 2).

Consecration is comprehensive. It is not a partial thing. It means all. It comprehensively includes the gift of the person with all his possessions, now and forevermore.

Consecration involves a readiness to do what God requires, to give self and all one's possessions as a living sacrifice (Romans 12), to be or not to be, to go or stay, anything or nothing, if God will only deliver from this "heart foe" within. Any conscious withholding from God or any desire or ambition to do or be other than His will is sin within, self-will, "enmity against God." The believer hates all ungodliness within and without. This hating and abhorring of it comes from the grace of repentance, and because of it there will arise the possibility of sanctifying faith; a faith not only that God has made provision for full deliverance, or that He is able to deliver, or that He has promised to deliver, but a faith that appropriates the promise of God for present deliverance, the faith that says, "He does it now," and it is done that very moment.

### IV. There Is the Prerequisite of Chastening

"Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Heb. 12:9-12).

Here is chastening in order that we might be partakers of His holiness. The discipline of correction is vital in the family of sonship, lacking desperately today. The purpose is clear.

### V. There Is the Prerequisite of Cleansing

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man" (II Cor. 7: 1, 2).

There is a twofold cleansing: "let us cleanse ourselves" (text), and "the blood of Jesus Christ . . . cleanseth" (I John 1: 7). In like manner, there is a two-foldness of sanctification: "Sanctify

yourselves" (Lev. 11: 44; Joshua 3: 5); "Sanctified by the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 15: 16). In Leviticus 20: 7, 8, a two-foldness is revealed: "Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the Lord your God." Here is the human. "Ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the Lord which sanctify you." Here is the divine.

We have our part to do. Then God will do what we cannot do. We must cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh, all unclean habits, and all filthiness of the spirit, carnal dispositions and all uncleanness. When we have done this, then the Lord will do His part: "He will do it" (I Thess. 5: 24).

God the Father is the Source of our sanctification: "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly" (I Thess. 5:23).

1. It is His will: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification" (II Thess. 4: 3).
2. It is accomplished by Him through various agencies.

Christ Jesus is the Sacrificial Agent: "Sanctify through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb. 10: 10). "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Heb. 13: 12).

The Word is the Revealing Agent: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). "Purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit" (I Peter 1: 22).

The Holy Ghost is the Administrative Agent: "Sanctified by the Holy Ghost" (Romans 15:16). "Through sanctification of the Spirit" (II Thess. 2: 13).

The act of faith by the believing soul is the conditional agent: "Purified their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:9). "Sanctified by faith" (Acts 18:26).

# SCRIPTURAL SANCTIFICATION

by

Peter Wiseman, STD., D.D.

## Lecture 2

### THE PERVERSION AND POSITION OF SCRIPTURAL SANCTIFICATION

". . . the best may be perverted . . . ." there is a scriptural position . . . ."

#### Scripture:

Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth (John 17:17).

#### PART ONE: THE PERVERSION

It is serious and saddening indeed to see the confusion with regard to much teaching on the subject of sanctification. We are not thinking so much of terminology when we say that, for in some aspects of the subject terminology is not so important, while in other aspects it is vital. That we shall see later.

##### I. Sanctification Merely a Term Applied to All Christians

Sanctification, according to some, appears to be just a term given to Christians. Paul having addressed the Corinthians as "the sanctified," despite the existence of carnality among them, appears to settle the matter as far as they are concerned. After quoting some passages from Hebrews (13: 12; 10: 14; 10: 10), with a brief comment, one writer says: "Observe then that our sanctification and His one offering stand or fall together. We believe the record and God declares 'we are sanctified.' There is no growth, no progress, and certainly no second work in this." [3]

##### II. Sanctification Separation Only

Sanctification, according to others, is simply a separation. It may involve an act, but it is separation and separation only. The chief text appears to be the words of Jesus when He said, "I sanctify myself."

The first position will naturally be answered as we develop the subject. The second position calls for an answer here. It should be noted that,

1. The Lord used the word sanctify in the sense of dedication, as if to say, "I sanctify, dedicate myself to death in order that they might be sanctified." This He did. Sanctification surely means more than mere separation, as if to say, "I separate myself, that they might be separated." The fact is they were already separated, for in this very prayer (John 17) He said, "The men whom thou gavest me out of the world" (v. 6). "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world"; therefore "the world hath hated them" (vv. 14, 16). That looks like a very good case of separation. They had

evidently done what Paul exhorts the Corinthians to do, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord" (II Cor. 6: 17). While separation is an aspect of sanctification, as we shall later see, it is largely negative and human. We do the coming out, the separating as far as we can; then God will do what we cannot do. He will move in and take over.

2. Separation itself is inadequate to deal with the unholy tendencies of the soul. The condition calls for an act of purification (Acts 15: 8, 9). If, however, the idea of separation includes the act of God in releasing the soul from evil, we agree. Dr. A. B. Simpson has put it thus: "We have not to annihilate the evil or to resist it in our own strength, but simply by a definite act of will to separate ourselves from it, to hand it over to God and renounce it utterly, to give Him the absolute right to deal with it and destroy it; and when we do so, God always follows out committal with His almighty power and puts a gulf as deep as the bottomless grave of Christ and a wall as high as the foundations of the New Jerusalem between us and the evil we renounce. We separate ourselves, and God makes the separation good. This is the first decisive step in sanctification, an act of will by which we renounce evil in every form in which it is made manifest to our consciences and brought into the light, and not only evil in its manifestations but the whole evil self and sinful nature from which each separate act has sprung." [4]

3. The necessity of an act of cleansing, then, is clearly revealed in many passages of the New Testament. A state of spiritual oneness among the disciples that existed between the Father and the Son calls for an act of God in purification (John 17: 21, 23). In Paul's letter to Timothy purging is included: "If any man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel . . . sanctified" (II Tim. 2:21). Again, in his epistle to the Ephesians, the work of cleansing is clearly involved, "sanctify and cleanse" (5:25, 26).

### III. Sanctification Making Sin of None Effect

There is a third position with which we desire to deal in this lecture, that is, the idea developed from the word "destroy," that it signifies "to make of none effect." The idea seems to be that by sanctification sin in the heart is "made of none effect" but not removed.

"The Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." The Greek word translated "destroyed" in the Authorized Version, Romans 6:6, also used I Corinthians 6: 13; 15: 26; II Thessalonians 2: 8; Hebrews 2: 14, is *καταργέω*, which signifies "to render inoperative; to bring to naught, to make of none effect." [5] In this connection, a little research is interesting and beneficial. "Once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. 9:26). The word translated "put away," used also in Hebrews 7: 18, signifies to reject, to disannul. Paul, in Ephesians 4:22 and Colossians 3: 8, in speaking of "putting off," used the Greek word which means to put away, discard, get done with! Romans 8:3, "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh"; that is, He passed judgment against, passed the sentence of death on, sin in the flesh (*σαρκι*), the sphere or place where sin resides, it seems, as used here; and the passing judgment against, or the sentence of death, is illuminating. The word "destroy" in I John 3:8 means "to release," "to loose the bonds of sin, and dissolve the power, influence and connection of sin." [6] In speaking on this passage Bishop Wescott says, "The two objects of the manifestation of Christ cover the whole work of redemption: 'to take

away sins' (v. 5), and 'to destroy the works of the devil' (v. 8). In this connection the works of the devil are gathered up in 'sin' (indwelling sin), which is their spring. This the devil has wrought in men. The efficacy of Christ's work extends to both 'sins' and to 'sin.'" According to Dean Alford the aorist tense for the verbs "take away" and "destroy" implies "take away at one act and entirely."

There are, however, many passages of a more positive nature on the question. In Romans 7:20, Paul speaks of "sin that dwelleth in me"; instead, in verse eighteen it could read, "in my flesh, that is, in me"; for the trouble was in the person, the "me"; but in Galatians 2:20, he says, "Christ liveth in me." Once "sin dwelleth in me" but now "Christ liveth in me : not both dwelling together surely. There must have been a change of tenants. This is in perfect accord with his prayer for the Ephesian church, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith" (Eph. 3: 17). Specifically on this very point, the late Dr. A. B. Simpson gives a clear note, though very simple: "In sanctification," he asks, "what becomes of the old nature? Some people are somewhat concerned to know if it can be killed outright, and seem to desire a sort of certificate of its death and burial. It is enough to know that it is without and Christ within. It may show itself again, and even knock at the door and plead for admittance, but IT IS FOREVER OUTSIDE WHILE WE ABIDE IN HIM. Should we step out of Him, and into sin, we might find the old corpse in the ghastly cemetery, and its foul aroma might yet revive and embrace us once more. But he that abideth in Him sinneth not and cannot sin while he so abides. Therefore let us abide and let us not be anxious to escape the hold of eternal vigilance and ceaseless abiding. Our paths are made and the strength to pursue them; let us walk in them. God has provided for us a full salvation. Is it strange that He should demand it of us, and require us to be holy, even as He is holy, seeing He has given us His own holiness? So let us put on our beautiful garments and prepare to walk with Him in white." [7]

#### IV. Sanctification by Education as Obtained by Growth and Development

There are those who think that carnality is merely a lack of instruction, education; that the Corinthians were carnal and Paul undertook to "instruct" them in the "more excellent way" (I Cor. 3: 1-3; 12: 31).

There is no doubt about the necessity of instruction in the Corinthian church, or in any church for that matter; but it should be realized that one might "instruct" a carnal person, but he cannot cure carnality by instruction. "Whereas," said Paul to these Corinthians, "there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal?" (3: 3.) Note the three -- thought, word, and deed: "envying," a state of soul manifesting itself in grudgings and inward sinful attitudes toward one another; "strife," contentings, disputings; "divisions," outward manifestations of conduct. Reverse the order of words here and commence with "divisions"; a process of instruction may bring about external unity at least; "strife" may cease by instruction; but when one reaches the fountainhead, the state of soul or mind, "envy," there is but one cure, a work of God by which that state may be changed, a cleansing process. This is all the more evident when one reads what God has said about "the carnal mind," that it is "enmity against God: . . . not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Romans 8:7). "Enmity against God." This suggests an irreconcilable and implacable hatred. Do what one will with this-say "No" to it, choke it down, sit on it, if you can-but it is what it is because of what it is, "enmity," "implacable hatred." On the basis of the grace of God in the soul and, as a consequence,

a hatred for this existing enmity, God, through the provision of Christ Jesus on Calvary, administered by the Holy Spirit, can and will adequately deal with it. This is the cure and the only cure.

Growth or development in grace is a glorious fact, but growing into grace is without scriptural proof; "into" and "in" mark the differences. One has to get "into" before he can grow "in."

## V. Sanctification by Physical Death

1. Physical death is our "last enemy," and it is scarcely possible that such an enemy could or would effect a deliverance from sin.

2. Physical death makes no change in the moral nature. What a person is within the physical body he is without the physical body, only in altered circumstances; before death he was in the body, after death without a body; before in the physical world, after in the spirit world. "In" and "out" mark the difference, but effecting no moral change in the soul.

If sin is in the physical body, and not in the person within that physical body, then when the person moves out at death sin will be left in the body. But sin is in the self, in the person, "in me." That makes the difference.

## VI. Sanctification Neither Canonization nor Glorification

It is strange, though nevertheless true, that there is constant need of a clear distinction between the experience of sanctification and a hundred and one things which are often incidental to it. It is our purpose here to deal exclusively with its negative side: what sanctification is not.

1. It is not absolute perfection. Absolute perfection belongs to God. He alone is perfect in this respect "There is none good but one, that is, God." "Created beings and things can only be perfect in a relative sense; that is, according to their nature and after their kind. Men and angels may be approximating toward the perfections of God for all eternity, without the possibility of ever attaining unto them. God, in all His perfections, will still be infinitely beyond their reach." [8]

2. It is not angelic perfection. Angels comprise an order of their own. They "excel in strength"; those who "kept their first estate" are called holy. They are distinct from the race of man. They do God's pleasure. "All their native faculties are unimpaired; their understanding in particular, is still a lamp of light; their apprehension of all things clear and distinct; and their judgment always true. Hence, though their knowledge is limited (for they are creatures), though they are ignorant of innumerable things, yet they are not liable to mistake; their knowledge is perfect in its kind. As their affections are all constantly guided by their unerring understanding so that all their actions are suitable thereto, so they do every moment, not their own will, but the good and acceptable will of God."

3. It is not Adamic perfection. Adamic perfection extended to the whole man perfect in every respect -- mentally, spiritually, and physically. He, doubtless, enjoyed before the fall a perfection in comprehension, as afore-mentioned, that we shall not enjoy till we get a new body. Psychology



usually discusses man in a threefold way-the intellectual, the emotional, and the volitional. When we consider the relation of one to another, and the relation of all to the frail body, the earthly home of the man, it would be folly to claim perfection for either. Bad nerves mean nervousness, but ugliness is an "aesthetic feeling from lack of grace."

4. It is not an experience that excludes mistakes and temptations. Our conduct may be the outcome of errors of judgment, ignorance of the right or even the truth. Our intentions will no doubt be all right but conduct wrong. We may sell stocks for a firm in good faith and the results be serious. The business may be legitimate, the results disastrous, the aftereffects involving moral damage to the person who sold the stocks, who professes to be a Christian and perhaps is one. He did it in all good faith; but he made a mistake.

That we are not perfect in knowledge is known by any person who has any knowledge. We are not free from ignorance. "We are no more to expect any living man to be infallible than to be omniscient. We are not free from infirmities, such as weakness or slowness of understanding, irregular quickness or heaviness of imagination. Such, in another kind, are, impropriety of language, ungracefulness of pronunciation; to which one might add a thousand nameless defects, either in conversation or behaviour. From such infirmities as these none are perfectly freed till their spirits return to God." [9] Infirmities are involuntary and entail humiliation, regret, while sin is voluntary and entails guilt. Infirmities do not interrupt communion with Deity, but sin does. Infirmities are covered by the precious Blood (Heb. 9: 7). Paul gloried in infirmities. He surely would not glory in sin (II Cor. 12:9). There is no state of grace in this life that would exclude one from involuntary transgressions; and as to temptation, the servant is not above his Lord, and Christ was tempted to presumption, to devil-worship, to distrust God, to worldly ambition. He won out. Thank God! So may we. He will help us on this line, for He was tempted in all points like as we are.

Yield not to temptation,  
For yielding is Sin.

5. It is not physical healing. Sanctification is not the healing of the body; it is the healing of the soul; but, thank God, there is healing for the body! The body is imperfect and must of necessity remain so till it is changed into a "glorious body." We wait "the redemption of the body." This fact remains independent of our views regarding divine healing. If blessed with divine healing, the body is not glorified by it. It is still a human body; but within that body there may be a soul cleansed by the blood of Christ through faith. That is sanctification.

6. It is not a mere denominational standard. Sanctification cannot be determined by a certain standard in Christian attire. To follow Christ means that we shall not follow the world of fashions; but not to follow fashions does not necessarily mean that we have sanctification. One is outward, the other inward. The inward will affect the outward, but teaching may do so while the heart remains yet carnal. Our wish is that all plainly attired people had sanctification, and that all sanctified people were plainly attired. Our personal convictions will naturally vary, but the grace of full salvation will help us to manifest the charity that believeth all things.

One may shout, another may quietly weep. Demonstrations have their place; they come and go, and they greatly vary; but sanctification is a state of the soul. Blessings are manifold; but sanctification is "Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me"; the indwelling Christ, the Blessor!

7. It is not one or more of the nine gifts of the Spirit. The gifts of the Spirit are of God, and God has placed them in the Church. They are distributed by the Holy Spirit, whereas the gift of the Holy Spirit is the gift of God the Father through His Son (Acts 2:33). According to the Word of God, we may have gifts and not have divine love. The precious gifts have their place, but purity is greater and more important. It is the more excellent way (I Cor. 12:31; 13:1).

8. It is not mere orthodoxy. It is a grand thing to be orthodox, but it is better to be pure. There is a difference between theology and religion. One is of the head, intellectual, the other of the heart; one a doctrine, the other a life, a heart relationship to God. So of orthodoxy and purity. Some people are better than their theology, others not so good. Orthodoxy is one thing and commendable indeed, but right tempers and Christian disposition are quite another thing. Satan is orthodox, but he lacks desperately in right principle and in purity.

9. It is not the removal of any legitimate desire. What God gave man remains; sin, the work of the devil in the soul, may be cleansed. Sanctification means that these God-given passions and desires are sanctified to the glory of God and, in consequence, restored to their proper use, while there remains the constant possibility of disuse.

If any people are marked by loyalty to a sacred conviction, it should be sanctified people. Authoritativeness is not anger, nor is firmness fierceness. We should have grace under all conditions to do that which we believe to be pleasing and honoring to God, and grace to respect those who differ from us. "Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth; for God hath received him He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks" (Paul). Grace to do and grace to refrain; grace to respect the other; grace to give to others what we expect from them! Amen!

We are not saved from the capacity for sin nor the ability to sin; but we are saved from sin within human personality, and we are kept clean by the fact of the indwelling Divine Person and the conscious realization of present perfect cleansing through the Blood on the basis of fellowship, obedience, and faith (I John 1:8).

Purity of heart is made possible by the work of the Spirit of God; maturity is the result of years of experience. Purity is instantaneous and is obtained by faith; maturity is reached through trials, tests, experiences. Purity may be considered in the light of quality; maturity, in the light of quantity. Purity is purity; maturity admits of degrees.

## VII. Sanctification Variouslly Used

The word sanctification has various meanings according to its setting and use in the New Testament. For instance, it is understood that sanctification commences in the soul with the new life

that comes through the new birth. If that is so, then the word sanctify may signify a process leading to a crisis, independently of the time element whether short or long. Colossians 3: 5; Romans 6:6; Galatians 2:20 indicate a process as well as a crisis. Paul addressing the Corinthians as "the sanctified in Christ Jesus" (I Cor. 1:2) may indicate provisional sanctification, as in I Corinthians 1:30. The word saint is sometimes so understood. It is clear that some at least of the Corinthians were yet carnal (I Cor. 3:1-5). In Hebrews 12:14, sanctification is urged as an objective: "Follow peace . . . and holiness [the sanctification]." The word "sanctification" is used in I Corinthians 7: 13, 14 for the sanctity of the home. But the Master's prayer in John 17, for the sanctification of His apostles and disciples in order that they may be one as He and the Father were one, and the exhortation (I Thess. 4: 7) and prayer of Paul (I Thess. 5:23, 24), also other passages, obviously necessitate a definite work of God in the soul of believers for whom such prayers were offered.

After the people of Samaria had "received the word of God" and were "baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus," "they received the Holy Ghost" (Acts 8:12-17). The Holy Spirit is the great Agent of God in the "new birth," "born of the Spirit" (John 3:5, 6). It is the Holy Spirit who bears witness to the soul (Romans 8:16). It is, however, on the basis of sonship, it seems, that God sends forth the Spirit of His Son into the heart: "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. 4:6). It was upon believers in the Upper Room the Holy Ghost fell, and believers are the only qualified people to receive Him thus.

Sin is twofold. It is in act and in unholy tendencies within the person; in what we do and in what we are. Out of the heart, says the Lord Jesus Christ, proceeds evil (Mark 7:21). A person may be forgiven for the act, but must be cleansed from the corruption within. The very nature of the latter, being what it is, "enmity," necessitates cleansing, for it cannot be forgiven. It cannot be brought into subjection (Romans 8: 7). The individual's attitude toward the act and its hidden source determines one's deliverance. The question is not concerning the ability of God to do both in the same moment, but rather the man as a sinner and the man as a Christian; the burdened and guilty sinner is not able to go deep enough to realize the seat, the cause, of his trouble. On becoming a Christian he will soon find out that deeper trouble, and be led to believe God for full deliverance; hence, sanctification. We have yet to meet the person who has obtained both at once. And furthermore, the distinction is clearly seen in the fact that it is the sinner who receives Christ, and the believer who receives the Holy Ghost This is the New Testament order. Concerning the former, it reads: "But as many as received him [Christ], to them gave he power [the right] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name (John 1: 12); concerning the latter, the believer, it reads: "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" (Acts 19: 1, 2.) The sinner receives the Christ for salvation from sin; the believer receives the Holy Ghost for purification of the heart, power, guidance, comfort, and all that belongs to the glorious experience of receiving the blessed Paraclete.

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## **PART TWO: THE POSITION**

It seems perfectly clear that the word sanctification, when used with reference to New Testament Christian experience, involves the twofold meaning of the word sanctify, to set apart and to make holy or clean, to purify.

Webster's Dictionary: Sanctify -- "1. To make sacred or holy, to set apart in a holy or religious use, to consecrate by appropriate rites, to hallow.... 2. To make free from sin, to cleanse from moral corruption and pollution, to purify. John 17: 17, Esp. (Theol.) the act of God's grace by which the affections of men are purified or alienated from sin and the world, and exalted to a supreme love to God."

Century Dictionary: Sanctify -- "To make holy or clean, either ceremonially or morally and spiritually; to purify or free from sin ... In theology, the act of God's grace by which the affections of men are purified and the soul is cleansed from sin and consecrated to God; . . . conformity of the heart and life to the will of God."

Imperial Dictionary: "1. To make holy or sacred; to separate, set apart or appoint to a holy, sacred or religious use. 2. To purify in order to prepare for divine service and for partaking of holy things. 3. To purify from sin, to make holy." "Set apart"; "to purify from sin," which is "to prepare for divine service."

Worcester's Dictionary: "1. To free from the power of sin; to cleanse from corruption; to make holy; sanctification; the act of sanctifying, or purifying from the dominion of sin. 2. The act of consecrating or setting apart to a sacred end or office; consecration."

Universal Dictionary: "1. To make holy or sacred; to consecrate. 2. To make holy or godly; to purify from sin."

Standard Dictionary: "To make holy; rendered sacred or morally or spiritually pure; cleansed from sin; sanctification; specifically in theology, the gracious work of the Holy Spirit, whereby the believer is freed from sin and exalted to holiness of heart and life."

These dictionaries, out of loyalty to the meaning of the word sanctify, stand unitedly for good Christian theology of sanctification. This truth of sanctification "has come down to us from apostolic days as a sacred and uninterrupted tradition through all the Christian centuries. The different ages have been frequently characterized by a difference in terminology which the student of history must be quick to discern, but in no age has this glorious truth suffered eclipse." [10]

The position of sanctification is that of a divine act in the soul of a believer in response to his appropriating faith in God whereby he experiences the divine incoming, the purification of the heart, and the comfort of divine assurance.

There are three aspects, at least, in which the position of sanctification may be viewed:

## I. Freedom from Sin

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin" (Romans 6:6, 7). "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life" (Romans 6:22). Through a death to sin comes freedom from sin; not

freedom from "self," but freedom from sin in the self, in me" (Romans 2:20); freedom from the selfishness in the self. Sin's being purged from the self means from henceforth a sanctified self, indwelt by the sanctifying Lord. "I live;" said Paul, "yet not I" (the former unsanctified I), "but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God" (Gal. 2: 20). Death to sin but a denial of self. This is the order. [11] Thus an act! Independently of the ordeal and process of dying, there is the moment of death, the moment when one passes. In like manner spiritually, independently of the process or length of time, there comes the moment when the old life ceases and one enters into the glorious life of fullness in Christ. With this thought before us, we suggest the following:

1. It is an act of circumcision, an operation performed by Almighty God on the human heart whereby that person is enabled to love God with all his being and powers: "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live" (Deut. 30: 6; see also Col. 3: 10). Spiritual circumcision is an act whereby sin is severed, removed from the heart. The Colossians passage indicates the positive clothing of God's image. Alfred, the great Greek scholar, commenting on I Peter 1: 16, "Be ye holy; for I am holy," says: "Be ye yourselves also holy, aorist imperative setting forth the completeness with which this holiness is to be put on."

2. It is an act of creation. Sanctification as a crisis is the act of creation, the act which calls into existence a new spiritual state of being. "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps. 51:10). "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:24). Make the application of Psalms 33:9 to this experience, and the thought is clear.

3. It is an act of cleansing. Sanctification in its crisis is the act of cleansing, purging; an act which is the spiritual reality of ceremonial cleansing as revealed in the types and symbols of the Old Testament, and so clearly fulfilled in the New Testament; for instance: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." I give you the material, He will give you the spiritual: I give you the external, He will give you the internal: I give you the ceremonial, He will give you the experiential: I give you the sign, He will give you the meaning of the sign: I use this water, He will give you rivers of living water (Ps. 51:7; John 15:2; Matt. 3:11; Acts 15:8, 9; I John 1:7-9).

Whatever may be included in the experience of sanctification, according to St. Paul, in his letter to the Ephesian church, the fact of cleansing must be realized: "That he might sanctify and cleanse it" (Eph. 5:26). So also St. John: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1: 9). The great authority on the original meaning, Wescott, says, "It is not the forgiveness of sins only but the removal of sin." Indwelling sin, not being a materiality but rather an anti-God attitude or disposition, and "enmity against God . . . not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Romans 8: 7), may, through the merit of the atoning blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, administered by the blessed Holy Spirit, in response to the act of appropriating faith of the believer, be purged and the believer experience the instantaneous act of heart cleansing or purging from all sin, though the capacity for sin and the ability to sin still remain. But with this glorious sanctifying grace there is the ability, thank God, to be done with

indwelling sin. Then the blessedness of progressive cleansing, daily, hourly, and momentarily; not only cleansed, but kept clean!

It cleanseth me now,  
Hallelujah to God!  
I'm out on the promise;  
I'm under the Blood.

Every moment, Lord, I need,  
The merits of Thy death.

Yes, and

Every moment, Lord, I have  
The merits of Thy death!

"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" (I John 1: 7). The sanctifying Christ indwelling and reigning supremely in a cleansed temple!

Speaking on this aspect of sanctification, Dr. A. B. Simpson said: "Sanctification, it will be seen, is not a gradual growth from the root which is implanted in conversion and which slowly and surely develops into holiness and spiritual maturity. It is rather a complete and definite second work of grace which Christ imparts to us immediately and freely, and which we may receive by faith in a moment and rise to a new and higher plane of Christian living from the time we enter in ... It is not an attainment slowly acquired by painful effort, but an obtainment instantly received by intelligent faith. It is above all the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." [12]

4. It is an act of completion. After the work of creation, God rested; not that He was tired, but rather rested because of the completion of the work of creation. Thus the ancient Sabbath—a day of rest and worship. The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews speaks of a rest that remains to the people of God (4:9); a rest into which Christians enter by faith (4:3); a rest of completion, "He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his" (4:10). After commenting on the aorist tense, II Peter 1:4, Dr. A. B. Simpson says: "It denotes an act accomplished at a given moment in the past, and quite finished. Therefore, at a given moment we have escaped the corruption that is in the world through evil desire; we were delivered from the world and the flesh by becoming partakers of the divine nature, and receiving 'all things that pertain unto life and godliness.' We do not drag through a dreary and endless circle of vain attempts, but we come up to Jordan, we enter in, we pass over, and we sing henceforth, 'I am over, in the promised land.' Beloved, this is the gospel of holiness according to Peter. Surely, it is good news, it is all divine, it is all freely given, it is all for you. Have you received it? Will you receive it?" [13]

## II. Sanctification Makes Possible Spirituality

"Many of us," said Dr. R. Newton Flew, in his introduction to his great work, *The Idea of Perfection*, "who were comparatively fresh to pastoral work when the Great War broke out, were dismayed by the spiritual unpreparedness of the Christian Church. As Bishop Neville Talbot wrote: 'We were all overtaken in a state of great poverty towards God.' Amid the outward conflicts of these years of war, some of us stumbled on the principle of John Wesley, which was of immediate value as a guide in practical work that the truest evangelism is to preach the full ideal for which power is offered in the present life. 'The work of God does not prosper,' said John Wesley, 'where perfect love is not preached.' Those who dislike the phrase or who suspect the maxim may yet bear with an attempt to penetrate to the spiritual value of the principle. The surest way to victory over the many is to begin with the few. A vast evangelistic advance can only be sustained if the Christian ideal for this life is steadily set forth in all its beauty and its fullness as being by the grace of God something not impossible of attainment. If this principle be valid, it is likely that the ignoring of it will bring impoverishment and arrest." [14] Without the glorious grace of sanctification spiritual impoverishment is certain.

### III. Fullness of the Spirit (Eph. 5:8).

The Holy Spirit indwelling a believer in His fullness: the Holy Comforter within, doing for the believer all that is necessary to be done in the soul! His indwelling means perfect satisfaction, the deepest longing of the soul met through Christ's death made real by the Spirit within.

The first and highest reason for this standard of purity and fullness is recorded by Peter in his first epistle, chapter one, verses fifteen and sixteen: "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." Through the fall, man lost the moral image of God; through Christ that moral image may be restored in "righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:24). This restoration is a divine accomplishment (I Thess. 5:24). "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that [in order that] ye should shew forth the praises [excellencies] of him" (I Peter 2:9) "who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14). To the Colossians Paul said, "Put on . . . a heart of compassion" (3:12, A.S.V.).

Sanctification means a clean heart, and a clean heart means a heart of holy compassion, a heart that feels deeply for helpless humanity, a heart that bleeds to bless:

Oh, for a heart to praise my God,  
A heart from sin set free!  
A heart that always feels Thy blood,  
So freely spilt for me!

A heart resigned, submissive, meek,  
My great Redeemer's throne;  
Where only Christ is heard to speak,  
Where Jesus reigns alone.

Oh, for a lowly, contrite heart,  
Believing, true, and clean,  
Which neither life nor death can part  
From Him that dwells within!

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

Charles Wesley

#### IV. Fruitfulness in Service

A great salvation received assures great service. The Holy Spirit not only works within but works through the vessel. He possesses: "I will dwell in them, and walk in them" (II Cor. 6: 16). The Spirit reveals Christ through the believer: "To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach" (Gal. 1: 16). In this passage both aspects are revealed.

Fruitfulness is the story of the Acts of the Apostles. Paul prayed for the church at Philippi that she might be "filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (1:9-11). To Timothy Paul said, "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (II Tim. 2:21).



# SCRIPTURAL SANCTIFICATION

by

Peter Wiseman, STD., D.D.

## Lecture 3

### THE POWER AND POSSESSIONS OF SCRIPTURAL SANCTIFICATION

"..... our God is the God of power...."

"... the possibilities of Him are unlimited . . . ."

#### Scripture

Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people (Acts 6:8). Add to your faith . . . . (II Peter 1: 5).

#### PART ONE: THE POWER

The outstanding mark of the early apostolic Church was perhaps the power manifested by that Church. "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began" in a new and more powerful way than ever before the work of God. The Book of Acts has been termed by some "The Acts of the Holy Ghost." These acts were the acts of the Holy Spirit through Spirit-filled men. One has only to read the story of the book to be convinced of the facts of power. The commotion caused by the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2: 1-13) gave Peter, with the eleven, an opportunity to preach under the power of that blessed Spirit, which he did, with glorious results. In chapter three there is the record of a mighty miracle of healing with its fruitful results.

There is revealed a new power in prayer (4:23-33). Let us read it.

And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.

And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that

ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

To those who would emphasize the baptism of the Holy Spirit for power only and not for personal holiness as well, Dr. A. B. Simpson has this to say: "This teaching finds no justification in the story of Pentecost. The greatest change wrought in these early disciples was moral and spiritual. Cowardice gave place to invincible courage; vanity and striving for precedence, to humility and love; and selfishness to consecration so complete that 'None of them said that ought of the things that he possessed were his own.' And while it is true that 'with great power the disciples witnessed to the resurrection of Jesus Christ,' it is also true that 'great grace was upon them all.' So high and inflexible was the standard of holiness that the two persons who dared to defy it by open hypocrisy and deception were stricken with instant judgment, and a holy fear fell upon all the church. Even Gibbon, an infidel historian, attributes the remarkable success of primitive Christianity quite as much to the moral character and mutual love of the early believers as to the influence of their doctrine and their aggressive zeal. Indeed, the most effective element of spiritual power is personal holiness, and it has been truly said that the genuine consecration of a single Christian is worth the conversion of a score of souls."

We at this time are specially interested in verse eight of chapter six of the Acts of the Apostles. "And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people."

The Church at this time faced a new problem, perhaps its first real problem. "The twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word."

There were two services, "the service of tables" and "the service of the Word." They were both sacred, for that matter; but the twelve could not look after "the Grecian widows" and do justice to "the ministry of the word"; hence the division of responsibilities.

"Service of tables" and the "service of the Word" are placed in contrast. The former being cared for by Holy Ghost laity would permit the apostles to give full time to the latter, that is, "to prayer, and to the ministry of the word" -- not that the former is not important, but the latter is more important.

We begin by considering:

## I. Spirit-filled Men in Demand for Secular Service

While we may speak of "the service of tables" as "secular," yet it is really "sacred"; for that which is necessary in human life, if performed by a Christian, is to him sacred. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." The spiritual experience required of those elected to "serve tables" is surely a lesson to the Church of today. We have often wondered what the

history of these nineteen hundred years would have been had the Church of Christ continued to practice the standard of the Early Church as required of laymen elected to look after the secular aspect of church work. This is God's standard for His Church.

## II. Spirit-filled Men, a Normal New Testament Standard

The New Testament emphasis is on fullness. "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:4). "This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that we may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:9-11). "For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled" (Col. 1: 9). "That ye might be filled with all the fulness of God" (Eph. 3: 19). "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5: 18). Thus the emphasis in the New Testament on this line.

## III. Spirit-filled Men Argue an Experience to Meet Various Needs

1. We are being filled with the Spirit as a salvation experience, a crisis. Acts 2:4 is the Pentecostal experience. "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost," and this blessed Spirit who filled the disciples witnessed to them of His accomplishment within and of His abiding presence. The other things mentioned in verses 1 to 4, in this chapter, are but signs and manifestations. The being filled with Divine Personality, the Holy Ghost, is the thing that counts.

2. We are being filled with the Spirit for service. "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me" (Acts 1:8). Again, in Acts 4:31, "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness."

3. We are being filled with the Spirit as a state of Christian life. "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5: 18). The context here clearly reveals the marks of such a state: marked by walking "circumspectly" (v.15); "redeeming the time" (v.16); "understanding what the will of the Lord is" (v.17); "speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (v.19); "giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 20); "submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God" (v.21). The Christian state of being Spirit-filled will meet this standard!

4. We are being filled with the Spirit to meet specific aspects of need.

(1) There is the satisfaction of a full man. Jesus said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matt. 5: 6). Stephen was a full man, and a full man is a satisfied man. Did you ever see a hungry boy tackle a pie? One bite and there was a partial eclipse; another bite and there was a total eclipse! then fullness plus satisfaction. Yes, satisfied yet spiritually hungry!

(2) There is the supplication of a full man. "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge"; like our Lord, who in His dying hours prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." A man filled with the Holy Ghost can and does pray thus, as Stephen did, for his enemies.

(3) There is the sacred study of a full man. Being filled with faith and the Holy Ghost, Stephen filled his mind with the Word. Read carefully his sermon and you will have the best brief possible of the history of Israel. It was a historic sermon, Biblical history!

(4) There is the shine of a full man. "And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel" (Acts 6:15). Stephen had a "new look"; but it came from heaven, not Hollywood. It was the result of the indwelling Spirit of God and His cause. The shine of a cleansed soul, the shine of a saint! He was accused of using "blasphemous words against Moses, and against God" (6: 11), and the Lord put a shine on his face similar to the one He put on Moses' face, thus vindicating him.

(5) There is the sacred vision of a full man. Under a shower of stones, he "looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7: 55, 56). He could see Jesus through a shower of stones. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matt. 5: 8): see Him in the dark! See Him in the midst of trouble!

#### IV. Spirit-filled Men Should See Some Definite Results

1. Increase of the word and of disciples. "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly" (Acts 6: 7). There was a revival of Christian religion!

2. Priests were won to Christ. Verse 7, "And a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."

3. Convincing logic. The wisdom of the Spirit produced unanswerable argument. Verse 10, "They were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake."

4. There was Holy Ghost fearlessness. "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye" (Acts 7: 51). This might have hastened Stephen's death, but it was the triumphant death of the first Christian martyr.

5. There was the power of holy character. Stephen not only had power for service, but he had power to die for Christ and power to shine. The witnesses to Stephen's death "laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul" (Acts 7: 58). Saul, afterwards Paul, never did get over this sight. It was at least a mighty factor in his conversion. "And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him" (Acts 22: 20).

Let not the Christian laity think for a moment that they can accomplish for God in their sphere of the service of tables, any more than the Christian ministry can accomplish in their sphere, the

service of the Word, without the fullness of the Spirit of God. There is not any substitution for this glorious enduement of power from on high. It is not by the power of arms nor by the power of human ability, not by material wealth nor by physical power, not by human learning nor by human organization. It is by the power of God. "Not by.... nor by.... but by my spirit, saith the Lord" (Zech. 4: 6). Humanism has always been and ever will be a failure without God.

The Spirit-filled life is a life that honors God and in return is honored by God. The Holy Spirit taking over, purifying, filling, and possessing assures perfect and complete inward and outward victory. He will guide, for the promise is, "He will guide you into all truth." He will illuminate, for it reads, "He will shew you things to come." He will exercise every aspect of His office and work through human personality. The Holy Ghost within assures a Holy Ghost revival; His presence and power will touch every faculty and power of the soul, and burst forth in a mighty revival in the service of God.

The question is, Can Christians afford to go without God's wonderful Gift, the blessed Holy Spirit? "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" (Acts 19:2.) This glorious Gift of God through Christ to His Church (Acts 2: 33) is your inheritance. Have you received HIM? If you should ask, How? I would answer, we "receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Gal. 3:14). And if by faith, He is obtainable now. May God help us!

Is this the end? By no means. There are possessions to possess.

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## **PART TWO: THE POSSESSIONS**

The definite work of God in the soul of a believer by His Holy Spirit through the atonement made by Christ Jesus on Calvary, designated as sanctification, is not the end as far as Christian experience is concerned but rather a good beginning: the beginning of rapid development in the life of inward and outward holiness unto the Lord; the glorious advancement in all the graces of Christian character; the blessedness of possessing our possessions. Spiritually, we may make the ancient promise of God to His people ours: "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you."

### **I. Possessions in Divine Love to Possess**

What a wonderful field is the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians for possession! This love is greater than gifts, greater than speech (verse 1), greater than thought, greater than faith (verse 2), greater than deeds (verse 3). It is pre-eminent.

As to its nature: its patience, "suffereth long"; its kindness, "is kind"; its generosity, "envieth not"; its humility, "vaunteth not itself"; its courtesy, "doth not behave itself unseemly"; its unselfishness, "seeketh not her own"; its good temper, "is not easily provoked"; its purity, "thinketh no evil"; its guilelessness, "rejoiceth not in iniquity"; its sincerity, "rejoiceth in the truth"; its charity, "beareth

all things"; its faith, "believeth all things"; its hopefulness, "hopeth all things"; its endurance, "endureth all things"; its permanency, "love never faileth."

This wonderful love is the great test in Christian life. It is the test of the new life: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." It is the test of discipleship: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." It is the test of heart purity: "Seeing that ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." It is the test of obedience: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." It is the test of our giving: "Abound in this grace also I speak . . . to prove the sincerity of your love." It is the test of sacrifice: "Hereby perceive we the love of God; because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." It is the test of our labor: "The love of Christ constraineth us." The "labour of love." It is the test of Christian religion: "The end of the commandment is charity [love] out of a pure heart." It fulfills the whole law. It is the high aim of prophecy, nothing higher in the Christian religion. It will be the test of the judgment: "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world." It is the final garment, "Above all things, put on charity [love], which is the bond of perfectness."

## II. Possessions Revealed in Paul's Epistles

Paul's prison prayers open up to us, to some extent at least, the immensity of our possessions yet to possess. Read them carefully: Philippians 1:9-11; Colossians 1:9-12; Ephesians 3: 14-21. There is no limit to the grace indicated by these prayers and from the circumstances under which they were offered. Take the word "that" as the basis of the analysis of the last prayer mentioned, and fill in the divisions: "that he [God] would grant . . . that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love . . . that ye might be filled . . . that is able to do exceeding abundantly [superabundant above the greatest abundant] above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

It should be clear to us that this church has been led into the experience of the fullness of the Spirit by Paul in the very beginning of his ministry among them (Acts 19: 1-7), and that this prayer not only includes a prayer for this experience, but also a challenge to our prayer life, a challenge to our development in God!

## III. Possessions in Christian Graces: the Fruits of Faith

St. Peter in his second epistle, chapter one, verses one to eleven, clearly outlines the program. Read it carefully. First, there is the multiplication of grace and peace through the knowledge of God. Then the comprehensiveness of the divine provision, "according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." To the glorious store of "grace and peace" there is the privilege of adding, hence the need of "all diligence."

"Add to your faith virtue," that wholesome quality of purity which makes the sanctified life beautiful. Holy courage is involved. Virtue as moral excellency is basic. Without the addition of this grace, what have we in the end?

Add to virtue, knowledge. We are to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." "Study to shew thyself approved." What a field of knowledge opens up to the sanctified: knowledge of God, of His Word; knowledge of ourselves, our weakness, our need; knowledge of others with their need! What a great discovery is the lack of our knowledge, knowledge of our ignorance! To know we don't know! What a blessing!

Add to knowledge, temperance. Knowledge should lead to the observance of this, for knowledge should lead us to renounce our own will and to indulge less. Knowledge with the multiplication of grace should make self-control a pleasure.

Add to temperance, patience. "Bear and forbear; sustain and abstain"; self-denial in a deeper sense than ever before. "Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

Add to patience, godliness. "Its proper support; a continued sense of God's presence and providence, and a filial fear of, and confidence in, him; otherwise your patience may be pride, stoicism, but not Christianity."

Add to godliness, brotherly kindness. The following stanza expresses the thought:

Mild, sweet, serene, and tender in her mood;  
Nor grave with sternness, nor with lightness free;  
Against example resolutely good,  
Fervent in zeal, and warm in charity.

Add to brotherly kindness, charity. Here is a beautiful climax. Commence with faith and end with love. "Each grace being assured, becomes a steppingstone to the succeeding grace; and the latter in turn qualifies and completes the former. Faith leads the band; love brings up the rear. The fruits of faith specified are seven, the perfect number."

The result of this Biblical mathematics is fruitfulness; the lack of it is shortsightedness and barrenness. Here again we see the great need of possessing our possession.

#### IV. Possessions in Biblical Research

Some good Christian people appear to go through life without discovering this wonderful field of spiritual research and possessions: this "well of English undefiled" (Dean Chaucer); this "impregnable rock" (Gladstone); this "good news" (Dr. Elliot); this Book of God; this Revelation of the very heart of the Eternal. In this Book we discover our need and God's provision to meet that need. In this Book we find grace for our daily task. In and through this Book we will find a solution

for our problems; yes, the most challenging problem we have. It is the Guidebook to the Eternal City!

## V. Possessions Unlimited

"The unsearchable riches of Christ," cried Paul (Eph. 3:8). The word "unsearchable" is challenging. It suggests the idea of one attempting to trace the source of a lake, trace it to its source. He commences to walk by the side of that lake to discover its source, but the farther he goes the wider the lake becomes, till he faces a mighty ocean. He gives up the task, and cries out, "It is untraceable." Or a person may attempt to fathom the mighty ocean. He uses up all the rope he has, still no bottom. He despairs of doing it, and cries out, "It is unfathomable." Again one may discover a vein of gold ore. He secures a pickax and goes to work; but the more and harder he picks, the wider and deeper the vein of ore becomes. He throws down the pickax, and cries out, "It is unsearchable." So this glorious gospel with its divine source! It is untraceable. It is unfathomable. It is unsearchable. There is not only a supply but always an abundance of supply.

In our highest state of grace, we can never be to God what God has been to us and is to us; but we can improve. We can develop. Yes, and as long as we are in the human body, we can improve and develop; and on after we receive a new body, a body suited to the soul, we may advance. Dr. Wiley would like to do a little more research work over there in Christian theology, and really I would like to do a little more research work in scriptural sanctification. Why not?



# SCRIPTURAL SANCTIFICATION

by

Peter Wiseman, STD., D.D.

## Lecture 4

### THE PERSUASION AND PRAISE OF SCRIPTURAL SANCTIFICATION

"... God speaks assuringly ..."

"... praise becometh a child of the King

#### Scripture:

I am persuaded (Romans 8:38).

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together (Romans 8: 16, 17).

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This is the record [God's record in the Scriptures], that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son (I John 5:21). In the same letter, chapter five and verse six, It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. And in chapter four, verse thirteen, Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, literally, "In whom also have believed ye were sealed" (Eph. 1:13).

By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name (Heb. 13:15).

#### PART ONE: THE PERSUASION, THAT IS, IN ASSURANCE

The importance of the subject of the witness of the Spirit can scarcely be overemphasized; for it is not only one of the great doctrines of Scripture, but a most comforting one-the comfort that ariseth out of the knowledge of sonship and of being cleansed by the precious blood of Christ Jesus. Naturally there would be dangers with regard to such an important subject.

There is the danger of resting in "a form of godliness" as being a sufficient evidence that we are the children of God. "Denying the power thereof" would not be necessary; just rest in the form. Many do. On the other hand, there is danger of resting in extreme outward emotionalism, as we are naturally emotional creatures. There is the danger of resting in mere orthodoxy as an assurance of

salvation, despite the fact that orthodoxy cannot save; only Christ can save. There is also the danger of resting in a particular doctrinal interpretation or view, the chief reason being "the preacher said so"; having confidence in the pastor or preacher, the question is settled. The enemy has many substitutes for the witness of the Spirit of God. His mission is to ruin, whereas the mission of the Spirit of God is to save. The devil not only has a great many substitutes, but he has a great dislike to this gracious doctrine because of the comfort and assurance it gives to God's children. It is believed by many that the early Methodists received more persecution because of this teaching than they did from any other doctrinal emphasis.

## I. The Witness of the Spirit: a Divine Awareness

There is, first, the testimony of the Spirit of God, "The Spirit itself beareth witness." To realize at once the personality of the Holy Spirit is to get off on a good start, and more, a Divine Personality. The Holy Spirit speaks. He guides. He reveals. He comforts, and so on. In I John 5: 11, we read, "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." "It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth."

The witness of the Spirit is not given by an outward voice; nor is it always by an inner voice, although this is sometimes the case, as in my personal experience of sanctification. "Neither do I suppose," said the Rev. John Wesley, in his sermon on this subject, "that He always applies to the heart (though He often may) one or more texts of Scripture. But He so works upon the soul by His immediate influence and by a strong, though inexplicable, operation that the stormy wind and troubled waves subside, and there is a sweet calm; the heart resting as in the arms of Jesus, and the sinner being clearly satisfied that God is reconciled, that all his iniquities are forgiven, and his sins covered." Continuing, Mr. Wesley said, "By the testimony of the Spirit, I mean an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God immediately and directly witnesseth to my spirit that I am a child of God; that Jesus Christ hath loved me, and given Himself for me; that all my sins are blotted out, and I, even I, am reconciled to God."

The second stanza of the hymn on the tombstone of Rev. John Wesley's mother, Mrs. Susannah Wesley, who passed to her reward July 23, 1742, are these words:

The Father then revealed His Son,  
Him in the broken heart made known!  
She knew and felt her sins forgiven,  
And found the earnest of her heaven.

The same assurance is expressed thus:

Thy sins are forgiven! Accepted thou art!  
I listened, and heaven sprung up in my heart.

There is, second, the testimony of the spirit of man: "with our spirit." The suggestion of a double witness is clear. While it may be argued that the text is but one witness in the impression on, or the assurance to, the soul, yet the very expression, "with our spirit," suggests at least the second. The

Holy Spirit speaks to the human spirit-the spirit of man; and the human spirit, being thus assured, answers every demand of the whole psychical being as to his acceptance by God.

Thus the double witness, the testimony of God's Spirit and the testimony of our spirit, makes for what theologians call the direct witness of the Spirit of God, which is immediately followed by the indirect witness in the life; the work done in the soul shows itself in fruit in the life. "Every good tree," said the Master, "bringeth forth good fruit." "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. 4: 6). "The fruit of the Spirit," said Paul in the same epistle, "is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Speaking of the direct and the indirect, it has been suggested that the first saves us from despondency, and the second from presumption. "In the mouth of two or three witnesses," says Christ, "every word may be established." Thus our assurance is settled and thus the testimony of Scripture.

We have been discussing the new birth, regeneration, with its witness, direct and indirect. We now turn our attention to the deeper experience, the second crisis, with its witness.

## II. The Second Witness: a Divine Assurance

Paul, in his letter to the Ephesians, chapter one and verse thirteen, says, "In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise." The deeper experience in the soul of a believer naturally carries with it a deeper evidence or assurance. There is the awareness of the Holy Spirit's work by His incoming, and the Holy Spirit's assurance of His presence. There is, then, the direct witness, which arises out of the Spirit's incoming and presence in the soul, and the indirect witness, which is the result as revealed in the fullness of the fruit of the Spirit in a believer's life: out of the two, the full assurance of faith.

It is of vital importance to realize that the evidence of the Holy Spirit in His fullness in a believer is within the consciousness of that believer rather than in any physical manifestation, for the simple reason that the former is abiding while the latter varies and is changeable.

In order to enlarge more fully on this subject, namely, the witness of the Spirit to the fullness of the blessing, may we suggest --

## III. The Substantial Witness: a Divine Abiding

We use this heading as a convenience in order to develop the subject in hand.

The testimony of the Spirit of God in either experience of grace should not be separated from the fruit of the Spirit. In neither regeneration nor sanctification should any person be satisfied with one witness without the other. No person should rest in a supposed testimony of the Spirit without the fruit of the Spirit; nor should a person rest in a supposed fruit of the Spirit without the testimony of the Spirit. They go together: "In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."

There is here the danger of resting in a mere release from the consciousness of inward sin. Pleasant as that is, it is not enough; not to feel inward sin is not a sufficient proof that one is cleansed from it. Indwelling sin may lurk within the personality and watch the moment to "take occasion" to slay one (Romans 7:11). The sure proof of deliverance is the twofold assurance of the Holy Spirit that the work is done.

There is another danger, namely, that of resting in "a constant activity" in the good works of the church as an assurance that all is well. Some people become so busy doing something that they have no time for devotion, no time to wait on the Lord. They do not know the meaning of the scripture which says, "Be still, and know that I am God."

Among the many factors which may help us in the consideration of the scriptural witness of our standing in these precious experiences in God, there are three that should be mentioned:

1. An inner approbation of conscience, even "a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward man (Acts 24: 16). Conscience unenlightened by the Holy Spirit is not a safe guide; but when one can say with St. Paul, "My conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost" (Romans 9: 1), he is on safe ground. In this last statement by Paul, he suggests a twofold aspect of the witness or a double testimony: his conscience as the result of the Christian experience he had received, and the Holy Ghost: "My conscience also . . . in the Holy Ghost" -- both assuring him. Such assurance will always be in harmony with the Word of God and never contrary thereto; for the Spirit and the Word agree. "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world" (II Cor. 1: 12). "The testimony of our conscience -- that inner voice speaks independently of what others may think of us; "that in simplicity" -- singleness of soul to the glory of God; "and godly sincerity" -- without wax, without defilement; "not with fleshly [carnal] wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world" -- before mankind. The word "simplicity" means singleness of mind, a single eye; "godly sincerity," the R.V., "the sincerity of God." With such intention, such purity, those who live in the fullness of the blessing have their conversation, their deportment of living, in the world. In this wonderful condition they live; and in this wonderful condition, by the grace of God, they shall die.

2. An inward yieldedness and agreement with God's will and standard in everything as revealed in His Word. The Bible is the rule of faith and conduct. It is God's standard for us. We submit to it in order to find the grace of God, and we must live by it in order to retain that grace. The heart says, "Yes," to all God's will and plan, despite any unholy tendency to the contrary. God conquers, then saves. This is the road into the fullness of God's grace: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." Absolute yieldedness to all God's will is the constant attitude of the believer toward God; and in the grace of full salvation, the will of God becomes a delight; then we "stand perfect and complete in all the will of God" (Col. 4: 12).

Sweet will of God, still fold me closer,  
Till I am wholly lost in thee!

There may still remain many individual characteristics, such as difficulty in arranging one's thought into words and expressing one's self in public, and other individualities; but there are certain things that are settled forever. The will of God will ever be the perfection of reason; and though one may stumble in his effort to carry out that will as it is revealed to him, he will stumble on and be blessed in his stumbling efforts.

3. An experience of appropriating faith. On the resurrection side of his experience of crucifixion with Christ, Paul cried out, "I live by the faith of the Son of God." Faith is the victory that overcometh. We are saved by faith. We are sanctified by faith. We live by faith. We walk by faith. We conquer by faith. And "without faith it is impossible to please him [God]." According to St. John, in his first epistle, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself" (5: 10). It is our glorious privilege to appropriate by faith the promises of God as they are revealed to us in His Word: promises not only for pardon and purity but for healing, illumination, guidance, power, and victory, till the last battle is won. Amen!

In a paper on "Sanctification" by Dr. George P. Pardington, prepared for and approved by a special conference of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in 1906, Dr. Pardington says this: "The step of surrender must be voluntary, complete, and final; the act of faith must be definite, living, and aggressive. Such a step of surrender and such an act of faith mean a new Christian experience, a second definite work—a crisis as radical and revolutionary as the crisis of conversion. In nature it is not gradual development but a sudden change. In regeneration we pass out of death into life; in sanctification we pass out of self into Christ-life. In regeneration we receive a 'new spirit'; in sanctification Christ comes and takes up His abode within the 'new spirit.' When such a revolution occurs in our lives, we shall certainly know it, and we may expect the Holy Ghost to witness as definitely and distinctly to His work of sanctification as He did to His work of regeneration."

"As soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him" (Mark 1:42). That is how quickly it is done.

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## **PART TWO: THE PRAISE**

Inward assurance argues inward victory; inward victory argues victory independently of outward circumstances. Praise, then, should be natural!

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow."

### **I. Praise Through the Saviour**

"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually." Through the sanctifying Saviour, this is possible. Most Christians are away behind on the subject of praise. Let us move up, and offer this sacrifice, namely, "the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name."

### **II. Praise Through Shame**

We are to go forth unto the sanctifying Christ without the camp bearing His reproach . . . . offering the sacrifice of praise-praise in reproach and shame. Sanctification enables those who are in possession of that grace to triumph in situations in which carnal Christians may suffer defeat; the shame of the Cross becomes the glory of the Cross; the hard situations become means of grace. The Hebrew Christians "took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better substance." Praise through shame!

### III. Praise Through Sacrifice

"When the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord began also" (II Chron. 29:27). Paul in his second letter to the Corinthians, chapter four and verses seventeen and eighteen, says: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

The affliction is light, the glory heavy. The affliction is short, the glory long; one a featherweight, the other exceeding and eternal. What we look at determines what we shall experience. "While we look . . . . at the things which are not seen," the affliction will work out the glory! Peter tells us that Christ suffered . . . . leaving us an example (I Peter 2: 21). Here is exemplary suffering!

Human redemption came through the death and suffering of Christ. The principle of human redemption is the principle of Calvary. We must suffer with Him in our service for Him, not in the sense of procuring human redemption, but in the sense of carrying on human redemption in the world. Christian service is therefore sacrificial service. When it ceases to be sacrificial it ceases to be Christian!

### IV. Praise Through Shining

Is it not greater to be than to do? Grace to shine! Sanctified Christians are radiant Christians. They carry good cheer wherever they go. They are "the colony of God." Moffatt translates this expression, "citizens of heaven." They are "God's husbandry, God's building" (I Cor. 3:9). They are God's workmanship, literally, His "poems" (Eph. 2:10). They are Christ's epistles, read and known of all men (II Cor. 3: 3). They are "a sweet savour of Christ," "a sweet perfume to God" (II Cor. 2:15). They are the light of the world and the salt of the earth (Matt. 5:13, 14). "Be of good cheer," said the Master; "I have overcome the world."

### V. Praise Through Psychical Purification

The sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit reaching every aspect of the psychical person, issuing in praise.

Psychology was once defined as "the science of the soul"; later, "the science of the mind"; still later, "the science of behaviour"; and still later, shall we say, "the science of consciousness." It has been a wonderment in the minds of some whether psychology has not lost its soul, then its mind, then its behavior, and then its consciousness! It had a peaceful end!

Without discussing dichotomy or trichotomy, the twofold and threefold nature of man, or going into Biblical psychology on this subject, we lift up the word soul as representing human personality, the person within the body, the person responsible for sin, and, therefore, needing sanctification, and not only needing this wonderful grace but touched by it. Briefly let us note the following:

### 1. Purges the Conscience

"The blood of Christ . . . purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God" (Heb. 9:14).

Conscience is an immortal and therefore an important faculty in human experience. In this case it is "purified." "My conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost" (Romans 9: 1). Conscience witnessing in the Holy Ghost is always safe!

### 2. Purges the Will

"I am crucified with Christ" (Gal. 2: 20).

The will is the moral capital power of the soul, the power of choice. Sin in self often expresses itself in self-will as against God's will. The grace of sanctification enables one to "stand perfect and complete in all the will of God" (Col. 4: 12). Then one can say from the bottom of his heart, "Thy will be done in earth [in me], as it is in heaven." Then, and only then, can one truly sing, "Sweet will of God!"

### 3. Purges the Desires

"They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts [desires]" (Gal. 5: 24).

"In the Hebrew and Greek originals of the Scripture," says Paget Wilkes, "there are some sixteen words used to express the noun, and about twenty-six the verb 'desire.' Sanctification reaches these deep places of the soul. Most of us are all too conscious of the truth of Wesley's line, 'My will seems fixed, yet wide my passions rove conscious that lower and deeper down than our wills there are hankering desires so strong that they bring again into captivity the will that has been set free. Let us look well to our hearts. What are our real desires? 'Desire nothing but God,' said John Wesley. Do we? Are there no hankering desires for worldly things, ease, comfort, and pleasure? Here at this place as the Lord draws nigh to ask, 'What shall I do for thee?' we say, 'Lord, give us the plenitude of Thy Spirit,' but when we get home do we find in our hearts desires for other things stronger far than the petitions of our lips? 'Set your hope (or desire) perfectly on the grace that is to be brought us at the revelation of Jesus Christ,' said the apostle Peter. Are our desires thus fixed? The Word of God speaks a good deal of this permanent fixing. Here it tells of our desires being fixed. The Psalmist cries, 'My heart (i.e., my affection) is fixed.' The prophet Isaiah talks of our mind or imagination being stayed or fixed on God. And yet before this fixing and establishing of our desires wholly Godward can be secured, the Holy Spirit uses a stronger word, 'Crucifixion.' They that are Christ's have crucified . . . the desires." [15]

#### 4. Purges the Faculties as in the Following:

(1) The Affections -- "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart . . . to LOVE the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul" (Deut. 30:6). Sanctification of the soul makes possible supreme love to God.

(2) The Imagination -- "Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6: 5). "O Lord God.... keep this for ever in the IMAGINATION of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee" (I Chron. 29: 18).

The Word of God has much to say about the imagination. But, thank God, the grace of sanctification can reach that inner chamber and purge it!

(3) The Mind and Memory -- "Renewed in the spirit of your mind" (Eph. 4: 23). "I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance" (II Peter 3:1).

Thought determines the man, for "as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." Said one: "Sow a thought, reap an act: sow an act, reap a habit: sow a habit, reap a character: sow a character, reap a destiny."

We know not how much the Psalmist knew about psychology, but we do know he expressed the psychology of sanctification well in Psalms 103, when he said, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." Bless the Lord!

What about this principle of praise in your life and in mine?



# SCRIPTURAL SANCTIFICATION

by

Peter Wiseman, STD., D.D.

## Lecture 5

### THE PRINCIPLE AND PASSION OF SCRIPTURAL SANCTIFICATION

"... God being what He is, the Holy One, His ethical standards are accordingly ..."

".... a pure heart is a passionate heart ..."

#### Scripture

As he is, so are we in this world (I John 4:17).

[I will] fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ (Col. 1:24).

#### PART ONE: THE PRINCIPLE

General ethics may be said to be the science which treats of the source, principles, and practice of right and wrong in the light of nature and reason. Christian ethics, on the other hand, is said to be the science which treats of the sources, principles, and practice of right and wrong in the light of the Bible.

There are various definitions of ethics which throw light upon the subject: "Ethics is the science of duty" (Webster), "the science of moral law" (Wayland), "the science which teaches men their duty and the reasons for it" (Paley), "the science of man's choosing, and acting from choice under moral law" (President Hopkins), "the systematic application of the ultimate rule of right to all conceptions of moral conduct" (Hickok), "the science of rectitude and duty" (Valentine), "the science of moral personality and moral good" (Hyslop).

There are distinctive questions which help us in our research. Dr. Keyser, in *A Manual of Christian Ethics*, asks the questions, "Is it right?" . . . "Is it wrong?" "Apply," says he, "those questions to any status, situation, and event, and you will know at once whether it belongs to the ethical sphere or not. In physical science, the distinctive question is, 'Is it physical?' In psychology we ask, 'Is it mental?' In philosophy, the question arises, 'Is it the ultimate reality?' In ethics, the interrogation, 'Is it right?' is the deciding one." [16]

#### I. The Principle of Sanctification in Sanctity

"As he is, so are we" (I John 4: 17).

It may be said that moral philosophy is concerned with the development of the laws for human conduct; Christian ethics derive these laws from the essence of Christianity. The essence of Christianity is sanctification, the outcome of which is ethical conduct.

Sanctification is the gracious act of God in the soul of a believer which cures the fountainhead of human life and conduct. Out of the heart flows what is within (Mark 7: 15, 21-23). But when the fountain is cleansed the flow is pure. Then it is a river of living water (John 7:38-39).

This principle of purity is absolutely necessary, for God is holy. "Be ye holy; for I am holy" (I Peter 1: 16). It is the fundamental principle of Christian religion, a condition produced by the act of sanctification.

In the grace of sanctification there is that beauty of inoffensiveness and blamelessness. Note a few Biblical expressions: "without offence" (Acts 24: 16), "without rebuke" (Phil. 2: 15), "without blame" (Eph. 1:4). What higher ethical standard could one find for social relationship, especially in the Christian ministry, than Paul's admonition to Timothy to treat "the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity" (I Tim. 5:2)?

The sanctity of this grace is seen in the fact that it restores perfect harmony. There is perfect harmony of the soul with the Divine. Thus the sanctity of sanctification is one of the outstanding qualities of beauty. The beauty of this grace is seen in its humility. Holiness is the garment of humility. "Be clothed with humility." "I charge you," says the holy McCheyne, "be clothed with humility, or you will yet be a wandering star, for let Christ increase, let man decrease. Remember 'Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone' . . . Oh, for closest communion with God, till soul and body, head and heart, shine with divine brilliancy, but oh, for a holy ignorance of their shine!" "Humility," says D. L. Moody, "is the fairest and loveliest flower that grew in paradise, and the first that died-has rarely flourished since on mortal soil. It is so frail and delicate a thing that it is gone if it but looks upon itself and they that venture to believe in theirs prove by that single thought that they have it not."

Among those who visited William Carey in his last illness was Alexander Duff, the Scotch missionary. "On one of the last occasions on which he saw him-if not the very last-he spent some time talking chiefly about Carey's missionary life, till at length the dying man whispered, 'Pray.' Duff knelt down and prayed, and then said good-bye. As he passed from the room, he thought he heard a feeble voice pronouncing his name, and turning, he found that he was recalled. He stepped back, accordingly, and this is what he heard, spoken with a gracious solemnity, 'Mr. Duff, you have been speaking about Dr. Carey, Dr. Carey; when I am gone say nothing about Dr. Carey -- speak about Dr. Carey's Saviour.' Duff went away rebuked and awed, with a lesson in his heart that he never forgot."

According to Christ Jesus Christians are the light of the world. They reflect the great Light of the World, Christ. "Ye are the light of the world." In order to be thus, they are not of the world, even as He is not of the world (John 17: 14). They are preservatives through grace: "Ye are the salt of the earth." They are righteous through Christ, and their righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. They are noted for their sincerity: "Yes, yes, and no, no." They resist not evil.

They return good for evil. They love their enemies. They bless their persecutors. They pray for those who spitefully use them. They not only love those who love them, but they love those who do not love them. They salute their brethren, but they do not stop there; they salute others also. They go the extras. They are like Him, "perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5: 48).

This wonderful principle reaches our intentions. The design back of our actions, whether natural or chosen, should be the glory of God. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (I Cor. 10:31). Thus every action is so comprehensive here that it includes the whole of life's intentions and actions. What is truthfulness or untruthfulness? For instance, to leave the impression that a thing is not when you know it is, or that it is when you know it is not, is to lie.

Defective ethics may arise from an unsanctified heart. They may arise from prejudice. Most of us, perhaps all, have heard the story about the woman who criticized her neighbor's washing. She said to a visiting friend: "Look at my neighbor, if you will, hanging out clothes on the line in her back yard. Look at the spots and the dirty streaks in the clothes. That is an example of this woman, both as to her character and her conduct. I have no use for her. She is certainly an undesirable character." The visiting friend walked to the window, lifted it, and, looking at the clothes, saw they were spotless. The trouble was nearer home than her next neighbor. It was with her dirty windows and her unsanctified heart.

Intention of a sanctified spirit will shape action. The grace of sanctification having reached the intentions, one's actions will be accordingly; as the root is to the tree, the soul to the body, the sun to the world, the base to the pillar, so the intention to action. The motive should be pure even though the method is poor. The purpose should be pure, even though the performance is not the best. Actions should correspond to intention and motive. There should be honest relationships. In the matter of common obligations, honest people will be prompt and careful. If unable to meet certain obligations at the proper time, there should be acknowledgment and understanding. Thus the actions would be in harmony with purity of intention and honesty. Christian courtesy in the general deportment of life is outstanding in ethical Christianity. There is an inward attitude toward God and humanity associated with the experience of sanctification closely allied to pure intention. Sometimes it is not so much the attitude externally as it is the attitude internally: a smile on the face does not always argue a smile on the soul or an inward smiling attitude. There is, nevertheless, in the sanctified life a constant need of adjustment of attitude toward others because of changing circumstances and new situations. Sanctifying grace enables one to make the adjustment

## II. The Principle of Sanctification in Service

"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (I John 2:6).

"Ought" is imperative to a Christian; for it stands out with emphasis in the Christian Scriptures. "Ought" means we should, and what we should be and do we can by grace.

At Pentecost there began service for God on fire! One has only to read the record found in the Acts of the Apostles to realize this. Whatever came with the purpose of defeating them in their

mission, it failed. God was on them, and in them, and victory was sure. It was a victorious service; whatever the sphere or kind of service, it was rendered in the power of the Spirit. If service of worship, service of prayer, service of healing, it all witnessed to the fact and power of a risen Christ! Like their Master, the Early Church ministered to needy humanity.

The grace of sanctification has an unavoidable bearing on our relationship to God and to our fellows. This is clear in the teaching of Jesus, "Go with him twain," "go the extra mile," which is the spirit of Christianity in distinct contradiction to the spirit of the Pharisee; his way was a legal mile, Christ's an extra. The explanation of the context is beautifully reached in the climactic passage of the discourse, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Our duty to God is to love Him supremely and to recognize Him in all His revealed aspects with human beings and in every aspect of human life. Our duties to ourselves-to the body, to the mind, to the whole personality-are to care for the body, develop the mind, present the whole body to God as a living sacrifice, as a place for Deity to indwell: "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost." As to our duties to humanity, we should read carefully Paul's admonition to the Christians at Rome (Romans 12: 16). Our duty is to serve!

The Lord Jesus Christ on one occasion gave a lesson of true greatness in service. He "took a towel" (John 13: 4) and washed the disciples' feet. He revealed in this incident the greatness of spirit in which great service is rendered. The Redeemer of mankind on His knees with a basin and a towel washing the disciples' feet! Let angels look on! But let saints kneel in humility and seek for the privilege and honor of lowly service! The Saviour on His way to Calvary, stopping by the way to do a kindness, washing the "dusty, sandaled feet" of His followers!

In our modern day many expressions have found their way into usage. In the political world, "the man who will clean house," "the gentleman with a duster." Concerning a great statesman, it has been said, "the gentleman with a sponge." He wiped off some debts. If David Livingstone was correct-and we believe he was-when he spoke of the Lord Jesus Christ as "the Gentleman who always kept His word," then we may humbly venture to speak of "the Gentleman with a towel!" Did He not use a saw and hammer as a Carpenter? Why not a towel? Is there not a dignity in labor?

True greatness stands out in doing in a splendid spirit that which is necessary, whether great or small, known or unknown. "Make me as one of thy hired servants" is the true spirit. While walking along an unpaved sidewalk in a strange town, I saw a little boy around the age of six and his sister, a little younger than he, come out of an ice cream dairy with two big ice cream cones in their hands. They walked but a very short distance when the little girl evidently forgot herself for the moment and tipped her hand. The ice cream fell out of the cone to the sidewalk. She stopped and wishfully looked down at the ice cream. The little fellow took in the situation immediately, stepped over to his sister, took the empty cone out of her hand and put his untouched ice cream cone in hers in its stead. Then he reached down and picked up the ice cream, held it in his hand, and looked at it rather pathetically. "Sonny," I remarked, "I would not eat that. How much did it cost you?" "A nickel, sir," was the reply. I gave him a nickel. He ran quickly back into the dairy and soon came out with a big, fresh, clean ice cream cone. He looked up at me with a smile that said more than "Thank you." I looked at him and felt I could almost take a bite out of him, for his face looked somewhat like a big, full ice cream cone. I walked on up to the church, where I was to speak, and somehow I preached better that

afternoon, and when I think of the incident I feel better. More than that, whatever may come into that little fellow's life, he will never forget that a man was kind to him in helping him out when he was in great difficulty! What I did cost me only in actual money, a nickel, and the remembrance of it has been worth millions to me.

Little deeds of kindness,  
Little words of love,  
Make the earth an Eden,  
Like the heaven above.

The sanctified Christian is a practical person, practical because of the spirit of his life: his heart being freed from hatred, therefore from murder (I John 3:15), he loves his enemies (Matt. 5:44); his heart being cleansed from lust, he is free from adultery (Matt. 5:28). He is an extra-mile Christian! like his Lord, "who went about doing good."

### III. The Principle of Sanctification in Suffering

"Ye shall be witnesses unto me," "martyrs" unto Me. The word martyr suggests power to die. The idea of power is generally associated with physical or material force, so much so that many people associate some kind of physical manifestation with the gift of the Holy Spirit. It may be of interest here to notice that when the Holy Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost, known as "The Jewish Pentecost," there were four signs: "a sound from heaven," "it filled all the house," "cloven tongues like as of fire . . . sat upon each of them," and they spake "with other tongues" (Acts 2: 1-4). In the case of the Ephesians receiving the Holy Spirit, known as "The Grecian Pentecost," there were just two signs, prophecy and tongues (Acts 19: 1-6). In the case of the house of Cornelius, called "The Roman Pentecost," there was but one sign, speaking with tongues (Acts 10:44-46). But in the case of the Samaritans, called "The Samaritan Pentecost," there was no sign (Acts 8: 14-17). In each case, however, they received the Holy Spirit. It is difficult to conceive how the Holy Spirit's coming into the spirit of man would necessitate any physical manifestation as an unanswerable proof of His presence and work, especially when it is Spirit in spirit, the Holy Spirit in the spirit of man.

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## **PART TWO: THE PASSION**

In this section we are anxious to develop more fully the idea of suffering with Him! The passion of the Cross!

### I. Passion Through Participation

"Fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ" (Col. 1:24).

Such a statement must not be interpreted to mean that there is any lack in the provision of Calvary. "Jesus paid it all."

Bearing shame and scoffing rude,  
In my place condemned He stood,  
Sealed my pardon with His blood.

It is rather a statement of passion, an expression of heart burden, a holy desire to carry forward the work of Calvary in the spirit in which it was provided. The spirit which took the Christ up the rugged steeps to die upon the cross of shame must possess us as heralds of that provision, heralds of that passion. Paul desired to fill up that which was behind in the sufferings of Christ for His body's sake, which is the Church (Col. 1:24). "I would make up the full sum of all that Christ has to suffer in my person" (Moffatt). We must share His suffering: "Partakers of Christ's suffering" (I Peter 4: 13). To suffer with Him is our glorious privilege as members of the family of God. We may suffer with Him in the same cause, the glorious cause of Christianity in relation to human redemption; suffer to the same end, the glory of God; suffer from the same source, the world, the flesh, and the devil; suffer in the same spirit, the patience and long-suffering of Christ. This is, doubtless, what Paul had in mind when he expressed that desire.

Loyalty in this respect assures us that we shall be "partaker of the glory that shall be revealed" (I Peter 5:1). "If . . . we suffer with him . . . we may be also glorified together." "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" -- that is, if we keep looking in the right direction, at the things that are not seen. The way to the crown is by the way of the Cross, the way of suffering.

O Cross, that liftest up my head,  
I do not ask to fly from thee;  
I lay in dust life's glory dead,  
And from the ground there blossoms red  
Life that shall endless be.

The idea is that of becoming a medium through which Christ could carry on His redemptive suffering. "The gospel of a broken heart," said the late Dr. J. H. Jowett, "demands the ministry of a bleeding heart. If that succession be broken, we lose our fellowship with the King. As soon as we cease to bleed we cease to bless. When our sympathy loses its pang we can no longer be servants of the passion. We no longer 'fill up the sufferings of Christ,' and not to 'fill up' is to paralyze, and to 'make the cross of Christ of none effect.' " [17]

## II. Passion, Expression of Purity

A pure heart is a passionate heart. "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2: 14). To the Colossians Paul said, "Put on . . . a heart of compassion" (3: 12, A.S.V.).

There is the problem of unity. The passion of Calvary will bring it about: a scriptural unity, a holy passionate unity for the extension of the kingdom of God among men; a spiritual unity for the spread of the holy Christian religion around the world: "Father..-. Sanctify them.... that they all may be one;

as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe" (John 17).

Methodism's greatest historian, Dr. Abel Stevens, says of the early Methodist preachers that every one of them at his ordination either professed the experience of perfect love or to be groaning after it. "Perhaps," said he, "no single fact so well accounts for their success." Yes, a pure heart is a passionate heart!

### III. Passion Expressed in Prayer

Prayer was pre-eminent in the life of the Master. Whether by the running stream of the Jordan, in the valley, in the busy streets of Jerusalem, on the mountain-top, or in the wilderness, prayer ascended from His holy soul as incense from the altar. Prayer was more important with Him than eating, sleeping, or preaching. It was, it seems, the most important thing in His life. It should be the most important thing in our lives. Just as the Master lived in the spirit of prayer, so we should live in the spirit of prayer.

Prayer expressed from such a spirit of life will often become earnest and intercessory: "Labouring fervently [agonizing] for you in prayers." St. James, in speaking about Elijah's prayer, said, "He prayed earnestly"; in his praying he prayed; in his praying he really got to praying, and something happened. That is exactly the case of the Early Church. They prayed it through. Unitedly they continued in prayer in the Upper Room when the blessed Holy Spirit fell upon them. At the moment of His coming, of course, they were sitting and praising; but they had continued in prayer, and His gracious coming did not cause that spirit of prayer to abate. It intensified the spirit of prayer. Acts 12: 5 reveals the fact that the spirit of prayer continued in the Apostolic Church for some years. "Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made [not merely said] without ceasing [continuousness of prayer] of the church [the called-out ones] unto God [not at one another] for him [Peter]." The angel of God was commissioned in answer to prayer and things happened, iron gates flew open. Peter came out. God was glorified. Such power manifested in answer to prayer is always constructive. The order at least is suggestive: purity, then the passion of prayer.

One of the best illustrations of this is seen in the experience of David Brainerd. "I set apart this day for secret fasting and prayer, to entreat God to direct and bless me with regard to the great work which I have in view of preaching the Gospel . . . . Near the middle of the afternoon God enabled me to wrestle ardently in intercession for my absent friends, but at night the Lord visited me marvelously in prayer. I think my soul was never in such agony before. I felt no restraint, for the treasures of divine grace were opened to me. I wrestled for absent friends, for the ingathering of souls, for multitudes of poor souls, and for many that I thought were the children of God, personally, and in distant places. I was in such agony from sun half hour high till near dark, that I was all over wet with sweat, but yet it seemed to me I had done nothing. Oh, my dear Saviour did sweat blood for poor souls! I long for more compassion toward them." [18]

#### IV. Passion in Preaching

Dr. Goodell gives Dr. Chalmers' evaluation of the sermons of the moderates: "They were short, clear and cold. Brevity is good, and clearness is better, but coldness is fatal. Moonlight preaching ripens no harvest." [19]

The Lord Jesus Christ could not look on the multitudes in their need and not be moved with compassion. His messages were passionate messages. His very sight of helpless humanity caused His pain of heart. "Give me Scotland," cried John Knox, "or I die!" Even in old age and feeble, when he had to be helped up into the pulpit by attendants, the divine passion would so grip him that a friend remarked, "So mighty was he in his yearnings that I thought he would break the pulpit into bits." A contemporary of Rutherford, the great divine, remarked concerning him, "Many a time I thought he would have flown out of the pulpit when he came to speak of Jesus Christ."

#### V. Passion Permeating Program

There was perhaps never a greater need for the passion of Calvary's provision in Christian program of service as well as in Christian preaching than at the present hour. What made the difference between the early apostolic Church and the modern Church? It is simply this: The early apostolic Church went to the Upper Room and tarried until . . . then a blazing revival. The modern Church went where and tarried for what? We do not mean any reflection on the Church, but we simply desire to help Christian people to see the need for this spirit. The Early Church had their emphasis on men of passion rather than men of plans; men of holy motive rather than men of methods; men of God, not men of gush. Look at the cause of missions! The answer is—they went with Christ. Only recently, we read that when Judson died hundreds of baptized Burmans and Koreans were sleeping in Jesus, and over seven thousand survived in sixty-three churches, under oversight of 163 missionaries, native pastors, and helpers. Judson had finished his Bible translation, compiled a Burmese dictionary, and laid the basis of Christian character deep down in the Burman heart.

In the Baptist meeting-house at Malden, Massachusetts, is the simple memorial tablet with the following inscription:

In Memoriam  
Rev. Adoniram Judson  
Born August 9, 1788  
Died April 12, 1850  
Malden, His Birthplace  
The Ocean, His Sepulcher  
Converted Burmans and the  
Burman Bible, His Monument  
His record is on High.

And so it runs. We may find such glorious illustrations of the Christian passion in every vocation of the Christian Church, the ministry at home and missionaries abroad, yes, and among Christian laymen.



The world is waiting for this Christian passion. The challenge is to us. Let us lay aside the mere natural and seek the supernatural; lay aside the dreary drudgery and seek the divine dynamic; place emphasis on God and use methods as His probable means; lay aside this "dying rate" and take on the glorious march of the true Church militant.

While conducting services among the soldiers in Egypt, Dr. Stuart Holden asked a big sergeant in the Highland regiment, a soldier with a bright testimony for the Lord, how he was brought to Christ. His answer is interesting. "There is a private in the same company who was converted in Malta before the regiment came on to Egypt. We gave that fellow an awful time. One night, a terribly wet night, he came in very tired and very wet, and before getting into bed he got down to pray. My boots were heavy with rain and mud, and I let him have one on one side of the head and the other on the other side; and he just went on with his prayers. Next morning I found those boots beautifully polished and standing by the side of my bed. That was his reply to me, and it just broke my heart; I was saved that day."

It is said of Samuel Johnson that he did not like Mr. Wesley, "for just as he got his legs under the table for a long talk, Mr. Wesley would run off to see some old woman who was in want." Birrell remarked concerning John Wesley that "he was out of breath pursuing souls."

Our worship must be enriched by this passion of Calvary. Without this, ordinances and ceremonies are dull and dead. May not the lack of passion be the cause, to a large extent, of the falling away from the Church? The worship of the Church of Jesus Christ should be bubbling forth with the glorious life of the risen Lord. Did He not say, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me"? Such a heavenly atmosphere would enrich and draw. "We . . . worship God," cried Paul, "in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." The Church of Jesus Christ is His holy bride, and she should act like one. She should labor unceasingly to bring others to Him. She should love Him affectionately and be looking steadfastly for His return, in the meantime laboring passionately for Him. This should be the spirit of the Church. This should be her passion!

Christian passion is, then, one of our greatest needs. "Every great movement," said Dr. John Watson, "which has stirred the depth of life and changed the face of history has sprung from some profound sentiment and powerful emotion" [20] God himself dislikes lukewarmness: "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:16). Dr. Joseph Parker said: "As long as the church is one of many institutions, she will have her little day. She will die, and that will be all. But just as soon as she gets the spirit of Jesus until the world thinks she has gone stark mad, then we shall be on the high road to capture this planet for Jesus."

There is need of a revival of holy passion: the passion of the prophets, the passion of the Christ, the passion of the apostles and early followers of Christ, the passion of that immortal army who welcomed the faggot, the arena, the prison, rather than deny their Lord. O Lord, give us this holy passion!

Oh, for that flame of living fire  
Which shone so bright in saints of old,  
Which bade their souls to heaven aspire,  
Calm in distress, in danger bold.

Where is that spirit, Lord, which dwelt  
In Abraham's breast, and sealed him Thine?  
Which made Paul's heart in sorrow melt,  
And glow with energy divine?

That spirit which from age to age  
Proclaimed Thy love, which taught Thy ways,  
Brightened Isaiah's vivid page,  
And breathed in David's hallowed lays?

Is not Thy grace as mighty now  
As when Elijah felt its power;  
When glory beamed from Moses' brow,  
Or Job endured the trying hour?

Remember, Lord, the ancient days;  
Renew Thy work, Thy grace restore;  
And while to Thee our hearts we raise,  
On us Thy Holy Spirit pour.

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## ENDNOTES

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