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THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By

A. M. Hills

*“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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THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Author of
Holiness and Power
Eradication
etc., etc.

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THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By **Aaron Merritt Hills**

INTRODUCTION

This collection of sermonettes, originally prepared for the religious press of this country and England, has been made in response to the oft-repeated requests of many people. They seem to have been used by God to bless many souls.

More than fifty years ago, we settled it irrevocably that we would live to that end, and that it should be the supreme purpose of life. The joy of that decision has kept pace with us through all the years. By voice and pen, in the pulpit and the class-room, in public and in private, we have been at this glorious work of helping to save men from sin, and bring the wanderers back to their Father's house. Than this we can conceive of no higher work or greater joy.

Should this book prove helpful to Christian workers, it may be followed by others. What else is worth living for but the kingdom of God?

Yours in Christ,
A. M. Hills,
Pasadena College.

THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By Aaron Merritt Hills

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THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 1

THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

"Wherefore also Christ is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" — Heb. 7:25.

This is a desperately wicked world. Every daily paper proves it, every police court, every lockup, jail and prison; every criminal Court record and all Criminal Statistics of every civilized or pagan land prove to a demonstration that this is an awfully wicked world. Men hate God's law, His Bible, His character, and His service. They hate HIM, and would banish Him from the universe if they could.

Men hate each other. The beasts of the forest and the sharks of the deep do not treat their own kind as men treat their fellow men. With such sin abroad to be dealt with, we need an omnipotent Savior. Any other kind would only mock the needs and sorrows of a sin-sick world.

St. Paul did not know any word in the Greek language that would satisfactorily express his conception of the power of Jesus to save. So, as scholars sometimes do, he coined a phrase, "eis to panteles," found only here and in Luke, which is Paul's gospel. It means "able to save to completeness," "completely, entirely, perfectly," "clear to the end of every possible need of the soul." And some scholars put the element of time in it, and add, "save from all the guilt, power and consequences of sin for ever." Certainly men need, and for ever will need, such a Savior.

I. — We need one who can save uttermost sinners.

If Jesus cannot do that, His glory is tarnished. He is not an almighty Savior. The devil can mock His claim to omnipotence and boast to the universe that he can get men into a pit of sin so deep that even the Son of God cannot get them out. What right-thinking, moral being can believe anything so dishonoring to the Lord of glory as that? It is almost blasphemy to even think of it.

(1) He can save infidels, and has saved hundreds of them. We have seen some of them who were rare trophies of grace. We knew one, Elijah P. Brown, who of all the infidels in the United States was chosen to deliver an address in honor of Tom Paine before a convention of infidels. When he was an editor of a paper in Cincinnati he would print all the names of God with a small letter to insult his Maker. He built a mansion, and filled the niches on his walls with the busts of famous infidels. The bust of Robert Ingersoll had the place of honor, and he pointed to it proudly as his "pastor." He took a dreadful oath that no preacher should ever darken his door. Out of curiosity he went to hear Moody preach, and was converted after the second sermon. He at once founded and published the Ram's Horn, one of the most aggressive Christian papers. Jesus had conquered and saved the proud infidel.

(2) We have seen hundreds of drunkards saved, and thousands who have been saved, by this mighty Savior. The Lion of the tribe of Judah broke every chain of habit and brought eternal deliverance to their blighted natures.

(3) We have seen a hopelessly enslaved cigarette fiend get saved and sanctified and become the president of a holiness college, when the doctors, before his conversion, had given him but ten months to live.

(4) We have seen a harlot come to the altar and confess all the sins in the catalogue of crimes, and then get saved and sanctified and so filled with the glory of heaven that she could hardly contain herself.

(5) We have seen men preaching the gospel who had worn stripes behind prison bars for the crime of murder. We are acquainted with an ex-pugilist who has fought sixty-three battles in the prize ring. Today he is an effective preacher of full salvation. We have concluded that our Jesus can save to the uttermost the uttermost sinners.

II. — Jesus is able to save fashionable moral sinners.

Plenty of that class belong to the ranks of culture and fashion. Some of them are college-bred. They are proud and wealthy and worldly and wicked, and very much harder to reach than the roughs and down-and-outs in the city slums. People are loath to believe it, but every experienced Christian worker knows that it is literally true. We preached in Chicago jail to hundreds of prisoners when they were taking their exercise as fast as they could walk. Yet seven knelt on the stone platform and gave themselves to Christ and were saved. But we have offered the same glorious gospel from the same text to fashionable sinners, and they laughed Christ to scorn.

However, the Christ who saved Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathaea and Saul of Tarsus, still lives, and is saving moral sinners.

III. — Jesus can save the most hopeless of backsliders.

Oh, the sad condition of those who once knew Jesus, and drank of the cup of His salvation, and then went back to the cup of demons; poor, heart-broken, despairing sinners, "having no hope and without God in the world." But the Savior of David and Peter and the disciples who "forsook Him and fled," is still restoring the backslidden and the lost. He sends His loving message to them: "I am married to the backslider." "How can I give thee up?" "Return unto Jehovah thy God." "I will heal their backslidings; I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned away." Who will persistently resist such pleading, forgiving love?

IV. — He can save to the uttermost from every kind O! sin. There are two kinds of sin, actual and indwelling sin.

(1) Actual sins are our own voluntary acts of disobedience, for which we are directly and wholly responsible. We committed them of our own free choice, deliberately and willfully. These can be, and must be, pardoned and blotted out by the grace of Christ.

(2) There is indwelling sin, depravity, the carnal mind. This was born with us and in us. We were not responsible for being born with it, and so cannot be pardoned for it. It must be cleansed out of us; and God has made provision in Christ for that cleansing. It was to that David referred when he prayed: "Cleanse me from my sin." "Create in me a clean heart, O God: and renew a right spirit within me" (Psa. 51:2 and 10).

God promised through Isaiah: "I will thoroughly purge away thy dross and will take away all thy sin" (Isaiah 1:25). It was fulfilled to Isaiah himself in the sixth chapter when he was convicted for holiness and sought and obtained the blessing (Isa. 6:7).

What a mockery of salvation that would be which did not save the drunkard from the appetite for drink, nor the liar from lying, nor the thief from the passion for stealing nor the murderer from his hate and his desire to kill!

Jesus sends His Holy Spirit to burn out of our hearts the tendency to sin, and then fills us with Himself, so that there shall be no room for Satan or any of his belongings. "Preoccupied" is written upon every faculty of our being.

V. — This uttermost Savior can save continually.

A Sunday salvation is not enough. We must have a salvation that will take us through the week. A revival salvation is not enough. We want a salvation that will hold us when there is no revival. A campmeeting blessing will not suffice. We need a blessing that will last when the tents are down and the sermons and songs and prayers are hushed.

A youth religion will not suffice. We need a Savior who can keep us in the fierce temptations of young manhood and amidst the cares of middle life, and make our gray hairs of old age a shining crown of eternal glory. A sunshine piety will not be enough. We want an experience that will abide when the stars are hidden and the night is on, and the hurricanes of grief and trouble are wrapping their convoluted blackness about us. A health and prosperity blessing is not sufficient. When the Sabeans and Chaldeans carry away your possessions, and a wind, death-laden, strikes the four corners of your dwelling, and those whom you have most loved turn against you, and the friends whom you have long trusted smite you with the tongue of slander, and sickness makes life a continuous agony of pain until you long for death which does not come — then, then you need the keeping grace that enabled Job to say, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him. Blessed be the name of the Lord!" Yes, we need a salvation that saves in every place, in all kinds of company, in each hour of the day, in every day of the year, and in every changing circumstance of life, world without end. And Christ can give it; for He is an uttermost Savior.

VI. — This Savior can save and sanctify everybody.

He is an almighty Christ, and no respecter of persons. He does not pick out easy cases upon which to exhibit His power to save. He takes people as they come, high or low, rich or poor, educated or ignorant, moral or vicious. He says to thieves, drunkards, murderers and harlots, "Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth."

I heard Mrs. C. T. Boyce, an evangelist, say she had seen seventy-five thousand souls kneel at the mercy-seat seeking Christ. She testified: "I was converted, and when but a child had turned many to Christ. I was a preacher and a missionary's wife, but until I was sanctified, I was one of the most disagreeable wives that ever lived. One day when I was not well my kind husband harnessed his horse to take me out driving to rest my tired nerves. But I resented it because he had not asked me first. Think how mean the devil and carnality can make a wife be! The Holy Spirit convicted me of it, I shut myself in my room, and prayed until God sanctified me."

"In one of my campmeetings I met Harry J. Elliott. He was a Catholic for thirty-four years; a bar-tender, horse-racer, gambler. He forged notes and twice set his uncle's hotel on fire. He was converted, and four months afterwards was sanctified. Christ took from him all appetite for liquor, tobacco, gambling and sin. When I met him he was preparing to be a missionary to Japan. Christ proves that He is an uttermost Savior by saving and sanctifying all that come unto God by Him." WILL YOU COME?

THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

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Chapter 2 HOLY LIKE GOD

"But like as he which called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living, because it is written ye shall be holy for I am holy" — 1 Peter 1:15,16.

The word "like" suggests at once the divinely implanted principle of imitativeness. There is not one gifted and noble mother in all the world who would not be pleased to have her best qualities repeated in the life of her daughter. There is not one great artist or genius in literature or statesmanship who would not be pleased at the thought that the great gift would reappear again in his son. It is a natural feeling of the parental heart.

Now the great moral attribute of God is His infinite, eternal, unchangeable holiness. Need we wonder that He is so anxious to have this characteristic reproduced in every child of His redeeming love? It would be the wonder of earth and heaven if God didn't feel that way toward us all.

There are many holiness people who are not holy people. They are in the ranks. They follow the crowd. They like the company; but they have not the inner experience. We should have a reality as well as a profession — an experience as well as a name. They who have the real experience do exploits. They are glorious as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners.

I. — God's Holiness is a Perfect Holiness.

It is unthinkable that God should have an imperfect holiness. It would then be all out of harmony with His other attributes. But our holiness is to be like God's. It is to be genuine from skin to core. There is no "suppression" in this kind of holiness, no concealed carnality within. There is no "inward sin and corruption to the last hour of life."

Some preach "cleansing and holiness;" but they say, "We shall never be sinless in this world." There are still "depths upon depths of mischief that lie hidden within us." Now we might ask what kind of holiness is it that is "not free from sin to the last day of our lives?" What kind of holiness is it which co-exists with "indwelling corruption," "which always will defile the very best deeds and holiest efforts of this life?" What kind of cleansing is it which leaves "depths upon depths of mischief in us" to defile our lives? Manifestly "corruption" holiness, "sinful" holiness, is not God's kind; and our holiness is to be like God's.

Some one says, "That is an overwhelming standard. Is it not too high?" We answer, "Jesus lifted up this standard: 'Be ye therefore perfect.'" John tells us, "Every one that hath this hope set on Him (Jesus), purifieth himself, even as He is pure." We should accept the standard and depend on God's almighty grace to keep it.

II. — It is eminently Practical Holiness.

"Holy in all manner of living." It is not merely talk and cheap profession, but godly deportment. It is not fad-riding, but everyday godliness — that speaks the truth and pays the grocery bill, and the doctor, and the newspaper, and the preacher, and the milkman. Its solemn covenants are not a mere "scrap of paper." Practical holiness is not fanaticism, for it is guided by the Word of God and walks in "His steps Who did no sin." God practices holiness, and so must we if we are like Him.

It means holiness in our physical life. We are to "eat or drink, or whatever we do, for the glory of God." It means to clothe ourselves for health, rather than for display of our person: bathe, sleep, wake, work and play for God. If our body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, treat it reverently and care for it for God. If your mouth belongs to God, do not put tobacco or whiskey into it; for that insults God, and shortens life and your power of service.

It means holiness in your intellectual life, your reading, study, opinions, doctrines; "bringing every thought and imagination into captivity to Christ." It means loving truth and seeking it with an honest heart to put it in practice. Otherwise one is not holy as God is holy.

It means to be holy in political life, hating and opposing every kind of sin, prohibiting every public evil. It means to be holy in social life; no ungodly companionships; no unholy lodges; no forbidden marriages. It means a clean parlor, a clean library, clean pictures, a clean household where Jesus might feel at home.

III. — It is a Professed Holiness.

God professes His holiness; and He never wearies of telling us that He is holy. His command is: "Be ye yourselves holy, for I am holy." Now, plainly, we cannot have a holiness like God's unless we have a similar disposition to let it be known. A quotation was sent to me from a great evangelist. He said: "If you become holy or sanctified you need not blow a horn about it; people will find it out without your telling them." That dear brother never said anything more unwise. He might as well have told his converts: "If you get converted keep still about it. You need not blow your horn; people will find it out." Such conduct as that would drive all the Christian religion from the earth. God said: "Ye are my witnesses." Possess and profess is the law and the life of genuine Christian experience.

The Israelites had to bring a basket of early fruit to the place of worship, and profess before the priest. ". . . And thou shalt set it down before Jehovah thy God and worship. . . . And rejoice in all the good which Jehovah thy God hath given thee" (Deut. 26:1-11). Frances Willard tells us pathetically that she followed false advice, and kept still about her sanctification until she suddenly waked up to the awful fact that she "had nothing to keep still about."

God will have the glory, and we must profess the blessing or lose it. The disciples said: "We cannot but speak the things we saw and heard." We are witnesses of these things. The devil would like to have us keep still and grieve the Spirit and lose the blessing.

IV. — It is a Positive Holiness.

We are quite aware that the negative side of holiness comes first — the cleansing from indwelling sin. So the sin question is the basis of the whole subject of holiness. There can be no holiness at all without getting rid of the uncleanness of the heart. The very words for holiness and sanctification mean cleansing from sin.

Hagios means "pure, righteous, holy." Hagiastos means "moral purity, sanctification." Hagiastos means "sanctification, sanctity, holiness." Hagiotes means "holiness, sanctity." Hagiastos means "to separate, consecrate, cleanse, purify, sanctify."

These Greek words do not mean "suppression," or "counteraction," or "filling," or "ecstasy," or "empowering," or "emotional experience." They mean getting rid of defilement. So the sin question is the center of the holiness movement. Sin is the deadly damnable thing that God hates. "It turned the angels out of heaven, and wrecked the earth, and murdered the Son of God, and fills hell with those for whom Christ died."

Holiness means getting rid of sin, actual and inbred, sin in every form and kind and degree. This is why the devil and wicked men and carnal preachers are so opposed to the genuine holiness movement.

But there is also a positive side to the blessing. It is more than a cleansed heart. The heart is first emptied of depravity and wickedness, and then filled with the Holy Spirit, and all the fruits of the Spirit, joy, peace, goodness, patience, power and love.

V. — It is a Personal Holiness.

There are those who profess to teach holiness, and who call themselves holy; only they say they are not holy in themselves, they are holy in Jesus. They imagine they have a legal, fictitious holiness in Him. He is a covering for their vileness; and God, when He looks at them, does not see them, but sees their covering — Jesus. In other words, they try to make themselves believe that God works a deception on Himself, like a man looking through green-colored glasses, who looks at a dry tree and persuades himself that it is green.

This is bad theology; it is not Bible. What does our text say in the Greek and the Revised Version? "Be ye yourselves also holy," "Ye shall be holy for I am holy." A Calvinist preacher said to us: "I have holiness; that is, I am not holy in myself, but I am holy in Christ. God sees Him and not me." Even Charles Spurgeon preached in one of his sermons: "Arise, believer, and behold thyself perfect in Christ Jesus. Let not thy sins shake thy faith in the all-sufficiency of Jesus. Thou art with all thy depravity still in Him, and therefore complete. Thou hast need of nothing beyond what there is in Him. In Him thou art just and entirely clean, in Him an object of divine approval and eternal love. Now, as thou art, and where thou art, feeble, fickle, forgetful, frail in thyself, yet in Him thou art all that can be desired. Thine unrighteousness is covered, thy righteousness is accepted, thy strength perfected, thy safety secured, thy heaven certain." To tell people "full of sins and depravity" such a message was a horrible perversion of truth. And there is no Scripture for such rank antinomianism.

VI. — It is a Pure Holiness.

It is because the Holy Ghost fire has burned carnality out. As God said in Isaiah: "I will turn my hand upon thee, and thoroughly purge away thy dross and will take away all thy sin". (1:25). So also in Malachi: "He is like a refiner's fire, and He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver. And He will purify the sons of Levi, and refine them as gold and silver; and they shall offer unto Jehovah offerings in righteousness" (3:3, 4). "Every one that hath this hope set on Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." Scriptural holiness has the holy Christ for its model.

A man gets a degree of holiness — holiness of outward conduct in regeneration. He henceforth does not lie, or swear, or steal, or get drunk, or willfully sin in regeneration. But real holiness goes deeper than the outer conduct, and cleanses us from the indwelling sin. That inbred sin principle which fights against our piety and makes us jealous, and revengeful, and willful, and passionate, and hot-tempered, and selfish, and self-indulgent, must be and is consumed by the fire of the Holy Ghost before we have the holiness described in the text that makes us "holy like God," and "pure as He (Christ) is pure."

VII. — It is a Possible Holiness.

We know it is possible for many unanswerable reasons. (1) Jesus prayed for it (John xvii.). (2) Jesus died for it. "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it that He might sanctify it, having cleansed it" (Eph. v.25). (3) Jesus commanded it (Matt. v. 48). (4) He calls us to it (1 Thess. iv. 7). (5) He promises it. "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it" (1 Thess. v. 24). (6) He baptizes us with the Holy Ghost and fire to produce it in our hearts. For these six best of all reasons we know we can have this blessing.

VIII. — It is a Present Holiness.

Jesus never sought holiness. He had it. God does not seek or try to grow into holiness; He has it now. And ours is to be like God's, a present holiness. God says under oath that we may have it now and all the days of our life (Luke 1:73-75). In our text we are commanded in the aorist tense (genesthete) "Be ye now at once holy like God." We cannot be absolute, self-contained, independent and self-sufficient in holiness like God. But ours, derived from Him and induced by His Holy Spirit baptism, can be in quality like God's holiness, as a thimbleful of ocean-water is like the ocean. Thus we can have a perfect practical, professed, positive, personal, pure, possible, present, holiness. All praise to the God of our salvation. Jesus Christ then becomes our wisdom from God, and justification, and Sanctification; and some sweet day He will bring us to glorification and an eternal heaven. Jesus shall not have prayed and died in vain. "He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied."

THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 3

CLEANSING FROM ALL SIN

"God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all."

"If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth."

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

"If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

"If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us." — 1 John 1:5-10.

A great heresy arose during the closing years of the first century. It threatened the utter subversion and destruction of the Christian religion. Peter wrote against it (2 Peter 2:12-19). Jude wrote a blistering message against it (4, 10-19). Paul foretold it in his parting address to the Church of Ephesus (Acts 20:18-35) and in his Second Epistle to Timothy (3:1-8). John hurled his fiercest invectives against it in his first epistle, of which our text is the preliminary summary. Even Jesus condemned it in His message to the churches (Rev. 2:6 and 14-16).

These false teachers were variously called Nicolaitanes and Gnostics. They went everywhere infesting the churches, denying the real incarnation of Christ and the reality of His atoning death. Their primal dogma that all evil resided in matter and did not affect the soul, was a heathen notion imported from Eastern Asia. Under its baleful influence even church members imbibed the idea that they could be purified in soul by a mental knowledge of God, and could then indulge their bodies in any form of vice without spiritual detriment. A gross licentiousness resulted, consecrated by a false profession.

Irenaeus says of them: "They assert that they themselves will be saved, not by practice, but because they are spiritual by nature, and that, as gold, though mingled with mire, does not lose its beauty, so they themselves, though wallowing in the mire of carnal works, do not lose their own spiritual essence; and therefore, though they resort to the banquets which the heathen celebrate in honor of their false gods, and abstain from nothing that is foul in the eyes of God or man, they say that they cannot contract any defilement from these impure abominations, and they scoff at us who fear God as silly dotards."

In other words, these vile heretics taught that "a man might be an outrageous violator of moral law and yet be a pure and holy saint." It was a subtle error most pleasing to carnality, and struck a deadly

blow at Christian morality. The aged apostle wrote this epistle as a defense of CHRISTIAN PURITY FROM SIN against Gnostic purity IN SIN. He says: "These things have I written concerning them that seduce you" (1 John 2:26).

There is a constant series of burning antithetical ideas, issues between the true view and the opposite error, stated in the most intense language. John put all the earnestness of his Christ-like soul into it, because he saw that the foundations of Christian purity were involved and Christianity itself was at stake.

1. — Then consider the text as a whole. There are six verses in all, with three antithetical or opposing ideas, two verses to each. The first verse of each pair of verses states the Christian truth of pardon, purity, and full salvation. The second verse of each pair is not a description of Christian character at all, but is a stunning blow at the doctrine and practice of these vile teachers who are seducing Christians from morality, and by their practice were uniting professed sanctity with unspeakable depravity.

Let us consider these verses by pairs, and the truth will appear. In the fifth verse the apostle teaches that "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." In other words, God is light. His children will be children of the light and of the day. They will walk in the light of moral purity, and will be without darkness, like their Father.

Verse six gives the antithesis, — a blow at the seducers: "If we say (he meant, If YOU say) that we (you) have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness (as your false teachers say and do), we (you) lie and do not tell the truth." That is, "You simply cannot have fellowship with a holy God and practice vice as you are doing; and if you say that you do, YOU LIE." It was terrific plainness, and he simply softened it by saying "we" instead of "you," to make the castigation a little more acceptable.

Take the next pair of verses. Verse 7 gives the blessed hope of salvation: "If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another (we and God), and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin." This is the way of full salvation and complete deliverance from all sin. Walk in the light of God in faith and obedience, and He will cleanse our hearts "FROM ALL SIN." Sin of every kind will be taken away.

Verse 8 is the antithesis — another fearful blow at heresy: "If we (you) say that we (you) have no sin (and no need of a Savior from all past sins, as your vile teachers would have you believe), we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us (you deceive yourselves and the truth is not in you)."

You Nicolaitan Gnostics affirm that your wicked vices are not wrong, and that when you practice them you commit no sin; but you are simply deceiving yourselves. You will not get rid of your sins by denying them, but by confessing and forsaking, and by praying for an application of the cleansing blood of Jesus.

Look now at the third pair. Verse 9 gives us again the blessed truth of full salvation: "If we confess our sins He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all

unrighteousness." This verse tells us how one may walk in the light of a holy God, and obtain justification and sanctification and complete deliverance from all unrighteousness of heart). God has a perfect cleansing for us all.

Verse 10 gives the third antithesis — another blow at the doctrine of these corrupt teachers: "If we say we have not sinned (as these seducers say), we make Him a liar and His Word is not in us." In others words: "If you Gnostics, or any that accept your doctrines, say you have not sinned, while you are wallowing in shameless orgies of vice, you make God a liar and His Word is not in you."

II. — If now we write the first verses of these three pairs together, and then write the second verses together, the correctness of our interpretation will be more apparent.

Verse 5: "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all."

Verse 7: "If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Verse 9: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." These three verses are the Gibraltar of the Christian faith, an epitome of the gospel of full Salvation. Jesus has made ample provision for us to be justified and sanctified, pardoned and cleansed, from ALL SIN and ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS, and thus made clean and holy. It is not salvation IN sin, but salvation FROM sin, of every form and degree. It is what we all must have to get to heaven. The other three verses, antithetical to these, are a scathing denunciation of the teaching of the Gnostics, who were corrupting the churches by teaching that people could be in a saved relation with God and yet be living in drunkenness and licentiousness. Notice how they read, and think of the pronouns as being in the second person, instead of the first, and all will be plain.

Verse 6: "If we (you) say that we (you) have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we (you) lie and do not the truth."

Verse 8: "If we (you) say that we (you) have no sin, we (you) deceive ourselves (yourselves) and the truth is not in us (you)."

Verse 10: "If we say we have not sinned (as these seducers say while practicing all sin), we make Him a liar and His Word is not in us."

Just such antithetical passages fill the entire epistle, and show to a demonstration that the beloved apostle was writing against the teaching and practice of Antinomian heretics who were teaching a salvation IN vice rather than FROM vice. John himself said, "These things I write concerning them that seduce you." The above grouping of these verses makes this Scripture perfectly plain, and robs it of all its seeming contradictions.

III. — It is amazing that any Christian teachers should wrest this eighth verse from its connection and divinely-intended meaning, and apply it to holy children of God who profess sanctification. It

is a warning to wicked deceivers and their followers who are described as "having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin," "which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam." But one preacher applies these words to the best of Christians thus: "What can be clearer than the statement, 'If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us'? To say we have not sinned, or to say we have no sin, is to show ourselves destitute of God's truth." What a wretched interpretation it is to take these words, hurled against vile seducers of the bride of Christ, and force them to teach as a divine revelation that the bride herself, with all the heavenly 'Bridegroom's sanctifying indwelling, and the cleansing of the Holy Spirit, cannot herself be pure and clean!

We should like to ask this brother and his fellow-preachers a few questions:

(1) When a sinner has experienced the works of grace described in verses 7 and 9, that is, when he has been pardoned, and afterward cleansed from "ALL sin" and "ALL unrighteousness," how much sin has he left in himself to lie about?

(2) When God has thus pardoned and cleansed one of his obedient, trusting children, and that child gladly testifies for the glory of Jesus to his cleansing, does this saint of God lie in saying, "I am now, by the grace of God, without sin"?

(3) Does an inspired apostle flatly contradict himself with a single pen full of ink by writing that we may be cleansed from "all sin" and "ALL unrighteousness," and yet we still have sin in us until the last breath of life? And does he teach that to testify to the Holy Spirit's cleansing would be a lie?

If the King of England should pick up a filthy, ragged London beggar, take him to his own bath-room and wash him thoroughly, and burn up his rags and clothe him with the best of garments, would the beggar lie if he should then say, "By the grace of the King, I am now without filth and without rags"? Of course not! And no more does a child of the King of kings falsify when he extols the grace of his heavenly Father.

(4) Do those teachers who declare that "we must have sin in us to the last hour of life" fitly honor the great salvation of Jesus? "All unrighteousness is sin. But the apostle, inspired by the Holy Spirit, declares that "the blood of Jesus cleanseth us from ALL sin and ALL unrighteousness."

Adam Clarke well says: "To attempt to evade this and to plead for the continuance of sin in the heart through life is UNGRATEFUL, WICKED, and even BLASPHEMOUS; for, as he who says he has not sinned makes God a liar, so he that says the blood of Christ either cannot or will not cleanse us from all sin in this life, GIVES ALSO THE LIE TO HIS MAKER." God help us all to keep back from such awful sin!

Thank God, the old gospel will stand in spite of those who oppose Bible holiness and plead for the life-long continuance of sin in the heart! No wresting of Scripture from its connection, and the avowed purpose of the writer, can rob weary souls of their blood-bought right to be cleansed from every stain of sin. The seventh verse and the ninth verse tell us of a complete deliverance. There is a double necessity and a double cure. Sin exists in two forms; actual sin which must be pardoned,

and inherited indwelling sin or depravity which pardon cannot reach. It needs to be cleansed away. And if we confess and forsake our sins they can be pardoned. And afterward, if we abhor our pollution of nature, our indwelling sin can be cleansed. The immutable Word of God declares (verse 9): "If we confess our sins, God is faithful to His promise and just to His atoning Son to FORGIVE us our sins and to CLEANSE us from all unrighteousness."

Jesus is "an uttermost Savior." His precious blood can and does cleanse from ALL SIN. And those who have the blessed sanctification of the Holy Ghost can testify to freedom from sin without lying.

THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 4

HOW TO OBTAIN THE BLESSING OF SANCTIFICATION

"The Lord, Whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple" (Malachi 3:1).

"Ye are the temple of God" (1 Cor. 3:16).

A growing number of Christians are inquiring about the experience of sanctification. Multitudes wish to get rid of the carnal mind that is enmity against God. Many are weary of moral defeats and would like to enter upon a life of victory. What large numbers long for a relief from internal conflicts and sigh for cleansing of heart and soul, for purity and power!

Well, their hunger and thirst may be gratified. There are some scriptural conditions to be complied with, and then the longed-for goal will be reached.

I. — The first condition is a conviction of want. "Blessed are the poor in spirit," those who are conscious of a soul-need of something more. Nothing short of this deep sense of need will lead one to earnestly seek the blessing, and pay the price for it. Hannah Whitall Smith, after eight years of Christian experience, said: "My heart was ill at ease. . . . I resolved, I prayed, I wrestled, I strove, I lashed myself up to attain to more faithfulness. But all in vain! I said, If this is all the Christian life has to offer, it is a bitterly disappointing thing."

Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote of herself: "There is an undercurrent of perplexity and unhappiness about my spiritual state. Why am I thus restless? Why do I not have all God wants me to have? Ah, why not? Every effort of mine breaks like a wave upon a rock. We reason, reflect, resolve and pray, weep, strive, love, love to despair, and all in vain.

Andrew Murray wrote: "The believer must be convicted and brought to the confession of being in a carnal state. What may be termed a second conviction of the utter impotence of the flesh to good, and its mighty power to do evil? It is the seventh of Romans over again." Blessed are those who have such a conviction! It is a sign that God is moving on their hearts for sanctification.

II. — The second condition is repentance for having kept the sanctifying Savior out of His full possession of your nature so long, and for the resulting failures of life. A Christian lady once said to me, as she was going out of church, "How can God ever forgive my past?" "Blessed are they that mourn" for wrong words spoken, questionable deeds done, duties neglected, opportunities wasted, usefulness impaired, cleansing deferred, holiness hindered, and perhaps souls lost because we did not have clean hearts filled with the Holy Ghost.

III. — A third condition is to feel its importance. The one hundred and twenty in the upper chamber have been commissioned to represent Jesus and disciple the world! How would they feel about it? Peter would remember his fickleness and blasphemy, and lying and cowardice. Thomas

would remember his doubting, and James and John their unholy ambition, and Martha her fretting. Mrs. Catherine Booth said: "God never gave this gift to any soul who had not come to the point where he would sell all he had to get it." Torrey said: "No man ever got this blessing who thought he could get along without it."

IV. — Another condition is, Believe that the promise is for you. Not merely for Paul and John, and Wesley and Finney, but for you.

Daniel Steele writes: "I took the promise, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My Name, He will give it you.' I wrote my name in the promise, making it read, 'I say unto you — Daniel Steele.'"

Dr. A. J. Gordon wrote: "The filling of the Spirit belongs to us as a covenant privilege," because we are the children of God.

Dr. Lowrey wrote: "It is a prime necessity to bring yourself to the conviction that sanctification is for you. The Scripture affords ample ground for such a blessed faith.

1. Jesus prayed for it. John 17:17.
2. Jesus died for it. Eph. 5:25,26, and Heb. 13:12.
3. God wills it. I Thess. 4:3.
4. God promises it. I Thess. 5:24
5. God commands it. I Peter 1:15.

What more ground of confidence can any soul demand, that you may seek this blessing with the expectation of receiving it?"

V. — A fifth condition is to hunger and thirst for it. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." One must desire it intensely with a real craving of soul. A lazy, indifferent, feeble desire never obtained this blessing. I once said to an audience: "You may pray for the baptism of the Holy Spirit until your tongues are tired, but as long as you fight holiness, He will not come." On the way out of the church a lady said: "I see my mistake; I have long prayed for the Holy Spirit, but all the time I have been opposing holiness. I now see that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of holiness." She consented to be sanctified, and at once the Spirit came.

David B. Updegraff, the saintly Quaker, writes as follows: — "I hated pride, ambition, evil tempers and vain thoughts, but I had them for all that. There came into my heart a great hunger and thirst to be filled with the fullness of God."

Anna M. Hammer, a great temperance worker, writes: "Finally a great hunger of soul came on me. I knew that nothing but 'the anointing that abideth' would satisfy my soul. I was in deep conviction

for three days in an agony of tears, as one said to me, 'dying hard.' But all this time the hunger and aching increased, until I could no longer resist the pleadings of the Spirit."

Hannah Whitall Smith says: "I began to long after holiness. . . . My whole heart panted after entire conformity to the will of God."

Rev. J. O. Peck, D. D., writes: "A deep heart hunger began to be realized for a clean heart. I was not backslidden, and my ministry was never more fruitful, but the hunger of my soul grew more imperious. I went to a holiness campmeeting and confessed how I was hungering."

It will be noticed in what similar language all these people depict the deep longing of their souls for a holy heart. The forerunner of sanctification is usually a desire for it so intense that it can be fitly likened to "hunger and thirst," as Jesus said.

VI. — The sixth condition is obedience. God says: "He gives the Holy Spirit to them that obey Him" (Acts 5:32). An illustration is furnished by the Bible itself of this condition. Jesus told the five hundred believers to tarry in Jerusalem till they were baptized with the Holy Spirit, the blessing promised of the Father which they should soon receive. Only one hundred and twenty obeyed; yes, and only one hundred and twenty got the blessing. Jesus had promised (Luke 11:13), "the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him," and commanded to tarry and pray for the blessing till it came. They obeyed, and prayed in that upper chamber, and the blessing came.

Obedience means obeying in everything. Mr. Torrey tells of a woman who prayed and struggled for this blessing until people thought she would go crazy in the intensity of her desire. Every time she prayed some little gew-gaw in her hair was the sticking-point with her. She prayed and prayed, and that would come up every time. At last, one day, when in prayer, she put her hand to her head and tore it from her hair and threw it across the room. Immediately the Spirit came, because she had settled a principle that she would obey God.

Mrs. Maggie Van Cott, of U.S.A., had led seventy-five thousand souls to Christ. When she was converted she laid aside all her jewelry, of which she had been vain, but one ring. As often as she prayed for sanctification the Spirit said, "Put away your ring." At last, one day, when dealing with seekers at the altar, she saw that her ring was attracting the attention of a seeker, and she took it off. Immediately the Spirit came. She had settled it that she would obey the slightest whisper of God.

VII. — The seventh condition is full consecration. God's Word is, "Present yourselves unto God as alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Consecration is the actual present surrender to God of our whole being and all we possess. It is the turning over of ourselves to the Lord to be owned and used by Him, just as a master owns a slave. The ground of it is Christ's ownership. He created us. He preserves us. He bought us with His blood. He has a triple right to us, and in consecration we recognize the right.

Consecration is not an act of feeling; it is an act of will. It can be performed without feeling. It is a simple recognition of God's claim upon you for the service of all your God-given powers.

Rev. B. K. Pierce, D. D., writes: "On my knees I wrote out an entire surrender of myself, body, soul and substance, and all pertaining to me, and I solemnly signed my name to it."

Rev. Isaiah Reid presents this as a proper form of consecration for this blessing: "O Lord, in view of this thing Thou hast besought of me to do, I hereby now do really consecrate myself unreservedly to Thee for all time and all eternity. My time, my talents, my hands, feet, lips, will, my all, my property, my reputation, my friends and family, my entire being, a living sacrifice to be and to do all Thy righteous will; — for the cleansing of my nature from indwelling sin, I seek the sanctification of my soul.

THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 5

PLEDGE OF FAITH

"Now, as I have given myself to Thee, I will, from this time forth, regard myself as Thine. I believe Thou dost accept the offering that I bring. I put all on the altar. I believe the altar sanctifieth the gift. I believe the blood is applied NOW as I comply with the terms of Thy salvation. I believe Thou dost now cleanse me from all sin."

Prof. Dougan Clark, the Friend, says: "The essence of consecration is in the sentence, 'Yield yourselves unto God.' When you yield yourselves you yield everything else. Consecration is not to God's service, or His work, or to the church, or to the missionary cause, but to God Himself. 'Yield yourselves unto God.' Consecration does not mean the giving up of your sins, or vices, or depraved appetites, or forbidden indulgences. We cannot consecrate our alcohol, or our tobacco, or our opium, or our card-playing, or dancing, or theater-going. He wants none of these things. Actual and known sins must be abandoned at conversion. He wants all the good things: the son Isaac, most precious to our heart, laid on the altar. An English periodical had this:

I am willing
To receive what Thou givest,
To lack what Thou withholdest,
To relinquish what Thou takest,
To suffer what Thou inflictest,
To be what Thou requirest,
To do what Thou commandest.
Amen."

Amanda Smith says: "You must make your consecration complete, and you must make it eternal."

VIII. — The last condition is faith. One might take all the seven steps already described, and still remain without the blessing. The children of Israel marched out of Egypt and entirely across the desert to the very border of the Promised Land, and halted on the wrong side of the border. For lack of faith they did not get into Canaan. With faith they might have gone in before sundown. Acts 26:18 teaches that we are "sanctified by faith that is in Me" (Jesus). "We receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Gal. 3:14). Our hearts are "purified by faith" (Acts 15:8, 9). All other conditions lead to this, and without faith all others would end in failure. As Dr. A. J. Gordon says: "It is the duty and privilege of believers to receive the Holy Ghost for sanctification by a definite act of appropriating faith, just as we received Jesus Christ by faith for justification. It is as sinners that we accept Christ by faith for justification; it is as sons that we accept the Spirit by faith for sanctification."

Dr. Steele says: "My faith had three things to master: 'the Spirit, for me, Now!' Upon the promise I ventured with an act of appropriating faith, claiming the Comforter as my right in the name of

Jesus. For several hours I clung by naked faith. Suddenly I became conscious of a mysterious power . . . melting my heart."

Dr. Carradine says: "Is everything upon the altar? If so, who is the altar? Paul tells you — it is Christ. What does the altar do? God says, 'The altar sanctifies the gift.' Will you believe that? Will you take God at His word? You must believe that Christ makes you holy right now. Will you take that step and receive full salvation? Plant yourself on God's Word. Dare to believe it, and hold on till the witness comes."

Andrew Murray says: "Who are ready to come into this life and claim their heritage as a child of God?"

(1) Say, tonight, I must be filled with the Spirit.

(2) I may be filled with the Spirit; God does not give a must without a may.

(3) Say, I would be filled with the Spirit; I long for it.

(4) I shall be filled with the Spirit; O God, I give myself to Thee entirely; I claim the filling of the Spirit. Thou givest it."

THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 6

ANY MAN'S LAWYER

"My little children, these things write I unto you that ye may not sin [even once]. And if any man sin [once], we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for our sins only, but also for the whole world" (1 John 2:1, R. V.).

This aged Apostle, nearly one hundred years old, writes to younger Christians, many of them no doubt his own converts, with tender benignant grace, addressing them as, "My little children." In the first chapter he has told them about a mighty Savior and His full salvation from sin, in contrast with the deadly heresy of salvation in sin. God is light, and in him is no darkness at all . . . 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. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:5, 7, 9). This is the blessed salvation that God has prepared for all men, which will enable us to live without sin.

The companion verses (6, 8, 10) were written against the Gnostics, who were indulging in orgies of vice, yet professing to be Christians. John says that all who make such professions, yet live so wickedly are liars, and God's Word is not in them. Then follows appropriately the opening of the next chapter.

1. "THESE THINGS I WRITE UNTO YOU THAT YE MAY NOT SIN [EVEN ONCE]." I insert the words "even once" in brackets because the verb is in the aorist tense and denotes a single act. This is admitted by the most scholarly modern commentators. Says Bishop Wescott: "The thought is of the single act, not of the state. The tense is decisive against the idea that the Apostle was simply warning his disciples not to draw encouragement for license from the doctrine of forgiveness. His aim is to produce the completeness of the Christ-like life." Whedon: "The main aim of the epistle is to show the incompatibility of sinning as an actual practice, or sin as a permanent State, with the divine fellowship or communion." So Alfred writes: "That ye may not sin at all; implying the absence not only of the habit, but of any single act of sin." So Dr. Steele: "In aiming to produce complete and constant victory over sin, he was not endeavoring to get forth an abnormal character. An unsinning Christian was in his estimation neither an impossibility nor an anomaly. He plainly asserts that sinlessness is the aim of his teaching. We call attention to the aorist tense, "May not sin, that ye may not commit sin — a single sin." Lange says: "Sinning applies here to particular sins, not to small faults and inadvertences which would properly be no sin."

The venerable Apostle was not teaching the world the false doctrine that sin was a necessity. He himself had been pardoned, and then had been sanctified in the Pentecostal chamber. He had experienced what he wrote about in verses seven and nine of the previous chapter. And the opening of this second chapter implies that he was not conscious of any single sin, much less of a state of sin. He wanted his converts to live a holy life, as he was living, without sinning even once.

"This," says Dr. Clarke, "is the language of the whole Scripture; of every dispensation, ordinance, institution, doctrine and word of God. Sin not. Do not run into sin; live not so as to promote your own misery; be happy, for it is the will of God that you should be so; therefore He wills that you should be holy; holiness and happiness are inseparable; sin and misery are equally so."

Let this then be the aim of every child of God to sin not. Let it be your fixed purpose not merely to sin as little as you can, but not to sin at all. And by the sanctifying grace of God, let this aim be realized. We are not to anticipate failure but success. By God's cleansing and helping grace, we may find holiness to be not a distant and impossible ideal, but a blessed, joyous experience.

We should not sin out of respect and reverence for God; for it has made Him endless sorrow and trouble, and He hates it with an infinite and eternal hatred. It is opposed to His nature, His perfections and His supremacy. If it should prevail it would involve His universe in ruin.

Again we should not sin for Jesus' sake. Sin cost Him descent from eternal enthronement, the humiliation of His earthly lot, the contradiction and abuse of vile sinners, the anguish of Gethsemane, the scourging of the Judgment Hall and the dying agonies of Calvary. He bore them all for us that we might escape the sorrows of a lost eternity. How wickedly ungrateful it would be to grieve such holy love by wanton sin!

Still further, we should not sin because it grieves the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is sent to take Jesus' place and to be ever present to counsel, guide and help us. He hates sin just as Jesus does. And when we willfully sin it insults and grieves Him, and drives Him from our hearts.

Again we should not sin for our own sakes. Sin necessarily and inevitably makes woe. It avenges itself, inflicts its own penalty, strikes its fangs of retribution into the soul that conceives it, and kindles the fires of its own eternal burnings. And even if a Christian should sin and afterwards repent and be forgiven, he has suffered an eternal loss that never can be made good. An act of obedience has been subtracted from his record for which he can get no reward; an act of sin has taken place whose evil influence will be felt through eternal ages. Nobody but God can measure the evil influence and eternal disaster of one sin. No wonder the holy Apostle entreated his converts not to sin even once.

II. BUT STILL THE BEST OF CHRISTIANS MAY SIN. "And if any man sin [once]." The tense is still aorist, and denotes a single act. Wescott: "Here again the thought is of a single act, regarded as past, into which the believer may be carried against the true tone of his life, as contrasted with the habitual state." Steele says: "The possibility of a sinless Christian life is still implied." In this wicked world, where the moral atmosphere is so hostile to goodness, and sin is so abundant on every hand, assaulting every sense of our being perpetually, by carelessness, by a little unwatchfulness or unsteadiness of faith and lack of prayer, the saintliest Christian may trip and fall. He need not; for the keeping grace is sufficient. "Christ is able to guard you from stumbling" (Jude 24, R. V.). But He will not do it without our cheerful consent and helpful co-operation.

And if through ignorance, inexperience, the violence of temptation, unwatchfulness, suddenness, you have fallen into one sin, Swerving a moment from the Christian's orbit in which you usually

revolve about your center — Christ, and you have thus grieved the Spirit, do not continue a moment longer in sin. Do not let days and weeks and, perchance, months pass by while you lie down in discouragement, and let Satan triumph over you. Do not despair of being again restored to the favor of God. Your case is indeed sad, but not hopeless. You may come back at once into the sunlight of God's reconciled face. For—

III. WE HAVE AN ADVOCATE WITH THE FATHER, JESUS CHRIST THE RIGHTEOUS. The word here means an attorney, or responsible speaker for us in court. The term implies that the man is now a culprit on trial before the Father for his sin, and Christ is the Lawyer to plead for him. The image is borrowed from Roman law; no such officer as an Advocate being known to the Old Testament. When brought under the Romans, the Jews and other conquered peoples were obliged to engage Roman lawyers to plead their cases, as Tertullius in Acts 24:1.

A wonderful Advocate Jesus is!

(1). He is Jesus Christ the Righteous.

"Jesus," because "He saves his people from their sins." "Christ," which means the Divine, Anointed One! "The Righteous One," filled with the holiness of heaven, who will not try to save anyone in any way incompatible with perfect holiness. He will not tolerate evil, or smile upon or minimize guilt. If He secures the pardon of His client it must be in a way consistent with the safety of the government and the honor of God.

(2) The Righteous One is a successful Advocate because He enjoys the perfect confidence of the Judge. The Father knows that He will make no unworthy plea, nor ask a favor of the Court that cannot be safely granted. The Father knows that however much his Beloved Son loves the trusting sinner, He loves still more the honor of His Father, and the holiness of the law, and the safety of the divine government. This Righteous Advocate will not connive at, or condone, or in anyway conceal the sinner's guilt. There is no other such Advocate. As He appears for us at God's bar of judgment, He admits the sin; He approves of the law: He acknowledges the justice of the penalty, and yet, Oh blessed fact! He procures for all who believe, and make Him their Advocate, a full pardon. And how? Because He pleads not our merits, but His own. For—

IV. "HE IS THE PROPITIATION FOR OUR SINS; AND NOT FOR OURS ONLY, BUT ALSO FOR THE WHOLE WORLD." The propitiation is the Atoning Sacrifice appointed by God Himself for the sins of the world. "Jesus' vicarious sufferings were made a provisory substitute for penalty in the interest of the divine government in behalf of all who will forsake sin, and accept Jesus as their atoning Savior."

What a plea it enables our Advocate to make! "Remember, O Father, what I suffered that guilty sinners might be offered pardon! Remember the bloody sweat of Gethsemane! Remember the scourging and the crown of thorns! Remember the blood I shed that this repentant, believing disciple might be forgiven this sin! Remember the promise thou didst make that 'Whosoever believeth in me shall not perish, but have everlasting life!'"

Listen! The Father speaks: "Son, I remember it all." "Recording Angel, write, This sin is blotted out! this repentant, believing child of grace is forgiven and restored once more to the divine favor.

O child of God, "These things I write unto you that ye sin not even once;" but should you sin once, haste in repentant faith to the Righteous Advocate, apply to His blood that "cleanseth from all sin." Then go forth in the strength of Him "who is able to save to the uttermost," and "keep you from stumbling," and "sin no more."

O unrepentant, unbelieving sinner, persistently rejecting Christ, what will you do at the bar of God without this Advocate?

THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 7

THE SIN-PRINCIPLE CONDEMNED TO DEATH

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. . . . For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of the sin [principle] and of the death. For what the law could not do, in that it was, weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and [as an offering] for sin, condemned the sin [principle] in the flesh: that the requirements of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:1-4, Accurate translation).

Paul is still relating his experience. He has described in the seventh chapter his bitter bondage to the sin (depravity) dwelling in him, and the cry of despair it occasioned. That is the mournful wail of the seventh of Romans, Paul's experience trying to live up to his law-ideal — in his own strength, without the help of Christ or the Holy Spirit, whom, as yet, he did not know.

Some say that that chapter is a picture of St. Paul's best, and of every Christian's best!

Never! In that passage there are up to verse 25 twenty-nine "I's"; "law" nineteen times; "sin" fourteen times; "me" ten times; "dead and died and death" seven times, and no Christ and no Holy Spirit. Is that a Christian experience? If so, then the naked aborigines of Australia, worshipping snakes and sacrificing to demons are Christians! Indeed, is that the way St. Paul was in the habit of describing his Christian experience? Emphatically not. In the first seven verses of the first chapter of this epistle, containing only one sentence, he had eleven references to Christ. His beloved Savior was "all." In Him He always triumphed, and was more than conqueror. He called God and men to witness "how holily and unblameably he walked among men" (1 Thess. 2:10).

No, the eighth chapter was the up to date Christian experience of St. Paul. It so utterly contradicts the experience of the seventh that they cannot both belong to the same man at the same time. There he was "carnal, sold under sin," a wretched captive tugging at his chains; here he is free. There he was trying to save himself; here he is already saved by another. There he was groaning; here he is shouting happy. There it was agonizing prayer; here it is rapturous praise. There he was hopelessly defeated; here he is victorious and more than conqueror through Christ. There it was dark despair; here it is cloudless hope.

In the sixth chapter Paul exhibits sanctification and a life of holiness as provided for in the atonement, both a blessed privilege and a solemn duty. In the eighth chapter it is Paul's experience and the possible experience of every Christian. It begins with no condemnation and ends with no separation from God.

Godet reports Spener as saying, "If the Holy Scripture was a ring and the Epistle to the Romans its precious stone chapter 8 would be the sparkling point of the jewel." The Holy Spirit brings Christ

potentially into the Apostle's life, Who not only justifies him but abides in him as a new principle of death to the sin principle and life to God.

1. Christ justifies the sinner. "There is, therefore, no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus" (verse 1). He is fully justified, pardoned and restored to the favor of God. He is also adopted into the divine family, and the Holy Spirit bears witness to the fact. "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:16).

The phrase "In Christ Jesus" means not a legal or federal union. It is a vital union, such as Jesus described in the parable of the Vine and the branches, a living relation, which passes the holy life of Christ into us.

Mel Trotter, when a helpless, hopeless drunkard, ready to go to hell for a drink, got saved so completely and wonderfully that for years he became the leader of Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago. Wonderful Savior!

II. Verse 2. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of the sin-principle and the death." Godet, the great French Commentator, says, "Verses 14 describe the restoration of holiness by the Holy Spirit. Sin entails death on the justified, in whom it regains the upper hand as well as on the unjustified" (8:12-13). There is therefore only one way of preventing sin from causing us to perish; that is, that it perish itself. Grace does not save by patronizing the sin but by destroying it.

The word "law" occurs in this second verse twice. No one can rightly interpret the seventh and eighth chapters of Romans without critically noting the sense in which the word "law" is used each time it occurs. In this verse it does not mean any statute, or decree, or legislative enactment. Dr. Maclaren says it means here "constancy of operation." Godet calls it "controlling power imposing itself on the will." Dr. Steele says it means "uniform tendency." Dr. Barnes says it means "the influence of the sin (principle) and the death;" that is, if we substitute any one of these phrases for "law" we shall get the meaning of the verse: "The influence of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the influence of the sin (principle) and the death;" that is, the moral death that accompanies the sin (principle).

That is the Apostle's wonderful testimony of deliverance, which he gladly proclaimed to the world. He believed that the power of the Holy Spirit which broke the power of the sin principle over him can deliver others too. In substance he confessed: "The controlling power of the Holy Spirit in one instant (aorist tense) made me free from the influence or power of the sin (principle) depravity. I tried intellectual methods; but found that they could not free me from the domination of carnality which had captured my passions and desires. I whipped myself up to keep the law of God; but I found that the proneness to evil would not loosen its grip upon my being. I tried every human resource, and all miserably failed. Nothing touched the necessity of my case until I heard of Jesus Christ. When I applied to Him He sent the Holy Spirit who subverted and expelled the tendency to sin, and set me free."

III. The law of God could not do this. Hear St. Paul further; — verse 3: "For what the law [of God] could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, condemned [to death] "The Sin in the flesh.""

"Law" in this verse means the law of God, the moral law. This law could not justify or sanctify, as Paul knew by sad experience. It condemned every kind of sin, but could not save from it. The flesh hindered it. "Flesh" (*sarx*) here means "the seat of passion and frailty" and then figuratively "the carnal and rebellious principle itself" (Adam Clarke). Human depravity fatally hindered the law of God.

But "God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh." Christ took on Himself human nature as God originally made it, without any sinful propensity. There was no "he hamartia, the sin principle" in it. Jesus came to do for us and in us what no written or unwritten law of God could accomplish.

Dear old Dr. Maclaren said: "That life of Jesus, lived in human nature (in a human body) gives a new hope of the possibilities of that nature lived in us. What the man Christ Jesus was He was that we may become. In the very flesh in which the tyrant (the sin principle) rules, Jesus shows the possibility and the loveliness of a holy life. He condemned to death the sin in the flesh as wholly unnecessary and no essential part of it."

Godet quotes Theophylact: "He sanctified the flesh and crowned it by condemning to death the sin (principle) and by showing that the flesh is not sinful in its (essential) nature."

"But," someone asks, "do not some teach that we must have sin in us"? and "No man can be free from sin while in the mortal body, which sin must indwell us to the last moment of our lives"? Let there be no mistake about that: "It is ever taught at Keswick, as in every part of God's Word, that there are to the very last hour of our life upon earth powers of corruption within every man which defile his very best deeds and give even to his holiest efforts the nature of sin." "We shall never be sinless in this world." "We do not at Keswick make light of those depths upon depths of mischief that lie hidden within us."

Yes, we are compelled to admit that this is the fundamental element, and warp and woof of most Keswick teaching. And the "higher life" conventions in the East repeat this same unscriptural nonsense. And so do the Moody and Torrey Bible schools. Torrey says in one of his books: "There is not a line of Scripture that warrants the idea that the baptism of the Spirit cleanses from inbred sin!" Poor Torrey!

What about these texts:

1. Acts 15:8, 9 (R. V.), "Giving them the Holy Spirit . . . cleansing their hearts by faith."

2. Rom. 6:18 (R. V.), "Being made free from the sin [principle] ye became servants of righteousness."

3. Rom. 6:27 (R. V.), "But now [not at death] being made free from the sin [principle] . . . ye have your fruit unto sanctification." That is exactly what sanctification is — deliverance from the sin-principle.

4. Rom. 8:2 (R. V.), "Law of the Spirit . . . made me free from the law of the sin."

5. I John 1:7, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" v.9. "And to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

What can possess educated men like Dr. Torrey to pervert and distort and deny the plain, unmistakable meaning of such texts? And yet they pretend all the time to be preaching holiness. But observe, it is a new brand of modern holiness — "Corrupt" holiness! "Sinful" holiness! "Depths upon depths of mischief" holiness! — a kind the writers of the Bible never heard of. Yet this moral rubbish is being peddled out all over the English-speaking world, in the interest of the father of lies, to side-track true holiness, that cleanses the heart. See I Thess. 5:23 and 2 Peter 1:4. "Exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

IV. What man could not do and divine law could not do, Christ has done for us. Christ, by His incarnation, provided for the pardon of sins, and the expulsion of the sin principle. He baptizes with the Holy Spirit, and by the entrance of the Spirit of holiness into our nature, the great usurper — the sin principle — is driven out, executed.

Clarke says: "The design and object of the incarnation and sacrifice of Christ was to condemn sin: to have it executed and destroyed — to annihilate its guilt, power and being in the soul of a believer."

Godet says: "The condemnation of the sin by Christ's life is the means appointed by God for its destruction in ours."

Alford: "Sin is throughout the passage an absolute principle. The Apostle is not speaking of the removal of guilt, but of the practice of sin . . . by the new and sanctifying power of the Spirit by Christ. The context shows that the weakness of the law was its having no sanctifying power. It could arouse sin but could not cast it out." This noble quotation endorses my whole argument, and my translation, "the sin-principle" of the Greek noun for sin in the singular number with the article "the" before it. "The sin" occurs twenty-nine times in three chapters, meaning always "the sin principle." Sixteen of the world's greatest commentators endorse our argument and translation and do not leave Torrey and his Keswick friends an inch of standing. Bless God! we have the truth, and "the mind of Christ," and of the Spirit.

V. Notice the results, v. 4. "That the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Alford: "We must look for the meaning of the word 'condemned' in the effects — victory over sin, and casting out of sin" (the sin principle). This is very important to the right apprehension of the whole chapter, in this part of which, not the justification but the sanctification of Christians is the leading subject. Christ's victory over the sin is mine, by my union with Him, and participation in His Spirit. Whedon: "The righteousness of the law does not mean

imputed righteousness, nor simply innocence, but an actual and active personal righteousness, energized by the Spirit." This does not sound much like "Corruption holiness," does it?

Dear Dr. Maclaren wrote: "Remember the alternative. There must be condemnation for us, or for the sin that dwelleth in us. There is no condemnation for them who are in Christ Jesus, because there is condemnation for the sin that dwells in them. It must be slain or it will slay us. It must be cast out, or it will cast us out from God. It must be separated from us, or it will separate us from Him. We need not be condemned: but if it be not condemned, then we shall be." In your case, dear reader, which shall it be?

Oh, struggling hearts, mourning over spiritual failures and defeats; falling below your ideals, watching and weeping and striving in vain, do you want to keep God's law, and live a victorious life pleasing to Him? Then come in faith to Him who opened the fountain for sin and uncleanness. Come to Him who prayed that you might be sanctified, and shed the blood that cleanses from all sin. Come in faith, and you will not be disappointed.

THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 8

DEATH OR GLORY — WHICH?

TEXT: Rom. 8:5-14. "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh: but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind of the flesh is death, but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace." — Rom. 8:5, 6.

On the previous Section, verses 1-4, Lange tells us: "Christ by becoming man in the flesh and yet having a sinless, fleshly nature, so maintained this sinlessness and holiness . . . that He made it manifest:

1. That sin does not belong to the flesh in itself, but is inherent in it as a foreign, unnatural, condemnable, separable, alienable element.
2. That sin in the flesh is condemned and rejected in its carnal appearance;
3. That sin in the flesh should be separated from the entire human nature by means of the Spirit proceeding from Christ."

We say, Amen! That is precisely what we are always teaching and it is absolutely contradictory to Keswick teaching.

Now the verses before us tell why God wishes us to be rid of this carnal principle. "For those who are under the power of the carnal, rebellious principle" "think of, care for," "relish," "strive after" "the things of the flesh," having no relish for spiritual and eternal things; "but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit." "After" here means "in accordance with" "in harmony with" the Spirit. Augustus Meyer, the great German exegete, says, "After the Spirit designates only the sanctifying divine principle, and not the human spirit. We must choose between these two ruling principles. There is no avoiding it. And in the next verse the Apostle urges us by the most awful motives that can be named to make a right choice: — v. 6. "For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace."

In other words, to live under the influence of the carnal mind — the depraved tendencies of our fallen nature — and to yield to them is to be headed for destruction and to be liable any hour to be numbered among the damned. Yea, it is already moral death. But he who has the mind of the Spirit has already the life and peace of God in his soul and has heaven full in view. And he has peace the soul of life. "Peace with God is connection with the source of life; peace with one's self, a blessed sense of life; peace with the government of God, and His world, an infinitely richer life" (Lange). Sanctified people need nobody's pity, especially the pity of carnal worldlings. They already have heaven begun in their hearts.

In the next verse the Apostle explains why the indwelling sin is so dangerous. Verse 7: "Because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be." The word "flesh" here means the "sin-principle," or depravity. The word for "enmity" means a principle or state of enmity — the essence of hatred. "Because it is a carnal mind and relishes earthly things and sinful things and lives in opposition to the pure and holy law of God, therefore it is enmity against God; it is irreconcilable and implacable hatred. "It is not subject to the law of God." It will come under no obedience, for it is the very principle of rebellion; and it cannot be subject nor subjected. It is essential to the sin principle to show itself in rebellion: and when it ceases to rebel it ceases to be the sin. It dies." So Clarke observes: "From this we learn that the design of God in the economy of the gospel is not to weaken, curtail, nor lay the carnal principle in bonds (repress), but to destroy it. As it is not subject and cannot be subject to the law of God, it must be destroyed else it will continue to rebel against God. It cannot be mended nor rendered less offensive in its nature even by the operations of God. It is ever sin, and sin is ever enmity: and enmity wherever it has opportunity will invariably show itself in acts of hostility and rebellion against God." Absolutely the only thing God can do with it consistently with His holiness is to destroy it.

For (verse 8.) "They that are in the flesh, (that is in this carnal state) cannot please God." This word "flesh" here cannot mean the human body; for Enoch dwelt in a human body, "and before his translation he had this witness borne to him that he had been well-pleasing to God." Jesus dwelt in a human body, and the Father said: This is my beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased. No; "in the flesh" like the phrase "after the flesh," means to be in subjection to this sin principle which perverts and deranges all our sensibilities prompting obedience to them rather than obedience to right reason illuminated by the Holy Spirit. "Cannot please God!" That settles it. The sin-principle that infests our being must be condemned and executed so that we may be wholly loyal and wholly pleasing to God.

I was preaching from these verses in a Holiness Convention in Manchester, England. A noble Baptist minister was there who had come more than a hundred miles to be present. I pictured how awful it would be if across the forehead and breast and back of every unsanctified Christian God should write in ineffaceable letters the words, "Cannot please God!" But I said, it was just as true as if God had written it there. That minister started for the altar saying, "I will not live longer in a state in which I cannot wholly please God." Soon he was gloriously sanctified, and went home to shine for God.

People may talk about taming and subduing and repressing and baptizing into respectability this inbred sin, this child of the devil, all they like. No such idea is scriptural. It is not to be "repressed," nor "suppressed" nor "oppressed," but "expressed" out of our being. The Bible terms are "take away," "purge away," "destroy," "consume by fire," "cleanse from," "eliminate," "mortify," or "kill." And the real blood-bought, truly-saved children of God who really love Him will be so anxious to please Him that they will earnestly plead for the sin-consuming cleansing baptism with the Holy Spirit and fire to burn out this sinful dross from their hearts and make them wholly pleasing to God.

Verse 9. "But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you."

The Holy Spirit sustains three relations to believers: "para" with us, "en" in us, and "epi" upon us. He was with the disciples before the crucifixion (John 14:17). Jesus then promised that He should be in them, which was fulfilled at Pentecost. Also He was "upon" them for power (Acts 1:8). Here then the apostle set forth the experience of sanctification. "Eiper" "provided that" if only "the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." The flesh — the sinful principle possesses men, ruling sinners, and tormenting unsanctified believers, opposing every good within them. But Jesus proposes to cleanse the temple and make man again "a habitation of God through the Spirit." When Jesus baptizes with the Holy Spirit for cleansing He comes in and puts out the sin-principle, His enemy and ours, and fills the vacated nature with Himself to abide in us forever. This is absolutely necessary to our final salvation.

Verse 9. "But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his."

If any man has not this Holy Spirit in some degree of power either with him or in him, either to subdue or to put out this sin-principle, he is none of His. "The Apostle does not regard a merely external belonging to Christ as of any value. Where the Christianity of the inward life is extinct there the Christianity of the whole man is extinct." — Lange. This is one of the great perils of believers. Like the Church of Sardis, they may have a name to live when Christ knows they are already dead. — Rev. 3:1.

Verse 10. "And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of THE SIN; but the spirit is life because of righteousness."

Verse 11. "But if the Spirit of him that raiseth up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

Alford says: "The righteousness of verse 10 is not imputed righteousness but the **IMPLANTED RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE SPIRIT.**" Amen! This is the exact teaching of the orthodox holiness churches. Honest Christian scholars are compelled to endorse our teaching.

The meaning of this passage seems to be this as most in harmony with the context.

"The sin-principle" brought "the death principle" upon the race (Rom. 5:12), and the sentence of physical death must be fulfilled on every human being until the judgment. No doubt this spiritual life of sanctification will not prevent our bodies from dying; but it is the earnest of its participation in the glorious resurrection of Christ. He who receives the Spirit of Christ in sanctifying fullness, and continues to live a life of obedience to the divine will shall have a glorious resurrection to life eternal.

Sanctification removes the artificial and abnormal appetites from the body and leaves the necessary and innocent natural appetites in a normal degree of strength to be henceforth controlled by the sanctified reason. But still, death being a judgment on humanity as a race, the body must die, even though sanctified. Godet says: "Dead here means irrevocably smitten with death."

We mention in passing that Chrysostom, Grotius, and others explain the term "dead" as "dead unto sin." This if correct would make the doctrine of sanctification all the stronger. The indwelling Spirit purifies the whole man even the body and restores all to God.

Verses 12 and 13. "So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh (depraved nature) to live after the flesh: for if ye live after the flesh ye must die: but if by the Spirit ye mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live."

"The natural man," Hofman observes, "imagines that he owes it to his flesh to satisfy it." "The flesh here," says Whedon and Miley, "is a depravity not confined to the body but including the entire tendency to sin." Barnes says: "Sarx (flesh) here is the corrupt propensities and passions." "The Apostle then says that we do not owe these corrupt propensities any gratification. We are not bound to indulge them, because the end is death and ruin, (eternal ruin). "But if ye mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live" (life eternal). Lange says: "Mortify means to exhaust or abnegate to the very root." Barnes says it means "to put to death destroy." "Deeds of the body consists in the predominance of illegal impulses." — Lange. "The corrupt inclinations and passions are called the deeds of the body because they are supposed to have their origin in the fleshly appetites" — Barnes. . . . "Either your sins and evil propensities must die, or you must. If they are suffered to live, you will die. If they are put to death you will be saved. No man can be saved in his sins."

Verse 14. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God." "This," says Lange, "gives the reason why they shall live." By the indwelling, sanctifying Spirit the propensities of the carnal nature are mortified and they are continually led in the way of holiness and so are the sons of God. "One evidence of piety is a willingness to yield to that influence and submit to the Spirit. One decided evidence of a want of piety is an unwillingness to submit to that influence, but where the Holy Spirit is grieved and resisted." (Barnes.)

The influence of the Spirit if followed would lead every man into the experience of entire sanctification and finally to Heaven. But when neglected, rejected, or despised, man, driven on by his own carnality, makes his final home in hell.

Thus closes St. Paul's greatest and most unanswerable argument. It has proved that what the law could not do the gospel, revealing Christ and the infinite Spirit of God, accomplishes; viz, the sanctification of the soul, the destruction of the depraved tendencies of our nature and the recovery in man of the image of God. Blessed is the man who accepts the whole gospel and gains regeneration, sanctification and a glorious heaven!

THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 9

THE PROMISE OF THE FATHER

"And being assembled with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which ye have heard of me." — Acts 1:4.

First things first, is the law of successful achievement. A trained and efficient mind has a sense of logical order and sequence. Before a railroad is built the route is surveyed, the right of way is secured, the funds are collected, and a vast deal of work is done first that the public does not see.

The erection of the tower and the gilding of the weather vane is not the beginning of the great cathedral that is to be the home of worshipers for ages. The plan first, and the foundation, and the great structure: after that, the windows and the organ.

It is so with the making of the temple of a great spiritual life. There are things that are initial and primary, and cannot take a secondary place.

The kingdom of God was to be established on earth and among men. It was to be the greatest enterprise of all ages of human history. "The God of heaven shall set up this kingdom, and it shall stand forever" (Dan. 2:44).

Jesus had often talked about this kingdom to His bewildered disciples. He revealed to them as much as they were able to understand. His words were, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." But He did tell them things of supremest importance that they were to make first in their lives.

1. — A Command.

When an oriental despot commands, men tremble and obey. He has power over the life of his subjects. "Jesus commanded them that they should not depart out of Jerusalem." Martha might have said, "I have neglected all my domestic and social affairs for a long time now, waiting on Jesus. I do not see why I cannot abide in my own home in Bethany among my friends!" Matthew might have said, "I have neglected my business at the custom house these two years, and I find that my revenues are dwindling. If this goes on much longer I shall be bankrupt." Peter and John might have said, "Servants are a poor substitute for proprietors. We must look after our boats and our nets and our fishing, or the business will be ruined." All the rest of the company might have pleaded some urgent demand upon their time and attention and energies that would justify them in going elsewhere at that particular time. Yet here was the command — "Depart not from Jerusalem; but wait for the promise of the Father!"

Waiting is a tiresome business. It wears on the nerves. It exhausts the patience. It finally becomes almost unbearable. "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." Waiting for a guest that does not arrive,

a lover who does not come, a promise that is not fulfilled! Just waiting! It is such a wearing, exasperating business!

Wait where? In Jerusalem, in an upstairs prayer-chamber! Why, Lord, the world waited for your coming thousands of years. And after You came, You waited thirty years before You opened Your lips to tell about Your mission. And You have spoken Your life-giving messages to our ears, and wrought Your miracles before our eyes. We saw You die on the cross for the world's sin. We have had a matchless training at Your feet, and we have a message of life through faith in Christ which the world is in dying need of. Sinners are hungering for the "Bread of Life" and thirsting for "The Water of Life," and longing to hear of some One who can take from their hearts the burden of sin. They are actually dying, "having no hope and without God." Let us go at once and tell the perishing of "the Mighty to save," "The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

"No," says the divine. . . "First things first! Do not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father!"

How slow the Christian Church has been to learn the lesson! Young people will not take time to get an education to prepare themselves to preach the gospel. The world is dying, and they are in a hurry to tell a message before they get a message to tell. They should heed the Master's command and tarry in the school of the prophets till they get their message. And when they have their minds trained and their intellectual apprehension of truth is exact and keen and they really have a message which men need — a gospel of salvation which can give life and hope to the despairing and dying, even then the divine voice says, "WAIT" for the preparation of the heart.

II. — "The promise of the Father."

What is it? The immediate context does not tell: but still we know what they waited for, and what after ten days of waiting they obtained. "Then will I sprinkle clean water (type of the Holy Spirit) upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you and a new spirit will I put within you: And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them. And I will save you from all your uncleannesses" (Ezek. 36:25-29). "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh" (Joel 2:28). After the ten days of waiting and prayer, the Spirit was poured out at Pentecost, and Peter stood up and quoted the above, and said: "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, 'I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh'" (Acts 2:16-17).

This pouring out of the Holy Spirit, then, is what the Father promised, that for which all the members of the Church of Christ were commanded to wait and pray. This was the supreme blessing, the thing of first importance, compared with which everything else was subordinate. This was the burden of Christ's desire for His disciples, as He was about to leave them and ascend to His Father. This was the deepest longing of His heart — this His parting charge to His Church for all the coming years — "Do not henceforth try to teach My gospel, or to preach, or to be missionaries to evangelize the heathen world until you yourself are baptized with the Holy Spirit."

Alas! the sad mistakes, the costly blunders, the abortive efforts, the useless sermons preached, the wasted years, the ruined lives, the lost souls that have resulted from disregarding this parting charge of the Master! We have put everything else in the foreground, and emphasized all the other qualifications for the ministry, until Christ's FIRST THING has been lost sight of and quite forgotten.

Hence the perversions of truth, the monstrous errors, the heresies, the emasculated gospels, the "cunningly devised fables," the fads and hobbies, the divided and wrecked churches, the multitudes of priests and preachers and people lost for ever because they would not have the cleansing baptism with the Holy Spirit!

III. — The blessing of the Spirit was possible.

A promiser puts himself under obligation to fulfill his promise. He cannot break his word without moral ruin to himself. But the Promiser in this case is our own heavenly Father. He cannot lie. He cannot be untrue to us, or to Himself, and "He is able to do what He hath promised."

Therefore we have every encouragement to seek this blessing expectantly: may we not say with every possible, or at least every needed assurance, that we may obtain this great gift of the Holy Spirit? The whole work of salvation, so far as this life is concerned, culminates in this Pentecostal baptism with the Holy Spirit.

Every disciple who obeyed Christ and went to that upper chamber and tarried and prayed till God's appointed time came, obtained the great blessing. Even so it is recorded: "He gives the Holy Spirit to them that obey Him" (Acts 5:32). It is not a matter of age, or culture, or years of religious experience, or mental endowment. After one has obtained the blessing of regeneration, then the next experience may be and should be, the baptism with the Spirit for sanctification. John Wesley puts on record that one Grace Paddy was converted and then sanctified within twelve hours. Twice in my own meetings a man was regenerated and sanctified within five hours. Twice in my presence a seeker obtained the first blessing of regeneration and then the second blessing of sanctification at the same after-service. Let it be distinctly understood, both blessings were not obtained at the same moment, by a single act of faith. The first blessing was obtained by faith exercised for the first blessing of regeneration, and was witnessed to by the Spirit; then, by consecration and faith, the second blessing — the baptism with the Spirit — was definitely sought for sanctification, and was obtained and witnessed to by the Holy Spirit.

This is not only the divine plan and order, but it is the believer's experience. And God is both willing and able to bring these experiences very near together in time, if we will have it so. Oh, the wonders of God's grace!

IV. — "Ye shall have power, the Holy Spirit coming upon you" (v.8).

Every one longs for power. The merchant wants power to draw more customers and sell more goods; the gambler wants power to win the game; the warrior to win the battle; the politician to win the election; the statesman to rule the country. There is not an ambitious sinner on earth who does

not covet power to accomplish his selfish ends. But power is unsafe in a sinner's hands. It is like a stick of dynamite in the hands of an insane man. There is no knowing what awful deed he will commit with it. But when God has got sin and selfishness out of a man, and got divine knowledge into him, then it is perfectly safe for God to entrust him with a goodly measure of power.

So Jesus said, "Tarry in the Jerusalem chamber till you are sanctified; and you will be endued with power." When a man has a clean heart and seeks divine wisdom and guidance, he will not abuse power or use it apart from the glory of God and the good of men. Power to live a victorious life! Power to guard against all the wiles and traps and hidden snares of the Evil One! Power to witness successfully for Christ at all times, in all places, and under all circumstances. Power to do whatever God has for us to do! Power "to speak a word in season to him that is weary, or tried, or tempted, or in need of guidance! Power to preach to one, as Nathan preached to David, or to preach to a thousand, or to ten thousand; or to write a tract, or an article, or a book that God will use to win thousands to Christ! Wonderful, God-given power!

THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 10 MORAL INSANITY

"The heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live" (Eccle. 9:3).

God uses the most striking language conceivable about the wickedness of the human heart. "Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). "From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment" (Isa. 1:6). "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" "Thou . . . knowest not that thou are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev. 3:17). In our text sinners are declared to be full of evil and morally insane.

1. WE ASK: IS THIS LANGUAGE OF GOD TOO STRONG? Are there sufficient points of analogy to justify such strong figures of speech? Let us see.

Notice that madness is a derangement of the intellectual powers. The judgment is dethroned. Reason does not act normally. Power of reflection is at least temporarily lost. Now, what is there in a wicked heart that is similar to this?

1. Sinners waste themselves in efforts to procure trifles, and neglect treasures infinitely valuable. What would be thought of such conduct in the realm of business? Suppose that one of the merchant princes, Wanamaker for instance, when he had ten thousand clerks or salesmen in his employ, had neglected all purchases and sales, bills receivable and bills payable, all accounts, all weighty and important affairs of his vast business, and spent his time in gathering bent pins and broken nails and scraps, and fragments and ravellings of his goods. How soon he would have been adjudged insane! Just imagine Carnegie, the great iron prince, neglecting vast interests of his business in which hundreds of millions of dollars were involved, and wandering about the streets picking up bits of coal, rags and cigar stumps in the gutter, like a gutter bum. Everybody would have said, "Carnegie has lost his mind!" But sinners behave in precisely that way. They chase after the baubles of time, honors, popularity, applause, wealth, pleasure, which a breath of trouble will blow away, and neglect character and salvation, the eternal treasures of the soul. They profess to believe in God's existence, but they pay more attention to Peter Smith or Bill Jones! They confess that God has infinite power: but they treat Him with utter contempt. They know that sin is dangerous; but they pursue and practice it with mad eagerness. Ah, they know better! It is not a mistake of the head. It is moral madness.

2. This spiritual insanity is seen by the way sinners treat their best friends. It is a strange fact that insane people are almost universally inclined to injure those most dear to them. A famous congressman of Ohio was killed by his own son in a fit of insanity. A young man in Circleville, Ohio, killed his own loving mother. A deacon of the writer's church was a most devoted and affectionate husband. He gradually lost his mind from the effect of a sunstroke. In his delirium he

assaulted that precious old wife with whom he had lived for nearly half a century, and also another deacon of the same church whom he had known and loved from boyhood.

Sam Jones told us of two brothers who were slowly killing their mother by their wretched vices. One day the father called the family together, and handed a revolver to one son and a long knife to the other, and said, "There is your mother, now stab and shoot her to death, make quick work of it. It is infinitely more merciful than to kill her by inches as you are now doing by your sins." So multitudes of sinners are the worst enemies of their own families and friends, and are doing more to curse them than all their professed enemies would even think of doing.

Think how the sinners treat God who loves them, and gives them every blessing they enjoy; and added to all the rest, gave His Son to die that they might live. They scorn all the pleadings of divine mercy, treat Christ himself with contemptuous neglect. There is no possible explanation of such morally insane conduct, except that "madness is in their hearts while they live."

3. The moral insanity of sinners is seen by their treatment of fiction as if it were reality, and their treatment of reality as if it were fiction. If you ever have visited an insane asylum you certainly did not fail to notice what strange absurdities had taken possession of the minds of the inmates. And no two of them alike. It is precisely so with sinners. The eternal truths of God, which have brought salvation to millions, through the ages, they treat as if fiction and idle tales; while every foolish fad of modern infidelity and every empty ism that Satan can invent to delude and damn souls is run after with the most eager avidity. God's truths are set at nought and Satan's lies are welcomed and adopted. It proves to a certainty that their moral reason is dethroned, and madness is in their hearts.

4. The moral madness of sinners is seen in their disregard of their spiritual possessions. Suppose a multimillionaire should appear on the public street throwing broadcast hundred-dollar bills, and thousand-dollar bonds, certificates of stocks, notes, deeds of property and costly jewels. How quickly men would conclude he was insane!

Suppose a princely farmer should order his hired men to shoot his blooded horses and cattle, set fire to his barns and fences, and his fields of ripening grain, and his dwellings! Think you his servants would obey? No, indeed! They would conclude he was a madman and put him in an asylum. But how do men sow broadcast the treasures of their soul! How they exert themselves to kill reverence for God and the Bible and sacred things! How they murder conscience and destroy faith, and stifle gratitude and love and waste purity and break down their power of will to choose and do right. They know better. Ah, it is insanity of heart!

5. Men show their madness of heart by absurd attempts to achieve impossibilities. Suppose that the head of the Vanderbilt family should give orders to all our iron firms for structural iron of such vast weight and size as it is impossible to construct, and should assemble thousands of workmen on the ocean shore to construct piers vaster than the pyramids and high as the mountains. And when questioned about the strange proceedings, he should inform the astonished world that he was building a suspension bridge across the Atlantic to make a European connection for the New York Central! How soon his heirs would shut him up and stop his insane folly! But God sees sinners doing things quite as absurd. They are seeking blessedness by defying the holy laws of God. They try to

get life in a career of sin, forgetting that the wages of sin is death! They try to bridge the impassable gulf between them and heaven, by false hopes, false doctrines, and worse practice. Only moral madness could pursue such insane folly.

6. Madmen are uninfluenced by counsel. They take no advice. They laugh at danger and heed no warning. Is it not equally true of sinners? Godly parents say, "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Christian friends invite, "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good." Earnest ministers plead, "We then, as ambassadors for Christ, beseech you, as in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Even the Holy Spirit urges, "Today, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your heart." But parents, friends, preachers and God himself, are turned down with idiotic mockery and the guilty souls rush on madly to their impending doom!

11. How is such conduct to be explained? What malign cause produces such a havoc of destiny? It is not any want of intellect; for noble minds are among the wicked. Nor is it from lack of knowledge. Men have the law of God written in their very hearts. It is from no lack of natural endowments, or a proper balance of faculties. Oh no! The text gives the explanation. "The hearts of the sons of men are full of evil, and madness is in their hearts while they live." Downright wickedness betrays them into such stupendous folly. And back of all this outward wickedness is the depravity, the carnal nature which makes them go stark mad in sin. This innate depravity, when cherished, becomes deliberately, obstinately, inexcusably, insanelly wicked.

Remarks:

1. Moral insanity is far more deplorable than mental insanity. The courts never hold the mentally insane responsible for their conduct. But this is something for which God and men do hold people responsible. It is a solemn, awful sight to see a Nebuchadnezzar lose his mind, to see a mighty intellect go into clouds of darkness! But Oh, to see such a soul lost in ungodly ambition, sensuality, drunkenness, worldly lusts! No other human evil can be compared with this.

2. It is enough to call forth the compassion of all men. How our pity goes out to those who have lost their minds! They are haunted by wild vagaries, troubled by foolish suspicions, excited by needless alarms. All beholders are filled with pity, sympathy, and a desire to help. But Oh, these morally insane, who are driven by an evil spirit to utter ruin! How sad the spectacle! It awakes the compassion of God, angels and men.

3. No wonder God is compelled to confine the wicked by themselves. We dare not let the mentally insane run at large. Neither property nor life would be safe. But they are not half so dangerous as a modern infidel in a university chair, breaking down the faith in God of a whole body of students. No man jeopardizes human interests as does a distiller, or a saloon-keeper, or a libertine. A half-crazed scoundrel shot President Garfield and another shot President McKinley. But what lunatic is half so dangerous to human government as a mad rebel against God — a Voltaire, or Tom Paine, or Bob Ingersoll or a modern infidel in a university chair, breaking down the faith of college students, is to the divine government? God gives probation to such a little while, but sooner or later, He is compelled to incarcerate the incurably morally insane in the mad-house of hell.

4. But Jesus can cure completely. He cast the demons out of the insane Gadarene, and proved Himself the master of moral insanity. The prodigal son had not had a sane hour for years; but at last, "he came to himself." Conversion breaks the spell of the world's delusions, sanctification wholly restores to the right mind. None but the sanctified have all the cause of moral madness taken out. None but they are perfectly sane. Will you let this mighty Savior deal with your case, and make you "every whit whole," clothed and in your right mind?

THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 11

"THINGS THAT ACCOMPANY SALVATION"

"Things that accompany salvation" (Heb. 6:9).

How much the word "SALVATION" means! Print it large; for it stands for the greatest experience that comes to man in time or eternity. Man is born with a proclivity to evil, a heart estranged from holiness and from God. At the earliest dawn of his moral life he gives expression to that evil tendency by the deliberate choice of sin. Sins multiply. Wrong acts form wrong habits. Habits rapidly form character. Wrong character soon determines a wrong destiny. Salvation reverses the entire process and alters the eternal result.

God sends His convicting Spirit to bring us to repentance. If the Spirit is yielded to, we turn from sin with abhorrence, and forsake a life of self-gratification, and make the supreme choice to live for the good of others and for the glory of God. This is, in Scripture language, being "born again." The life is no longer self-centered but Christ-centered.

But there is still left in us the evil trend. Sooner or later the Spirit will convict us of a need, and awaken within us a heart-hunger for more grace. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled" (Matt. 5:6). If that divine prompting is yielded to, the hunger and longing to be delivered from the carnal mind will be so imperious that the soul will not cease its seeking and striving and pleading for help from God until the heavens open and Christ pours out His Spirit with sin-killing energy, and the heart is cleansed from indwelling sin (Acts 15:9, Luke 11:13). Such has been the experience of countless thousands of souls. This is what we call "full salvation"! Now what is it that accompanies such a salvation?

1. — Power to be what He wishes you to be.

Christ said, "Ye shall have power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses." Oh, how many Christians perpetually carry about a heavy heart because they realize that their own life does not measure up to the moral standard of their own judgment of what a Christian ought to be! Their own inner light reveals the flecks and flaws, the inconsistencies and blunders, the faults and sins, into which they have been trapped unexpectedly and unawares by the great adversary of all good! They sincerely wish they did live more worthily. They sigh because they are not better specimens of a Christian, better examples of the might of Christ to save. What poor witnesses for Christ they feel they are! How little their life commends Christ to sin-burdened souls!

But oh! when this blessing comes in its glorious fullness; when Christ is revealed in His full power to save; when the flood-tide of salvation joy comes pouring in, and the heart, like a bird, is full of song, and there is a new light in the face and a new look in the eye, and a new spirit and steadiness of life in the whole being — then, then is realized Jesus' promise, "Ye shall receive power to be witnesses."

II. — Power to do.

"They that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits."

Has it not always been so through the ages? The people who knew God and had a special endowment of His Spirit, so long as they kept the experience, never lived in vain, never were just ordinary. They might have been ordinary enough before they received the blessing, but never afterward. What a list of spiritual giants, men and women, might be named, from George Fox, the founder of the Quakers or Friends, and Jonathan Edwards the Puritan, and John Wesley the Methodist, and William and Catherine Booth of the Salvation Army, and Madame Guyon the Roman Catholic, and John Bunyan the Baptist, and Finney the Congregationalist — all leaders of great movements in the religious world — down to the present hour; evangelists, bishops, authors, editors, teachers who have blessed their age, touched the nations with a hallowing influence, and who light up Christianity itself with a radiant glory which shall never grow dim! An uncounted host of Christian workers are rearing godly families, training children for future service in the kingdom of Christ, teaching in Sabbath schools, doing visitation work where they live, pushing on the Church and kingdom of Christ to ever-increasing victory and triumph just because they welcomed the Holy Spirit into their hearts.

III. — A burden for souls.

This is another thing that accompanies this great salvation.

Paul had it. He said: "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren." It nearly broke his heart to see them continually rejecting their only Savior. So whenever this blessing comes, the pastor or the laity can never be satisfied with fruitlessness. There is an impelling influence, a divine urgency which will not be quenched. Christians feel it even in the humblest walks of life. The most illiterate as well as the educated have a heaven-born passion for souls.

I was once spending the night with a man who had been recently saved and sanctified. He could neither read nor write. But he carried in his pocket a New Testament, with pages marked by a friend that would teach others how to be saved or sanctified. With that meager equipment some ten people, his own workmates, had been led into rich experiences of grace.

David Brainerd said of himself: "I cared not where or how I lived, or what hardships I went through, so that I could but gain souls to Christ. While I was asleep I dreamed of these things: and when I awaked, the first thing I thought of was this great work. All my desire was the conversion of the heathen, and all my hope was in God." John Smith, the mighty Wesleyan preacher, used to say: "I am a broken-hearted man; not for myself, but on account of others. God has given me such a sight of the value of souls, that I cannot live if they are not saved. Oh, give me souls, or else I die!"

Of Alleine it is said that "He was infinitely and insatiably greedy of the conversion of souls; and to this end he poured out his very heart in preaching and prayer."

Bunyan said: "In my preaching I could not be satisfied unless some fruits did appear in my work."

Doddridge wrote to a friend: "I long for the conversion of souls more sensibly than for anything besides. I could not only labor for it, but die for it with pleasure."

Whitefield prayed: "O God, give me souls, or take my soul!" This was the passion that brought Jesus from the skies, and it is the spirit that will possess us when this blessing of full salvation comes to us.

IV. — Trials.

Trials will assuredly accompany salvation.

It will not be because one has little salvation but because he has much. Trials are a matter of divine appointment. They let us know what we are and how much we have got. They are more precious to God than gold.

Less than two years ago a letter came informing us that over three thousand dollars' worth of wheat had been stolen from us up in Canada. I never lost one wink of sleep over it. I said: "Thank God! now I know that I have a good case of religion. I have something laid up in heaven more precious than barns full of wheat, where thieves cannot break through and steal!"

St. Paul had ceaseless trials; but he wrote to a church, "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, rejoice!" Jesus had no end of trials; but when standing under the very shadow of the cross He said, "My peace I give unto you." "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but he of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

V. — A concern for the kingdom.

A concern for the kingdom and the glory of the King accompanies this great salvation.

No sooner had the Spirit come upon the first disciples than they manifested a great concern for the glory of Jesus. Everywhere and always, if they wrought a miracle or made an effective Speech that produced results, they gave Christ the glory. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them: Ye rulers of the people and elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that **BY THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST** of Nazareth, Whom ye crucified, Whom God raised from the dead, even **BY HIM** doth this man stand before you whole" (Acts 3:8-10).

When the rulers threatened them if they spoke or taught any more "in the Name of Jesus," they answered, "We cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard."

Thus they went forth burning with zeal to glorify Christ and spread His kingdom, unmoved by scourgings and imprisonments and tortures and death in the amphitheaters, their lives a living sacrifice for Christ.

Such deeds fitly and naturally accompany this great salvation. Many are now going everywhere to the ends of the earth to spread the good news. In city or village or country, in churches or halls or tents or in the streets, with pay or without pay, with popularity or persecution, on and on they go to rescue souls from death and hell, and to spread the glory of the Name that is above every name.

THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By **Aaron Merritt Hills**

Chapter 12

RECEIVING THE HOLY GHOST

"Receive ye the Holy Spirit" (John 20:22).

"Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed?" (Acts 19:2).

"Who have received the Holy Spirit" (Acts 10:47).

"Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?" (Gal. 3:2).

Multitudes Seem not to realize that we are living in the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. In the pre-Christian ages men were under the dispensation of the Father: and the duty of man and the test of man was his acknowledgment and worship of the One Only God. This was Abraham's duty and the test of his piety, as it was with Enoch and Abel.

Then came the dispensation of Christ the Son — "God manifest in the flesh." Then it was the duty and the test of men to receive Jesus, and acknowledge Him as Savior and Lord. This brought life and salvation. But Jesus looked with unutterable sorrow upon the people, and said, "Ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life."

Then came the present dispensation — that of the Holy Spirit, who is now the representative and executive of the Godhead. Christians are now born of the Spirit, guided and led by the Spirit, comforted and sanctified and filled and empowered by the Spirit. It is now the duty and the test of men to yield to the Spirit and accept Him as Leader and Guide and Sanctifier and Keeper. We get our present comfort and victory, and our future glorification through Him.

1. — Note that the Spirit is a Person.

Some have degraded the Spirit to a mere influence. Others have taught that it is another name for the written Word. But nobody can fairly interpret the words of Jesus in the upper chamber about the Holy Spirit, and put with them the things said about Him elsewhere in the Bible, without concluding that He is as truly a person as God the Father, or His only-begotten Son. He has the very same personal attributes as the Father. He is omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent: He thinks, feels, and wills; speaks, comforts, guides; inspires, instructs, warns; is grieved, resisted, rejected; strives, helps, intercedes; speaks and hears; is blasphemed and His influence so scorned, and His character so insulted, that He sorrowfully leaves the soul to its eternal doom. He is a person as much as we are, or as God is, if language can have any meaning.

Sinners can have no internal communion or fellowship with Him, or receive or know Him. But He convicts them of sin, striving to lead them to repentance and salvation. Yet He manifests himself

to Christians continually, revealing truth and Christ unto them, trying to sanctify them, and empower them for service, and fit them for a glorious heaven.

II. — He is a Gift.

That means that His work in the Christian's life cannot be earned or procured as a reward of service. He must be served if we are saved: service and salvation are wedded to each other and can never be divorced. Yet the incoming of the Spirit into a Christian's life is so infinitely important, and transcendently precious, that it could by no possibility ever be earned.

Moreover, the Spirit's work in the heart cannot be bought. Simon Magus tried to do it, but was sternly rebuked for it. No person is opulent enough to procure this treasure by any effort of generosity. The poorest can have it; but the richest cannot buy it. The simple reason is, the Spirit is a gift.

Gifts are received, as hungry beggars receive bread; as shivering mendicants receive clothing to cover their nakedness. Hence the texts quoted at the head of this article. Hence Jesus said: "The heavenly Father gives the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him." Hence Peter said: "We are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit whom God hath given to them that obey Him (Luke 11:13 and Acts 5:32).

Please remember, then, that as truly as God gave His Only Son to a world of sinners, so truly has He given, and does give, the Holy Spirit to Christians. We come to God for comfort in sorrow, for healing in sickness, for forgiveness of sin, for cleansing from impurity. But while strength and cleansing are all gifts of God to believers, the Author of them all is a gift also.

Instead, then, of seeking these gifts in a half-reluctant manner, now and then one, would it not be more in harmony with the plan of God to seek Him? For when the Spirit came to abide in our hearts, He would bring His gifts with Him. It is not only a delight to God, but He even commands us to RECEIVE Him, and "be filled with the Spirit." And it grieves His loving heart when we do not obey. He knows that we lose the most priceless blessing this side of heaven.

III. — If we receive Him, we must seek Him for His own sake and not for what He gives.

The son of a wealthy father should love him for his own sake, and not for the sake of the wealth he may inherit. To love selfishly is not to love at all. So to seek the Spirit for the gifts, is really seeking the gifts, and not seeking Him at all.

Probably this is one of the chief hindrances in seeking this blessing of holiness. We "ask and receive not, because we ask amiss" — selfishly for the joy, or the honor, or the fame, or the power, or the reward. God is compelled to withhold the gift for a time until our motives are purified.

A Christian woman sought the baptism with the Spirit for a whole night in prayer, and in the morning was no nearer the blessing than she was the night before. It was suggested to her that she was not seeking the Holy Spirit, but the joy of the Spirit. When she perceived that, she said: "I see

my blunder. I have not been seeking Him at all. I have been seeking some manifestation of Him. I receive Him now by faith. I just receive HIM whether I ever have a moment's happiness or not. I will not question about that, I will just take HIM." And instantly He responded to her loving faith, and gave her, not the joy she was seeking, but His own blessed Self — a conscious presence in her soul. Of course joy followed later; for the fruits of the Spirit always come when needed.

We know of a minister who sought the Spirit long and earnestly, that he might have power, and be like Finney. He did not get the blessing until years afterward, when he sought in a better way. This may account for the reason that Moody sought so earnestly for three months, and A. B. Earl for five years, before the Spirit came. We may be sure the Spirit had ample reason for His delay. He will not respond to our prayers, until our seeking is for His glory.

It is much to be regretted that some of our holiness evangelists have been betrayed into magnifying and stressing manifestations, and emotions, and gifts, until whole audiences have been turned aside to seeking them instead of Him — the Holy Spirit. We know of a whole body of students led aside on this false trail by an imperious, dominating will: they sought feelings and ecstasies. The result was the wrecking of the presidency and the ruin of the religious experience of many of the students, from which a large number will never recover. Some lost their sanity, others re-acted into infidelity, and bright lights were put out.

If you are bent on having manifestations, and ecstatic emotions, and physical thrills, you can unfaithfully get them without God; for the devil can counterfeit them all, deceiving the very elect. And no sight is more sad than the ultimate wreckage that follows in the wake of such man-made and Satan-inspired enthusiasms. But when the movings of the sensibilities are Pentecostal and genuine, we bow reverently, and let the Spirit have right of way.

IV. — How do we receive the Spirit?

(1) By obedience. "God gives the Spirit to them that OBEY Him." He cannot take up His abode with us while there is any insubordination in our hearts. Not until we consent to be and do what He wishes, and let Him have His way with us, can we rationally expect His coming. Obedience comes first.

(2) By faith. "But," said a seeker at the altar to me, "I will not believe that the Spirit comes and sanctifies me until I feel the experience in my heart." Ah, then you will never get it. You could deal with a rogue or villain in that way: and is that all the confidence you have in the Word of the holy God? You must receive the promised Comforter by faith, without feeling or evidence, except God's promise. God will respond to the faith, with the instant gift of the Holy Spirit. Faith first: experience and feeling afterward.

We were told in England of a devout young woman living in New Zealand, whose heart became hungry for God. She wanted to be holy and filled with the Spirit, and knew not how to receive the blessing. She took steamer for London and attended the famous May Meetings, and still was as hungry as ever. They advised her to go to the Keswick Convention. She went, and the last meeting of Keswick week left her as unsatisfied as ever, and her heart was nearly broken. That evening she

attended a holiness meeting in a little hall, led by Reader Harris, and was sanctified and filled with the Spirit that evening. But, if she had only known it, she could have been spared the long journey to England and back, twenty-five thousand miles, and received the Holy Spirit by faith in her own home in thirty minutes. He was there, and waiting to be received, and He is waiting to be received by every one who reads these lines. Will you, dear reader, have Him now?

THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 13

A MAN OF GOD UNSANCTIFIED

"So he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water" (1 Kings 13:19).

The Bible is the world's greatest textbook on morals. It often teaches by personal incidents and story illustrations. The most important truths are sometimes wrapped up in a narrative that would delight a child, or interest a sage.

We have here a long chapter detailing the experiences of God trying to reach the conscience of a king and a nation, and His failure to do it because of the religious short-coming of two preachers, who ought to have been better men. It is enough to move the clerical profession at least to serious self-examination.

I. WE ARE INTRODUCED TO AN UNNAMED "MAN OF GOD."

Is not that name enough to give personal distinction to any man? It is like the title God gave to Abraham, "And he was called the friend of God." "But thou, Israel art the seed of Abraham my friend." So God called the great lawgiver "my servant Moses;" and called "Daniel beloved of the Lord." God has splendid titles for His very own.

Who is "a man of God"?

1. He is one of the regenerated. A man who of choice and full purpose of heart is living in deliberate and persistent rebellion against God would not hold the glorious title, "a man of God."

2. This "man of God" at least was commissioned by the Almighty to perform an unpleasant and dangerous task. "And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of Jehovah unto Bethel: and Jeroboam was standing by the altar to burn incense. And he cried against the altar by the word of Jehovah, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith Jehovah; Behold, a son shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he sacrifice the priests of the high-places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall they burn upon thee. And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which Jehovah hath spoken: Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out.

"And it came to pass, when the king heard the saying of the man of God, Jeroboam put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not draw it back again to him. The altar also rent, and the ashes poured out, from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of Jehovah. And the king said to the man of God, Entreat now the favor of Jehovah thy God, and pray for me, that my hand be restored to me again. And the man of God entreated Jehovah, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as it was before" (R. V.).

After all this no one could make Jeroboam believe that this was not a real "man of God," for—

3. God used him and heard his prayers, put a prophecy in his mouth, and brought it to pass, and punished the idolatrous king who thought to do him violence. Jehovah says, "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm."

4. He is sixteen times in this chapter called "the man of God," and God used him as if he owned him, body and soul. St. Paul, said of God, "Whose I am, and whom I serve." There can be no doubt about such a character.

5. He proved himself to be "the man of God" because he was unbribable. The humbled king offered him a reward if he would come back and refresh himself in his palace. But he replied, "If thou wilt give me half thy house, I will not go with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: for so was it charged me by the word of Jehovah, saying, Thou shalt eat no bread, nor drink water, neither return by the way that thou camest. So he went another way" (R. V.). A true "man of God" is not to be bribed by high offices, nor big pulpits, or large salaries, or any royal honors that this old world can offer. He sets his face like a flint against all sin.

II. "Now THERE DWELT AN OLD PROPHET IN BETHEL."

This one is called "a man of God." He was probably backslidden, and had compromised under the influence of Jeroboam, and God would not use him. More than likely, also, he was jealous because God had sent clear to Judah to find a man who would deal faithfully with the wicked king.

When he heard from his son what "the man of God" had said and done, he followed after him to meet him and entertain him. He found "the man of God" sitting under an oak, and invited him to his home; but he received the same answer that was given to the king. "I may not return with thee, for it was said to me by the word of Jehovah," etc. And the old backslidden prophet said unto him, "I also am a prophet as thou art; and an angel spake unto me by the word of Jehovah, saying, Bring him back with thee into thy house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But he lied unto him. So he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water." Verses 18-19 R. V.

III. HERE COMES THE TRAGEDY OF A NOBLE LIFE.

"The man of God" trusted and honored and used by Jehovah, who could not be bribed or coaxed to be untrue to God, is deceived by a miserable lie in the mouth of a backslidden preacher. Oh, the devices of Satan!

We have trained eight hundred students to preach holiness. Some of the brightest of them, with the richest experience, and a dear witness of the Holy Spirit to sanctification, and a success in preaching holiness that was more than human, have met some backslidden church official who told them there was nothing in the doctrine of sanctification, and invited them to go back and eat and drink with the old crowd in the backslidden land. In absolute opposition to the clear testimony of God, they believed the devil's lie, and went.

That deceived, disobedient prophet was no more truly slain by the lion, than those precious young men have been slain as to their marked power and usefulness. They indeed have their reward in big pulpits and large salaries in backslidden Bethel; but the unction and glory of their work has departed and "Ichabod" is written across their lives.

To deny and go back on God's witness to a personal experience, is fearfully like the sin of blaspheming against the Holy Ghost which hath never forgiveness.

IV. NOTE THE FAR-REACHING CONSEQUENCES OF DISOBEDIENCE FROM TRUSTING TO A LIE AND A LIAR.

1. It was fatal to the noble man of God himself. It cost him his life, even if it did not cost him his eternal salvation.

2. It resulted in the final ruin of Jeroboam, and of his dynasty. We may well believe that the fearful warning of "the man of God," and the withering of his arm, and its restoration in answer to prayer, made a profound impressions on the king's wicked heart. It must have moved him mightily to repentance and reformation. But then "the man of God" himself was slain by the lion for disobedience, "after these things," says the holy record, "Jeroboam returned not from his evil way" (R. V.) but pushed on in wickedness until he and his house, and nation were destroyed from the face of the earth.

V. NOTE THE SUPREME IMPORTANCE OF LITTLE THINGS.

1. "The man of God" was overtaken by the lying prophet, "sitting under an oak." If he had not been acting so leisurely, but had hurried along to the completion of God's business, he would not have been overtaken, and all would have been changed.

2. It seems a "peccadillo" to sneering critics what a man eats, or when, or where, or what road he takes. But God thinks differently. It made a profound difference to Eve and Adam and "the man of God," what and where they ate and drank. With some, God tells us, "not even to eat."

3. It seems to many, a matter of indifference whether we receive the Holy Spirit or not. But we may well believe, if "the man of God had been filled with the Spirit he would not have believed the devil's lie in opposition to the expressed command of God. And, doubtless, if the old prophet had been sanctified, he would not have been a backslidden liar, guilty of the death of "the man of God," Jeroboam and his nations might have been saved, and God more glorified.

THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 14 THE WILL OF GOD

"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification" (1 Thess. 4:3).

It is pleasant to know that somebody is willing for us to be sanctified. Often the Church is not. Sanctification is peculiarly a Methodist doctrine, but we have known presiding elders and bishops of that church to persecute and drive ministers out of their connection because they obtained and professed this blessing. Members of a person's own family will often look upon him who obtains this blessing with a touch of pity as mildly insane. Church leaders will say to young preachers: "You'll be ruined if you become a holiness preacher."

Yet, unlike these opposers in the Church and out of it, God tells us it is His will that we should be sanctified. Read the text again.

I. WHAT IS SANCTIFICATION?

The Greek New Testament lexicon will make it plain. "The adjective *hagios* primarily means pure, clean, without blemish, holy, morally pure, upright, blameless in heart and life." The verb *hagiazo*, derived from the adjective, means "To make clean, to purify, to sanctify." The noun *hagiasmos* means "sanctification, purity of heart and life, holiness produced by the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 6:19-22; I Thess. 4:3,7, 8; Heb. 12:14; 2 Thess. 2:13).

This is the testimony of the New Testament lexicon. The Standard English Dictionary defines "sanctification" as "The gracious work of the Holy Spirit whereby the believer (not the sinner) is freed from sin and exalted to holiness of heart and life." Notice:—

(1) It is the Spirit's work. Sanctification is not the result of culture, education, growth, striving, self-discipline, self-development, death or purgatory." The Greek New Testament teaches that this blessing is obtained immediately, here and now, by the baptism with the Holy Spirit (Acts 15:8, 9). Notice:—

(2) "Whereby the believer." Then it is a second work of grace obtained only after conversion."

(3) "The believer is freed from sin" (inbred sin or depravity). The great discussion of St. Paul in the fifth to the eighth chapters of Romans shows that it means we are "freed from depravity" according to the interpretation of the world's best scholarship.

We have all inherited depravity through race connection from Adam. This sanctification of the Holy Spirit is its only cure. It alone cleanses the heart from the propensity to sin, and makes it clean and pure.

As Worcester's Dictionary says: "Sanctification is cleansing from corruption, purifying from the dominion of sin."

Now—

II. CONSIDER THE EVIDENCES THAT CHRISTIANS MAY OBTAIN SUCH A BLESSING.

We might draw a most satisfactory and, as we believe, unanswerable argument:

(1) From the nature and character of God. Surely an infinitely holy God must hate every kind of sin with an infinite, eternal hatred: and He must do everything that is right and reasonable to help us get rid of it. He will never force us to be holy against our wills: but if we will consent to be made holy, and will seek His help, He will make us holy. Jesus said: "All power is given me in heaven and on earth," and "He came to destroy the works of the devil."

Now the greatest work of the devil in us was the implanting of depravity, or the spirit of alienation from God, in every human breast. But Jesus has ample power to destroy it: and He will destroy it if we will permit Him and will co-operate with Him.

A man said to his friend: "It took two to sanctify me." "Who were they?" "Why, it took me and God." "Well, what did God do?" "He sanctified me." "And what did you do?" "I let Him." This is the truth put in few words. We seek: God sanctifies.

(2) Another evidence of the possibility of such an experience is that it is God's will. Our text says: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." Only ourselves can frustrate this will of God.

(3) Jesus prayed for it. "Sanctify them" (John 17:17). God will never refuse to answer the prayer of His holy Son. Nothing can prevent this blessing coming to us but our own opposition to the will of God.

(4) God commanded it. "Like as he who called you is holy, be ye yourself also holy in all manner of living; he cause it is written, Ye shall be holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15, 16).

(5) Our Savior commanded it. "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48).

(6) Jesus died for it. "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it" (Eph. 5:25,26). "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered without the gate" (Heb. 13:12).

Now the adorable God will never permit His holy Son to die in vain. Be sure some people are going to be sanctified: and it may as well be you as anyone. It will be you if you will be a candidate for the blessing and comply with the conditions.

(7) God calls us to be sanctified. "For God calls us not for uncleanness, but in sanctification" (1 Thess. 4:7).

(8) God chose us to be sanctified. "God chose you, beloved of the Lord, from the beginning unto salvation, in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." Nothing but obstinate unbelief will shut us out from this blessing (2 Thess. 2:13).

(9) God promises this blessing to all that earnestly seek it. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness (rightness of heart), for they shall be filled" (Matt. 5:6). "The God of peace himself sanctify you wholly. . . . Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it" (1 Thess. 5:23, 24).

(10) We are taught to pray for it. The Lord's prayer is a prayer for sanctification, and it dovetails into our text as if meant to be a part of it. "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by thy name. Thy kingdom come: Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." Are they not all holy in heaven? Are they not all free from every form of sin there? Have they not all pure and holy hearts there? Holiness is the very life and breath and atmosphere of heaven. Then we are to be like that on earth.

Does anyone dare to say that Jesus taught us to pray for that which cannot be realized? Never! Therefore, we may be sanctified on earth before we reach heaven.

God declares that nothing shall enter heaven that defileth or worketh abomination or maketh a lie." The depravity in human hearts does nothing else than defile and corrupt the imaginations and the thoughts. He perverts the appetites and desires.

This depravity, this wicked alienation from God does nothing else but work abominations and make deceits in the individual life, in the family, in the church, in the school, in the community, in the nation, in all the world. The world war, with all its indescribable horrors and infamies, was only the depravity of hell let loose in human hearts to fester, and corrupt, and blight, and destroy humanity, and blot out the image of God from the nature of man.

No wonder the triune God hates it and wills its destruction. No wonder His infinite love has procured a perfect remedy; but it cost the awful price of Calvary and the atoning death of the only begotten Son of God.

Beloved, shall we allow that awful price to be paid in vain, so far as we are concerned? Shall you and I reject so great a salvation procured for us at such a price? If we do, our damnation will be deserved and swift and inevitable.

"Without sanctification no man shall see the Lord."

THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 15

THE REASON FOR OUR HOPE

"But sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord: being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, yet with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15).

The commentator Godbey asks: "How shall we sanctify Christ in our hearts?" He answers: "The Christian has Christ and depravity in his heart. Christ rules or He would not stay: But He has a rival. Cast out all else, and let Christ rule alone."

Is such a state of heart possible? Can a poor sinner, down in the ditch of sin, abhorred by others and abhorring himself, climb to such an extraordinary height of grace in a few days? Can one who is an alien by birth and a sinner by choice, condemned to God's wrath, and fit fuel for eternal burnings, come into such a sublime relationship to God almost immediately? Can his sins be blotted out and pardoned for ever, and Christ be enthroned within, so that he shall be indwelt and possessed by the Spirit of God, and his heart be pure and his life holy?

Exactly this and nothing less than this is our sublime hope. It is beyond philosophy. It surpasses reason. It beggars description. But it is blessedly true. The star of hope shines through all the clouds of past sins, and all the darkness of ungodly years. We dare to believe that although we were born with depravity, and have committed sins innumerable, yet, through the grace of an atoning Savior, our sins have been forgiven, our hearts have been cleansed, and by growth in grace we are now being fitted for glory, in God's own time, to be received into heaven to dwell with Him forever.

What reason have we for such a daring hope?

I. BECAUSE GOD HAS PROVIDED FOR THE PARDON AND REGENERATION OF SINNERS

He held out a marvelous encouragement to those who would turn their back upon sin and look to Him for mercy. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (Is. 4:7). Again He looked in compassion upon us, as we were staggering along under the crushing load of sin, and said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." We still were dull of hearing and went on downward, as if intoxicated with sin and enamored with death. Again in loving pity for the sure doom that awaited us, He said: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

There came a day, how well we remember it, when we grew weary of sin. We longed for rest from the heavy burden. We took God at His word, and helplessly threw ourselves upon His mercy. And, to the praise of His name we witness, we were not disappointed. He buried our sins in the depths of the sea of His infinite love, and we saw the burden no more.

II. WE CHERISH THIS BECAUSE GOD PROVIDED SANCTIFICATION FOR ALL HIS CHILDREN, AND MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO BE CLEANSED AND HOLY

Someone exclaims: "Show it. We want the proof." Very well, here it is; enough to satisfy the most incredulous:

(1) God **PLANNED** for our sanctification back in eternity. "He chose us in him before the foundation of the world that we should **BE HOLY** and without blemish before him in love" (Eph 1:4). And as if this single assurance were not enough, He tells us again: "God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in **SANCTIFICATION** of the Spirit." Now, if, back in the ages, before the rock-foundations of the earth were laid a hundred million years ago, or the sons of God shouted for joy over a new-born world, God foresaw the sin and fall of our race, and all its dire consequences of woe, and provided for our pardon and sanctification, it is not unreasonable to expect this plan of God to be realized in time. We are certainly justified in coming to the throne of grace, and pleading for the fulfillment of the plan.

(2) We are informed that it is **GOD'S WILL** that we should be sanctified. "For this is the will of God, even your **SANCTIFICATION** (1 Thess. 4:3). In other words, He planned it ages ago; and this gracious purpose is still the same. What an encouragement to us to seek the great blessing!

Does it never occur to you how we mock God if we do not do it? He taught us to pray, "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come; **THY WILL BE DONE**, in earth as it is in heaven." Stop there, please. Now ask God what is His will concerning His children. He will reply quickly, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." What shall we do about it? Shall we seek the blessing? Or shall we go on mocking God by repeating a prayer that we do not even intend shall be answered? God, keep us back from such hypocrisy.

(3) Sanctification is our **INHERITANCE**.

St. Paul said to an audience, "I commend you to God, and the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified." Most of us are quite careful to look out for an inheritance. When we are the rightful heir to an estate we put in our claim. The children of God are all heirs to this inheritance. We can each go with all boldness to the court of heaven and put in our claim.

(4) The inheritance was bought for us by our Elder Brother. "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it" (Eph. 5:25, 26). "Wherefore Jesus, also, that he might sanctify the people, suffered without the gate" (Heb. 13:12, 13). Our precious Jesus shed His blood and poured out His life that we might each become sanctified and holy. How doubly

precious and infinitely desirable it ought to make sanctification seem to us, when we learn that Jesus suffered with this end in view. We sympathize with the Christian sister whom we heard pray years ago: "O Lord, help us to experience in our own hearts and lives all that Jesus bought for us with His own blood." We shall never forget how that prayer struck through our heart with conviction for sanctification. We never got over it until we went to the fountain for cleansing. Is it too much to say that Christians who, knowingly, reject sanctification are blood despisers and Christ-rejecters?

(5) God **COMMANDS** us to have sanctification.

Surely it is not rash for us to obey our heavenly Father Who says, "Like as he which called you is holy, he ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living: because it is written, Ye shall be holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15, 16). He wants us to be like Him in our inner nature. He so created the race "in His own image." But the race fell, and depravity resulted, and it has been passed down by race connection to every son and daughter of Adam. Each of us was born with a tendency to sin and a trend toward evil, and "an evil heart of unbelief to depart from the living God." This is a grief to our heavenly Father. And He has prepared a remedy: the heart-cleansing baptism with the Holy Spirit for sanctification.

Oh, the shame of it, if we refuse this blessing, and prefer to retain within us a spirit of alienation from God! And, oh, the peril of it! It means downright disobedience: and that persisted in means the death of the soul. Obedience is the soul of religion. Jesus said, "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments; he that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me" (John 14:15 and 21). How is it? Do you love Jesus enough to seek sanctification and be holy in order to please Him? If not, if you only have a little fashionable, gushing, sentimental admiration for Jesus, your carnal mind will easily persuade you to ignore His command and live on with a heart infested with sin.

(6) God calls us to sanctification.

"God calls us not for uncleanness but unto sanctification" (1 Thess. 4:7). "God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in **SANCTIFICATION OF THE SPIRIT** and belief of the truth, whereunto He **CALLED YOU** through our gospel." God will not force this blessing upon us: but oh! how urgently He calls us to have it. By the fitful tempers and unruly passions and unholy longings of our poor wayward hearts, He speaks. By the restlessness and hunger of our souls for a closer walk with God, He urges. By His blessed Word, and the convicting and wooing influences of His Holy Spirit, He calls to the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

(7) Jesus **PRAYED** that we might have sanctification.

"Sanctify them" (John 17:17). Is it improper to seek for, and expect to realize in this life, what Jesus prayed for in that solemn upper chamber on the night before He suffered for us? When the shadows of death were upon Him, and He could already feel its pangs in anticipation, He thought of our need, and prayed that we might be sanctified. Shall we let that intercessory prayer he offered in vain?

(8) Jesus is faithful to sanctify us when we want it done. "Faithful is He that calleth you" (to sanctification — see previous verse and I Thess. 4:7) "Who also will do it" (1 Thess. 5:24). Oh, the blessed fidelity of Jesus! How many countless thousands of times He has heard prayers for sanctification, and poured out His Spirit in efficacious, cleansing power!

(9) When it is done the HOLY GHOST WITNESSES to it. "For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, whereof, also, the HOLY SPIRIT BEARETH WITNESS to us." Others may make light of this whole subject and think that we are led by a delusion, but when Jesus baptizes us with the Holy Ghost, thus cleansing our hearts, and the Spirit bears witness to the work, and wakes the joys of heaven within us, and gives "the peace that passeth understanding," it does not matter much what others say about it.

(10) Jesus is NOT ASHAMED of those who have this blessing. "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb. 2:11). There are a great many professing Christians who are so unlike Christ, and weak, and worldly, and unstable, and unfruitful, that they must be a grief to the angels, and Jesus must be ashamed of them. But when He gets a believer sanctified and Spirit-filled, Jesus is not ashamed of him.

(11) The end is heaven.

"Now being free from the sin, and become servants of God, ye have your fruit unto SANCTIFICATION, and the end ETERNAL LIFE" (Rom. 6:22). Now, these are the reasons for the blessed hope within us. We think they are good reasons. And so, in spite of the sneers and derisions of worldly and backslidden professors, we go shouting along on our way to heaven.

THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 16

SANCTIFIED WHOLLY

I Thess. 5:23, 24: "And may your spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless . . . Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." — GREEK and R. V.

Many preachers and teachers and honest Christians do not understand that the Bible teaches the need of a second work of grace after regeneration. The First Epistle to the Thessalonians teaches it very plainly.

Notice, I. — To whom the Epistle was written.

The first chapter makes it absolutely certain that Paul was writing to Christians — people who had already been regenerated.

Ver. 1: "Paul, Sylvanus and Timothy unto the Church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

In those days church members were converted people. Ver. 2: "We give thanks to God always for you all."

St. Paul certainly was not thanking God for a great company of unregenerated sinners within the Church.

Ver. 3: "Remembering without ceasing your work of FAITH, and labour of LOVE, and patience of HOPE in our Lord Jesus Christ."

They had the three Christian graces — faith, hope, love. Ver. 4: "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election."

The apostle did not call a great company of sinners "brethren beloved," nor did he tell sinners they were "elected." Ver. 5: "They had much assurance."

The Holy Spirit bore witness to them that they were regenerated.

Ver. 6: "Ye became imitators of us and of the Lord."

So they had selected Paul and the Lord Jesus Christ to

IMITATE.

Ver. 6: They had "joy of the Holy Spirit."

The Spirit does not give any joy to sinners. He convicts them.

Ver. 7: "They were examples to all Christians."

Ver. 8: "They sounded forth the word of the Lord." "Your faith to God-ward is gone forth."

Ver. 9: "Ye turned from idols to serve the living and true God."

They had a glorious conversion.

Ver. 10: And they were "waiting for His Son from heaven." Sinners are never waiting or longing for Jesus to appear.

Now here are all these unmistakable evidences that the apostle was writing to Christians. If they were not regenerated Christians, there never were any in the world.

II. — Notice what Paul wrote to these good Christians.

(1) In chapter 3:6 he tells them that Timothy, whom he had sent back to see how they were getting on, had returned and brought him the glad tidings of their faith and love. So they had not backslidden, and the apostle was delighted.

(2) Nevertheless, in chapter 3:10, he writes: "We are night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect that which is lacking in your faith." Why? Ver. 13: "To the end he may establish your hearts UNBLAMABLE IN HOLINESS." In other words he says: "You have exercised faith for regeneration: but I pray that you may also exercise faith for holiness or sanctification. Why?"

(3) Chapter 4:3 gives the reason: "FOR THIS IS THE WILL OF GOD, EVEN YOUR SANCTIFICATION." Regeneration is not all the grace of God's plan for you. It is also His will THAT YOU BE SANCTIFIED.

(4) Why? Verse 7: "For God called us not for uncleanness, but UNTO SANCTIFICATION."

III. — What is this sanctification to which God calls us? Notice these definitions of our English lexicons.

(1) Webster: "Sanctify: To make free from sin, to cleanse from moral corruption and pollution; to purify" (John 17:17). "Sanctification: 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."

(2) Century Dictionary: "Sanctification: 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 heart and life to the will of God."

(3) Standard Dictionary: "Sanctification: The gracious work of the Holy Spirit whereby the BELIEVER IS FREED FROM SIN AND EXALTED TO HOLINESS OF HEART AND LIFE."

Now observe:—

(a) All these three dictionaries say that sanctification is a work of God, and not something that you can do for yourself.

(b) Two of them say we are sanctified by "AN ACT OF GOD," performed like all acts in an instant of time. Then no one can get it by a slow growth.

(c) One says it is a work of the Holy Spirit whereby the BELIEVER (one already a Christian) is FREED FROM SIN." Then, manifestly, it is a SECOND WORK OF GRACE subsequent to regeneration. These dictionary definitions are in perfect agreement with Scripture and teach a better theology than many preachers.

IV. — Notice how the text verifies the teaching of the dictionaries.

"And the God of peace HIMSELF sanctify you wholly" (Revised Version and Greek). In the Old Testament use of the word "sanctify," viz. "to set apart from a common to a sacred use," people could sanctify themselves. But in the New Testament use of being cleansed from depravity or inward corruption, "THE GOD OF PEACE HIMSELF" is the only One who can sanctify. No human individual can do it, no priests or laymen, no college dignitaries can accomplish the task. They can confer degrees of honor, but they stand dumb and helpless before the depravity of the human heart. Only the omnipotent God can say, "Be thou clean," and make it so.

The aorist tense of the verb "sanctify" teaches that sanctification is INSTANTANEOUS. All the Greek grammars teach this, and all the scholarly commentators. Steele: "The aorist tense denotes singleness of action, instantaneous sanctification." Ellicott: "The aorist tense denotes instantaneous perfecting in love."

V. — Notice how completely God does the work.

"The God of peace Himself sanctify you WHOLLY." The German Bible translates it, "Sanctify you THROUGH AND THROUGH." Then the text proceeds to show how completely: "And may your SPIRIT and SOUL and BODY be preserved entire, without blame."

(a) The "body" can be cleansed from all the abnormal appetites. We were once preaching to an audience of three thousand people at a holiness campmeeting. We asked all to rise to their feet who had been instantaneously cleansed from the appetite for tobacco, intoxicants, and drugs by the Holy Spirit. In a moment five hundred sprang to their feet, and with hallelujahs of praise testified that they had been instantaneously cleansed and the chains of habit had been broken. Thousands of helpless victims of Satan are going down to hell for the want of just such a salvation.

(b) Then the "soul" can be sanctified: the intellects and sensibilities, with all their emotions and feelings and ambitions and hopes and fears. The depravity can be cleansed from this whole realm of faculties, and all can be made submissive to Christ.

(c) Then there is the "spirit," that part of our nature which has direct intuition of duty and of moral obligation and of God. The Holy Spirit can cleanse it from every impulse to disobedience, and make it sweetly and lovingly loyal to all the blessed will of God.

When these three — body, soul and spirit — are brought thus into perfect harmony with God, one has the "mind of Christ" and is "blameless." Amidst all the abounding wickedness of this polluted, evil world, the text teaches us that God can "PRESERVE" us, unstained, unsoiled, clothed in the white raiment of holiness. There is a "keeping" grace for those who want to be like God.

VI. — Notice the promise of the text.

We have seen in chapter 4:7 that "God calls us unto sanctification." In the text, ch. 5:24, He says: "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." Do what? Why, SANCTIFY You — the blessing prayed for in the previous verse. What more could man ask? How could God make it any plainer? Two men were talking on this subject. One said: "It took two to sanctify me." "Who were they?" "It took God and me." "What did God do?" "He sanctified me." "What did you do?" "I let Him do it." Many more people would be sanctified if they were only willing and would just let God do it. An opposing will defeats God and loses the blessing.

Just hear George Fox, the Quaker, testify: "I knew Jesus, and He was very precious to my soul. But I found something within me that would not keep sweet, and patient, and kind. I did what I could to keep it down, but it was still there. I besought Jesus to do something for me, and when I gave Him my will He came to my heart and took out all that would not be sweet, all that would not be patient, all that would not be kind, and then He shut the door and He shut Himself in." Jesus, with His preserving grace, was inside, and sin was outside, and the door was shut

THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 17

SANCTIFIED BY FAITH

"That they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among all them that are sanctified by faith in me." — Acts 26:18.

God has through His Word announced many conditions of receiving the Spirit in sanctifying power.

1. — There is the conviction of need. "Blessed are the poor in spirit" (Matt. 5:3).
2. — Sorrow for not having received the Spirit before. "Blessed are they that mourn" (Matt. 5:4).
3. — Praying for the Spirit. Luke 11:11: "How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"
4. — Obedience of a surrendered will. Acts 5:32: "The Holy Spirit given to them that obey him."
5. — Hunger and thirst for the blessing. Matt. 5:6: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness."
6. — Consecration for it. "Present yourselves unto God" (Rom. 6:13 and 22:1).
7. — Faith. "Sanctified by faith in me" (Acts 26:18). This is naturally and necessarily the last condition. Until the other conditions are met the soul is not on believing ground, not in the place where it can believe. But when all the preliminaries have been complied with, there is nothing left for the soul to do but to BELIEVE AND ENTER IN.

I. — Jesus speaks authoritatively here of a second work of grace.

If there is any authoritative voice on matters of morals and religion in this world and during all the ages, it is when Jesus speaks. He had dwelt in the bosom of the Father before the world was created, and knew the secrets of eternity. Of all religious teachers He only could say: "I speak that which I do know, and testify that which I have seen."

Notice the doubles of statements in the context: "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But arise and stand on thy feet: for to this end have I appeared unto thee (1) to appoint thee a minister (2) and a witness, (1) both of things wherein thou hast seen me, (2) and of the things wherein I shall appear unto thee; (1) delivering thee from the people (Jews) (2) and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, (1) to open their eyes that they may turn from darkness to light (2) and from the power of Satan unto God, (1) THAT THEY MAY RECEIVE REMISSION OF SINS (2) AND AN INHERITANCE AMONG ALL THEM THAT ARE SANCTIFIED BY FAITH THAT IS IN ME. Here are five pairs

of statements. If the last pair does not teach two works of grace — justification and sanctification — it would be difficult for human speech to do it.

"But," say some, "talk about a second blessing! I have had a hundred blessings." We heard this very thing said with a smile before a large audience of ministers by a doctor of divinity and ex-missionary in the city of Cleveland, Ohio. The dear brother manifestly thought he was making a masterly and irresistible argument against a second work of grace.

Now it is doubtless true that that brother had been stirred by the breath of the Spirit moving upon his heart a hundred, yea, a thousand times. But that distinct epochal Pentecostal experience which the apostolic band received in that upper chamber, which so revolutionized and transformed their lives, is in the language of Wesley, "THE SECOND BLESSING, PROPERLY SO CALLED," and no man who has received that blessing will ever speak lightly of it Pentecosts are not obtained so easily. The truth is, that Doctor of Divinity did not know what he was talking about, nor does any other man who speaks flippantly of "The baptism with the Holy Spirit and fire."

II. — Notice it is received by faith.

On this matter there is a jargon of conflicting voices:

1. — Some tell us that we get all the saving grace there is for us at conversion. There is nothing, they say, beyond regeneration and justification, but a lifelong struggle with inbred sin and continuous development in spiritual life. (a) It is a sufficient answer to this to point to Pentecost. The disciples there received a blessing they had never had before, which continued with them through all their eventful lives. (b) Christians, but never sinners, are often exhorted and commanded to seek and obtain this experience of sanctification. (c) Uncounted multitudes through all the Christian centuries, after being regenerated, have sought and obtained this sanctifying grace.

2. — Others say we get it BY GROWTH. But this cleansing by growth is nowhere taught in Scripture, and there is no recorded example of it in the Bible or out of it. The hearts of the one hundred and twenty in the upper chamber were cleansed in the twinkling of an eye by the Holy Ghost.

3. — Others still tell us that we get the deliverance from inward sin AT DEATH, or by death. Now all instructed teachers will admit that the grace of God may be given at death to all justified souls, otherwise prepared for heaven, who have not knowingly and willfully rejected sanctification. The light may then break on longing eyes that have never been purposely closed to it.

But death itself has no essential relation to the blessing. God may bestow it an hour, or a day, or a year, or fifty years before death, as easily as in the moment of transition from this world to the next, if the soul is only willing and prepared to receive it. It is nothing but a theological fiction that "SIN IS A NECESSITY," and that we must be cursed by it "daily" as long as we live. Nothing can possibly be more unreasonable or more contradictory to the holy Word.

4. — The Roman Catholic Church puts the blessing further away, and teaches that we are sanctified BY PURGATORY. That is not the teaching of the Bible.

God said under oath that "we should serve Him IN HOLINESS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS ALL OUR DAYS" (Luke 1:73-75). Jesus says in our text that we are sanctified BY FAITH instantaneously. It is not theory with Christ. He knows.

III. — What is the nature of sanctifying faith?

1. — It is a clear intellectual apprehension of a great truth. There is indeed a great truth as the basis of all rational faith on any subject; for rational faith is not credulity. On this particular subject there must be an apprehension of the fall of man and the consequent depravity of the race, from which every son and daughter of Adam needs to be cleansed. Evolutionists flatly deny all this; but the whole Bible states or assumes this fact, and bases the whole plan of salvation upon it. This truth must be known and accepted.

2. — It must be accepted as true that Christ's baptism with the Holy Spirit is the remedy for us by the atonement. This is why we are told that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). "Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Heb. 13:12 and 10:10, and Eph. 5:25).

But we are as plainly told that the work is accomplished by the baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire (Matt. 3:11; Mal. 3:3). "Giving them the Holy Ghost . . . cleansing their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:8, 9).

3. — It is a heart-faith. Not only the intellect but the whole moral nature is involved in it, intellect, sensibility and will. Moody said: "Saving faith involves assent, consent, and laying hold." Dr. Whedon says: "Saving faith is that belief of the intellect, consent of the affections and act of the will by which the soul places itself in the keeping of Christ as its Ruler and Savior."

4. — Saving faith involves a ceasing from labor. Our own efforts end. In rescuing a drowning man, an experienced swimmer waits till the man ceases to struggle. Faith is a self-committal of the whole matter of salvation to God, a sinking of self down into Him and resting there.

When Blondin, the famous tight-rope gymnast, proposed to wheel a man in a wheelbarrow across Niagara Falls, he asked Blondin what he should do. "Do?" said Blondin, "do nothing but lie in the barrow like a dead man. I will take you over." And Blondin did it. So when a soul seeks sanctification, it complies with all the preliminary conditions which precede faith. Then faith CONFIDENTLY TRUSTS, WITHOUT ANY EVIDENCE OF FEELING, THAT GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISE AND SANCTIFIES. God never fails such a believing heart. He does it.

THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 18 FINISHED SIN

"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempteth no man: but each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lusts, and enticed. Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin: and the sin [principle], when it is full grown, bringeth forth death" (James 1:13-15; R. V.)

The word "tempt" first meant to test or try a man in order to prove and perfect him. In that sense only, does God tempt or try men. If we endure these testings we receive the crown of life.

Then the word came to be used in a bad sense, meaning "to induce a man to sin, to lure him to his ruin." In that sense God never tempts nor is tempted; but the God-man, Jesus Christ, was thus tempted.

The word "epithuria," translated "lust," originally meant "desire," then very strong desire: then it came to mean strong, impure, unclean, unholy desire or lust. That is the meaning in the text — a something that draws a man from moral integrity, and entices to sin and ruin.

This opens up before us the sin question. Sin is the cause of all evil in the empire of God. People shrink from the study or discussion of it. It is an unpopular theme in the pulpit. One of the eminent physicians of Manchester, England, told me that the uncleanest section of the city was around the University. I asked "why?" His instant answer was "Prudery." Parents, teachers and preachers are too nice and modest to point out the perils and dangers of "fashionable sins." Jesus and His Apostles were not so modest.

There seem to have been speculating minds through all ages, who, by their theories, blamed God for sin. As:

1. Some asserted that "God eternally and unchangeably ordained whatsoever comes to pass" — all sin included — thus foreordaining sin and ruin.

2. God deliberately placed men in circumstances that would be fatal to virtue.

3. He created the race with such ungovernable passions that sin was unavoidable.

4. He made natural laws that work out the phenomena we call sin with the precision of fate. So those who hold this theory tell us that all pangs of conscience for sin or guilt, all sense of responsibility for wrong doing is a delusion, a foolish notion! If there is any responsibility, it lies with God. Adam started this theory, when he said: "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." "Your gift was my ruin!"

Now James resents all these theories, as a libel on a holy God, as our text proves. His theory was that no outward circumstances constitute a temptation to sin apart from some lust in a man's own heart. So he said: A man is tempted only as he is drawn away by something within himself.

I. We find here, then, an explanation of all sin. Our first parents sinned by gratifying what was, at the beginning, innocent desire, instead of obeying conscience and moral reason. That brought depravity to our race — "the sin-principle" entered into the world, and the death-principle through "the sin-principle" and so death passed upon all men" (Rom. 5:12). (N. B. Fifteen of the world's most scholarly commentators tell us that the Greek noun for sin, — "hamartia" in the singular number, with the article "the" before it, means — "the sin-principle" or "depravity"). This "proclivity" or "inclination to sin" makes sin easy for any of us.

And how do we sin now? "Sin," according to my old teachers, Dr. Samuel Harris of Yale and President Fairchild of Oberlin, "consists in the surrender of the will to depraved desire against the protests of right reason."

The language of the text is very striking. As several commentators have noticed, "Epithemia," lust is personified as an enticing harlot. She persuades the understanding and will to yield to her solicitation and the result of the sinful union is the conception and birth of sin. "The sin principle" of the heart is the fruitful mother of all the sins and crimes that curse the earth.

We need not blame God — nor even blame the Devil, as Eve did: — "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." Archbishop Tillotson said: "The worst devil is a man's own lust [or depravity] and more strongly inclines him to sin than any devil without can possibly do." Dr. Theodore Cuyler said: "A man's worst foe walks in his own shoes." Every man is his own worst tempter, worst peril and worst foe.

II. We meet here sin's growth, or progress. Lust (very strong desire) when it hath conceived bringeth forth sin; and the sin (principle) when it is finished (full-grown) bringeth forth death. "The sin principle" — the inclination to sin, or depravity, grows by what it feeds on. Every actual sin a man commits increases the strength of his inclination to sin. The lust grows, like a blacksmith's arm, by its own exercise. Unholy desires lead to unholy deeds: and the deeds feed and inflame the overweening desires. We were born depraved by nature: and we become more and more depraved by practice. A visit to the slums will prove this to any open and discerning mind to a demonstration. The horrible, loathsome creatures living there were once as innocent little boys and girls, and perhaps no more depraved, than your children or mine. The sin principle grows, strengthens, increases in its relish for evil. Just as plants and animals begin to be, then grow, mature and ripen, so in the moral world and the realm of our soul life.

What then is the nature of the conception mentioned in the text? It is the surrender of ourselves to the voluntary slaves of desire, the victims of the uniform tendency to evil, born in us all. The perverted appetites and propensities grow to Herculean strength. The captive will nearly cease to struggle, and the turbid current of base passions rushes us on to inevitable moral death.

Illustrations of this mournful truth are everywhere. In my boyhood, my schoolmates played games of chance for pins, and played marbles for keeps. Then other games, cards and billiards, followed until the gambler's passion was aroused and it ended in the gambler's doom in a gambler's hell. We have watched the sin of lying from the first conscious prevarication or evasion of the truth, to the finished habit of unblushing falsehood and deliberate perjury.

We have seen the first indulgence in the intoxicating cup in a few swift years end in delirium and death. Covetousness becomes finished in the Swindler, the embezzler and the thief. Impurity of thought and dream and purpose has its maturity in the pollutions and obscenities and debaucheries of the brothel. An occasional irreverent word is finished in a stream of horrible blasphemy on the verge of death and hell. Such is the growth of sin, everywhere and always.

III. The sin principle, when she starts action, has no lesser aim than ultimate ruin. The final act of the tragedy which sin initiates is always spiritual and eternal death. She at least mothers "a grizzly terror," "a hideous monster," and final curse of an indignant God. She plans sin, then more sin and worse sin! The pimple becomes a festering ulcer, the soreness becomes a consuming cancer! This is what Satan deliberately planned, when he planted depravity in the human breast.

It became my painful duty as well as privilege to pray over a dying girl in a rescue home. She had a Christian father and mother: but in a careless, frivolous hour, she launched out into a so-called life of pleasure. Oh, if young people would look ahead and see the end! How the devil cheats them. Sin's first and best is soon spent: the worst is always at the end! This girl's career of pleasure was ending in two brief years, away from father and mother, in a home whither she had gone to hide her shame. No one dared touch her save with gloved hands! Hypodermic injections were given every hour to deaden the unendurable pain, while she was constantly praying for death! It was "finished sin"!

Leo Frank of Atlanta, Georgia, graduated from Cornell University. He was a millionaire at the head of a great factory. One day he summoned a girl, who was working in his factory, into his private office, and because she tried to protect her honor, he struck her and killed her! When he was sentenced to be hung, his wife and mother swooned, but five thousand people in and around the courtroom cheered. When he was swung into eternity at the end of a rope on the scaffold, it was amidst the execrations and approval of millions of people — a case of "finished sin."

Intelligence from America, reached me in England, that ran as follows: "There lived a young woman in Boston, unusually gifted and highly educated, cultured to the highest degree. She used the most charming English I ever heard. She had traveled through every civilized country of the world, and was as familiar with many foreign countries as most people are with their own state."

"She read in God's Word, 'The wages of sin is death.' She decided to prove those words untrue. . . I was sitting on my porch in the city of Denver, Colorado, when a little boy rushed up and cried: 'Come over quick, there is a crazy woman at our house.' Hastening over, I found this same woman, insane with drugs, emaciated, unkempt, hollow-eyed, sunken low in sin. We got her into the city hospital. She escaped in her night-robe, and wandered to the home of a lady physician. She was then placed in a home and her true character became known. . . She was again taken to the city hospital where she lay for days too weak to escape.

"She was now so wasted in form that she weighed only fifty-five pounds, while a year previous she had weighed one hundred and fifty pounds, and her physician told me that when he first knew her she had the most perfect form he ever saw. She lay for days in the hospital between an old lady, seventy years of age who had convulsions every thirty minutes, and an old Indian woman.

"Begging not to be allowed to die there, she appealed to the sympathy of some kind ladies of the Trinity Methodist church, and was removed to a home in North Denver. She died cursing, while from her lips there issued one vile obscene sentence after another, with not a friend to close her eyes. She was hurried to the potter's field, in a box costing \$1.50" — It was finished sin!

IV. There is no human security against the ravages of the sin-principle. As we have just seen, all the refinements of culture and noblest education and wealth and foreign travel and social position afford no protection whatever from its insidious assaults. Its secret lust can be hidden in the noblest soul, and stir and excite, and spread and grow and develop, until the whole being is one mass of corruption and death. If there were no other than human defense from its ravages we might well despair of our race.

But, thank God, the omnipotent Christ can save to the uttermost (Heb. 7:25). The blood of Christ can cleanse from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:7 and 9). The fire of the Holy Spirit can burn out the carnality and corruption of the sin-principle and make us pure and holy (Matt. 3:11; Mal. 3:2, 3; John 1:29; Rom. 6:22).

"Be ye holy [now at once] for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:16). Will you have deliverance, and have it now?

"Oh, that I was to lie on the fire that never is quenched a thousand thousand years to purchase the favor of God, and be reunited to him again! But it is a fruitless wish. Millions of millions of years will bring me no nearer to the end of my torments than one poor hour. Oh, eternity, eternity! forever and forever! Oh, the insufferable pangs of hell! " — Sir Francis Newport's "Finished Sin."

THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 19

A TWO-FOLD DISEASE AND A DOUBLE CURE

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts ye double minded." — James 4:8.

Health is the normal condition of moral beings. It is evidently what the Creator planned for all the beings He made. When He had finished His creative work He looked upon it all and pronounced it "very good." It was superlative praise for superlative wisdom to bestow.

Think of a world without ache or pain with the tides of vitality pulsing everywhere, and the tint of health upon every cheek, and a God of love brooding over all, and imparting His perfect life to every being! That was our world as it came from the hand of its benevolent Creator.

But a hostile spirit came upon the scene. Fallen himself, he hated God and everything good or God-like. And with malignant hand he hurled a temptation at the heart of humanity and shattered the divine image in every soul. "Hence came sin and all our woe." The first sin induced "the sin principle:" the sin principle brought "the death principle." Hence the ravages of pain and disease and death passed upon all men "for that all sinned."

I. Notice, the disease of sin exists in two forms. There are:

1. The voluntary sins that we purposely commit. Men choose to steal. Men intend to lie. Men plan to wrong their neighbor, to commit some crime of violence or deed of infamy. We perform evil acts with a wicked intention, when we know we are doing it against the protest of conscience — the voice of God within us. Men do such deeds when they know that the laws of God forbid them, when the laws of men condemn them and prisons yawn for them.

But in spite of conscience, and the laws of men and of God, and threatening prisons and shame and disgrace, still moral beings who know better, willfully, purposely, defiantly commit sins and repeat them day after day. And these sinful acts form sinful habits. Sinful habits form a sinful character and the sinful character becomes fixed, eternal unlikeness to God. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Damnation is the penalty! We are all undone forever unless these sins are forgiven and this penalty is removed.

2. But what made anyone want to sin? Whatever prompted anyone to swear or lie or steal or disobey God? Why is it that anyone should ever be so willfully foolish, so deliberately, insanely unwise as to turn from the path of virtue and righteousness which leads to blessedness and heaven, and choose the path of sinfulness which leads straight to eternal death? How can any human being with a conscience and common sense and moral reason be so blind to self-interest, so indifferent to his future good as to run in the way of evil as if enamored of damnation? Nay, how is it that all the human family do it with one common consent? Ah, why?

The Greek New Testament Lexicon gives the clew to the mystery. It gives two sets of definitions of the most common word for sin in the Greek language: "Hamartia."

(a) "Error, offense, sin" — in other words, our voluntary sins.

(b) "The principle or cause of sin, proneness to sin, sinful propensity." Here, then, are the two forms which the disease of sin takes in human experience.

First, we notice that all the progeny of the human family, while yet young in years, begins to sin purposely; and we further notice that all keep it up through life unless the grace of God intervenes to prevent it. This is undeniably a matter of universal observation and experience — the first feature of the disease.

Secondly, thoughtful souls begin to ask, What is the cause of this universal sinning? Why could not some tribe or family somewhere, be immune to this universal disease? Nobody has ever found a satisfactory answer to these questions, but in the Word of God. It informs us that our first parents by their first sin brought on themselves a radical derangement of their moral nature — a proneness to sin. Then they begot children, each of whom inherited this principle of sin or proneness to sin. And by the simple law of heredity it has been passed on as an inheritance to every member of the human race.

This is not only a scriptural but a scientific explanation of the universal disease of sin. It completely brings to light and covers all the facts of the case. We all have sinned because we all inherited a sinful propensity. Back of every wicked choice ever made since the first, was an evil aptency or propensity that prompted it.

Here, then, we behold the two forms of the malady of sin:

(a) The voluntary sinning.

(b) The abnormal propensity that prompts it and produces it.

II. Observe there is a double cure for this two-fold disease.

1. The first remedy brings pardon of all sins that are past, and prompts a man to go out of the sin business. He purposes by the help of God "to sin no more." "He that is born of God sinneth not."

And where does this remedy come from? "God so loved the world (sinners) that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." The atoning death of Christ made it possible for God, the Father, to pardon the sinner, set aside the penalty, on condition of repentance and faith in Christ, restore him to the divine favor, and treat him as if he had never sinned. This brings reconciliation between a holy God and the guilty soul. A new family relation is set up. The man, instead of remaining a condemned sinner with the penalty of death hanging over his head, is now adopted into the heavenly Father's family to feast on the bounty of pardoning love. Thus the first and most visible form of sin's disease is cured.

2. But what about that sin principle, that inward heart-propensity to sin? That must manifestly be dealt with in an entirely different way. Voluntary sins can be forgiven; but forgiveness will not cure the propensity to evil with which he was born, and for which he is in no wise responsible.

But there is a remedy: "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it." — Eph. 5:25, 26. The pardoned souls who are now in God's family and form His "Church" are now to be "sanctified" by being "cleansed" from that "sin-principle" or "propensity to sin" which regeneration — the first work of grace — did not cure or reach.

Once I nearly lost my first-born child, my precious baby girl, by a severe case of eczema. After months of doctoring in vain, at last a skillful physician came, who gave the first remedy for the burning eruption. But a second radical remedy was needed to reach the root of the difficulty — by removing the condition of blood which produced the painful sores. So it is with God's dealing with sin. The first remedy cures the outward manifestations of sinning; but sanctification — the second work of grace — is needed to cleanse the heart, the fountain of all iniquity, from inbred sin.

III. Look now at the text: — "Cleanse your hands ye sinners: and purify your hearts ye double-minded." The "hands" represent the doing faculty — the evil choices of the will. The sins must be forgiven and the sinning stopped. But the depraved heart must be cured of its depravity by the medicine of the baptism with the Holy Spirit, which Christ administers. It "cleanses the heart by faith." — Acts 15:8, 9.

"Purify your hearts ye double-minded." The sinner has only one mind which is bent on the self-gratification of sins. The sanctified man has only one mind — and that is to live for the glory of God. The unsanctified Christian is the only person who has "a double mind." In regeneration he had the principle of grace implanted in him; but the old "sin principle" or "evil propensity" has not yet been removed. So when he would do good evil is present with him. There is a perpetual conflict in his soul, which will never end until his heart is purified from the carnal mind.

Look now at the context — James 4:7, 8: "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh unto you. . . Be afflicted and mourn and weep." How these commands ring out like the sharp crack of a woodsman's rifle! No hint here at moral inability — but always an assumption of present ability to obey God's commands. We cannot forgive ourselves or sanctify ourselves. But we can consent to let God do it for us.

We are all by nature sick with the disease of sin. But a great physician has come to our city — the Lord Jesus Christ, with an unfailing cure for our disease. He will not force His remedies upon us any more than any human physician does; but He opens an office near by and advertises His remedies in a Holy Book. If we will only "draw nigh" to Him and ask for His help, He will cure us "without money and without price."

"Rock of ages, deft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure:
Save from wrath and make me pure."

THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 20 GOD'S KEEPING

"I pray God your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved entire . . . faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it" (1 Thess. 5:23 R. V.)

He will keep the feet of his saints" (1 Sam. 2:9).

"He will give his angels charge over thee in all thy ways" (Psa. 91:11).

"He that keepeth thee will not slumber" (Psa. 121:3).

"That good thing that was committed unto thee, guard through the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us" (2 Tim. 1:47, R.V.).

"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God" (Jude 20, R. V.)

"My little children, keep [R. V. guard] yourselves from idols" (1 John 5:21).

God undertakes and promises to keep us, but He tells us to guard and keep ourselves. What can it mean? Manifestly this: He does not force His keeping grace upon us. He will use divine agencies and even the help of angels; but He will not do it without our hearty co-operation and willing, cheerful consent.

I have been a profoundly interested, and often deeply grieved observer of the spiritual life of those professing holiness in this community for some eight years. It has made me somewhat qualified to speak.

I am compelled to say that there has been a vast deal of backsliding. I certainly have seen very many come to the altar in ten different series of meetings, many in twenty series of meetings; and not a few, I am persuaded, in as many as thirty series of meetings!

Now this is not normal. It is not God's plan! This is not in harmony with what He has said about His keeping power. It certainly does not measure up to our privileges in Christ. I would write a few lines to Stop, if possible, this chronic backsliding. It is too dangerous to be permitted to go on unnoticed and uncorrected.

1. Jesus proposes to guard us from stumbling (R. V.); but our corresponding attitude of soul is constant trust, and deepest dependence upon God. The Lord has made our heart His temple, and purposely comes in to keep it clean and holy; but He does it only by our consent and assistance.

There is no compulsion in a life of grace. Always remember that God never does anything to subvert, or set aside, or override your own self-sovereignty.

He made us free moral agents to be masters of ourselves, and arbiters of our own destiny, and He will forever leave us free. God has no slaves in heaven. The home of the blessed is not a slave pen into which people are stampeded as cattle are driven into a corral. Only those are there who choose to be; and it was an ever-repeated and irrevocable choice.

II. Jesus can and will keep us in the blessing only as He gave it to us by our faith. Jesus says, "Sanctified by faith in me." — Therefore do not be forever consulting your feelings, and keeping your fingers on the pulse of your emotional nature, and your sensibilities, but keep up your devotions and keep on believing. Let it never be forgotten that a state of purity is never dependent on emotions, but on faith in Christ as our sanctification. Emotions and feelings are mere attendants, and depend largely on the temperament, and the flow of animal spirits and the nervous sensibilities. Disease, infirmities, weaknesses, aches and pains, and weather may depress the emotions. St. Peter knew that. He wrote of the incorruptible inheritance, "reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto salvation . . . Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, ye have been put to grief in manifold trials, that the proof of your faith — might be found unto praise and glory" (1 Peter 1:4-7, R. V.).

But if you will have ecstasies, and are more concerned about them than about a clean heart, remember that the devil can give ecstasies and tongues, and has done it times without count to vile spiritualistic mediums.

Do not seek for emotions. Let them come as they will; but tell Satan that, feelings or no feelings, by faith in Jesus, you are still under the blood "that cleanseth from all sin."

III. There is the duty of constant watchfulness. In the course of five verses (Mark 13:33-37), Jesus bade His disciples four times to watch. "What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch." No Christian is ever relieved from this necessity of constant watchfulness.

Those of us who have crossed the ocean in a steamship, have always gone to our berths on a dark night with a greater sense of security because we knew that high up in the crow's nest, over the bow of the steamer, was a "look out" sailor. It was his particular business to do two things, viz., to keep constant watch and report any glimpse of a vessel or an iceberg in the steamer's path, and to signal to the engine room below. So it is in our spiritual life. There are always perils about us. It is the careless souls who are foolhardy and presumptuous, and will not believe that there is any danger, who are the easy victims of Satan's wiles. — This leads me to observe:

IV. Conscience is that "lookout" sailor aloft over the bow, in the voyage of life. "Some people with sinful infatuation, put conscience at the stern; it may utter its cry of remorse after the sin has been committed, and the craft has struck the peril which stove in the bow. But a conscience that does no more than weep and moan over sins already committed is of little worth. It is the duty of a healthy conscience to detect sin in advance, and to sound the alarm to the will, that has its hand on the helm. The truly righteous man has temptations floating across his way, as really as the ungodly or the

backslider has. The difference is that the righteous man's conscience detects the danger ahead, and gives the signal to the will to "steer clear of the temptation." Yea, it reports the danger to God in prayer, and help comes from above.

April 15, 1912, the greatest ship that had ever plowed the waves, 882 feet long, — the Titanic, was crossing the Atlantic. It had nearly 2,400 lives on board, and was making its maiden trip at record speed. Her commander, Captain Smith, had won a name for care and skill, and was at the summit of renown among English naval officers, and then lost his "patient continuance in well-doing." That star-lit Sunday night he was feasting to intoxication with millionaires — six of them worth in the aggregate, \$400,000,000. Other members of the crew were stupid from champagne, and the lookout in the crow's nest was thus asleep. Three other ships sent wireless warnings to them, and alarms were rung, but all in vain. With utter infatuation they crowded her spend to the limit, and drove on in a race with death. Death won the race. The ship crashed into an iceberg and tore out its side. The captain saw his own ruin, drew his revolver and shot himself. A survivor says he will never forget, to his dying day, how the sixteen hundred clung to the ship's rail, shrieking and moaning and groaning, as the sinking Titanic carried them down to a needless death.

That is a perfect picture of a neglected and drugged conscience, despising all God's warnings, and waking up in remorse, when it is forever too late.

V. Our religious safety depends on our being dead to the world. God says, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lusts thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

Now we may ask what is meant by "the world" in this wonderful passage? Bishop Gore of England defines it thus: "The world is human society organizing itself apart from God." Bishop Ellicott of England defines the world as: "The sum total of all that is opposed to the spiritual reign of Christ." Enlarging that definition, I define as follows: "Those habits, fashions, customs, laws — those principles of conduct, ambitions, pleasures and aims of godless people — which constitute, in the aggregate, that old hag called the world, that is forever opposed to God and Christ and all righteousness." That is the thing which crucified Jesus and still crucifies Him and His cause afresh, and puts Him to an open shame before our eyes continually.

Now what I am saying is this: those who would keep their piety and grow in grace must die out to this whole damning and damnable worldliness. We cannot seek its approbation. We cannot practice the most of its pleasures. We cannot slavishly follow its fashions. We cannot bow to its opinions, or court its favors, or love its applause. Above all, we cannot adopt its moral principles as our standard of conduct, or imitate its customs, or worship at its idolatrous shrines.

St. Paul said, "By whom [Christ] the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Nobody has a very serious case of religion, who has not thus been crucified to the world and by the world, and dissolved partnership with it forever.

I am free to admit that what I am now saying has special reference to women. Multitudes of professedly Christian women, and altogether too many of them in the ranks of holiness, seem to act as if they were the bond-slaves of fashion, and the fashion magazines were their Bible, the dressmaking shops were their churches, and the dressmakers priestesses to direct their devotions and guide their prayers.

I believe God is trying by the Holiness Movement to produce a generation of women who are dead to the fashionable follies and idiotic fooleries of this hell-bent world. And if you women fail Him, farewell all hopes of a redeemed humanity.

Some worldly, fashionable females in our churches ask, "What harm is there in cards, and dancing and theaters?" Many of these people are not amenable to argument. They are beyond all rational persuasion! They are a thousand times more afraid of not being in the fashion than they are afraid of sin. They have drugged consciences. Worldliness has befogged their brains, and reduced their moral-backbones to the limpness of a cotton string. To seem to be aristocratic, they will have intoxicants on their tables, even though it does engulf their husbands and sons in hopeless ruin. They must patronize the dance, even if it is likely to make their sons drones, and their daughters harlots. "O Fashion! Fashion! what power hast thou to brow-beat holy nature so that she dare not speak to assert her sacred claims against thy imperious sway!"

I am not writing for such people. It would be useless. They are abandoned to the pleasures of sin. They are strangers to Jesus. They "love the world, and the love of the Father is not in them." But there are others not utterly committed to a career of Christless worldliness. They are toying with these fashionable pleasures which so many church members run after. They are troubled about it because the Spirit of God has not wholly left them; they are still willing to listen to the voice divine. For them I write. To them the Spirit speaks; "Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate" (Jer. 44:4).

THE END