

October, 1935
Studies in the Scriptures
The Spirit Cleansing.

Though the real Christian has been delivered from condemnation and freed from the reigning power of sin, yet there is a continual need for him to “mortify” or put to death the principle and actings of indwelling corruption. His main fight is against suffering sin to bring him into captivity to the lusts of the flesh. “Have *no* fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness”—enter into no truce, form no alliance with—”but rather reprove them” (Eph. 5:11). Say with Ephraim of old, “What have I to do any more with idols?” (Hosea 14:8). No real communion with God is possible while sinful lusts remain unmortified. Allowed sin draws the heart from God, entangles the affections, discomposes the soul, and provokes God to close His ears against our prayers: see Ezekiel 14:3.

Now it is most important that we should distinguish between mock mortification and true, between the counterfeit resemblances of this duty and the duty itself. There is a *pagan* “mortification,” which is merely suppressing such sins as nature itself discovers and from such reasons and motives as nature suggests (Rom. 2:14). This tends to hide sin rather than mortify it. It is not a recovering of the soul from the world unto God, but only acquiring a fitness to live with less scandal among men. There is a *Popish* and superstitious “mortification,” which consists in the neglect of the body, abstaining from marriage, certain kinds of meat, and apparel. Such things have “a show of wisdom” and are highly regarded by the carnal world, but not being commanded *by God* they have no spiritual value whatsoever. They macerate the natural man instead of mortifying the old man. There is also a *Protestant* “mortification” which differs nothing in principle from the Popish: certain fanatics eschew some of God’s creatures; others demand abstinence when God requires temperance.

True mortification consists, first, in *weakening* sin’s root and principle. It is of little avail to chop off the heads of weeds while their roots remain in the ground; nor is much accomplished by seeking to correct outward habits while the heart be left neglected. One in a high fever cannot expect to lower his temperature while he continues to eat heartily, nor can the lusts of the flesh be weakened so long as we feed or “make provision for” them. Second, in *suppressing* the risings of inward corruptions: by turning a deaf ear to their voice, by crying to God for grace so to do, by pleading the blood of Christ for deliverance. Make conscience of evil thoughts and imaginations: do not regard them as inevitable, still less cherish them; turn the mind to holy objects. Third, in *restraining* its outward actings: “denying ungodliness,” etc. (Titus 2:12).

Though grace be wrought in the hearts of the regenerate, it is not in their power to act it: He who implanted it must renew, excite, and marshal it. “If ye *through the Spirit* do mortify” (Rom. 8:13). First, He it is who discovers the sin that is to be mortified, opening it to the view of the soul, stripping it of its deceits, exposing its deformity. Second, He it is who gradually weakens sin’s power, acting as “the Spirit of burning” (Isa. 4:4), consuming the dross. Third, He it is who reveals and applies the efficacy of the Cross of Christ, in which there is contained a sin-mortifying virtue, whereby we are “made conformable unto His death” (Phil. 3:10). Fourth, He it is who strengthens us with might in the inner man, so that our graces—the opposites of the lusts of the flesh—are invigorated and called into exercise.

The Holy Spirit is the effective Helper. Men may employ the aids of inward rigor and

outward severity, and they may for a time stifle and suppress their evil habits; but unless the Spirit of God work in us, nothing can amount to true mortification. Yet note well it is not “If the Spirit do mortify,” nor even “If the Spirit through you do mortify,” but “If *ye* through the Spirit do mortify”! The Christian is not passive, but active in this work. We are bidden to “cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit” (2 Cor. 7:1). We are exhorted to “build up yourselves on your most holy faith” and “keep ourselves in the love of God” (Jude 20, 21). Paul could say, “I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection” (1 Cor. 9:27). It is by yielding to the Spirit’s impulses, heeding His strivings, submitting ourselves unto His government, that any measure of success is granted us in this most important work.

The believer is not a cipher in this work. The gracious operations of the Spirit were never designed to be a substitute for the Christian’s discharge of his duty. True, His influence is indispensable, though it relaxes us not from our individual responsibility. “Little children, keep yourselves from idols” (1 John 5:21) emphasises our obligation, and plainly intimates that God requires from His people something more than a passive waiting for Him to stir them into action. O my reader, beware of cloaking a spirit of slothful indolence under an apparent jealous regard for the honour of the Spirit. Is no self-effort required to escape the snares of Satan by refusing to walk in those paths which God has forbidden? Is no self-effort to be made in breaking away from the evil influence of godless companions? Is no self-effort called for to dethrone an unlawful habit? Mortification is a task to which every Christian must address himself with prayerful and resolute earnestness. Nevertheless it is a task far transcending *our* feeble powers.

It is only “through the Spirit” that any of us can acceptably and effectually (in any degree) “mortify the deeds of the body.” He it is who works in us a loathing of sin, a mourning over it, a turning away from it. He it is who presses upon us the claims of Christ, reminding us that inasmuch as He died *for* sin, we must spare no efforts to die *to* sin—“striving against sin” (Heb. 12:4), confessing it (1 John 1:9), forsaking it (Prov. 28:13). He it is who preserves us from giving way to despair, and encourages us to renew the conflict, assuring us that ultimately we shall be more than conquerors through Him that loved us. He it is who deepens our aspirations after holiness, causing us to cry “Create in me a clean heart, O God” (Psa. 51:10), and moving us to “forget those things which are behind, and reach forth unto those things which are before” (Phil. 3:13).

“If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, *ye shall live*” (Rom. 8:13). Here is the encouraging promise set before the sorely-tried contestant. God will be no man’s debtor: He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him (Heb. 11:6). If, then, by grace, we deny the flesh and co-operate with the Spirit, if we strive against sin and strive after holiness, richly shall we be recompensed. To say that Christians are unable to concur with the Spirit, is to deny there is any real difference between the renewed and those who are dead in sin. It is true that without Christ we can do nothing (John 15:5), yet it is equally true (though far less frequently quoted) that “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Phil. 4:13). Mortification and vivification are inseparable: dying to sin and living unto God are indissolubly connected: the one cannot be without the other. If we through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, then, but only then, we shall “live”—live a life of grace and comfort here, and live a life of eternal glory and bliss hereafter.

Some have a difficulty here in that Romans 8:13 conditions “life” upon *our* perform-

ance of the duty of mortification. "In the Gospel there are promises of life upon the condition of our obedience. The promises are not made to the work, but to the worker, and to the worker not for his work, but for Christ's sake according to his work. As for example, promise of life is made not to the work of mortification, but *to him* that mortifieth the flesh, and that not for his mortification, but because he is in Christ, and his mortification is the token *or evidence thereof*. And therefore it must be remembered that all promises of the Gospel that mention works include in them reconciliation with God in Christ" (W. Perkins, 1604). The conditionality of the promise, then, is neither that of causation or uncertainty, but of coherence and connection, or means and end. The Highway of Holiness is the only path that leads to Heaven: "He that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6:8).

But let it be pointed out that the sowing of a field with grain is not accomplished in a few minutes, it is a lengthy and laborious task, calling for diligence and patience. So it is with the Christian: mortification is a *lifelong* task. A neglected garden is neither easily nor quickly rid of weeds and much care is required for the cultivation of herbs and flowers. Nor is a long-neglected heart, with its indwelling corruptions and powerful lusts, brought into subjection to the Spirit by a few spasmodic efforts and prayers. It calls for painful and protracted effort, the daily denying of self, application of the principles of the Cross to our daily walk, earnest supplication for the Spirit's help. So "*Be not weary*" etc. (Gal. 6:9).

In conclusion let us seek to meet the objection of the discouraged Christian. "If a true mortification must be not only a striving against the motions of inward corruptions, but also the weakening of its roots, then I fear that all my endeavours have been in vain. Some success I have obtained against the outbreakings of lust, but still I find the temptation of it as strong as ever. I perceive no decays in it, but rather does it grow more violent each day." Answer, "That is because you are more conscious and take more notice of corruption than formerly. When the heart is made tender by a long exercise of mortification, a less temptation troubles it more than a greater did formerly. This seeming strengthening of corruption is not a sign that sin is not dying, but rather an evidence that you are spiritually alive and more sensible of its motions" (condensed from Ezekiel Hopkins, 1680, to whom we are indebted for several leading thoughts in the September section of this article).—A.W.P.

The Epistle to the Hebrews
94. *A Call to Diligence: 12:14.*

The connection between the verses which were before us on the last occasion and that which is now to engage our attention is not apparent at the first glance. There the Apostle made a practical application to his readers of the important considerations he had been setting before them in the preceding verses, calling them unto the duty of steadfastness. Here there is a lively exhortation unto the pursuit of peace and holiness. The relation between these exhortations and those which follow, is more intimate than a number of pearls strung together, rather is it more like that of the several members of our physical body, which are vitally joined and dependent upon one another. Failure to observe this fact results in loss, for not only do we fail to appreciate the living connection of one part with another, but we lose the motive and incentive which they mutually supply. It is the business of the teacher to point this out, that we may be duly affected thereby and rejoice together in the perfect handiwork of God.

“From his exhortation unto patient perseverance in the profession of the Gospel under sufferings and afflictions, the Apostle proceeds unto a prescription of practical duties; and although they are such as are absolutely necessary in themselves at all times, yet they are here peculiarly enjoined with respect to the same end, or our constancy in professing the Gospel. For no light, no knowledge of the truth, no resolution or courage, will preserve any man in his profession, especially in times of trial, without a diligent attention unto the duties of holiness and Gospel obedience. And he begins with a precept, general and comprehensive of all others” (J. Owen).

The connection between Hebrews 12:14, etc., with verses 12 and 13 is threefold. First, the diligent pursuit of peace toward our fellows and of holiness toward God are timely aids unto perseverance in the faith and, in consequence, powerful means for preservation from apostasy. The one is so closely joined to the other that the former cannot be realised without an eager striving after the latter. Second, inasmuch as love toward our neighbour (“peace,” with all that that involves and includes) and love toward God (“holiness”) is the sum of our duty, it is impossible that we should devote ourselves unto their cultivation and exercise so long as we are permitting afflictions and persecution to paralyse the mind: the spirit of resolute determination must possess us before we can develop our spiritual graces. Third, oppression and suffering provide an opportunity for the exercise and manifestation of our spiritual graces, and are to be improved by us to this very end. “If the children of God grow impatient under afflictions, they will neither walk so quietly and peaceably towards men nor so piously toward God as they should do” (Matthew Henry).

The first thing which needs to be borne in mind as we approach each verse of this Epistle is the special circumstances of those immediately addressed, and to perceive the peculiar pertinency of the Apostle’s instruction to those who were so situated, for this will the better enable us to make a correct application unto ourselves. Now the Hebrews were living among a people where their own espousal of Christianity had produced a serious breach, which had stirred up the fierce opposition of their fellow-countrymen. The attitude of these Hebrews towards Christ was neither understood nor appreciated by the unbelieving Jews; so far from it, they were regarded as renegades and denounced as apostates from the faith of their fathers. Every effort was made to poison their minds against

the Gospel, and where this failed, relentless persecution was brought to bear upon them. Hence, it was by no means an easy matter for them to maintain the *spirit* of the Gospel and live amicably with those who surrounded them; instead, they were sorely tempted to entertain a bitter spirit toward those who troubled them so unjustly, to retaliate and avenge their wrongs. Here, then, was the need for them to be exhorted “follow peace with all men”!

Now while it be true that Christians are now, for the most part, spared the severe suffering which those Hebrews were called upon to endure, yet faithfulness to Christ is bound to incur the hostility of those who hate Him, and will in some form or other issue in opposition. There is a radical difference in nature between those treading the narrow way to Heaven and those following the broad road to Hell. The character and conduct of the former condemn and rile the self-pleasing disposition and flesh-indulging ways of the latter. The children of the Devil have no love for the children of God, and they delight in doing whatever they can to annoy and aggravate them; and nothing gives them more pleasure than to see successful their efforts to tempt them to compromise or stir up unto angry retaliation. Thus it is a timely injunction for *all* believers, in any age and in any country, to strive earnestly to live in peace with all men.

“Follow peace with all men” (Heb. 12:14). This is a very humbling word that Christians require *to be told* to do this. Its implication is clear: by nature men are fractious, wrathful, revengeful creatures. That is one reason why Christ declared “it must needs be that offences come” (Matt. 18:7)—“must” because of the awful depravity of fallen human nature; yet forget not that He at once added, “But woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!” It is because of this contentious, envious, revengeful spirit which is in us, that we need the exhortation of our text, and in view of what is recorded in Scripture, even of saints, its timeliness is the more apparent. Have we not read of “the strife” between the herdsmen of Abraham and Lot which caused the patriarch and his nephew to part asunder? Have we not read of the discords and fightings between the tribes of Israel issuing in their kingdom being rent in twain? Have we not read of the “contention” between Paul and Barnabas which issued in their separating? Theses are solemn warnings, danger signals, which we all do well to take to heart.

“It is the duty of Christians to be at peace among themselves, to be on their guard against all alienation of affection towards each other; and there can be no doubt that the maintenance of this brotherly-kindness is well fitted to promote steadfastness in the faith and profession of the Gospel. But in the words before us there seems to be a reference not so much to the peace which Christians should endeavour to maintain among themselves, as that which they should endeavour to preserve in reference to the world around them. They are to ‘follow peace with *all* men.’

“They live amidst men whose modes of thinking, and feeling, and acting are very different from—are in many points directly opposite to—theirs. They have been fairly warned, that ‘if they would live godly in this world, they must suffer persecution.’ They have been told that ‘if they were of the world, the world would love its own; but because they are not of the world, therefore the world hateth them.’ ‘In the world,’ says their Lord and Master, ‘ye shall have tribulation.’ But this, so far from making them reckless as to their behaviour towards the men of the world, ought to have the directly opposite effect. If the world persecute them, they must take care that this persecution has in no degree been provoked by their improper or imprudent behaviour. They must do everything that

lies in their power, consistent with duty, to live in peace with their ungodly neighbours. They must carefully abstain from injuring them; they must endeavour to promote their happiness. They must do everything but sin in order to prevent a quarrel.

“This is of great importance, both to themselves and to their unbelieving brethren. A mind harassed by those feelings which are almost inseparable from a state of discord is not by any means in the fittest state for studying the doctrines, cherishing the feelings, enjoying the comforts, performing the duties of Christianity; and, on the other hand, the probability of our being useful to our unbelieving brethren is greatly diminished when we cease to be on good terms with them. As far as lies in us, then, if it be possible, we are to ‘live peaceably with all men’” (John Brown, 1872).

“Follow peace with all men.” The Greek word for “follow” is a very emphatic one, signifying an “earnest pursuit”: it is the eager chasing after something which flies from one, being used of hunters and hounds after game. The Christian is to spare no effort to live amicably with all men, and no matter how contentious and unfriendly they may be, he is to strive and overtake that which seeks to flee from him. *Peace* is one of the outstanding graces which the Christian is called upon to exercise and manifest. All things pertaining to the Church are denominated things of *peace*. God is “the God of peace” (Heb. 13:20), Christ is the “Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6), a believer is designated “the son of peace” (Luke 10:6), and Christians are bidden to have their “feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace” (Eph. 6:15).

In this term “follow,” or pursue, the Apostle continues to preserve the central figure of the entire passage, introduced in the first verse of our chapter of the running of a race: the same word is rendered “I press toward” in Philippians 3:14. Peace may be elusive and hard to capture, nevertheless strive after it, run hard in the chase thereof, for it is well worth overtaking. Spare no pains, strain every nerve to attain unto it. If this exhortation be duly heeded by us then Christians are plainly forbidden to embroil themselves or take any part in the strifes and quarrels of the world: thus they are hereby forbidden to engage in politics, where there is little else than envy, contention and anger. Still less may the Christian take any part in war: there is not a single word in all the New Testament which warrants a follower of the Prince of Peace slaying his fellowmen. “Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it” (Psa. 34:14).

The word “follow” or pursue does not imply the actual attainment of peace: the most eager hunters and hounds often miss their prey. Nevertheless, nothing short of our utmost endeavours are required of us. “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men” (Rom. 12:18): with fellow-Christians, with those who are strangers to Christ (Eph. 2:18), with our enemies (Matt. 5:44). Few things more adorn and beautify a Christian profession than exercising and manifesting the spirit of peace. Then let us prayerfully strive to avoid those things which occasion strife. Remember the old adage that “It takes two to make a quarrel”: therefore see to it that *you* provoke not others. Give no encouragement to those who love contention; refrain from all argument—the things of God are too holy: debating is a work of the flesh. To “follow peace with all men” presupposes *righteousness* in our dealings with them, for we most certainly are not entitled to expect them to treat us amicably unless we give unto each his due, and treat others as we would have them treat us.

Do not merely be placid when no one irritates you, but go out of your way to be gracious unto those who oppose. Be not fretful if others fail to render the respect which you

consider to be your due. Do not be so ready to “stand up for your rights,” but *yield* everything except truth and the requirements of holiness. “If we would follow peace, we must gird up our loins with the girdle of *forbearance*: we must resolve that as we will not give offence, so neither will we take offence, and if offence be felt, we must resolve to forgive” (C.H. Spurgeon). Remember we cannot successfully “pursue peace” if the heavy burden of *pride* be on our shoulder: pride ever stirs up strife. Nor can we “pursue peace” if the spirit of *envy* fills the heart: envy is sure to see faults where they exist not, and make trouble. Nor can we “pursue peace” if we are loose-tongued, busybodies, talebearers.

Even when opposed, our duty is to be peaceful toward those who persecute—a hard lesson, a high attainment, yet Divine grace (when earnestly sought) is “sufficient” even here. Remember the example which the Saviour has left us: and cry mightily unto God for help to emulate the same. “When He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not” (1 Peter 2:23): He prayed for God to forgive His very murderers. “With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love” (Eph. 4:2). Ah, *there* are the prerequisites for the procuring of peace—the lack of which being the cause of so much confusion, strife and war. If *love* reigns our skirts will be clear, for “Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things” (1 Cor. 13:4-5, 7).

“Follow peace with all men.” This includes even more than we have intimated above: the Christian is not only to be a peace-keeper, but he should seek to be a peacemaker: such have the express benediction of Christ—“*Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God*” (Matt. 5:9). Seek, then, to restore amicable relations between those who are at enmity and be used of God as a medium of their reconciliation. Instead of fanning the flames of dissension or driving the wedge of division further in, endeavour to cool them by the water of the Word, and by a gracious demeanor and wise counsel seek to smooth out difficulties and heal wounds. “And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace” (James 3:18). “Peaceable men do sow a seed that afterward will yield sheaves of comfort into their own bosoms” (T. Manton).

“Follow peace with all men *and holiness*.” First, the cultivation of peace is a great *aid unto* personal and practical holiness: where discontent, envy, and strife dominate the heart, piety is choked. The two things are inseparably connected: where love to our neighbour is lacking, love to God will not be in exercise. The two tables of the law must not be divorced: God will not accept our worship in the house of prayer while we entertain in our heart the spirit of bitterness toward another (Matt. 5:23, 24). “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” (1 John 4:20). O my reader, if we imagine that we are sincere in our quest after holiness while striving not to live peaceably with all men, we are cherishing a vain deceit.

“Some who have aimed at holiness have made the great mistake of supposing it needful to be morose, contentious, faultfinding, and censorious with everybody else. Their holiness has consisted of negatives, protests, and oppositions for opposition sake. Their religion mainly lies in contrarities and singularities; to them the text offers this wise counsel, follow holiness, but also follow peace. Courtesy is not inconsistent with faithfulness. It is not needful to be savage in order to be sanctified. A bitter spirit is a poor

companion for a renewed heart. Let your determination principle be sweetened by tenderness towards your fellow-men. Be resolute for the right, but be also gentle, pitiful, courteous. Consider the meekness as well as the boldness of Jesus. Follow peace, but not at the expense of holiness. Follow holiness, but do not needlessly endanger peace" (C.H. Spurgeon, on text, 1870).

"Follow peace with all men, *and holiness.*" By a harmless, kind, and useful behaviour toward their unbelieving neighbours the people of God are to conduct themselves. They must avoid that which fosters bitterness and strife, and make it manifest they are followers of the Prince of Peace. Yet in pursuing this most needful and inestimable policy there must be no sacrifice of principle. While peace is a most precious commodity, nevertheless, like gold, it may be purchased too dearly. "The wisdom that is from above *is first pure*, then peaceable" (James 3:17). Peace must not be severed from holiness by a compliance with any evil or a neglect of any duty. "First being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace" (Heb. 7:2). "Peace has special relation to man and his good, holiness to God and His honour. These two may no more be severed than the two tables of the law. Be sure then that peace lacks not this companion of holiness: if they cannot stand together, let peace go and holiness be cleaved unto" (W. Gouge).

There may be the former without the latter. Men may be so determined to maintain peace that they compromise principle, sacrifice the truth, and ignore the claims of God. Peace must never be sought after at the price of unfaithfulness to Christ. "Buy the truth, *and sell it not*" (Prov. 23:23) is ever binding upon the Christian. Thus, important though it be to "follow peace with all men," it is still more important that we diligently pursue "holiness." Holiness is devotedness to God and that temper of mind and course of conduct which agrees with the fact that we are "not our own, but bought with a price." Peace with men, then, is not to be purchased at the expense of devotedness to God: "infinitely better to have the whole world for our enemies and God for our Friend, than to have the whole world for our friends and God for our enemy" (John Brown).

The Christian is not only to be diligent in his quest for peace, but he is to be still more earnest in his pursuit after personal and practical holiness. Seeking after the good will of our fellows must be subordinated unto seeking the approbation of God. Our chief aim must be conformity to the image of Christ. If He has delivered us from the wrath to come, we must endeavour by all that is within us to *follow Him* along the narrow way which leadeth unto Life. If He be our Lord and Master, then He is to be unreservedly obeyed. To "follow" holiness is to *live* like persons who are devoted to God—to His glory, to His claims upon us, to His cause in this world. It is to *make it evident* that we belong to Him. It is to separate ourselves from all that is opposed to Him. It is to mortify the flesh, with its affections and lusts. It is to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit" (2 Cor. 7:1). It is a life task from which there is no discharge while we remain in the body.

To urge us the more after holiness, the Apostle at once adds "without which no man shall see the Lord"—"which" is in the singular number, showing that the antecedent is "holiness." The believer may fail to "follow peace with all men," and though he will suffer loss thereby and bring himself under the chastening rod of his Father, yet this will not entail the loss of Heaven itself. But it is otherwise with holiness: unless we are made partakers of the Divine nature, unless there be personal devotedness to God, unless there be

an earnest striving after conformity to His will, then Heaven will never be reached. There is only one route which leads to the Country of everlasting bliss, and that is the Highway of Holiness; and unless (by grace) we tread the same, our course must inevitably terminate in the caverns of eternal woe.

The negative here is fearfully emphatic: “without which (namely, “holiness”) no man shall see the Lord”—in the Greek it is still stronger: the negative being threefold—“not without, no man.” God Himself is essentially, ineffably, infinitely holy, and only holy characters shall ever “see” *Him*. Without holiness *no* man shall see Him: no, no matter how orthodox his beliefs, how diligent his attendance upon the means of grace, how liberal he may be in contributing to the cause, nor how zealous in performing religious duties. How this searching word should make everyone of us quail! Even though I be a preacher, devoting the whole of my life to study and labouring for the good of souls, even though I be blest with much light from the Word and be used of God in turning many from Satan to Christ, yet without holiness—both inward and outward—I shall never see the Lord. Unless the earnest pursuit of holiness occupy all my powers, I am but a formal professor, having a name to live while being spiritually dead.

Without holiness men are strangers to God and cannot be admitted to His fellowship, still less to His eternal habitation. “Thus saith the Lord GOD; No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into My sanctuary” (Ezek. 44:9): such as have no holiness within and without, in heart or in life, cannot be admitted into the sanctuary. If God shut the door of His earthly sanctuary against such as were strangers to holiness, will He not much more shut the doors of His celestial tabernacle against those who are strangers to Christ? “For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial?” (2 Cor. 6:14-15).

Unholy persons have fellowship and are familiar with Satan: “Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do” (John 8:44); and again “The whole world lieth in the Wicked one” (1 John 5:19). It would be awful blasphemy to affirm that the thrice holy God would have fellowship with those who are in covenant with the Devil. O make no mistake upon this point, dear reader: if you are not walking after the Spirit, you are walking after the flesh: if you are not living to please Christ, you are living to please self; if you have not been delivered from the power of Darkness, you cannot enjoy the Light. Listen to those piercing words of the Redeemer, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3), and the new birth is holiness begun, it is the implantation of a principle of holiness in the heart, which is the life task of the Christian to cultivate.

The “holiness” referred to in our text is *not* imputed holiness, for we cannot be exhorted to “follow after” that! No, it is personal and practical holiness, which is not attained by standing still, but by an earnest, diligent, persistent pursuit after the same. “It will be well for us to remember that the religion of Jesus Christ is not a matter of trifling, that the gaining of Heaven is not to be achieved by a few half-hearted efforts; and if we will at the same time recollect that all-sufficient succour is prepared for us in the Covenant of Grace we shall be in a right state of mind: resolute, yet humble, leaning upon the merits of Christ, and yet aiming at personal holiness. I am persuaded that if self-righteousness be deadly, self-indulgence is indeed ruinous. I desire to maintain always a balance in my ministry, and while combating self-righteousness, to war perpetually with

loose living” (C.H. Spurgeon).

But for the comfort of the poor and afflicted people of God, who find sin their greatest burden and who grieve sorely over their paucity of holiness, let it be pointed out that our text does not say “without *the perfection of* holiness no man shall see the Lord.” Had it done so, we would not be writing this article, for then the editor had been entirely without hope. There is none upon earth who is fully conformed to God’s will. Practical holiness is a matter of growth. In this life holiness is but infantile, and will only be matured in glory. At present it exists more in the form of longings and strivings, hungering and efforts, rather than in realizations and attainments. The very fact that the Christian is exhorted to “follow” or pursue holiness, proves that he has not yet reached it.

“Without holiness no man shall *see the Lord*” spiritually, not corporeal: with an enlightened understanding and with love’s discernment, so as to enjoy personal communion with Him. “If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth” (1 John 1:6): how clear is that! “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” (Matt. 5:8): see Him in His holy ordinances, see His blessed image reflected, though dimly, by His saints, see Him by faith with the eyes of the heart, as Moses, who “endured, as seeing Him who is invisible” (Heb. 11:27); and thus be prepared and capacitated to “see” Him in His unveiled glory in the courts above. O to be able to truthfully say, “As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness” (Psa. 17:15). How we should labour after holiness, using all the means appointed thereto, since it is the medium for the soul’s vision of God.—A.W.P.

The Life of David

46. *His Conquests.*

In last month's article we pointed out that the central thing in 2 Samuel 8 is David overcoming his enemies, and this, in order that Israel might enter their rightful portion—occupy and enjoy the inheritance which God had given them. In order to this, hard fighting was entailed. We also called attention to the fact that 2 Samuel 8 opens with the word “And,” which requires us to observe what immediately goes before. In 2 Samuel 7 we find God giving David “rest round about from all his enemies” (v. 1), and that he spent this season of repose in communion with the Lord—over His Word, (vv. 4-17) and in prayer (vv. 18-29). Following which he evidently received a commission from on High to attack and conquer his most formidable foes, for we are next told “and after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them” (2 Sam. 8:1).

The spiritual application unto the believer of the above is very striking and blessed. The “rest” given to David from those who had assailed him typifies, first, the initial coming to Christ of a convicted and sin-weary soul, and finding rest in Him; and second, it typifies the restraining hand of God laid upon the sinful lusts of the Christian, granting him a little respite from their assaults. This is necessary if there is to be sweet and profitable communion with the thrice holy God, for the soul is in no condition to rejoice in His perfections while sin is raging within him; therefore does the Lord, in His mercy, frequently lay His powerful hand upon us, subduing our iniquities (Micah 7:19). Then it is we should improve the opportunity, by feeding upon the Word of promise and pouring out our hearts before God in thanksgiving, praise, and adoring worship. Thus David used his “rest,” and so should we; for by so doing new strength will be obtained for further conflicts.

David's smiting of the Philistines and subduing them is a figure of the work of mortification to which God calls the Christian: “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness” (Col. 3:5). The clear call of God to His people is “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof” (Rom. 6:12). The Christian must not suffer his fleshly lusts to lord it over him, but is to engage them in mortal combat, refusing to spare anything in him which is opposed to God. David's taking of “*Methegammah*” (which means “the bridle of the mother”) out of the hands of the Philistines, speaks of the believer devoting his special attention unto his master lust or besetting sin, for until *that* be (by grace) conquered there can be no real experimental progress in spiritual things: “Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour . . . Let him that stole steal no more . . . Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth” (Eph. 4:25, 28, 29).

Now David's subduing of the Philistines and his capture of *Methegammah*, their chief stronghold, was imperatively necessary if Israel was to gain possession and occupy their inheritance, and it is *this* fact which we desire to press most upon the reader. The Christian has been begotten unto a blessed and eternal inheritance in Heaven: from his eventual entrance into it Satan cannot keep him, but from his present possession and enjoyment thereof he seeks might and main to rob him; and unless the believer be duly instructed and steadfastly resists him, then the Enemy will prove only too successful. Alas that so few of the Lord's people realise *what* their present privileges are; alas that so

many of them relegate unto the future what is theirs *now* in title; alas that they are so ignorant of Satan's devices and so dilatory in seeking to resist the great robber of their souls.

The believer has, *even now*, a rich and wondrous portion in Christ: a portion which is available and accessible unto *faith*: "For all things *are* yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; *all* are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (1 Cor. 3:21-23). But O how little are we impressed by such glorious declarations as these; how little do we enter into them in a practical way; how little do we *appropriate* them. We are much like the man who died in poverty, knowing not that a valuable estate had been left to him. Instead of setting our affections upon things above, we act as though there was nothing there for us until we pass through the portals of the grave. "In Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Psa. 16:11)—*now* as well as in the future!

O what a tremendous difference it makes whether or not the Christian be living in the present enjoyment of his eternal inheritance. What power could the attractions of this world have for one whose heart is on High? none at all; instead, they would appear to him in their true light, as worthless baubles. How little would he be affected by the loss of a few temporal things: not making them his "treasure" or chief good, the loss of them could neither destroy his peace nor kill his joy—"And took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing *in yourselves* that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance" (Heb. 10:34). How little would tribulation and suffering move us from a steady pressing forward along the path of duty: "who for the joy *that was set before Him* (by faith) endured the cross, despising the shame" (Heb. 12:2).

But for the present enjoyment of our eternal inheritance *faith* must be in exercise, for "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1). Faith is that which gives visibility and tangibility to that which is invisible to sight. Faith is that which gives *reality* to the things which hope is set upon. Faith brings near what is far off. Faith lifts the heart above the things of time and sense: "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: *for he had respect unto* the recompense of the reward" (Heb. 11:24-26). Ah, the "recompense of the reward" was a living reality unto Moses, and under the elevating power thereof the flesh-inviting offer of Egypt's princess was powerless to drag him down. And, my reader, if "our citizenship is in Heaven" (Phil. 3:20) *in a practical way*, so far from the baits of Satan tempting us, they will repel.

But, as we pointed out in last month's article, faith cannot be in healthy operation while the work of mortification be neglected. If we yield to the solicitations of our fleshly and worldly lusts, if we fail to crucify our besetting sins, if any evil be "allowed" by us, then faith will be suffocated and rendered inactive. Just as both the Canaanites and the Israelites could not possess the promised land at one and the same time—one being compelled to yield occupancy to the other—so neither can faith and sin rule the heart at one and the same time. The idolatrous Canaanites already had possession of the promised land when God gave it to them, and *only by hard fighting* could the Israelites secure it for themselves. In like manner sinful lusts originally possess the heart of the Christian, and it is only by hard fighting that they can be dispossessed and the heart be filled with Heaven.

As the Canaanites were vanquished, the Israelites occupied their places. Thus it must be spiritually. The mortification of sin is in order to the vivification of spirituality. The garden-plot must first be cleared of weeds and rubbish before it is ready for the vegetables and flowers to be planted therein. Hence the oft-repeated word is "Cease to do evil; learn to do well" (Isa. 1:16, 17), "depart from evil, and do good" (Psa. 34:14), "hate the evil, and love the good" (Amos 5:15)—the second cannot be attended to until the first be accomplished. "Put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts . . . Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:22, 24). That is God's unchanging order throughout: we must "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit," if we would "perfect holiness in His fear."

How instructive and how very striking is the order in Obadiah 17, "But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions." First, there is deliverance upon "mount Zion," which is where *Christ* is, for in Psalm 2:6 God declares, "Yet have I set My King upon my holy hill of Zion." Only by Christ can the sin-harassed believer obtain "deliverance" from those enemies which are ever threatening to destroy his peace, joy, and usefulness. Second, following the "deliverance" is the promise of "holiness," which is a positive thing, a moral quality of purity, with the added signification of devotedness unto God. But note this cannot be before the "deliverance!" Third, there is then the assurance that God's people shall "*possess* their possessions," that is, actually enjoy them, live in the power thereof.

"And he smote Moab" (2 Sam. 8:2). In order to get at the practical application of this unto ourselves it will be necessary to go back to earlier Scriptures. From Genesis 19:36, 37 we learn that Moab was the incestuous son of backslidden Lot. Their territory was adjacent to the land of Canaan, the Jordan dividing them (Num. 22:1; 31:12). It was Balak the king of the Moabites who hired Balaam to curse Israel (Num. 22:4, 6). Her daughters were a snare to the sons of Israel (Num. 25:1). Her land also proved to be a snare unto Naomi and her family (Ruth 1:1). God used the Moabites as one of His scourges upon His wayward people in the days of the Judges (3:12-14). No Moabite was suffered to enter into the congregation of the Lord unto the tenth generation (Deut. 23:3). It was foretold that Christ would "smite" them (Num. 24:17). In the last reference to them in Scripture we read, "Surely Moab shall be as Sodom" (Zeph. 2:9).

From the above facts it is clear that the Moabites were a menace unto Israel, and that there should be no fellowship between them. But the particular point which we need to define is, exactly what do the Moabites symbolize? The answer to this question is not difficult to discover: they figured the world away from God, but more particularly, the world bordering on the domain of faith. It is not the world-bordering Church, but the Church-bordering *world*, ever inviting the people of God to leave their own heritage and come down to their level. The Moabites were *near* to Israel both by birth and locality. There was a long and strong border-line between them, namely, the Jordan, the river of death, and *that* had to be crossed before the people of God could enter their domain. Moab, then, typifies the world *near* the Church; in other words, Moab stands for a mere *worldly profession* of the things of God.

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal. 6:14 RV). The cross of Christ is the antitype of the Jordan. It is by the cross the Christian is

separated from the world. While the principle of the cross—the principle of self-sacrifice, death to sin—rules the Christian, he is preserved from the blandishments of the world. But as soon as the principle of the cross—mortification, the denying of self—ceases to dominate, we fall victims to the fair “daughters of Moab,” and commit spiritual adultery with them (Num. 25:1); in other words, our testimony degenerates into a mere profession; we cease to be heavenly pilgrims, and vital godliness becomes a thing of the past. “Every fair attractive worldly delight that makes us forget our true Home is a ‘daughter of Moab.’” (F.C. Jennings).

“And he smote Moab” (2 Sam. 8:1). The spiritual application of this to us today is, we must be uncompromising in our separation from an apostate Christendom, and unsparingly mortify every desire within us to flirt with worldly churches and an empty profession. For a child of God to come under the power of “Moab” is to have his usefulness, power, and joy, replaced with wretchedness, impotency, and dishonour. Hence our urgent need of *obeying* that emphatic command, “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: *from such turn away*” (2 Tim. 3:5). It is not that we are called upon to *fight against* the modern “Moabites” (as Israel did under the Old Testament dispensation) but to *mortify* that within us which lusts after their attractions. In sparing one third of the Moabites and in receiving “gifts” from them, David temporized—the sad sequel is found in 2 Kings 3:4, 5 and what follows.

We do not have sufficient light and discernment to follow out all the details of 2 Samuel 8 and give the spiritual application of them unto ourselves, but several other obvious points in the chapter claim our attention. “David smote also Hadadezer” (v. 3); “David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men” (v. 5). How *numerous* are the (spiritual) enemies which the people of God are called upon to engage! It is to be carefully noted that David did not quit when he had subdued the Philistines and the Moabites, but continued to assail other foes! So the Christian must not become weary in well doing: no furloughs are granted to the soldiers of Jesus Christ: they are called on to be “steadfast, unmovable, *always* abounding in the work of the Lord,” (1 Cor. 15:58), i.e., the work or task which the Lord has assigned them, which, as the immediate context shows, is to gain the victory over *sin*.

Let us now anticipate a criticism which some of the Lord’s people may feel ready to make against what we have said in this and last month’s article: Have you not been arguing in favour of self-sufficiency and creature-ability? No, indeed; yet, on the other hand, we are no advocate for Christian impotency, for there is a vital difference between the regenerate and unregenerate as to spiritual helplessness. The way to get more faith and more strength is to *use* what we already have. But we are far from affirming that the Christian is able to overcome his spiritual foes in his own might. So with David. Considering the vast numbers which composed the ranks of his numerous enemies, David and his small force could never have won such great victories had not *the Lord* undertaken for him.

“And the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went” (2 Sam. 8:6): note the exact repetition of these words in verse 14. Here is the explanation of David’s success: he fought not in his own strength. So the Christian, fighting the good fight of faith, though weak in himself, is energized by Divine grace. David’s onslaught upon the Philistines and the Moabites was in line with the promises of God in Genesis 15:18 and Numbers 24:17, and most probably they nerved him for the battle. Thus it should be with the

Christian. It is his privilege and duty to remind God of His promises and *plead* them before Him: such promises as “I will subdue all thine enemies” (1 Chron. 17:10), and “sin shall not have dominion over you” (Rom. 6:14). O to be able to say “Thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me” (Psa. 18:39).

We have space to consider only one point: “Which also king David did dedicate unto the LORD, with the silver and gold that he had dedicated of all nations which he subdued” (2 Sam. 8:11). While David destroyed the idols, he dedicated to God all the vessels of silver and gold which he took from his enemies. So while the Christian strives to mortify every lust, he must consecrate unto the Lord all his natural and spiritual endowments. Whatever stands in opposition to God must be crucified, but that which may glorify Him must be dedicated to His service. This point is a very blessed one: David entirely *changed the destination* of this silver and gold: what had previously adorned the idolaters, was afterwards used in the building of the temple. The spiritual application of this is found in “as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness” (Rom. 6:19). May the Lord graciously add His blessing unto all that has been before us.—A.W.P.

The Divine Covenants.

4. *The Abrahamic.*

“And therefore will the LORD *wait*, that he may be gracious” (Isa. 30:18)—wait until the most suited time, wait until the stage is prepared for action, wait until there is a fit background for Him to act from; wait, very often, until man’s extremity has been reached. “When the *fullness of the time* was come, God sent forth His Son” (Gal. 4:4). Winter’s frost and snows must do their work before vegetation is ready to bud and blossom. As it is in the material creation so it is in the realm of Divine providence. There is a wonderful *order* in all God’s works, an all-wise *timing* of the Divine actions. Not that the Almighty is hampered or hindered by finite creatures of the dust, but that His wondrous “ways” may be the more admired by those who are granted spirituality to discern them. “Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways” (Rev. 15:3).

Having dealt in *judgment* at Babel, God was then pleased to manifest His *grace*. This has ever been, and will ever be, true of all God’s dealings. According to His infinite wisdom, judgment (which is God’s “strange” work) only serves to prepare the way for a greater and grander outflow of His redeeming love. Having abandoned (temporarily) the nations, God now singled out the man from whom the Chosen Nation was to spring. Later, God’s rejection of Israel resulted in the enriching of the Gentiles. And we may add, that the judgment of the Great White Throne will be followed by the new Heaven and new earth, wherein righteousness “shall dwell” and upon which the tabernacle of God shall be with men. Thus it was of old: the overthrow of the Tower of Babel and the dispersion of Nimrod’s impious followers was succeeded by the call of Abraham, through whom, ultimately, the Divine blessing should flow to all the families of the earth.

The lesson to be learned here is a deeply important one: the *connection* between Genesis 11 and 12 is highly significant. The Lord God determined to have a people of His own by the calling of grace, a people which should be taken into privileged nearness unto Himself, and which should show forth His praises; but it was not until all the claims of the natural man had been repudiated by his own wickedness, not until his utter worthlessness had been clearly exhibited, that Divine clemency was free to flow forth on an enlarged scale. Sin was suffered to abound in all its hideousness, before grace superabounded in all its blessedness. In other words, it was not until the total depravity of men had been fully demonstrated, first by the antediluvians and then again by the concerted apostasy at Babel, that God now dealt with Abraham in sovereign grace and infinite mercy.

That it *was* grace, grace alone, sovereign grace, which called Abraham to be the friend of God, appears clearly from his natural state and circumstances when the Lord first appeared to him. Abraham belonged not to a pious family, where Jehovah was acknowledged and honoured; instead his progenitors were idolaters. It seems that once more “*all flesh had corrupted his way in the earth.*” The house from which Abraham sprang was certainly no exception to the rule, for we read, “Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they *served other gods*” (Josh. 24:2). There was nothing whatever, then, in the object of the Divine choice to commend him unto God, nothing in Abraham that merited His esteem. No, the *cause* of election is always to be traced unto the discriminating will of God, for election itself is “*of grace*” (Rom. 11:5), and therefore it depends in no wise upon any

worthiness in the object, either present or foreseen; if it did it *would not be* “of grace.”

That it was not at all a matter of any goodness or fitness in Abraham which moved the Lord to single him out to be the special object of His high favour is further seen from Isaiah 51:1, 2, “Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you.” While it be true that God never acts capriciously or at random, nor arbitrarily, that is, without some wise and good reason for what He does, yet the *spring* of all His actions is His own sovereign pleasure. The moment we ascribe any of God’s exercises unto aught *outside* of Himself, we are guilty not only of impiety, but of affirming a gross absurdity. The Almighty is infinitely self-sufficient, and can no more be swayed by the creatures of His own hand, than an entity can be influenced by non-entities. O how vastly different is the Deity of Holy Writ from the “God” which present-day Christendom dreams about!

“The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee” (Acts 7:2, 3). The Divine title employed here is a remarkable one, for we regard it is intimating that the Shekinah itself was manifested before Abraham’s wondering gaze. God always suits the revelation which He makes of Himself according to the effect which is to be produced. Here was a man in the midst of a heathen city, brought up in an idolatrous home. Something vivid and striking, supernatural and unmistakable, was required, in order to suddenly change the whole course of his life. “The God of glory”—in blessed and awesome contrast from the “other gods” of his sires—“*appeared* unto our father Abraham.” It was probably the first of the Theophanic manifestations, for we never read of God “appearing” to Abel or Noah.

If our conclusion be correct, and this was the earliest of all the Theophanic manifestations (God appearing in *human* form: cf. Genesis 32:24, Joshua 5:13, 14, etc.) that we read in the Old Testament, which anticipated the Incarnation itself, as well as marked the successive revelations of God to men; and if this Theophany was accompanied by the resplendent glory and majesty of the Shekinah, then great indeed was the privilege now conferred upon the son of Terah. Nothing in him could possibly have merited such an amazing display of Divine grace. The Lord was here “found” of one that “sought Him not” (Isa. 65:1), as is the case with each of all those who are made the recipients of His everlasting blessing, for “there is *none that seeketh after God*” (Rom. 3:11). It is not the lost sheep which seeks the Shepherd, but the Shepherd who goes after it, and reveals Himself unto it in all His love and grace.

God said unto Abraham, “Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee” (Acts 7:3). Those were the terms of the Divine communication originally received by our patriarch. This command from the Most High came to Abraham in Mesopotamia, in the city of Ur of the Chaldeans, which was situated near the Persian Gulf. It was a call which demanded absolute confidence in and full obedience to the word of Jehovah. It was a call for definite separation from the world. But it was far more than a bare command issuing from the Divine authority: it was an *effectual* call which demonstrated the efficacy of Divine grace; in other words, it was a call accompanied by the Divine power, which wrought mightily in the object of it. This is a distinction which is generally lost sight of today: there are two kinds of the Divine call mentioned in Scripture, the one which falls only on the outward ear and produces no definite

effect; the other which reaches the heart, and moves unto a real response.

The first of these calls is found in such passages as, "Unto you, O men, I call; and My voice is to the sons of man" (Prov. 8:4), and "For many be called" (Matt. 20:16). It reaches all who come under the sound of God's Word. It is a call which is addressed to the hearer's responsibility. It is the call of the law, which presses upon the creature the claims of God, and the call of the Gospel which reveals the requirements of the Mediator. This call is universally unheeded: it is unpalatable to fallen human nature, and is rejected by the unregenerate: "I have called, and ye refused" (Prov. 1:24); "And they all with one consent began to make excuse" (Luke 14:18). The second of these calls is found in such passages as "Whom He called, them He also justified" (Rom. 8:30), "Called you out of darkness into His marvellous light" (1 Peter 2:9).

The first call is general; the second particular. The first is to all who come under the sound of the Word; the second is made only to the elect, bringing them from death unto life. The first makes manifest the enmity of the carnal mind against God; the second reveals the grace of God toward His own. It is *by the effect produced* that we are able to distinguish between them. "He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him: for they know His voice" (John 10:3, 4)—"follow" the "example" which He hath left them (1 Peter 2:21). They "follow Him" along the path of self-denial, of obedience, of living to the glory of God. Here, then, is the grand effect wrought upon the soul when it receives the effectual call of God: the understanding is illuminated, the conscience is convicted, the hard heart is melted, the stubborn will is conquered, the affections are drawn out unto Him who before was despised.

Such an effect as we have just described is supernatural: it is a miracle of Divine grace. The proud Pharisees humbled into the dust; the stout-hearted rebel is brought into subjection; the lover of pleasure is now made a lover of God. He who before kicked defiantly against the pricks, bows submissively and cries, "Lord, what wouldest *Thou* have me to do?" But let it be said emphatically, nothing but the immediate power of God working upon the heart can produce such a blessed transformation. Neither financial losses, family bereavements, nor a dangerous illness, can effect it. *Nothing external* will suffice to change the depraved heart of fallen man. He may listen to the most faithful sermons, the most solemn warnings, the most winsome invitations, and he will remain unmoved, untouched, unless the Spirit of God is pleased to first quicken him into newness of life. Those who are spiritually dead can neither hear, see, nor feel *spiritually*.

Now it is this *effectual* call that Abraham was the subject of when Jehovah suddenly appeared to him in Ur of Chaldea. This is evident from the effect produced in him. He was bidden to "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee" (Acts 7:3). Think of what *that* involved: to forsake the land of his birth, to sever the nearest and dearest of all natural ties, to make a complete break with his old manner of life, and to step out on what appeared unto carnal reason to be an uncertain venture. What was his response? This, "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went" (Heb. 11:8). Ah, my reader, *that* can only be satisfactorily accounted for in one way: all-mighty power had wrought within him, invincible grace had conquered his heart.

Before proceeding further let us pause and take stock of our own souls. Have we ex-

perienced anything which at all corresponds to this radical change in the life of Abraham? Have you, have I, been made the subjects of a Divine call which has produced a right-about-face in our lives? Have we been the subjects of a Divine miracle, so that grace has wrought effectually upon our hearts? Have we heard something more than the language of Scripture falling upon our outward ears? have we heard God Himself speaking in the most secret recesses of our souls, so that it may be said, "The Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also *in power*, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance" (1 Thess. 1:5)? Can it be said of us, "The Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (1 Thess. 2:13)? Is the Word working "effectually" in us, so as to *govern* our inner and outer man, so as to produce an obedient walk, and issue in fruit to God's glory?

Though the response made by Abraham to the call which he had received from the Lord clearly demonstrated that a miracle of Divine grace had been wrought within him, nevertheless, God suffered sufficient of the "flesh" to appear in him so as to evidence that he was still a sinful and failing creature. While regeneration be indeed a wonderful and blessed experience, yet it is only *the beginning* of God's "good work" in the soul (Phil. 1:6), and requires His further operations of sanctification to carry it forward to completion. Though a new "nature" is imparted when the soul is brought from death unto life, the old "nature" is not removed; though the principle of holiness be communicated, the principle of sin is neither annihilated nor exterminated. Consequently, there is not only a continual conflict produced by these contrary principles, but their presence and exercise prevents the soul from fully attaining its desires and doing as it would (Gal. 5:17).

Abraham's obedience to the Divine command was both partial and tardy. God had bidden him to leave his own country, separate from his kindred, and "come into the land" which He would show him (Acts 7:3). His failure is recorded in Genesis 11:31, "And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there." He left Chaldea, but instead of leaving behind his kindred, his father and nephew accompanied him. This was the more excuseless because Isaiah 51:2 expressly declares that God had called Abraham "alone." It is significant to note that the word "Terah" means "*delay*," and such his presence occasioned Abraham, for instead of entering the land of Canaan at once, he stopped short at Haran, and there he remained for five years until Terah died (Gen. 11:32; 12:4, 5).

And why did the Lord suffer the "flesh" in Abraham to mar his obedience? To indicate to his spiritual "children" that absolute perfection of character and conduct is not attainable in this life. We do not call attention to this fact so as to encourage loose living or to lower the exalted standard at which we must ever aim, but to cheer those who are discouraged because their honest and ardent efforts after godliness so often fall below that standard. Again; there is only One who has walked this earth in *perfect* obedience to God in thought and word and deed, and that not occasionally, but constantly and uninterruptedly, and He *must* "have the pre-eminence in all things"; therefore God will not suffer Christ's glory to be reduced by fashioning others to honour Him as *He* did. Finally, God's permitting the flesh to exist and be active in Abraham further magnified the Divine grace, by making it still further manifest that it was through no excellency in him that he had been called.

“Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Haran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land” (Acts 7:4). Though God had suffered the flesh in Abraham to mar his obedience, yet He would not allow it to completely triumph. Divine grace is not only magnified by the unworthiness of its object, but it is glorified in triumphing over the flesh and producing that which is contrary thereto. The hindrance to Abraham’s obedience was removed, and now we see him actually entering the place to which God had called him. And there, for the present, we must stop.—A.W.P.

A Morning Prayer.

O eternal God and merciful Father, which art the light that no man can attain unto, and by Thy marvellous lightness drivest away the darkness of the night and shadow of death, and by Thy grace enlightenest all those that being in darkness come unto Thee, I Thy unworthy servant, do bless and praise Thy most holy name for all the mercies and gracious benefits from time to time I have received from Thee, and most humbly thank Thee that Thou has vouchsafed me this favour, to pass this night in so quiet and comfortable rest, and hast brought me again to see and enjoy the light of the morning. And now I beseech Thee, O Lord, of Thine infinite goodness and mercy, by the merits of my blessed Saviour, that Thy merciful compassion may this day be extended to me, that, being enlightened with Thy grace, I may not be carried away by the power of darkness, to spend this day after the lusts and pleasures of my own corrupt mind; but that I may, with all conscience, follow Thy Fatherly will, which Thou hast revealed unto me in Thy Holy Word. Increase in me, O Lord, all spiritual gifts and graces, and beat down in me all carnal and corrupt affections.

Enable me by Thy blessed Spirit, in some measure, both to withstand that which is evil, and to perform what is good and pleasing unto Thee; and that neither by my own negligence, nor the power of any temptation, which either the world, the flesh, or the devil shall present unto me, I be driven away from a true faith, but may lay hold of those gracious promises that Thou hast made unto me in Jesus Christ my Saviour. Dispel, O Lord, the thick mists and clouds of my sins, which corrupt my soul, and darken my understanding; and wash them away, I most humbly beseech Thee, in the precious blood of Thy Son's passion; that so I may be acknowledged for one of Thine elect, when I shall appear before Thy judgment-seat. Give me a will carefully to follow my vocation, and let Thy blessing be upon me in the same. Bless me in my body, in my soul, and in whatsoever belongs unto me: lighten my mind, and inflame my heart with a love of those things that are good. And as my body, by Thy power, is risen from sleep, so let my soul daily be raised from the slumber of sin and the darkness of this world, that so both together may enjoy that everlasting light which Thou hast provided for Thy saints, and purchased with the blood of Thy dear Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom with Thee, O Father, and the blessed Spirit, be all honour and glory for evermore. Amen.—(Henry Smith, 1590).

An Evening Prayer.

O Almighty and everlasting God, the Father of mercies and God of all consolation, that by Thy merciful providence defendest all those that walk before Thee, and put their trust in Thee; I, poor and miserable sinner, unworthy of the least of Thy favours, do yet presume, in the name and mediation of Jesus Christ, to present myself before Thee, and to offer up this poor sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving unto Thee; that Thou hast nourished and preserved me by Thy power, and hast guided and governed me by Thy Word and Spirit; and, as for all other Thy blessings, so far that mercy which hath this day accompanied me, whereby I have both been preserved from many sins that the wickedness of my nature was inclined unto, and also delivered from many punishments that the sins I have committed have deserved. I most humbly beseech Thee, in the merits of Christ Jesus, to pardon and forgive me all my sins, which either in thought, word, or deed, I have this day, or any time heretofore, committed against Thee; whether they be the sins of my youth or of my age, sins of omission or commission, whether wittingly or ignorantly committed; good Lord, pardon them unto me, and let them not cause Thee this night, as justly Thou mayest do, take vengeance of me; but be merciful unto me, O Lord, in forgiving the evil I have committed, and in supplying the good that I have omitted, in restoring me to that which I have lost, in healing my sores, in enlightening my blindness, in cleansing my filthiness, and in altering the whole course of my corrupt mind; that I may be diverted from that which is evil, and enabled to perform that which is agreeable to Thy blessed will and Word. And, Lord, as Thou hast this day preserved me and kept me in safety, so I most humbly beseech Thee to protect me this night from all danger, both bodily and spiritually, and to give me such quiet and comfortable rest, as may enable me to walk on in that vocation wherein Thou hast placed me, and that I may both be delivered from the darkness of this present night, and may also escape that everlasting darkness which Thou hast provided for those that without repentance continue in their sins from which, good Lord, deliver me, and all those that belong unto Thee; and that for the merits of the death of my blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, in whose name I continue my prayers, for myself and the whole church. Amen. (Henry Smith, 1590).

Union and Communion.

3. *Mystical.*

The everlasting love of the Triune God is *the origin of* the Church's union to Christ, election being the first and fundamental act of that love toward its members, that election giving them a subsistence in their Head: "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4). In election God made it manifest that He was pleased to desire *creature* fellowship and society, instead of dwelling alone forever in His own infinite self-sufficiency. First, He ordained that His beloved Son should take manhood into union with His own Person, and that as God-man He should be the Head of a people given to Him for His glory. This *order* in the Divine counsels is marvelously adumbrated in the physical realm: the head and members of the human body are conceived *together* in the womb, as Christ and the members of His Church were chosen to form one Body; yet as the head comes out *first*, so Christ was given the pre-eminence from the womb of God's decrees.

However difficult it be for us to grasp, it is important we should recognise that God's eternal decree gave the elect a super-creation subsistence before Him, so that they were capable of being loved and of receiving a grant of grace. In other words, in God's eternal thoughts and foreviews, the elect were conceived and contemplated by Him in the Divine mind as real entities in a state of pure creaturehood, above and beyond any consideration of the Fall. Even then they were "Blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" and "accepted in the Beloved" (Eph. 1:3, 6). It is of great moment that the Church should thus be first considered by us, that we never lose sight of the *original* dignity and loveliness of the Church, anointed and blessed in Christ before the foundation of the world. Her state by the Fall *was not her original one*, any more than her present state is the final one.

"Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given Me" (Isa. 8:18). Such were "sons" *before* God sent forth the Holy Spirit into their hearts (Gal. 4:6); they were "children" while "scattered abroad" *before* Christ died for them (John 11:51, 52); they were "children" *before* the Redeemer became incarnate (Heb. 2:14). The elect were "children" *from* all eternity and decreed to be so *unto* all eternity. They did not lose their sonship by the Fall, neither by any corruption derived from that Fall in their nature. "Children" they continued, though *sinful* children, and as such, justly exposed to wrath. Nevertheless, this relationship could not be revoked by any after-acts in time: united to Christ from all eternity, they were always one with Him. It is a remarkable fact that never once has the Holy Spirit used the prepositional form "into Christ" with reference to God's *election* of the Church, although "eis" occurs in the Epistles over six hundred times: it is always "in (Gk. "en") Christ," because the Church was *never out of Christ!*

From all eternity the Church stood in Christ as His mystical Body and Bride. A union between the members and their Head was then established which neither sin, Satan, nor death could sever. We say again, it is of vast importance that we do not lose sight of the original glory and beauty of the Church. The fall of the Church in Adam did not and could not alienate the Church from Christ, but it gave occasion for redemption, thereby affording the means and opportunity for the honour of Christ, by His work, death and resurrection bringing a greater revenue of glory to the Almighty Author of salvation than had the fall of man never taken place. Wondrous indeed are all the ways of God: in the ultimate outcome, He was no loser by Adam's defection, but the gainer; as it is written,

“The LORD hath made all things *for Himself*: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil” (Prov. 16:4); and again, “Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee” (Psa. 76:10).

“God’s love to His elect is not of yesterday; it does not begin with their love to Him, ‘We love Him, because He first loved us’ (1 John 4:19). It does not commence in time, but dates back from eternity, and is the ground and foundation of the elect’s being called in time out of darkness into marvelous light: ‘I have loved thee,’ says the Lord to the Church, ‘with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee’ (Jer. 31:3); that is, in effectual vocation. Many are the instances which might be given in proof of the antiquity of God’s love to His elect, and as it is antecedent to their being brought out of a state of nature. God’s choosing them in Christ before the foundation of the world was an act of His love towards them, the fruit and effect of it. His making an everlasting covenant with His Son, ordered in all things and sure, on account of those He chose in Him; His setting Him up as the Mediator of the covenant from everlasting; His donation of grace to them in Him before the world began; His putting their persons into His hands, and so making them His care and charge, are so many demonstrative proofs of His early love to them.

“There are also instances to be given of God’s love to His elect while they are in a state of nature. ‘When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly . . . God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us’ (Rom. 5:6, 8). Now certainly these persons were in a state of nature who are said to be ‘without strength,’ etc., and yet God commended His love towards them when and while they were such, in a matchless instance of it. John makes use of this circumstance respecting the state of God’s elect, to magnify the greatness of God’s love; ‘Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins’ (1 John 4:10). Again, the quickening of God’s elect when dead in trespasses and sins, the drawing of them to Christ with the cords of powerful and efficacious grace in effectual vocation, are instances of His special grace and favour, and fruits and effects of His everlasting love to them.

“If God did not love His elect while in a state of nature, they must forever remain in that state, since they are unable to help themselves out of it; and it is only the love, grace and mercy of God which engage His almighty power to deliver them from thence. There are three gifts and instances of God’s love to His people before conversion, which are not to be matched by any instance or instances of love after conversion. The one is the gift of God Himself to them in the Everlasting Covenant, which covenant runs thus: ‘I will be their God, and they shall be My people.’ The second is the gift of His Son to suffer and die on their room and stead, and so obtain eternal redemption for them. The third is the gift of His Spirit to them, to convince them of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. And now what greater instance is there of God’s love to His people after conversion? If the heavenly glory, with all the entertaining joys of that delightful state, should be fixed upon, I deny it to be a greater instance of God’s love, than the gifts of Himself, His Son, and Spirit; and, indeed, all that God does in time, or will do to all eternity, is only *telling* His people how much He loved them *from everlasting*” (John Gill).

Now it was this eternal love of the Triune God which gave the Church an election-union in Christ from everlasting, for that love ever considered them in Christ. As it is written, nothing “shall be able to separate us from the love of God, *which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*” (Rom. 8:39). Christ as God-man, was loved by the Father as the supreme

object of His complacency (Prov. 8:30; Isa. 42:1), which was manifested in His election of Him; and the Church was the secondary object of God's love as viewed in Christ. The Lord Jesus declared to the Father, Thou "hast loved them, *as* Thou hast loved Me . . . Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:23, 24). Therefore as eternal election is a display of God's everlasting love to His people, so it is also an instance and evidence of their eternal union to Christ. The one cannot be without the other: if loved *in* Christ, the Church must have been one *with* Him.

It is not that election was a fore-appointing of persons *unto* an union with Christ, as stones are selected *to be* used in a building, or as a slip is chosen for engrafting into a tree. Ephesians 1:3, 4 *does not* say, "According as He has chosen us to be in Him" or "that we should be in Him." Instead we read, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world"—the Church was blessed with all spiritual blessings *in Christ* "according as" they were chosen in Him. Election was not the original uniting act, for *that* was the everlasting love of God; yet the two must not be separated: they went together. Nevertheless, as in election the Church is considered *in Christ*, so it is a proof of their eternal union to Him. Now there are several things which *arise from* and are *branches of* this everlasting love-union of the Church to Christ, which it will now be our joy to consider. First and chief of these is *the marriage* between Christ and the Church.

It pleased the Father to choose for His Son, as God-man, the Church, to be not only His Body, but also His Bride, who was to receive from Him and share with Him His honours, glories, and privileges. Having chosen the Church in Christ, the Father set her before Him in the glass of His decrees, according to the uttermost purpose of His love and grace toward her, causing her to shine with excelling brightness and loveliness in the view of His Son, giving Him to see how high she was in the Father's estimation, and presenting her to Christ as His choicest gift to Him. This drew out the heart of the God-man towards her, caused Him to open His arms and heart to receive her, to set His affections and delight upon her, to regard and esteem her according to the high value which the Father Himself had placed upon her.

"Thine they were," said Christ to His Father, "And Thou *gavest them Me*" (John 17:6), to be My heritage, My portion, My bride. Here was the grand originating cause of Christ's love for His Church; the fact that she was the Father's love-gift to Him. Viewing the Church from eternity as thus presented to Him by the Father, He could not but regard her as supremely worthy of His affection and delight. His language was "I will betroth thee unto Me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the LORD" (Hosea 2:19, 20)—let it be carefully borne in mind that the record of His words in Holy Scripture are but the *open* transcript of what He said in secret before the world began: many examples of this might be given, but we here only state the bare fact.

"The King's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold" (Psa. 45:13). Observe well the glorious title which the Church here bears, and mark carefully what is necessarily presupposed and clearly implied in it. The "King" is God the Father, of whom we read "a certain King, which made a marriage for His Son" (Matt. 22:2). That "marriage" was made from everlasting, and therefore could the Divine Bridegroom say to

His celestial Bride, “thy Maker is thine Husband” (Isa. 54:5). Now it is by virtue of this marital union between Christ and His people that the Church is here designated “the King’s *daughter*”: because the Father is *Christ’s* “Father,” He is the Church’s “Father” (John 20:17); because Christ is the Father’s *Son*, and the Church is wedded to Him, therefore the Church is the Father’s “Daughter!”

Most marvelously and blessedly was all of this shadowed out in connection with our first parents. Adam, in his creation and formation, was a type of Christ; Eve of the Church. Before Adam’s creation we read of a council held between the Eternal Three concerning him: “And God said, Let *Us* make man in our image, after Our likeness” (Gen. 1:26). So it was in connection with the last Adam (Heb. 10:5, 9). Adam’s body was supernaturally produced out of the virgin earth, as Christ’s body was miraculously conceived by the Virgin Mary. The union between the soul and body of Adam (Gen. 2:7) adumbrated the incomprehensible union between the eternal Son of God and His assumption of our nature into oneness with His own Person. Adam’s lordship, or his being given dominion over all mundane creatures (Gen. 1:28), prefigured Christ’s universal headship over all things to His Church (Eph. 1:22, 23). But it is the formation of Eve and her union with Adam to which we would now direct particular attention.

“And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man” (Gen. 2:18, 21-23). First, behold here the tender solicitude of God toward Adam: “It is not good that man should be alone.” In this a deeper mystery is opened unto those who have eyes to see: it is a revelation on the earth plane of what had passed secretly in the eternal councils of Heaven. Christ, as God-man—“the Beginning” of Jehovah’s way (Prov. 8:22; Col. 1:18), the Fountain-head of all His decrees (Isa. 42:1; Eph. 3:11)—was the grand Object of Jehovah’s love: all His vast designs concentrated in Him, concerned Him, and were designed for His manifestative glory from all eternity—“all things were created by Him, *and for Him*” (Col. 1:16).

Second, we discover here God’s purpose to provide a suitable companion for Adam: “I will make him an help meet for him.” This affords us a yet fuller insight into that which had passed in the Divine mind before the foundation of the world: God thought it not meet that the God-man (“set up” in Heaven before the world was: Prov. 8:23, 24) should be alone, therefore did He ordain and choose a Bride for Him. Third, God created Eve *out of Adam*, taking one of his ribs and from it and the flesh cleaving thereto made He the first woman. This also was a most striking acting out in time of what had transpired ere time began. God had chosen the Church in Christ, she was *in Him* before the foundation of the world. Christ having been “foreordained before the foundation of the world” (1 Peter 1:20) to become incarnate, and His human nature having a covenant subsistence before God, the Church, as thus considered in Him, received her human nature from Him, and hence that expression “We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones” (Eph. 5:30) is language which most evidently refers us back to Genesis 2:23.

Fourth, out of Adam’s rib the Lord God made, or as the margin more correctly renders it “*builde*d” the woman, for she is of a more curious and delicate frame than the man.

Now Christ is “the foundation” (1 Cor. 3:11) and the Church is His “building”: built up for Him and upon Him, with heavenly art, by an infinitely wise Architect—“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house” (1 Peter 2:5). Fifth, God then set Eve before Adam, “and brought her unto the man,” and this, in order to effect a *marriage union* between them. What blessed light this casts upon the high mystery of grace, when God the Father presented the elect unto Christ. It was *to that* He referred when He said, “Thine they were, and *Thou gavest them Me*” (John 17:6)—as He gave Eve to Adam!

In our endeavour to view the eternal transactions of Divine love and grace, we must contemplate the Church as she was before Adam’s defection. We must view her first, not as fallen, but as unfallen; not as involved in sin and ruin, but as the pure and spotless bride of Christ, given by the Father to Him as His Spouse. Most blessedly was this typed out in Eve as she was brought and given to Adam in all her spotless innocence. O how surpassingly fair must Eve have appeared in the morning of her creation, as she came fresh from the hand of her Maker! What could Adam do but love her and delight in the admirable bride which the Lord God had so graciously provided for him! So Christ viewing, in the glass of God’s decrees, the Bride selected for Him, loved and delighted in her, betrothed Himself unto her, took her as thus presented by God unto Himself in a deed of marriage-settlement as the gift of the Father.

Let it be fully noted that Adam was joined to Eve in marriage *before* the Fall, and not after it. How this exposes the makeshift compromise of sublapsarians! Ephesians 5:31, 32 in the light of Genesis 2:23 unequivocally establishes the fact that the making of Adam and Eve *before* sin entered the world, prefigured the marriage-union of Christ and His Church, decreed of God prior to any consideration of the Fall. Nor does this stand alone. In Leviticus 21:13, 14 is another precious type equally definite and plain. There we read, “And he (namely, the high priest of verse 10) shall take a wife in her virginity. A widow, or a divorced woman, or profane, or an harlot, these shall he not take: but he shall take a *virgin* of his own people to wife.” Now as the high priest under the law was a figure of the great High Priest over the House of God, we must see in this Divine prohibition a typical intimation that the Church was espoused to the God-man in all her *virgin purity* as she stood before Jehovah in her native innocence.

But to return unto the exquisite scene set before us in Genesis 2. We observe, sixth, that Adam *owned* the relation which now existed between himself and Eve: “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man” (Gen. 2:23). In like manner Christ received the elect at the Father’s hands, became their Husband, and from thence owned them as His everlasting Spouse. His love for her is blessedly told out in “As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you” (John 15:9)—eternally, infinitely, unchangeably. He speaks of her as “in whom is all My delight” (Psa. 16:3); and “How fair and how pleasant art thou, O Love, for delights!” (Song. 7:6). Seventh, as Adam was not created for Eve, but she for him, so God did not foreordain and “set up” Christ, as God-man, for the Church, but the Church was ordained for Him: “For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man; neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man” (1 Cor. 11:8, 9).

Finally, though Adam was not taken out of the woman nor created for her, nevertheless it was not good that he should be “alone”: Eve was his necessary complement, his companion, his help meet; yea, as we are told, “the woman is *the glory of the man*” (1 Cor. 11:7). In like manner, Christ, as God-man, would be incomplete without His Bride:

considered as His mystical Body, she is called “the fullness of Him that filleth all in all” (Eph. 1:23). Christ needed a vessel which He might fill, that should reflect His glory; hence we read, “the messengers of the churches, and *the glory of Christ*” (2 Cor. 8:23); and again, “Israel *My glory*” (Isa. 46:13) He calls her. In the last reference made to her in Holy Writ we read, “Come hither, I will show thee the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife . . . descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious” (Rev. 21:9-11). In and by and through the Church Christ will be glorified to all eternity.

We must leave for our next article (D.V.) the consideration of how the marriage of the Church to Christ gave her communion with His honours and interests; as we must the effects which her fall in Adam did and did not produce in her.—A.W.P.

The Doctrine of Sanctification.

6. *Its Nature (continued).*

5. The threefold signification of the term “to sanctify.” Perhaps the simplest and surest method to pursue in seeking to arrive at a correct understanding of the nature of sanctification is to follow up the meaning of the word itself, for in Scripture the names of things are always in accurate accord with their character. God does not tantalize us with ambiguous or meaningless expressions, but the name He gives to a thing is a properly descriptive one. So here. The word “to sanctify” means to consecrate or set apart for a sacred use, to cleanse or purify, to adorn or beautify. Diverse as these meanings may appear, yet as we shall see they beautifully coalesce into one whole. Using this, then, as our principal key, let us see whether the threefold meaning of the term will open for us the main avenues of our subject.

Sanctification is, first of all, an act of the Triune God, whereby His people are *set apart* for Himself—for His delight, His glory, His use. To aid our understanding on this point, let it be noted that Jude 1 speaks of those who are “sanctified by God the Father,” and that this precedes their being “preserved in Jesus Christ and called.” The reference there is to the Father choosing His people for Himself out of the race which He purposed to create, separating the objects of His favour from those whom He passed by. Then in Hebrews 10:10 we read, “we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all”: His sacrifice has purged His people from every stain of sin, separated them from the world, consecrated them unto God, setting them before Him in all the excellency of His offering. In 2 Thessalonians 2:13 we are told, “God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth”: this refers to the Spirit’s quickening work by which He separates the elect from those who are dead in sin.

Sanctification is, in the second place, *a cleansing* of those who are to be devoted to God’s use. This “cleansing” is both a legal and an experimental one. As we prosecute our subject, it needs to be constantly borne in mind that sanctification or holiness is the opposite of *sin*. Now as sin involves both guilt and pollution, its remedy must meet both of those needs and counteract both of those effects. A loathsome leper would no more be a fit subject for Heaven, than would one who was still under the curse. The double provision made by Divine grace to meet the need of God’s guilty and defiled people is seen in the “blood and water” which proceeded from the pierced side of the Saviour (John 19:34). Typically, this twofold need was adumbrated of old in the tabernacle furniture: the laver to wash at was as indispensable as the altar for sacrifice. Cleansing is as urgent as forgiveness.

That one of the great ends of the death of Christ was the moral purification of His people is clear from many Scriptures. “He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again” (2 Cor. 5:15); “Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:14); “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (Heb. 9:14); “Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness” (1 Peter 2:24). From these passages it is abundantly plain that the purpose of the Saviour in all that He did and suffered, was not only to deliver His

to deliver His people from the *penal* consequences of their sins, but also to cleanse them from the *pollution* of sin, to free them from its enslaving power, to rectify their moral nature.

It is greatly to be regretted that so many when thinking or speaking of the “salvation” which Christ has purchased for His people, attach to it no further idea than deliverance from condemnation. They seem to forget that deliverance from *sin*—the cause of condemnation—is an equally important blessing comprehended in it. “Assuredly it is just as necessary for fallen creatures to be freed from the pollution and moral impotency which they have contracted, as it is to be exempted from the penalties which they have incurred; so that when re-instated in the favour of God, they may at the same time be more capable of loving, serving, and enjoying Him forever. And in this respect the remedy which the Gospel reveals is fully suited to the exigencies of our sinful state, providing for our *complete* redemption from sin itself, as well as from the penal liabilities it has brought upon us” (T. Crawford on “The Atonement”). Christ has procured sanctification for His people as well as justification.

That *cleansing* forms an integral element in sanctification is abundantly clear from the types. “For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh” (Heb. 9:13). The blood, the ashes, the sprinkling, were all God’s merciful provision for the “unclean” and they sanctified “to the purifying of the flesh”—the references being to Leviticus 16:14, Numbers 19:2, 17, 18. The antitype of this is seen in the next verse, “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, *purge your conscience* from dead works to serve the living God?” (Heb. 9:14). The type availed only for a temporary and ceremonial sanctification, the Antitype for a real and eternal cleansing. Other examples of the same thing are found in, “Go unto the people, and *sanctify* them to day and to morrow, and let them *wash* their clothes” (Exo. 19:10); “I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to Me in the priest’s office” (Exo. 29:44)—for the accomplishment of this see Exodus 40:12-15, where we find they were “washed with water,” “anointed” with oil, and “clothed” or adorned with their official vestments.

Now the substitutionary and sacrificial work of Christ has produced for His people a threefold “cleansing.” The first is judicial, the sins of His people being all blotted out as though they had never existed. Both the guilt and the defilement of their iniquities are completely removed, so that the Church appears before God “as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun” (Song. 6:10). The second is personal, at “the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5). The third is experimental, when faith appropriates the cleansing blood and the conscience is purged: “purifying their hearts by faith” (Acts 15:9), “having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water” (Heb. 10:22). Unlike the first two, this last is a repeated and continuous thing: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to *cleanse* us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). We hope to amplify these different points considerably when we take up more definitely our sanctification by Christ.

Sanctification is, in the third place *an adorning* or beautifying of those whom God cleanses and sets apart unto Himself. This is accomplished by the Holy Spirit in His work of morally renovating the soul, whereby the believer is made inwardly holy. That which the Spirit communicates is the life of the risen Christ, which is a principle of purity, pro-

ducing love to God, and love to God implies, of course, subjection to Him. Thus, holiness is an inward conformity to the things which God has commanded, as the “pattern,” (or sample) corresponds to the piece from which it is taken. “For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For *this* is the will of God, even your sanctification” (1 Thess. 4:2, 3) i.e., your sanctification consists in a conformity to His will. Sanctification causes the heart to make God its chief good, and His glory its chief end.

As *His glory* is the end God has in view in all his actions—ordering, disposing, directing every thing with this design—so conformity to Him, being holy as He is holy, must consist in setting *His glory* before us as our ultimate aim. Subjective sanctification is that change wrought in the heart which produces a steady desire and purpose to please and honour God. This is not in any of us by nature, for self-love rules the unregenerate. Calamities may drive the unsanctified toward God, yet it is only for the relief of *self*. The fear of Hell may stir up a man to cry unto God for mercy, but it is only that *he* may be delivered. Such actions are only the workings of mere nature—the instinct of self-preservation; there is nothing spiritual or supernatural about them. But at regeneration a man is lifted off his own bottom and put on a new foundation.

Subjective sanctification is a change or renovating of the heart so that it is conformed unto God—unto His will, unto His glory. “The work of sanctification is a work framing and casting the heart itself into the Word of God (as metals are cast into a die or mould), so that the heart is made of the same stamp and disposition with the Word” (Thomas Goodwin). “Ye have obeyed from the heart that form (or “pattern”) of doctrine which was delivered you” (Rom. 6:17). The arts and sciences deliver unto us rules which we must conform unto, but God’s miracle of grace within His people *conforms them unto* the rulings of His will, so as to be formed by them; softening their hearts so as to make them capable of receiving the impressions of His precepts. Below we quote again from the excellent remarks of Thomas Goodwin.

“The substance of his comparison comes to this, that their hearts having been first, in the inward inclinations and dispositions of it, framed and changed into what the Word requires, they then obeyed the same Word from the heart naturally, willingly; and the commandments were not grievous, because the heart was framed and moulded thereunto. The heart must be made good ere men can obey from the heart; and to this end he elegantly first compares the doctrine of Law and Gospel delivered them, unto a pattern or sampler, which having in their eye, they framed and squared their actings and doings unto it. And he secondly compares the same doctrine unto a mould or matrix, into which metal is being delivered, have the same figure or form left on them which the mould itself had; and this is spoken in respect of their hearts.”

This mighty and marvellous change is not in the substance of faculties of the soul, but in its disposition; for a lump of metal being melted and moulded remains the same metal it was before, yet its frame and fashion is greatly altered. When the heart has been made humble and meek, it is enabled to perceive what is that good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God, and approves of it as good for him; and thus we are “transformed by the renewing of our mind” (Rom. 12:2). As the mould and the thing moulded correspond, as the wax has on it the image by which it was impressed, so the heart which before was enmity to every commandment, now delights in the law of God after the inward man, finding an agreeableness between it and his own disposition. Only as the heart is supernaturally changed and conformed to God is it found that “His commandments *are not*

grievous" (1 John 5:3).

What has just been said above brings us back to the point reached in last month's article (or more correctly, the first sections of this article), namely, that holiness is a moral quality, an inclination, a "new nature," a disposition which delights itself in all that is pure, excellent, benevolent. It is the shedding abroad of God's love in the heart, for only by *love* can His holy law be "fulfilled." Nothing but disinterested love (the opposite of self-love) can produce cheerful obedience. And, as Romans 5:5 tells us, the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts *by the Holy Spirit*. We are sanctified by the Spirit indwelling us, His producing in and through us the fruits of holiness. And thus it is that we read, "But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is *godly* for Himself" (Psa. 4:3).

In the preceding portion of this article we asked, "How can it be discovered whether or not *we* have been sanctified, unless we really know what sanctification actually is?" Now let it be pointed out that our sanctification by the Father and our sanctification by Christ can only be known to us by the sanctification *of the Spirit*, and that, in turn, can only be discovered by its *effects*. And this brings us to the ultimate aspect of *the nature* of our sanctification, namely, that holy walk, or course of outward conduct, which makes manifest and is the effect of our inward sanctification by the Spirit. This branch of our subject is what theologians have designated our "practical sanctification." Thus, we distinguish between the act and process by which the Christian is set apart unto God, the moral and spiritual state into which that setting apart brings him, and the holy living which proceeds from that state: it is the last we have now reached. As the "setting apart" is both privative and positive—from the service of Satan, to the service of God—so holy living is separation from evil, following that which is good.

Thomas Manton, than whom none of the Puritans are more simple, succinct, and satisfying, says, "Sanctification is threefold. First, *meritorious* sanctification is Christ's meriting and purchasing for His Church the inward inhabitation of the Spirit, and that grace whereby they may be sanctified: Hebrews 10:10. Second, *applicatory* sanctification is the inward renovation of the heart of those whom Christ hath sanctified by the Spirit of regeneration, whereby a man is translated from death to life, from the state of nature to the state of grace. This is spoken of in Titus 3:5: this is the daily sanctification, which, with respect to the merit of Christ, is wrought by the Spirit and the ministry of the Word and sacraments. Third, *practical* sanctification is that by which those for whom Christ did sanctify Himself, and who are renewed by the Holy Spirit, and planted into Christ by faith, do more and more sanctify and cleanse themselves from sin in thought, word, and deed: (1 Peter 1:15; 1 John 3:3).

"As to sanctify signifieth to consecrate or dedicate to God, so it signifieth both the fixed inclination or the disposition of the soul towards God as our highest lord and chief good, and accordingly a resignation of our souls to God, to live in the love of His blessed majesty and a thankful obedience to Him. More distinctly (1) it implieth a bent, a tendency, or fixed inclination towards God, which is habitual sanctification. (2) A resignation, or giving up ourselves to God, by which actual holiness is begun; a constant using ourselves to Him, by which it is continued; and the continual exercise of a fervent love, by which it is increased in us more and more, till all be perfected in Glory.

"As to sanctify signifieth to purify and cleanse, so it signifies the purifying of the soul from the love of the world. A man is impure because, when he was made of God, he doth prefer base trifles of this world before his Maker and everlasting glory: and so he is not

sanctified that doth despise and disobey his Maker; he despiseth Him because he preferreth the most contemptible vanity before Him, and doth choose the transitory pleasure of sinning before the endless fruition of God. Now he is sanctified when his worldly love is cured, and he is brought back again to the love and obedience of God. Those that are healed of the over-love of the world are sanctified, as the inclinations of the flesh to worldly thing are broken.”

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess. 5:23). There was probably a threefold reference in the Apostle’s request. First, he prayed that all the members of the Thessalonian church, the entire assembly, might be sanctified. Second, he prayed that each individual member might be sanctified entirely in his whole man, spirit and soul and body. Third, he prayed that each and all of them might be sanctified more perfectly, moved to press forward unto complete holiness. 1 Thessalonians 5:23 is almost parallel with Hebrews 13:20, 21. The Apostle prayed that all the parts and faculties of the Christian might be kept under the influence of efficacious grace, in true and real conformity to God; so influenced by the Truth as to be fitted and furnished, in all cases and circumstances, for the performance of every good work. Though this be our bounden duty, yet it lies not absolutely in our own power, but is the work of God in and through us; and thus is to form the subject of earnest and constant prayer.

Two things are clearly implied in the above passage. First, that the *whole nature* of the Christian is the subject of the work of sanctification, and not merely part of it: every disposition and power of the spirit, every faculty of the soul, the body with all its members. The *body* too is “sanctified.” It has been made a member of Christ (1 Cor. 6:15), it is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19). As it is an integral part of the believer’s person, and as its inclinations and appetites affect the soul and influence conduct, it must be brought under the control of the spirit and soul, so that “every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour” (1 Thess. 4:4), and “as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness” (Rom 6:19).

Second, that this work of Divine grace *will be* carried on to completion and perfection, for the Apostle immediately adds, “Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it” (1 Thess. 5:24). Thus the two verses are parallel with “Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you *will perform it* until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:6). Nothing short of every faculty and member of the Christian being devoted to God is what he is to ever aim at. But the attainment of this is only completely realized at his glorification: “We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him” (1 John 3:2)—not only inwardly but outwardly: “Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body” (Phil. 3:21).—A.W.P.

Perfect Peace.

“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee” (Isa. 26:3). What is signified by a mind “stayed on” the Lord? At least three things. First, *to make the Lord the Portion of my soul*. All around us are those vainly seeking contentment in *things*: such as money, and what it can buy, social prestige, fame, pleasures, etc.—all of which are broken cisterns which hold no water. Only the One who made us can satisfy the heart; only as our affection is set upon “things above” do we drink of the Fountain of living waters. Just in proportion as “Delight thyself also in the LORD” (Psa. 37:4) will “perfect peace” be mine now.

Second, *to receive from God’s hand whatsoever enters my life*. I need to cultivate the habit of looking beyond all secondary causes, all intermediary agents and human instruments, recognising that “of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are ALL things” (Rom. 11:36). “Cease ye from man” (Isa. 2:22); conclude no more it is Satan who is seeking to disturb your rest; but say, “The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it!” (John 18:11). Just in proportion as we are enabled to say from the heart “It is the LORD: let Him do what seemeth Him good” (1 Sam. 3:18) will “perfect peace” be ours in this world of sin and turmoil.

Third, *to leave the future entirely with God*. And why not? Are not my “times” in His hand (Psa. 31:15)? Has He not graciously cared for me and faithfully supplied my every need hitherto? Then why be fearful of what lies ahead? Has He not promised never to leave nor forsake me! Just in proportion as I live a day at a time, and “Take therefore no anxious thought for the morrow” (Matt. 6:34) will “perfect peace” be mine even now. But each of these three things is dependent upon the exercise of FAITH; as the text says “because he *trusteth* in Thee.” O to know more of this experimentally.—A.W.P.