



"You will know them by their fruits." Mt. 7:16

Progressive Sanctification

An excerpt from "Perfect Love" by J. A. Wood

53. Can a person successfully seek the gradual attainment of entire sanctification?

No; for the following reasons: --

1. He who seeks a gradual sanctification, seeks necessarily something less than entire sanctification; that is, he does not seek entire sanctification at all.
2. He who does not aim at the extirpation of all sin from his heart now, tolerates some sin in his heart now. But he who tolerates sin in his heart is not in a condition to offer acceptable prayer to God. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Seeking a gradual purification, renders the attainment of purity impossible, as it excludes its (qualifying) condition. Faith, the (qualifying) condition of purity, can be exercised only in connection with renunciation of all sin, entire submission to God, and approval of all His known will. Conscious confidence – evangelical faith – and conscious rebellion – disobedience cannot coexist in the heart. The former excludes the latter.
3. Inbred sin (the destruction or removal of which constitutes entire sanctification) is a unit, a simple evil principle, and cannot be divided or subdivided and removed in parts. It is a carnal life, a simple uncompounded element or quality. In its essential nature it is unchangeably the same. This "principle," or "flesh," or "nature" or "seed of all sin," or "indwelling sin," or whatever it may be called, is not removed by any gradual process. (See Purity and Maturity, p. 177.)
4. The suppression of depravity is not its destruction or removal; and any gradual process which contemplates the subjugation only of this indwelling sin is no definite approach to entire sanctification.

Rev. Dr. Lowry says: "We can no more evolve it by discipline and culture and good works, than the Ethiopian can change his skin, or the leopard his spots. We might as well undertake to grow the briars and thorns and Canada thistles out of our fields, by sowing wheat among them, as to attempt to grow sinful appetites, and lusts, and tastes and tendencies out of the soul, by cultivating counter graces." -- Divine Life, June, 1878.

54. Does the Scripture imagery employed to illustrate the work of entire sanctification imply rapidity and dispatch?

It does. The imagery employed is that of death by mortification, death by crucifixion, the refining of metals, working of leaven, creation, ablution, and the cleansing of the leper.

1. Death by mortification. "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth." (Col. 3:5.) Let mortification set in, and its victim is soon laid in the dust.
2. Death by crucifixion. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him,

that the body of sin might be destroyed.” (Rom. 6:6.) Mr. Benson says: “Our old man, signifies our entire depravity and corruption, which by nature spreads itself over the whole man, leaving no part uninfected.” Crucifixion is a short process.

3. The process of creation. “Create in me a clean heart, O God.” (Ps. 51:10.) “Which after (the image of) God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” (Eph. 4:24.) The process of creation, so far as we know, is instantaneous.

4. The cleansing of the leper. “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean.” (Ps. 51) Leprosy was incurable by human means, was cured only by a special work of God, and was accomplished in a moment.

The cleansing of the leper was an emblem of the removal of sin. The whole process was short. Christ said: “I will, be thou clean, and immediately his leprosy was cleansed.” (Matt. 8:3.)

5. The refinement of silver and gold. “I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy sin.” (Isa. 1:25.) “And He shall sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver.” (Mal. 3:3.) This is another short process.

6. The working of leaven. “The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened.” (Matt. 13:33.) This parable is plain, and adapted to the weakest capacity, and indicates a short process.

7. As an ablution. “Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.” (Ps. 51) “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean.” (Ezek. 36:25.) The process in each of these cases is rapid and soon accomplished. Mortification, crucifixion, creation, refining metals, ablution, and the working of leaven are accomplished in a few hours, and never extend through series of years. In none of them is it continued through even a week.

“Behold, now is the day of salvation.”

55. Is it not objected that the terms “corruption,” “defilement,” and the like, are too physical to be asserted of the soul?

It is; and is a result of efforts to be wise “above what is written.” These terms are given in the Bible; they are very numerous, are in both Testaments, and are more used than any others. The philosophy of human depravity God has not revealed. The fact He reveals and amply illustrates, and uses the types in question to do it.

The Bible clearly teaches, that the soul in its fallen, depraved state is “diseased,” “defiled,” and “polluted,” and needs “washing,” “purging,” “cleansing,” and “healing.” It is both scriptural and reasonable to believe that human depravity is a corrupt, diseased condition of soul, analogous to a diseased, polluted human body. The predisposing evil tendency in the heart is the exponent of an underlying, radical evil, or corrupt nature. Teaching that “indwelling sin,” “inbred sin,” “sin in believers,” and “the evil treasure,” and the like, mean only “predisposing tendencies,” conflicts with the whole tenor of the Scriptures. To assert that defilement and pollution are too physical to be used of spirit, when we do not even know what spirit is, is to draw conclusions from premises which we do not understand, and our conclusions in the nature of the case must be as uncertain as our knowledge of the premise is uncertain. A false method always leads to a false conclusion.

We may infer moral condition from moral phenomena just as we do physical condition from physical phenomena. See Matt. 12:35; Luke 6:45. To assert that “the evil man” has no “evil treasure” in “his heart,” because we cannot analyze, explain it and tell what it is, is to contradict the Bible because of our ignorance. It is reasonable to suppose that the

Holy Ghost has selected the best and most appropriate terms significant of human depravity.

56. Can a state of entire sanctification be secured by ordinary growth in grace?

It cannot; for the following reasons: --

1. Growth in grace is neither a destroying, nor a washing, nor a crucifying, nor a cleansing process. Entire sanctification is a death, a washing, a purification. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

2. Growth in grace refers to addition, to enlargement and development, and belongs entirely to the positive in Christian life – the graces of the spirit. Growth is an increase or development of some living force: not a destroyer or transformer of any living force. The idea of entire sanctification is that of justification, i. e., the removal of an impurity or defilement. One is a destruction, the other is an enlargement.

3. Growth in grace is a natural process, involving culture and discipline, and pertains to spiritual life. Sanctification is a supernatural and divine work wrought in the soul. Growth, the natural, gradual process of development, should not be mixed with the instantaneous, supernatural work of purgation and purification.

4. In growth in grace, the soul is active and co-operative. Entire sanctification is something experienced, and not something done. The soul is passive, is the subject, and not the agent of the cleansing, the same as it was in regeneration. Before and after both regeneration and entire sanctification the soul is active and co-operative.

5. Growth never changes the nature of any thing; hence, a believer cannot grow pure, for the same reason that a sinner cannot grow into a saint – growth does not change the nature of things. A pure nature may grow, and an impure one may grow, and mere growth does not change the one or the other.

6. Growth and development have no fixed relations to purity in any way. They have respect to size, or enlargement, and not to quality or purity; and hence, all changes by growth, or gradual processes, are in size or quantity, and not in kind or quality. Purity or holiness refers to quality and not to quantity.

7. Growth in grace is the same after entire sanctification as before. If growth in grace is a cleansing process, and is growth in purity, it must follow, that when the soul is entirely sanctified, there can be no further growth, since what is wholly pure can never become more pure.

8. Dr. F. G. Hibbard says: "It has long appeared to us that any who are seeking after entire holiness mistake the duty of gradual growth in grace, and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, for a gradual growing out of sin. They seem to think that the two mutually involve each other, and that as they must always grow up into Christ in all things, so they must by degrees grow out of the bondage, guilt, and pollution of sin." Now, to all such we would say one word of admonition. There is no gradual growing out of sin. All that partakes of the proper nature of sin in you must be forgiven and washed away through faith in the blood of the Lamb. WHEN THIS IS DONE, IT IS AN INSTANTANEOUS WORK."

Sin is not a thing to be grown out of, but a thing to be forgiven and to be cleansed away. -- "In this view of perfection [the improvement and maturity of the graces of the Spirit], there are degrees and progressive stages but in the work of simply cleansing from all sin, both of flesh and spirit, inbred and overt sin, there are no degrees, no progressive stages, -- the work is complete at the first, and instantaneous as to time, performed by the Holy Ghost just at the moment when the burdened soul has faith to be made every whit whole."

-- N. C. Advocate.

The idea that deliverance from indwelling sin, and a state of entire sanctification may be secured by the ordinary process of growth, we regard as a serious mistake and productive of much evil. The reader will find this question treated with special attention in *Purity and Maturity*, pp. 128-185.

57. In what sense is entire sanctification instantaneous?

1. If, by entire sanctification be intended the act of cleansing the justified believer from inbred sin, it is instantaneous in the same sense as regeneration. Not necessarily in the “twinkling of an eye,” at least so far as our perceptions are concerned, but is a short, quick, rapid work, the same as the new birth. It is instantaneous as a death or a birth, as a washing or refining. Note the imagery – (see question 54.)

2. The preparatory process is usually more or less gradual hence, Bishop Hamline says: “It is gradually approached, but instantaneously bestowed.” Before regeneration, there was a gradual process of conviction, repentance, humiliation, consecration, and faith; but they did not regenerate the soul in part, or in whole, they preceded it. Preceding entire sanctification there is a gradual process of obtaining light, receiving conviction, hungering after purity, confession, prayer, and faith.

These do not gradually sanctify the soul, but precede that work.

3. The approach to entire sanctification – the life of righteousness, and the growth of the Christian virtues received in regeneration, are gradual, and not instantaneous. This is the sense that some writers mean who maintain that sanctification is only gradual in this life. Others claim that it is both gradual and instantaneous, gradual as to the growth of the Christian virtues, and instantaneous in heart purification.

Making this plain distinction between the death of sin and the life of righteousness, relieves this subject of much confusion, and delivers many writers from contradiction regarding instantaneous and gradual sanctification.

4. The death of sin is made instantaneous, and the life of righteousness gradual, by Dr. George Peck, one of the purest and ablest theologians of his day:

“It will be remembered that we have found sanctification to imply both the death of sin, and the life of righteousness. And when we speak of entire sanctification, as to the former part of it, we say it may be attained at once – it is an instantaneous work.” ... But in relation to the latter part of this great work, viz., the life of righteousness embracing all holy affections, and pious efforts, it is regarded as entirely progressive. The destruction of sin in the soul, and the growth of holiness, are two distinct things. The one is instantaneous, the other gradual and hence it is that we sometimes say, with propriety that the work of entire sanctification is both gradual and instantaneous.” -- Peck’s *Christian Perfection*, p. 212.

5. Dr. Raymond says: In this view it is obvious that the work of complete sanctification is both progressive and instantaneous: progressive as to the acquisition of knowledge and ability to know, and instantaneous as to the appropriation of the blessing apprehended.” -- Vol. 2 p. 393.

58. If growth in grace does not cleanse the heart, what does it accomplish?

1. It secures a progressive Christian life. Growth is an essential condition of life, and all development of life is by growth. The life of righteousness, embracing all the features of Christian character, gathers strength, symmetry, and stature by development.

2. Growth in grace is so related to the soul’s activities and voluntary powers

and the formation of its habitudes, as to secure increasing spiritual strength and moral vigor; hence, it will secure easier and more complete victories over inbred sin. It will secure increasing light and knowledge. It strengthens the habits of virtue. It fortifies the graces of the spirit, and renders them more and more mature. All this affords increasing power to weaken, hold in subjection, and prevent the operations of carnal nature.

3. Growth in grace is an increase in the volume and power of patience, meekness, gentleness, and love to God. An increase of patience will afford easier victory over impatience. An increase of love will secure a more easy and perfect victory over all its opposites in the heart. An increase of faith will give more perfect triumph over unbelief. While this growth and strengthening of these graces may weaken and lessen the power of indwelling sin, it does not cleanse the heart or remove the cause of these inward antagonisms. Growth may abate its force, but can neither change its nature nor remove it from the soul.

4. Growth in grace is a gradual approach to the conditions of entire sanctification; and after entire sanctification, growth is inseparable from the conditions of retaining that state. This growth, however, is not gradual sanctification, but gradual preparation.

Rev. Dr. Steele says: "Growth in grace, while accompanied by increasing power to abstain from actual sin, has no power to annihilate the spirit of sin, commonly called original sin. -- Love Enthroned, p. 331.

59. Is there a distinction between purity and maturity?

There is, and a very important one. Identifying and confusing these lie at the base of nearly every objection made to an instantaneous sanctification; and has occasioned many strange notions, and much confusion upon this subject.

1. Purity refers to moral cleanliness or freedom from the defilement of sin. "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Health is not manhood. Maturity refers to moral stature and strength, to adulthood. "The fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ."

2. Purity, in the light of gospel provisions, is a present privilege and duty. "Be ye holy." Maturity a question of time, and is subject to the laws of growth and development. "Grow in grace."

3. Purity being instantaneous, may be received at once. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Maturity is a gradual, progressive, and indefinite development. "Take heed, and add to your faith virtue," &c.

4. No Christian is cleansed into maturity, nor do any grow into purity. The Bible nowhere promises maturity as a work of God by faith, but purity it does. Even "a babe in Christ" may be cleansed from the fallen nature and become a pure Christian; but "a babe in Christ" becomes "a young man," and "a father," by growth and development, and not by cleansing power.

5. It must be seen that there is a difference between purity or entire sanctification, in infancy – as just received, and in maturity – as an advanced and confirmed state of purity -- "rooted and grounded in love." There are "babes," "young men," and "men of full age," a state of entire sanctification.

6. There are two classes of commands and types in the Scriptures in regard to Christian character and duty. One contains commands and types enjoining and illustrating growth in grace and maturity the other class enjoins and illustrates Christian holiness or

purity.

7. Maturity is nowhere made a condition of entrance to heaven while purity is. Millions of Christians die in immaturity and are saved: they have been made pure, which is the moral qualification for heaven.

Making this plain and easily understood distinction relieves this subject of difficulties which have perplexed multitudes of good men.

60. What is the voice of the leading writers on sanctification in respect to it's instantaneousness?

They teach that the work of entire sanctification proper – the cleansing of the heart by the Holy Spirit is instantaneous. Those who teach otherwise, may invariably confuse purity with maturity, and assume a gradual sanctification depends upon the growth and maturity of the Christian virtues.

The following quotations will be seen to agree with our positions on this subject.

1. I give Mr. Wesley's views:

“Indeed, this is so evident a truth that well-nigh all the children of God, scattered abroad, however they differ in other points, yet generally agree in this: that although we may ‘by the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body,’ resist and conquer both outward and inward sin, -- although we may weaken our enemies day by day, -- yet we can not drive them out. By all the grace which is given at justification we can not extirpate them. Though we watch and pray ever so much, we can not wholly cleanse either our hearts or hands. Most sure we cannot, till it please our Lord to speak to our hearts again – to speak the SECOND time, ‘Be clean;’ and then only the leprosy is cleansed. Then only the evil ROOT, the CARNAL MIND, is destroyed; inbred sin (dwells within) no more. But if there be no such SECOND CHANGE: if there be no INSTANTANEOUS deliverance AFTER justification if there be NONE but a GRADUAL work of God (that there is a gradual work none denies), -- then we must be content, as well as we can, TO REMAIN FULL OF SIN TILL DEATH.” --Sermons, vol. 1 p. 122.

“Inquiring in 1761, how it was that in all these parts we had so few witnesses of full salvation, I constantly received one and the same answer: ‘We see now we sought it by our works; we thought it was to come gradually; we never expected it to come in a moment, by simple faith, in the very same manner as we received justification.’ What wonder is it, then, that you have been fighting all these years as one that beateth the air!” -- Works, vol. 7 p. 377.

“You may obtain a growing victory over sin from the moment you are justified. *But this is not enough.* The body of sin the carnal mind, must be destroyed; the old man must be slain, or we can not put on the new man, which is created after God (or which is the image of God) in righteousness and true holiness; and this is done in a moment. To talk of this work as being gradual, would be nonsense, as much as if we talked of gradual justification.” -- Journal of H. A. Rogers, p. 174.

“As to manner, I believe this perfection is always wrought in the soul by a simple act of faith; consequently in an instant.” He further says: “Look for it every day, every hour, every moment. Why not this hour – this moment? Certainly you may look for it now, if you believe it is by faith. And by this token you may surely know whether you seek it by faith or by works. If by works, you want something to be done first before you are sanctified. You think, I must be or do thus or thus. Then you are seeking it by works unto this day. If you seek it by faith, you expect it as you are; and if as you are, then expect it now. It is important to observe that there is an inseparable connection between these three points – expect it by faith, expect it as you are, and expect it now. To DENY ONE IS TO

DENY THEM ALL.” -- Sermons, vol. 1 p. 391.

“In London alone I found six hundred and fifty-two members of our society, who were EXCEEDING CLEAR IN THEIR EXPERIENCE, and of whose testimony I could see no reason to doubt.” And every one of these (after the most careful inquiry, I have not found ONE EXCEPTION either in Great Britain or Ireland) has declared that his deliverance from sin was instantaneous; that the change was WROUGHT IN A MOMENT. Had half of these, or one third, or one in twenty, declared it was gradually wrought in them, I should have believed this in regard to them, and thought that some were gradually sanctified, and some instantaneously. But as I have not found, in so long a space of time (more than thirty years), a single person speaking thus, all who believe they are sanctified, declare with one voice, that the change was wrought in a moment! I can not but believe, that sanctification is commonly, if not always, an instantaneous work.” -- Sermons, vol. 2 p. 223.

“I have continually testified for these five and twenty years in private and public, that we are sanctified as well as justified by faith. And, indeed, the one of those great truths does exceedingly illustrate the other. EXACTLY AS WE ARE JUSTIFIED BY FAITH, So ARE WE SANCTIFIED BY FAITH.” -- Works, vol.1 P 338.

Tyreman says: “The doctrine of Christian Perfection, attainable in an instant by a simple act of faith, was made prominent in Methodist congregations in 1762, and ever after it was one of the chief topics of Mr. Wesley’s ministry and that of his itinerant preachers.” (Tyreman, vol. 2 pp. 346, 416, 444.) According to this, during half of his ministerial life, Mr. Wesley made instantaneous sanctification a prominent topic of his ministry. He wrote his brother Charles in 1766: “Insist everywhere on full redemption received now by faith alone. Press the instantaneous blessing.”

2. “It is, I think, allowed on all sides,” says Rev. John Fletcher, that ‘we are saved,’ that is, sanctified, as well as justified ‘by faith.’ Now, that particular height of sanctification, that full ‘circumcision of the heart,’ which centrally purifies the soul, springs from a peculiar degree of saving faith, and from a particular operation of the ‘spirit of burning;’ a quick operation this, which is compared to a baptism of fire, and proves sometimes so sharp and searching. That it is as much as a healthy, strong man can do to bear up under it.” -- Last Check, p. 566.

3. Dr. Adam Clarke says: We are to come to God for an instantaneous and complete purification from all sin, as for instantaneous pardon. In no part of the Scriptures are we directed to seek the remission of sins seriatim – one now and another then, and so on. Neither in any part are we directed to seek holiness by gradation. Neither a gradation pardon nor a gradation PURIFICATION exists in the Bible.” For as the work of cleansing and renewing the heart is the work of God, His almighty power can perform it in a moment. In the twinkling of an eye. And as it is this moment our duty to love God with all our heart, and we can not do this till He cleanse our hearts, consequently He is ready to do it this moment, because He wills that we should in this moment love Him. This moment, therefore, we may be emptied of sin, filled with holiness, and become truly happy.” -- Clarke’s Theology, p. 208.

4. Bishop Janes said in his sermon at Morristown: “These two blessings, pardon and regeneration, justification and sanctification, are here presented [1 John 1:8, 10] in the same manner, offered upon the same condition ... the conditions of justification and sanctification, according to the text, are the same.”

5. Bishop Foster says: sanctification is “distinct in opposition to the idea that it is a mere regeneration holding it to be something more and additional instantaneous, in opposition to the idea of GROWTH GRADUALLY TO MATURITY OR RIPENESS.”

“And though there is progress toward it, yet that its attainment is not a mere ripeness ensuing by gradual growth, but is by the direct agency of the Holy Ghost, and instantaneously wrought, (no matter how) long the soul may have been progressing toward Christian Purity, p. 46.

6. Dr. Nathan Bangs says: “Those who teach that we are gradually to grow into a state of sanctification, without ever experiencing an instantaneous change from inbred sin to holiness, -- are to be repudiated as unsound, anti-scriptural and anti-Wesleyan.” -- Article in Guide, 1854.

7. Dr. F. G. Hibbard says: “It is hence Mr. Wesley, and also Mr. Fletcher, distinguish sanctification into two stages: the lowest degree is to be ‘emptied of all sin,’ the highest to be ‘filled with God.’ To be emptied of all sin, to be ‘cleansed from all unrighteousness,’ is a work to be done by the Spirit of God immediately acting on the soul, through the truth. It is done at once according to the faith of the believer, through the meritorious blood and righteousness of the Redeemer. But to bring forth the Christian graces to the highest measure of maturity or perfection compatible with this earthly state, or with the moral capabilities of the believer, is a work of time, to be carried forward and performed, till the day of Jesus Christ.” -- N. C. Advocate.

8. Rev. Dr. Fuller, in his address before the Evangelical Alliance: “Nor did you find relief, peace, strength, victory over your corruptions, until you repaired to the fountain in open for sin and uncleanness, until looking to Jesus, casting your soul upon Him for sanctification, just as you did at first for pardon.”

9. Richard Watson: “To this faith shall the promises of entire sanctification be given, which in the nature of the case, supposes an instantaneous work immediately following upon entire and unwavering faith.” -- Institutes, vol. 2 p. 455.

10. Rev. J. S. Inskip says: “I apprehend in all cases where any special success has been given to the teaching of this doctrine, it has been where the instantaneous character of the work has been made very prominent.” -- Method of Promoting Perfect Love.

11. Rev. Dr. Lowry says “Salvation in all its stages is by faith and by faith alone. And this makes sanctification not only instantaneous, but creates a necessity that we should receive it as a gracious gift, bestowed in opposition to a product worked out, or resulting from development and growth.” -- Divine Life, June, 1878.

12. The pastoral address of the General Conference of 1832 presents the following upon the subject of holiness: “When we speak of holiness, we mean that state in which God is loved with all the heart, and served with all the power. This, as Methodists, we have said, is the privilege of the Christian in this life and we have further said that this privilege may be secured instantaneously by an act of faith, as justification was.”

61. Will you give some evidence that entire sanctification is instantaneous?

1. The church generally holds that God instantaneously removes all indwelling sin from dying infants and from all justified believers who die suddenly like the dying thief and it is reasonable to believe that He instantaneously sanctifies those who trust in the blood of Christ to have it done.

2. Purity being God’s work, and being by faith, is evidence that it is instantaneous, the same as its kindred blessings – pardon, adoption, and regeneration.

3. The beautiful analogy in the conditions and experience of regeneration and entire sanctification teaches a instantaneous work similar to regeneration. The sinner, convicted of his guilt, believes in Christ for pardon, and so is forgiven freely and fully. The Christian, convicted of impurity, believes in Christ for holiness, and so his heart is

made pure, entirely and instantaneously. The promise, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," covers the latter case just as much as the former.

Gradualism is not according to the analogy of the great work of God in spiritual regeneration. The instantaneous is.

4. The commands, exhortations, and promises of the Bible teach that purity is instantaneous. God desires, commands, and expects instant obedience. This cannot be done if holiness is not instantaneous. God commands -- "Be ye holy," plainly requires present holiness; "Be ye filled with the Spirit," "Be ye therefore perfect," enjoins perfection today. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification," means NOW. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," is a command enforcing perfect love today, if it means anything. Just as surely as God desires and commands us now to "be holy;" now "be perfect;" now to "be filled with the Spirit;" now to "love Him with all our heart;" so surely is sin's destruction and heart sanctification instantaneous.

5. All the commands, invitations, and promises of God in respect to holiness are in the present tense. They are as clearly and definitely so as those to the sinner in regard to repentance, obedience, justification, and regeneration. In point of time, their united language is, "Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW IS THE DAY OF SALVATION."

6. One act of sin by Adam instantly corrupted human nature. Is it not reasonable to believe that Christ, our second Adam, can as instantly purify the soul when He is fully trusted to do it? Could Adam do in an instant, in corrupting the soul, what it must take our Lord Jesus Christ a lifetime to undo, and call in death in the end, as some think, to complete the work? If, as all believe, in a moment a work of such magnitude as regeneration is wrought, imparting spiritual life to a soul, dead in trespasses and sins, and removing its weight of guilt, grief, and doubt; may not the remains of impurity be washed out instantly by "the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love and worthily magnify His Holy Name"?

7. The fact that inborn sin is a unit, an evil principle or taint infecting our nature, and cannot be removed in parts, any more than its antagonist, the principle of life in Christ can be imparted gradually in our regeneration, is evidence that sanctification is instantaneous.

8. The efficacious, meritorious ground of purity is the atoning blood of Christ. The (qualifying), conditional source of purity is faith. The instrumental source is the Word of God. The grand (effective, powerful) agent is the Holy Ghost -- "sanctified by the Holy Ghost." If the work of purification is thus wrought according to the Word of God, it must be instantaneous.

9. The uniform experience of all who are clear in the light of personal holiness teaches that purification is instantaneous and not gradual. Experience has but one voice on this subject, i. e., that it was sought by consecration and faith, and received the same as regeneration, by direct divine power. Gradualism does not accord with the experience of those who profess perfect love. The instantaneous does.

62. Do not some enjoy Christian purity who did not seek it instantaneously?

Undoubtedly this is the case. A large class of Christians, and some entire denominations, whose Christian character we do not question, do not believe in sudden conversions, and yet there was a definite moment when every one of them who is a Christian was pardoned and regenerated, and his new life began. They were neither pardoned nor regenerated gradually. Many who believe in sudden conversions cannot tell the precise time of their

conversion. They know they are converted, and can say, “Whereas I was blind, now I see,” but cannot tell the time of the change. The same holds true in regard to entire sanctification. While most who are in the possession of this grace sought it as an instantaneous work, and received it instantaneously, others cannot tell the precise time when the full cleansing was wrought; *and yet it was wrought in an instant.*

**questions and answers #53-62 are from “Perfect Love” by J. A. Wood (the full text is found on the “Entry Directions” page near the end.)*



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