

PERFECT LOVE

By *John Allen (J. A.) Wood*

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By John Allen (J. A.) Wood
Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1880
By **J. A. Wood**
In the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington

PREFACE

The following pages are designed for the benefit of believers in the church of Christ, who "hunger and thirst after righteousness," and seek light concerning the doctrine, experience, profession, and practice of Christian holiness.

Nearly twenty beautiful years have passed since the first writing of "PERFECT LOVE," -- two years after our blessed experience of the fullness in Christ. Since then, over twenty seven thousand copies have been scattered in this country, and the work published in England. The many gratifying proofs of its usefulness to devout and good people, have induced its revision and enlargement. In so doing, we have carefully and prayerfully rewritten and revised almost every page, and added about one-third to the book. While we have not materially changed the views of the first writing, we trust, not only valuable additions have been made, but that it has been improved in every respect, and will be found to be a repository of light, love, and sweetness. It is a pleasant item, that after these many years of reading, study, and enlarged experience, we find not an essential point to renounce; therefore, our work has been to systematize, state more clearly, make stronger, enlarge, and add other important items.

The book retains its catechetical form, to meet the many interrogations so often made regarding this subject, and also to help the memory of the

HISTORICAL NOTE

This 1967 edition is being reprinted from Rev. Roy S. Nicholson's copy which was rescued from the fire that destroyed the Wesleyan Headquarters in Syracuse New York, in 1957.

reader. This form allows a general, though brief; presentation of the whole subject. Our object has been to clearly present, and strongly enforce gospel truth, and when we could do this more efficiently in the language of others, and by quotations from them, we have freely done so.

We have given credit for what we have selected, except in those cases where we have changed the words or phrases. The italics in some quotations are our own. The reader will find many things in this work, which, in their original forms, are dispersed through many volumes, which most people have neither money to purchase nor time to read.

We have not written so much for the learnedly critical, as for the common people who need "line upon line, and precept upon precept." Many of these appear perplexed and mystified on this plain and intelligible subject; which, when properly understood, is seen to possess none of those objectionable features which are so often attributed to it by its mistaken opponents.

We have often been grieved and astonished at the amount of opposition, unbelief; and ignorance we have found regarding it.

We are so impressed with its truth and necessity, and so delighted with its beauty and sweetness, we hope never to cease writing about it, or

preaching it, as long as we can move a pen, or use our voice, and would love to do, as Dr. Gibson, Bishop of London, advised Mr. Wesley to do "PUBLISH IT TO ALL THE WORLD."

With a grateful sense of obligation to God for the kindly reception of "PERFECT LOVE" in its first writing, by hundreds of friendly notices, we now respectfully submit this enlarged and improved volume to the consideration of sincere and inquiring minds, trusting it will be helpful in

PERFECT LOVE

Or,

PLAIN THINGS FOR THOSE WHO NEED THEM, CONCERNING THE DOCTRINE, EXPERIENCE, PROFESSION AND PRACTICE OF CHRISTIAN HOLINESS

By **REV. J. A. WOOD**

AUTHOR OF "PURITY AND MATURITY."

"God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love mode perfect ... Perfect love casteth out fear."
Revised and Enlarged 1967

SECTION 7 HOLINESS ATTAINABLE

51. *Will you present some evidences that holiness is attainable?*

The Bible plainly teaches, --

1. That God commands us to be holy. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all by soul and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind and thy neighbor as thyself." (Luke 10:27.) "Be ye holy, for I am holy." (1 Pet. 1:16.) "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. 5:48.)

These commands are just as authoritative as any in the Bible; and if holiness is not attainable, God commands what is impossible. If this requirement is too great to be observed, it is too great to be commanded. No man ever strives to accomplish what he knows to be impossible.

2. We are expressly exhorted to be holy. "Having, therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (2 Cor. 7:1.)

"Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection." (Heb. 6:1.) God requires no impossibilities. All his requirements are based on our gracious ability. He exhorts no man to do an impracticable thing.

3. It is expressly promised in the Scriptures. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you." (Ezek. 36:25.) "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness [Holiness]; for they shall be filled." (Matt 5:6.) We have just as strong evidence that holiness is promised to Christians as that it is required of them. We may just as consistently and hopefully insist upon and urge Christians to lay hold on Christ for sanctifying grace, as to urge sinners to lay hold on Christ for pardon and regeneration.
4. That entire sanctification is attainable is evident from the fact that the commands and the promises stand correlated to each other. What God commands, He promises to aid us in doing. If He commands us to love Him with all our heart, He promises, -- "The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul." (Deut. 30:6.) If He commands us to "be holy," He promises, -- "From all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you." (Ezek. 36:25.) If He commands, "Be ye therefore perfect," He promises, "My grace is sufficient for thee;" and, "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." This we understand to be a universal law of the Gospel

promoting Christian holiness. Every man has a given circle of friends to whom he has access, and over whom he has an influence. The author trusts that some of these who would not otherwise become interested in this theme, may be reached by this book, and induced to seek that holiness "without which no man shall see the Lord."

J. A. Wood.

economy. The Bible enjoins duty, but never without the promise of needful grace to perform it.

5. The possibility of attaining this state is seen in the declarations of Scripture. "Jesus Christ is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. (1 Cor. 1:30.) "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (Eph. 4:24.) "To the end that he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God." (1 Thess. 3:13.) "For God hath not called us into uncleanness, but unto holiness." (1 Thess. 4:7.) If these, with kindred declarations, are true, holiness is attainable. If they are not true, the Bible is not true.
6. Christ and the apostles prayed for it. "Sanctify them through thy truth." (John 17:17.) "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven; deliver us from evil." (Matt. vi. 10.) "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Ps. 51:10.) "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.) Inspired men made holiness the subject of definite, fervent, and earnest prayer. If they did not believe holiness attainable, they would not have prayed for it, or, they were guilty of solemn mockery.
7. The Bible positively affirms that provision is made in the gospel for our sanctification. "Who his own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, might live unto righteousness." (1 Pet. 2:24.) "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (1 Cor. 1:30.) "Wherefore Jesus, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate." (Heb. 13: 12.) We have the same Scripture evidence precisely that provision is made for the entire sanctification of Christians, that we have that provision is made for the pardon and regeneration of sinners.
8. It is the declared object for which the Holy Ghost dwells in the heart of the Christian. "To be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge; that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." (Eph. 3:14.)
9. Sanctification is attainable from the fact that God has given us The Word as the instrumental means of effecting it. "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." (John 17:17.) "Ye are clean through the

word which I have spoken unto you.” (John 15:3.) All scripture is given by inspiration of God ... that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

(2 Tim. 3:16.) The Word declares its necessity, points to the cleansing blood, and to the Holy Ghost as the (effective, powerful) agent; “Through the sanctification of the Spirit, and the belief of the truth.” (2 Thess. 2:13.)

10. It is the grand object of an established ministry. “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” (Eph. 4:11.)

11. That holiness is attainable is seen in the fact that its attainability lays the only adequate foundation for vigorous and prayerful efforts to be holy. All admit that we are bound to aim at holiness. To aim at a state, without the expectation of reaching it, is a hard task, and must render our efforts powerless. If holiness is not attainable in this life, to seek it is to act in opposition to a principle that is considered necessary to (effective, powerful) action on every other subject. No one ever strives to secure or to accomplish what he knows to be impossible. The full salvation, or holiness of the child of God, is the grand fact running through the whole book of God. In the Bible figure of refining gold, it is, “I will purely purge away all thy dross.” If water be the figure, it is, “Ye shall be clean,” or “Ye shall be whiter than snow.” If it be the working of leaven, it is, “Till the whole is leavened.” If it be death to sin by crucifixion, it is, “He that is dead is freed from sin.” If cleansing the leper be the figure, it is, “Ye shall be clean,” or, “I will, be thou clean.” If it be a creation, it is, “Create in me clean heart,” If it be a renewal, it is, “In righteousness and true holiness.” If it refers to the priesthood of Christ, it is “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost.” Is it a state described? It is, “Blessed are the pure in heart.” Is depravity represented as deep and indelible as scarlet and crimson? It is, “They shall be as white as snow.” Does it present a Divine Prototype? It is, “As He (Christ) is, so are we in this world.” Does it present the instrumental cause? It is, “Sanctify them through thy truth.” Does it present the meritorious cause? It is, “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son,” who “gave Himself a ransom for all.” Is human agency involved in the work? It is, “He purifieth himself, even as He is pure.” Is the (qualifying) conditional cause stated? It is, “Sanctified by faith that is in Me,” and, “Purifying their hearts by faith.” Is the grand (effective, powerful) agent referred to? It is, “Through sanctification of the Spirit.” Is the time stated? It is, “Behold, now is the accepted time,” and, “Come, for all things are now ready.” Does it declare who shall enter heaven? It is, “he that hath clean lands and a pure heart.”

12. That holiness is attainable is clear from the fact that it is represented in the Bible as having been experienced:

- The comprehensive declaration that “Enoch walked with God three hundred years,” teaches us that he was a believer, and was righteous, was obedient, uniform, and persevering, and lived holy in his dispensation, and “pleased God.” His faith in God and the promised Redeemer restored to him the righteousness and true holiness from which Adam fell in the Garden of Eden. (Gen. 6:23.)
- Noah, we read, “walked with God, and was a just man and perfect in his generation.” (Gen. 6:9.) That was all God required, it was all he could do, and to do it was the fulfilling of the law.
- Whatever Job’s friends or his enemies, may have said regarding him, God said, “There was a man in the Land of Uz, whose name was Job and that man was perfect.” The Lord told Satan three or four times that Job “was a perfect and an upright man.” (Job 1:2.)
- When Abraham was ninety years old, four hundred years before the giving of the Law, the Lord appeared to him, and said, “I am Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect.” It is evident,

Abraham loved God with all his heart, and obeyed Him fully at the time he offered up Isaac, if not before. (Gen. 20.)

- The prophet declares (1 Kings 15.) that king Asa “did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, as did David his father;” and, “Asa’s heart was perfect with the Lord all his days.”
- The prophet Isaiah, writing by the inspiration of the Almighty, says, “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool;” and afterwards fixed the time of his entire sanctification in the year king Uzziah died, seven hundred and fifty-eight years before the Christian era, and gives his experience somewhat minutely. He says he saw the Lord high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. He saw a burning seraph, covering his face with both wings, in awful amazement at the wonderful holiness of God; crying, “Holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!” When the evangelical prophet cried out in bitterness of soul, -- “Woe is me! For I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips; then one of the bright, swift-winged seraphs flew to me, having a live coal in his hand, and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, ‘Lo! This hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin is purged.’” (Isaiah 6:1-8.)
- Zacharias and Elizabeth, it is distinctly stated, “were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments of the Lord blameless.”
- St. John says: “Herein is our love made perfect;” and, “Hereby we know that we dwell in Him, and He in us.” St. Paul says: “Ye are my witnesses and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you.” St. Paul appeals to the Church, and to God Himself, to witness to the truth of his profession. To be holy, just, and unblameable, is to be entirely sanctified. See Luke 1:6; 1 Thess. 2:10; 1 John 4:17.

52. *If entire sanctification is attainable, why do so few experience it?*

There are a variety of reasons, just as there are a variety of reasons why more sinners are not converted. The main reason in both cases is an unwillingness to come to Christ and comply with His conditions. This question can be answered by asking, “If conversion is attainable, why are so few converted?” If any are converted, more might be; and if any are entirely sanctified, others may be.

One case of the experience in either, proves the attainableness of regeneration or sanctification. The Church holds that all sinners have the opportunity of repenting, and being converted and saved, and yet we see that but a small share of sinners are converted and saved. For the same reason that millions of sinners are not converted, because they will not come to Christ, multitudes of believers are not fully sanctified, because they do not believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for it.

- It is not that God is unwilling to entirely sanctify all His children. “This is the will of God, even your sanctification.”
- Nor is it that some are born more depraved than others. “He is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto the Father by him.”
- Nor is it because some have fewer helps and privileges than others. God requires “according to what a man hath, and not according to what a man hath not.” We repeat, the main reason is, they will not come to Christ and comply with the conditions of entire sanctification. We must not measure the possible by the actual.

No doubt, if the Church and ministry were more faithful to the impenitent, more sinners would be converted; and if the ministry and the Church were more faithful in respect to this doctrine and experience, many more believers would be entirely sanctified.

Dr. Lovick Pierce gives his views thus: “The desire of entire sanctification is dying out in the Church, because the grade of religion our people have been running upon is below the level where sanctification begins.” --

Sermon before General Conference.

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, ablation, 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 ablation. "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, ablation, 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.*

63. Is the seventh chapter of Romans a portrayal of Christian experience?

It is not. As this is quoted so often to prove the necessary existence of sin in the Christian believer, we will give a number of authorities upon it.

“This (the 7th of Romans) was never designed to depict the ideal Christian life, but is rather the portrayal of the struggles of a convicted sinner seeking justification by the works of the law. -- Dr. Steele Love Enthroned, p. 79.

“At the present day the church generally, Greek, Roman, Protestant, including some of the latest commentators, have returned to the just interpretation, as held by the primitive church.” -- Dr. Whedon, Com. Rom., 7.

“Surely, there is as clear an opposition between the Christian represented in the sixth chapter as free from sin, and the seventh chapter, as miserable slaves to the law of sin and death which was in his members, as between light and darkness.” -- Dr. Whitby, Com. Vol. 7 p. 37.

The celebrated James Arminius, in 1635, published a dissertation of eighty quarto pages on this subject. He gives the views of the ancient fathers, and quotes from the writings of the following, as teaching the views he held: Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, Chrysostom, Basil the Great, Theodoret, Macarius, Ambrose, Jerome; and besides the fathers, he quotes Bede, Paulinus, Cardinal Hugo, Thomas Aquinas, Haimo, Bruno,

Erasmus, and Bucer, as advocating the same opinion.

“After all that has been urged in favor of this interpretation (that Paul is speaking of himself and of regenerated Christians), by Doddridge, Teller, and especially by Carpzov, it may justly be considered as untenable.” -- Dr. Bloomfield, on Rom. 7:14.

Rosenmuller and Dr. MacKnight both give the same opinion. See each on Rom. 7

Professor Stuart, in his learned commentary on this chapter, takes the position that “Paul is here speaking of himself in a legal state, or under the law, and before he was united to Christ.” He says: “The most ancient fathers of the church, without a dissenting voice, so far as we have any means of ascertaining their views, were united in the belief, that an unregenerated, unsanctified person is described in Rom. 7:5-25. So Origen, Tertullian, Chrysostom, and Theodoret. In this state the views remained down to the time of Augustine.”

He says: “On the other hand, besides all the ancient Greek, and some of the Latin fathers, there are many distinguished men who have defended the sentiment which has been above exhibited. Such as Erasmus, Raphael, Episcopus, Limborch, Turretine, Le Clere, Heumann, Bucer, Schroner, Frank S. Arnold, Bengel, Reinhard, Storr, Flatt, Knapp, Tholuck, and as far as I know, all the evangelical commentators of the present time on the Continent of Europe. Most of the English Episcopal Church, also, for many years, and not a few of the Scotch, Dutch, and English Presbyterian and Congregational divines, have adopted the same interpretation. I cannot but believe that the time is not far distant when there will be but one opinion among intelligent Christians about the passages in question.” These authorities ought to satisfy any candid mind respecting the seventh of Romans.

SECTION 8 DIRECTIONS FOR OBTAINING HOLINESS

64. Is this doctrine and experience susceptible of experimental demonstration?

It is. The essential facts of personal salvation are knowable – they may be known by experience.

The fallen condition of man with all his deplorable convictions, sufferings, and degradation, is not more a matter of assurance, and positive consciousness, than their counterpart in the redemption of Christ, --pardon, adoption, regeneration, and sanctification. The latter come as clearly and fully within the purview of experimental knowledge as the former. We believe with Lord Bacon, that “experience should be the test of truth;” and with Dr. C. H. Fowler, “Entire sanctification will, sooner or later, afford the best solution of any difficulties we may have on this subject.” There is philosophy as well as inspired truth in the declaration of Christ, “If any man will do His will, He shall know of the doctrine.” Here is common ground, on which all may prove the power of Christ to save, and obtain freedom from doubts and uncertainty, in a conscious realization of personal salvation.

Christian holiness theoretically and experimentally, is no greater mystery than regeneration, neither is it removed any further from the laws of human thought, but is as plain as any other fact of consciousness. The provisions and the possibilities of grace in this regard are alike adapted to all, needed by all, and free to all. Christ, “By the grace of God tasted death for every man,” and every man may taste the joys and sweet delight of full salvation. There are three things that are distinct in this experience:

1. There is a consciousness of inbred sin and moral deficiency after conversion, and the more devoted and faithful the justified soul, the clearer and stronger this conviction.
2. There is conviction, in the light of gospel provisions, of the duty and privilege of being “cleansed from all sin,” and made “pure in heart.”
3. It is prayerfully sought and experienced as an instantaneous cleansing by faith in the blood of Christ.

These three items of experimental knowledge will be found in every clear

case of entire sanctification.

65. What is the first direction you would give to a person seeking holiness?

Endeavor to obtain a correct and distinct view of the blessing promised and needed. What is it? The extermination of indwelling sin – carnal nature from the soul. It is such a destruction or removal of inbred sin (the fallen nature), as to make the heart – the fountain of thought, affection, desire, and impulse – pure.

66. What is the second direction you would give?

Come to a firm and decided resolution to seek until you obtain a pure heart. It will require a resolution which will not cower when the knife is put to the heart to amputate its idols. Your purpose must be settled, decided, uncompromising and unconquerable. None but an invincible resolution will answer. “The day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.”

67. What is the third direction you would give?

Humble yourself under the hand of the Almighty. Spiritual poverty is the prelude to spiritual enlargement. “Blessed are the poor in spirit.” Do not seek too easy a way. Be willing to die to sin.

Endeavor to feel the deep, malignant, hateful nature of your depravity, and your need of purity.

If you have but little sense of need, you will make little progress. The feeling that is required is represented by the sensations of hunger and thirst. Our Saviour says, “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness.” Your efforts in seeking holiness will be likely to harmonize with the strength of your desires. The necessary feelings of penitence, self-abasement and of strong desire for holiness, may be secured by prayer, searching the Scriptures, meditation, and self-examination.

68. *What is the fourth direction you would give?*

Make an entire consecration of yourself to God – your soul, body, time, talents, influence, and your all – a complete assignment of all to Christ. Search and surrender, and research and surrender again, until you get every vestige of self upon the altar of consecration. There is no sanctification without entire consecration.

You must consecrate yourself in detail, and get every item upon the altar. In order to grasp the whole, you must take in the items. The consecration must be perfect before the offering will be received. God will have a thorough work, and purity will never be given or retained but on condition of entire, universal, unconditional abandonment of all sin, and acceptance and approval of all the will of God.

69. *What is the (qualifying) condition of sanctification?*

Faith. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” Faith is the immediate condition of sanctification, and God always saves the moment true faith is exercised. You ask, “Believe what?”

1. Believe that God has promised it in the Holy Scriptures.
2. Believe what God hath promised He is able to perform.
3. Believe that He is able and willing to do it now.
4. Believe that He doth it.

If you are earnestly seeking holiness, will you examine yourself thoroughly by the following interrogations?

1. Do I clearly see my inbred sin (fallen nature), and consequent need of holiness?
2. Am I willing, anxious, and resolved to obtain it?
3. Am I willing to give up all to God – self, family, property, reputation, time, talents, everything – to be His, used for Him, trusted with Him, and never withheld or taken from Him?
4. Do I believe He is able to sanctify me?
5. Do I believe He is willing to sanctify me?
6. Do I believe He has promised to sanctify me?
7. Do I believe that having promised, He is able and willing to do it now, on condition of my faith?
8. Do I then, seeing all this, believe that He now will do it – now, this moment?
9. Am I now committing all, and trusting in Christ! If you are, it is done. O that God may aid your trembling faith, and give you purity this moment!

Mr. Wesley says: “The voice of God to your soul is, Believe and be saved. Faith is the condition, and the only condition, of sanctification, exactly as it is in justification. No man is sanctified till he believes; every man when he believes is sanctified.” -- Vol. 2 p. 224; vol. 1 p. 388.

70. *What degree of faith is necessary to entire sanctification?*

No degree. Faith is necessary. Sanctification is by faith. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.” Sanctification requires no greater degree of faith than justification. Faith, in the two instances, does not necessarily differ in degree, but in the object for which it is exercised.

The idea that faith for entire sanctification, and faith for pardon, differ in degree, has no foundation in either Scripture or reason. The question of faith, for full salvation, is not how strongly you believe, but in what you believe and do you believe, or, have you real faith for the object desired? The important item being real faith, for entire sanctification, rather than any particular degree of faith for it.

In the light of the Scriptures, faith for entire sanctification is just as feasible as faith for pardon and regeneration; the efficacy of faith being in the truth, or thing believed, and the actual belief of it, rather than some

imaginary degree of faith. We believe in an increase of faith, and in degrees of faith, but not as the condition of either pardon or purity. All genuine faith, without regard to its degree, exercised in the promise and power of God, to pardon or to purify, is honored by Him.

In the gracious order of God, real faith in convicting truth, produces conviction; real faith in justifying converting truth, secures pardon and regeneration; and real faith in sanctifying truth, instrumentally secures sanctification.

“In regard to the nature of the faith necessary to obtain perfect purity,” says Rev. J. S. Inskip, “it will be found to be essentially the same as that which we exercised when we sought and found pardon.” -- *Methods of Promoting Perfect Love*, p. 13.

71. *Is saving faith conditional?*

It is. Faith, or confidence in God, cannot coexist with voluntary transgression; since the one will destroy the other. “If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.” The condition is that of heart approval. “If our heart condemn us not.” Our heart approves us when we wholly submit to God. At this point we can have “confidence toward God.” “Confidence in God” is a necessary sequence of heart approval. “Then,” says the Apostle, “have we confidence toward God;” not *may* have it, not it is *possible* to have it, not it is *easy* to have it, but “then have we confidence toward God.” At the point of complete renunciation of sin and entire submission to God, faith comes naturally, according to the laws of mind and the divine adjustment and grace of God. When the heart wholly yields to God, it can rest nowhere else but in God.

To repose confidence (faith) in God, while the heart is in rebellion against him, is impossible, as it excludes the (qualifying) condition of trust. So long as our heart reproaches us with rebellion, faith is impossible. Christ said, “How can ye believe, which receive honor one of another?” That is, seeking the applause of men and not the honor of God, prevents “confidence (trust) in God.” Hence, an approving conscience, and a heart that does not condemn us for its voluntary attitude toward God, is indispensable to faith in God. Thus it is that faith for full salvation can be exercised only in connection with full submission. There must be in every case an honest purpose to do all his will.

Submission is the (qualifying) condition of saving faith, just as certainly as faith is the (qualifying) condition of salvation.

Bishop Foster answers this question as follows: Faith, in order to its exercise, presupposes a certain state of the mind and affections, and without these it cannot exist – its very existence includes them namely, in the briefest terms, it supposes the knowledge of sin, and sorrow for it: the knowledge that there is a Saviour, and a readiness to embrace him.” -- *Christian Purity*, p. 121.

Bishop Hedding says: “That faith which is the condition of this entire sanctification is exercised only by a penitent heart a heart willing to part with all sin forever, and determined to do the will of God in all things.” -- *Sermon at N. J. Conference*.

72. *What is the chief hindrance to the exercise of saving faith, when the heart has submitted to God?*

Being governed by our feelings, or a desire to possess the fruits of faith before we believe. We want to go by sense and feel first. Many are more solicitous about feeling than faith. We want to see signs and wonders before we believe. We have no right to expect feeling, the fruit of faith, before we believe. We might just as well want to taste our food before we eat it!!

It will never do to make a Saviour of our feelings. Many persons spend their time in vain efforts to force themselves into a right state of feeling. Feelings do not result from a direct effort to feel, but from true faith. If we would be saved, we must stop quarreling with our feelings, and trust all now and forever upon the immutable word of God, and we shall have just the right kind and the right amount of feeling. The purest faith is exercised in the absence of all feeling, and we are to take God at his word, and rely upon his truth, and give it the same confidence as though it were

proclaimed from heaven by God himself in a voice of thunder.

The soul must repose on the fullness and efficacy of the atoning blood. It is leaning there, singly, exclusively there, that brings the cleansing power. True faith takes the promise, and rests on the infinite merit upon which the promise is based.

Rev. B. V. Gorham well says “The man who remembers how he sought the blessing of pardon, knows how to seek the blessing of purity namely, to look for it as something to be received at once by simple faith.” -- God’s Method with Man, p. 188.

73. Why is it that many who desire holiness, and read, and pray, and resolve, and weep, and struggle, yet make but little progress?

It is mainly because they refuse to comply with the conditions on which the blessing is suspended.

One man sees that if he would be holy he must adopt a new system of benevolence. Another sees, as he approaches the clear light of perfect love, a probable call to the ministry, should he go forward.

Another sees a large class of duties, hitherto neglected, which must be performed. A sister sees, if holiness is obtained and retained, she will have to conform to the simplicity of the gospel of Christ, and undergo a material change in her equipage and costume. Many cease to seek holiness when the knife of excision is put to the heart to amputate its idols. There is much physical depravity standing in the way as a hindrance. Entire sanctification includes a radical and universal purification of the entire man, soul and body. Chastity of body is an important part of entire sanctification. Sin is “filthiness;” it may be of the flesh, or of the spirit, as there are defilements of the body and of the mind. Many stumble in seeking Christian holiness, because of habits of uncleanness – physical indulgences, which are not put away. No man can be entirely sanctified while his body is an “instrument of unrighteousness” in any sense, privately or publicly. God never does for any one what he can do for himself. The putting away of all “filthiness of the flesh” is a part of entire sanctification which every one must perform for himself.

God requires a pure soul in a chaste body. The Christian’s body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and it is not to be profaned by prostitution to wicked uses, or filthy lusts. “If any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy.” Having made both body and soul, and redeemed both, He requires them kept pure and devoted to His use. “Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

Many fail in seeking entire sanctification, because they do not sanctify their bodies, but touch, taste, and handle things unclean. A man who would be right with God, must be right with his body.

Convictions, resolutions, and good desires are not enough, there must be actual abandonment of all physical, as well as moral iniquity. Then our whole nature, “spirit, soul, and body,” will be “without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.”

74. In what sense is faith the gift of God?

Faith is the gift of God in nearly the same sense in which seeing, walking, and eating are the gift of God. These are the gift of God in such a sense that neither of them can be done without Him. And yet He does neither of them for us. The objects of sight and the power to see, the foundation on which to walk and the power to walk, the food we eat and the power to eat, are all, in an important sense, from God. But the acts of seeing, of eating, and of walking, are our own. He neither sees, walks, nor eats for us; and yet we can do neither without Him. Thus with faith. God gives truth, the object of faith, and the ground of faith, and the power to believe; but He believes for no one. “While He helps the believer, the act of believing is purely the believer’s, and is voluntary.

75. In what sense does faith involve a voluntary exercise of the mind?

In attention, assent, and submission. First, we are voluntary in giving proper attention to the truth, with its evidences; secondly, we are, in a measure, voluntary in giving assent and credence to apprehended truth; thirdly, we are voluntary in the practical reception of the truth, and in

submission to its claims, which involve trust and reliance.

The pivot upon which the salvation of the soul turns is its *submission* to the claims of truth. We are saved by the belief of the truth. Truth demands attention and submission. An intelligent, voluntary rejection of the perceived and admitted claims of truth, constitutes the most terribly damning sin which was ever committed. Unbelief is a voluntary rejection of truth. Faith is a voluntary submission to its claims. Faith and unbelief are the axles on which all real happiness or wretchedness revolves.

76. Will you give Mr. Wesley’s views of the faith that sanctifies?

“But what is that faith whereby we are sanctified, saved from sin and perfected in love? This faith is a divine evidence or conviction --

1. That God hath promised this sanctification in the Holy Scriptures.
2. It is a divine evidence or conviction that what God hath promised He is able to perform.
3. It is a divine evidence or conviction that He is able and willing to do it now.
4. To this confidence that God is able and willing to sanctify us now, there needs to be added one thing more – a divine evidence or conviction that He doth it.” -- Sermons, vol. 1 p. 390.

77. What is meant by simple, naked faith?

By a simple faith is meant, taking God at His word without doubting or REASONING; and by naked faith is meant, faith independent of all feeling, and stripped of every other dependence but CHRIST ALONE. The Holy Fletcher says, a naked faith is “a faith, independent of all feelings,” in a naked promise; bringing nothing with you but a careless, distracted, tossed, hardened heart, just such a heart as you have got now.” Lady Maxwell describes it thus: “I have often acted faith for sanctification, in the absence of all feeling; and it has always diffused an indescribable sweetness through my soul.”

Mr. Fletcher illustrates it in the following way:

“As when you reckon with your creditor or with your host, and as, when you have paid all, you reckon yourselves free, so now reckon with God. Jesus has paid all and He hath paid for thee – hath purchased thy pardon and holiness. Therefore it is now God’s command, ‘Reckon thyself dead unto sin’ and thou art alive unto God from this hour. Oh, begin, begin to reckon now; fear not believe, BELIEVE, BELIEVE and continue to believe every moment. So shalt thou continue free for it is retained, as it is received, by faith alone.” -- Journal of H. A. Rogers, p. 137.

78. May I come to Christ now, just as I am?

Yes, precious soul, this very moment. May the Lord help you! You can make yourself no better.

We can not save ourselves in part before coming to Christ. Tears, groanings, resolutions, and lamentations will make us no better, nor more worthy. “Now is the day of salvation “ now is the time you should believe. It is wrong not to believe. Say, Here, Lord, I will, I do believe thou hast said now; now let it be. And now rest your soul on the all atoning merit of Jesus.

Oh, happy state! Who would not give up all to obtain it? What folly to be satisfied with the commencement of Christ’s work, when an experience so sweet, so rich and full is our privilege! Oh that with a longing heart you may exclaim, --

My soul breaks out in strong desire,
The perfect bliss to prove;
My longing heart is all on fire
To be dissolved in love.”
-- Chas. Wesley --

79. How may we know that our consecration is unreserved or entire?

We may be as certain that we have devoted every thing to God of which

we have present knowledge, as we are of any mental operation. A knowledge of what we possess is all we can give, as it is all our will commands, or over which it has power. We must know something of a thing before we can will anything in reference to it. If we consecrate everything of which we have knowledge, we meet the gracious requirements of God's law, and reach the full measure of our obligation.

If increasing light shall reveal more, the consecration already made covers it, and we have only to lay it on God's altar. If we give our wills to God to be governed by his will and the light He gives, we do by this act give all that free will controls. This is all that any finite spirit has to give, and is all that infinite love demands. We may know whether we do this or not. A child may know whether he is determined to obey his father in all things. Our inward consciousness may assure us, just as clearly as our eyes reveal the starry heavens, that our surrender is complete. The soul knows when it fully submits. The Holy Spirit that assists the soul in its full surrender, floods it with light, so that it cries out:

“Take my soul and body's powers;
Take my memory. Mind, and will;
All my goods, and all my hours;
All I know, and all I feel;
All I think, or speak, or do;
Take my heart, and make it new.”

80. *How may we know our consecration is accepted?*

This may be known by the positive word of God, by the witness of the Spirit, by the divine response to faith, and by self-evident intuition.

1. What God says we know. His word of promise is, “I will receive you.” Can anything be more positive?
2. In the light of the “witness of the Spirit,” we know it, just as we know that the sun shines when He is pouring His mid-day beams upon the world. “We have not received the spirit of the world, but that which is of God, that we may know the things freely given to us of God.” Grace to fully submit to God is one of His free gifts, and a knowledge that He accepts our offering is another of His gifts.
3. Some of the results, and some items of the divine response to entire consecration, are immediately and consciously realized. In his lecture on “Conscience as the Foundation of the Religion of Science,” Rev. Joseph Cook says:
“I assert that it is a fixed natural law that when you yield utterly to God, He streams into you, gives a new sense of His presence, and imparts a strength unknown before. Will you try such self-surrender, and then will you repeat the experiment as opportunity offers? I care not how often, I affirm that in these billions of opportunities for experiments, in these ten thousand times ten thousand chances to test whether I am right or wrong, you will not find one chance failing to give you this verdict, that if you yield utterly to God, He will stream through you.”
4. We may know it as we know the whole of a thing is greater than any of its parts, or that the whole of a thing is equal to the sum of all its parts. To be wholly given to God, in the divine order, is to be accepted of God. Do we need evidence that God is true? That he accepts that which is right and condemns that which is wrong? Can God do otherwise than accept the right and reject the wrong? “If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted of Him?” The order of God, or laws of grace in spiritual things are as certain and reliable as in nature, and the certitude of religious things is just as strong as in physical things. Christ Himself says, “Every one that asketh receiveth.” He does not merely say, he shall receive, but he receiveth. It is asserted as a fact, a universal fact, from which there can be no exception.

Rev. Dr. Lowry says: “To ask, then, is to receive. To seek is to find. Asking and receiving, seeking and finding, are (simultaneous) and inseparable events. It is like breathing and living, and living and breathing.” -- Divine Life, June, 1878.

It must be self-evident that God accepts that which is according to His will, (the divine order, or laws of grace are the practical expression of His

will,) and that which is in harmony with infinite rectitude. “HAVE FAITH IN GOD.”

Well might Rev. John Fletcher say:

“Be it I myself deceive,
Yet I must, I must believe.”

There is a positive, divinely ordained connection between consecration, evangelical faith, and actual salvation. This is no imaginary phantom or dream, but a living fact, to which millions have given testimony after experimental demonstration.

81. *In what attitude towards God does entire consecration place the soul?*

In the attitude of an obedient spirit. In personal consecration to God, there is the vital principle, or germ of all obedience. Obedience is not so much in the outward act as in the state of the will. This is reasonable and scriptural. Submission, or consecration, refers to the will, and is manifested in exterior action, and external action is the outcome of the interior principle of obedience. Hence all true obedience has prior existence in the human heart, in an obedient spirit. By self-abandonment to God, we come to the attitude of obedience, in which the soul asks, “Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?” -- “Speak. Lord: thy servant heareth.” This submission implies a sweet complacency in God, and a desire and delight to do His will. This obedient spirit, or attitude of the will, with faith in Christ for purity, carries the whole train of the affections toward God, as, “with the heart, man believeth unto righteousness.” Hence the whole soul is brought under the saving virtue of Christ's blood.

While there is a distinction between consecration and faith, it must not be forgotten that they sustain a mutual and natural relation to each other. Submission is a fruit of faith. A belief in certain truths lies at the foundation of all consecration. Salvation from a disobedient attitude toward God, through submission, or the committal of all to God, is by faith; and very much of the faith which actually saves a man is called into exercise by a full surrender to God. How can man (make evident) a fuller trust in God than by a solemn surrender of himself and all he has to Him? The acceptance of God's will, and the committal of the heart to Christ and to the admitted claims of truth, is the very essence of love, and is the substance and fulfilment of the law. Christ said, “This is the love of God, that ye keep His commandments;” and, “Love is the fulfilling of the law.” Love to God is not a mere transient emotion, but a state of will and affection, and is inseparable from genuine faith. “Faith which works by love and purifies the heart.” Let it ever be remembered, that love to God is an abiding, general preference of the will, or a state of will underlying our whole moral activity, and determines all its particular acts to the one end of obeying and pleasing God.

Love in the entirely sanctified soul becomes a disposition, or character.

82. *Is there a distinction between entire consecration and entire sanctification?*

There is; and the act of entire consecration should not be confused with the fact of entire sanctification. Submission to God, or entire consecration, is our act, with assisting grace. Entire sanctification is God's work, wrought in the soul. Sanctification follows consecration in point of time, as the offering is made before the sin-consuming power is received. Sanctification always includes consecration; but entire consecration does not necessarily include entire sanctification, -- it precedes and accompanies it.

A Congregationalist, Rev. Dr. Upham, states this distinction thus: “I do not consider consecration and sanctification the same thing. Consecration is the (embryonic), the prerequisite act. It is the laying ourselves upon the altar; but it is not until God has accepted the sacrifice, and wrought upon us by the consuming and restoring work of the Holy Spirit, that we can be said to be sanctified. It is true the one may immediately and almost instantaneously follow the other and this will be the case when faith in God is perfect.” To this Bishop Janes responds “Amen, Never did uninspired man state the point more scripturally or with more clarity and

force.” -- Introduction to Pioneer Experiences.

Dr. Fowler says “There are two postulates taught by the advocates of the ‘higher life,’ as the essential conditions of it.” attainment, namely, entire consecration, and absolute faith in God’s acceptance of the consecration. “ -- Editorial in Advocate.

83. What is the difference between the consecration previous to conversion and that previous to entire sanctification?

They are essentially the same, each involving submission to God and the true spirit of obedience.

But, while in principle they are the same, that which precedes entire sanctification is made with a fuller and deeper sense of the import of full submission to God. The penitent seeking pardon, consecrates himself to the full extent of his discovery of truth and duty but only with the light of a convicted sinner. The believer, seeking purity, renews this consecration, in view of the revelations which increasing light, time, and the word of God have made of his duty and moral deficiency.

84. Is any particular standard of conviction necessary in seeking holiness?

To believe in the doctrine of sanctification, and at the same time to know that you have not experienced it, and need it, is all that is necessary. Certainly, this is all that is necessary to commence seeking it; then, if deeper convictions are needful, they will be given in the improvement of present convictions. The object of conviction is to lead to action. “Knowledge is conviction;” and a clear perception of duty is all that a rational being should ask.

85. Is the process of receiving full salvation the same in all cases?

It is essentially the same: submission and faith. All is consecrated, and faith in Christ is exercised.

In all cases there must be a practical recognition of divine authority, by unreserved submission to God, and appropriating faith in the merit and power of Christ. These are absolutely necessary to being sanctified wholly, body, soul, and spirit.

The links in the chain of God’s order in human salvation are: 1st, conviction; 2nd, submission; 3rd, faith; 4th, the work of the Spirit.

The order must be seen to be natural, reasonable, and scriptural. If one of these links be wanting, the work must be defective. We may not always note these different steps, yet they are taken in every genuine sanctification. Their connection is so intimate, and the transition is so natural, and may be so rapid as not always to be noticeable by us; and we do not say that we must always note these steps and distinguish one from another. The rapidity with which you may pass from conviction to the act of consecration, and to faith, and then realize that the blood cleanses, is probably the cause of the confusion which some minds experience in distinguishing between these several steps.

“The conditions on which God will do this work are fixed and unalterable,” says Rev. Benjamin T. Roberts. “God is not like some merchants, who will sell their goods to a reluctant customer at a lower price than to one who must have them; but, like the laws of nature, ‘without variability or shadow of turning.’ “ Earnest Christian, 1861.

86. Is any certain amount of feeling or emotion necessary in seeking purity?

The Bible presents no particular standard of feeling to which all must come. Our temperaments will have much to do with our feelings. It is not necessary that all should have the same amount of feeling, in order to seek either justification or sanctification. All must be brought, not to the same degree of emotion, but to entire submission to God, to the terms of salvation, and the consequences that may follow. We should never place too much dependence upon the mere matter of feeling. All the feelings which God requires are such as naturally and necessarily exist in connection with constant and entire consecration of every power to his service. Those mistake exceedingly who make direct efforts to produce

feelings or emotions otherwise than those which naturally arise in the faithful discharge of duty.

87. Do deep convictions for holiness sometimes obscure for the time, the light of present justification?

Doubtless this is often the case. It commonly happens that a Christian earnestly seeking full salvation, comes to the conclusion that he really has much less grace than he thought he had.

Sometimes the person seeking holiness will cast his confidence away altogether, and conclude he was deceived, and had never been born again. This is an error, and should be carefully guarded against. It is often the case that such find so much sin remaining in them, and the corruptions of their hearts, by being restrained and opposed, become so (frustrated and worked up), that they do not perceive the evidence of the grace they have received.

88. Are the convictions of the sinner seeking pardon, and of the believer seeking entire holiness, the same?

They materially differ. The penitent sinner is convicted of guilt, of condemnation, of the divine displeasure, and his need of pardon. Those of the believer seeking purity, are convictions of inward depravity, unlikeness to God, and his need of cleansing. They produce pain and shame, but not condemnation.

Mr. Wesley says: “The repentance consequent upon justification is widely different from that which is (before) it. This implies no guilt, no sense of condemnation, no consciousness of the wrath of God. It does not suppose any doubt of the favor of God, or any ‘fear that hath torment.’ It is properly a conviction, wrought by the Holy Ghost, of the sin which still remains in our heart; of the carnal mind, which ‘does still remain (as our church speaks) even in them that are regenerate,’ although it does no longer reign; it has not now dominion over them.” -- Sermons, vol. 2 p. 389.

89. What are the fruits of conviction for the blessing of regeneration?

A renunciation of sin; a confession of sin; an honest regret for sin, a turning from the vanities of the world, a resolute seeking of God; a strong anxiety to do His will, and prayer for pardon and salvation.

90. What are the fruits of conviction for the blessing of perfect love?

Deep self-abasement and humility of spirit; self-renunciation and submission to God; self-loathings, and hungerings and thirstings after righteousness; and a willingness to suffer anything, be anything, or do anything to please God and obtain a pure heart.

Bishop Hedding says “Though the Christian does not feel guilty for this depravity, as he would do if he had voluntarily broken the law of God, yet he is often grieved, and afflicted, and reproved at a sight of this sinfulness of his nature.” -- Sermon, before N. J. Con.

91. What are the usual exercises of mind in seeking holiness?

They are directly the reverse of what many suppose. The process is a humbling, sifting, searching, crucifying one. When the believer begins to pray for holiness, instead of receiving at once a baptism of sweet heavenly fire and glory, the soul begins to see more and more of its own vileness, deformity, and inward corruption. God makes to the soul a more clear and painful discovery of remaining impurity. The soul has no more depravity now than it had before, but is becoming more thoroughly acquainted with itself. It has now a clearer view of the tendency in itself to evil, and of the fact that it is shut up to the grace of God for help. Hence it is that, when a believer begins to pray for purity, he appears to himself to grow worse and worse. This spiritual poverty and crucifixion is sometimes very distressing, but in the nature of the case, is a necessary process. At this point there is much danger of getting discouraged, and giving up; here many fail at the very threshold of success.

“Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.” -- “Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

92. *In seeking holiness, is it important that prayer should be definite and discriminating?*

All indefiniteness stands in the way of seeking purity. We seldom get special blessings by indefinite prayers.

We have ample authority for definiteness in prayer. David, who longed for inward purity, prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God." The Saviour prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth." The Apostle prays, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly," etc. These are specific prayers for the blessing of entire sanctification. Why should you not ask for the very blessing you need and desire? Why pray at random? When you want one thing of your fellow-men, you do not ask for another, nor for everything. The very thing asked for is what you may expect to obtain. "If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him."

Dr. George Peck says "We must fix our attention upon this one object. This must be every thing to us. For the time, the hell we would be delivered from must be the hell of inbred sin; and the heaven we would obtain, the heaven of loving God alone." -- Christian Perfection, p. 414.

93. *Should a clear evidence of justification precede the seeking of entire sanctification?*

This should usually be the case; but there may be exceptions, as in those persons who have lost their justification by refusing to seek holiness. We think such persons, in some instances, may regain the light of justification in connection with their entire sanctification. But God's usual order is, first the light of justification, and then the work of entire sanctification.

Many, we fear, who commence seeking entire sanctification in a backslidden state, on being blessed, conclude they are in the possession of perfect love, when in fact they are only reclaimed backsliders. Such often bring reproach upon the cause of holiness. It is very desirable to start in the clear light of regeneration and justification to seek for the Canaan of perfect love.

94. *Will you give your views of Mark 11:24?*

"What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."

There has been some difference of opinion in regard to the meaning of this passage.

1. We do not presume this passage to teach that any blessing can be received independently of the established conditions of its bestowment.
2. No one believes it to teach that faith in the fact of receiving a blessing, is the condition of receiving it. Such faith would involve the absurdity of believing it is done and it will be done. The effort of faith is not to embrace the fact of receiving a blessing, so as to make the belief that we receive, the condition on which we receive.
3. This passage does not teach that any are to believe they receive without a present, appropriating faith in the merits of Christ.
4. It does not teach that any are to believe they receive without reasonable and proper cause for so doing. When a soul is clearly conscious of having complied with the terms of salvation, God's promise and warrant render safe and proper the belief that he NOW accepts and saves.
5. "Believe that ye receive them." When? Just when you comply with the conditions; not before you comply with them, and not after you have complied with them. You are not to believe that you receive them after you have got them, on the one hand, or before you obtain them, on the other.

6. "And ye shall receive them." When? Not before you believe, but just when you believe.

"Believe that ye receive; " not shall receive, not have received; but that ye receive just now, while you are believing. "According to your faith be it unto you" is the established order of God and evangelically believing and receiving are inseparably joined together, and cannot be put asunder.

As when the lungs breathe, the air is received, so believing is tantamount to receiving.

7. "Must I believe I receive the blessing just now without evidence that I now do receive it?" You are by no means to believe without evidence; but the evidences upon which your faith is to rest for the blessing now are the promise, faithfulness, and certainty of God's word, and not your feelings or imaginations, which may deceive you. You are to believe that you receive on the authority of Jesus Christ, you, on your part, having complied with the divinely appointed conditions.
8. The faith that saves, that claims the promise, that relies on God's word, must precede the consciousness or interior witness of possession. There can be no room for saving faith after visible or tangible manifestations, or after the blessing is received. It is a matter of knowledge then.

Mr. Fletcher says: "Beware of looking for any peace or joy previous to your believing; and let this be uppermost in your mind."

You say, "I do not see any evidence, I do not feel any evidence, that I receive the blessing." If you have completely submitted to God, -you are to believe and have no right to doubt God's word because of any absence of feeling. Your faith for salvation is not to rest upon sight or feeling. The Bible says faith is the evidence of things not seen. Faith in feeling, or in seeing, or in the witness of the Spirit, does not save; but faith, simple, naked faith in the word of God, does.

9. Seeing, feeling, and possessing the evidences of salvation must be subsequent to its reception.

The blessing is conditioned on faith, and this faith must rest on the truth of God, as the evidences of possessing the blessing cannot exist before the blessing is received.

10. Men are prone to live by sense rather than by faith, and are inclined to trust everything and everybody but God. This passage teaches the great and important duty of entirely trusting and believing God.

Rev. W. McDonald says: --

"If I cannot believe for entire sanctification until the evidence of its possession is clear, I can never believe for it; for the evidence of its possession must be subsequent to its possession, unless we receive the evidence first and the blessing afterward. The scriptural order is, faith first, the blessing next, and the evidence last. But with many it is the evidence first, the blessing next, and the faith last.

"This difficulty arises from confusing faith and evidence. That which assures us that the blessing is ours, is the evidence which God gives, the witness of the Spirit. And if we do not believe until this evidence is received, we shall never believe for this evidence which we so much desire is conditioned on faith, which faith must be exercised before the blessing is received." -- New Testament Standard, p. 195.

Dr. True says "You need not be afraid to believe that you receive while you pray; for according to the testimony of thousands, you will thereupon receive the direct witness of the Spirit. This is what you have hoped to receive first in order to believe but it comes, if it comes at all, as the confirmation of your faith." -- Article in the "Guide." Dean Alford's rendering is: "All things that ye pray and ask for, believe that ye have received, and ye shall have them."

SECTION 9 THE EVIDENCES OF PERFECT LOVE

95. *What is the character of the evidence of a state of entire sanctification?*

It is just as strong, positive and reliable as can be given to substantiate any fact. Indeed it is the very strongest of all evidence.

1. The testimony of consciousness. This testimony we can no more doubt than we can doubt our existence. No testimony is more certain than this. By it we know we live and breathe, love or hate, sit or stand, or walk, and that we are joyful or sorrowful, happy or wretched. The sanctified soul may be as clearly and fully conscious of purity as the unsanctified is of impurity. While on the one hand pride, anger, unbelief, love of the world, are matters of positive consciousness, on the other hand love, peace, humility, patience, faith, are equally so. Indeed, conscience usually speaks louder and clearer in the latter case than in the former, because it has received more gracious energy. Sin paralyzes; grace quickens.
2. The testimony of God -- "The witness of the Spirit." This testimony is divine, direct, and positive. The Holy Ghost is the witnessing Spirit.
 - He speaks first to the sinner's heart. Every convicted sinner has the witness of the Spirit, testifying to his guilt, condemnation, and exposure to the displeasure of God.
 - He speaks to every justified soul. Every truly regenerated soul has, or may have, the witness of the Spirit, testifying that he is born of God, and in a state of justification.
 - He speaks to every sanctified soul. Every truly sanctified soul has, or may have, the witness of the Spirit, testifying that the blood of Jesus Christ hath cleansed him from all sin. Now, while all this testimony is given by the infallible Spirit, the latter testimony is given under more favorable circumstances, and, consequently, is quite as clear and strong, if not more so, than either of the others.

We sum up this testimony as follows:

1. The convicted penitent sinner may know by the testimony of His Spirit, and the witness of the Holy Spirit, that he is guilty and unsaved. This testimony is stronger and clearer than in the impenitent.
2. The justified soul may know, and be equally certain, by the testimony of His Spirit and the witness of the Holy Spirit, that God has regenerated his nature, and pardoned his sins. This testimony is stronger and clearer than that of the convicted sinner.
3. The sanctified soul may know with equal certainty by His Spirit, and the testimony of the Holy Spirit, that God has cleansed his heart from all sin. This testimony is still clearer and stronger than that of the merely regenerated. The inferential and corroborating evidences are equally as strong for the fully sanctified as in either of the other cases.

96. *Did Mr. Wesley teach that we may have the same evidence that we are sanctified that we have that we are justified?*

To the question, "But how do you know that you are sanctified, saved from your inbred corruption?" Mr. Wesley replies: "I can know it no otherwise than I know that I am justified.

'Hereby know we that we are of God,' in either sense, 'by the Spirit that He hath given us.' We know it by the witness and by the fruit of the Spirit." -- Plain Account, p. 118.

Bishop O. C. Baker says: "We have been accustomed to believe that our standard authors have presented the doctrine of Christian holiness is a very perspicuous (of quick mental insight) light; and if they have never declared that it is the privilege of the sanctified believer to enjoy the direct witness of the Spirit, so far as their influence goes, it would check the panting soul from seeking after the direct evidence of internal purity. May God grant

that we may know by happy experience that the doctrine is true, and that the pure in heart enjoy the comforting indwelling of the Holy Spirit, assuring us that sin in us is all destroyed." Letter in "Guide," 1844.

97. *Ought any one to believe that he is sanctified wholly before he has the witness of the Spirit?*

Mr. Wesley says: "None, therefore, ought to believe that the work is done till there is added the testimony of the Spirit witnessing his entire sanctification as clearly as his justification.." -- Plain Account, p. 79.

This position of Mr. Wesley is safe, and applicable as a general rule; and yet, perhaps, there may be some exceptions to it, as in those cases where God may be pleased to hold the soul for a season, after the work is done, to a naked faith in his word, before the Spirit's witness is given. If we do not mistake, this has been the experience of some of the clearest witnesses of perfect love. Perhaps the same may be true in some cases of justification.

98. *What is the witness of the Spirit?*

It is a sweet, inward persuasion of the Spirit, that God, for Christ's sake, has either pardoned my sins and regenerated my soul, or that the blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed it from all sin.

Mr. Wesley gives the following answer: "By the testimony of the Spirit I mean an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God immediately and directly witnesses to my spirit that I am a child of God: that Jesus Christ hath loved me and given Himself for me; that all my sins are blotted out, and I even I, am reconciled to God." -- Sermons, vol. 1 p. 94.

99. *Is the witness of the Spirit to regeneration and to entire sanctification different?*

They differ only in the facts to which the Spirit gives His testimony in the two cases. In the one case, it is a delightful and decisive persuasion that God has pardoned our sins and converted our souls. In the other, it is a delightful and decisive persuasion that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.

Bishop Foster says: "the difference of the Spirit's witness in the work of justification and entire sanctification is not in the manner so much as the thing which is witnessed to. It is given in which the same way; it is the same Spirit the phenomena are much the same but the testimony itself differs. -- Christian Purity. p.148

100. *Is the evidence of sanctification, or the witness of the Spirit, always clear at first?*

"Indeed, the witness of Sanctification is not always clear at first, (as neither is that of justification:) neither is it afterward always the same, but, like that of justification, sometimes stronger and sometimes fainter. Yea, and sometimes it is withdrawn. Yet, in general, the latter testimony of the Spirit is both clear and as steady as the former." Plain Account. p. 119.

101. *Is it our privilege to possess the witness of the Spirit without any intermission?*

"Some have the testimony both of their justification and sanctification, without any intermission at all, which, I presume, more might have, did they walk humbly and closely with God" -- Wesley's "Plain Account." p. 122.

102. *Is true evangelical faith usually accompanied with the witness of the Spirit?*

It is. When real faith is exercised, and the work of entire sanctification fully wrought, the witness of the Spirit may be expected, and it is usually apprehended then with greater or less distinctness.

Although the witness of the Spirit is usually given in connection with

saving faith, yet it may not always be distinctly apprehended as such at the time. It may please the Lord to withhold it temporarily sometimes in order to teach important lessons, and discipline and test the faith of the believer. St. John says, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." 103. Can the witness of the Spirit be retained while any sin is committed or allowed? Mr. Wesley says: "It is inevitably destroyed, not only by the commission of any outward sin, or the omission of any known duty, but by giving way to any inward sin; in a word, by whatever grieves the Holy Spirit of God." Sermons, vol. 1 p. 94.

104. Are there certain fruits which necessarily flow from a pure heart as evidence of holiness:

"There re certain fruits which flow from sanctification, which must exist where the work itself exists, to assert it, and certain other and counter-fruits, which must necessarily exist where it does not, to declare its absence. Now, these fruits, if carefully considered, must constitute a most important branch of evidence in the case." -- Foster's Christian Purity, p. 158.

The experience carries much of its evidence with it, so that the saved know it. They feel it, they confess it and they diffuse it abroad in the sweetness of their spirit, and in the purity of their lives.

105. By what fruit of the Spirit may we know that our hearts are cleansed from all sin?

"By love, joy, peace, always abiding; by invariable longsuffering, patience, resignation; by gentleness, triumphing over all provocation; by goodness, mildness, sweetness, tenderness of spirit; by fidelity, simplicity, godly sincerity; by meekness, calmness, and evenness of spirit." -- Plain Account, p. 94.

Dr. Macknight says: "The fruit of the Spirit is love to God and man; joy occasioned by that excellent affection; peace with all men; the patient bearing of injuries; a soft, sweet manner of speaking; a beneficent disposition; fidelity to engagements, promises, and trusts; calmness under provocation; temperance in the use of meats and drinks."

106. What are the fruits of inbred sin, and how does it manifest itself in the heart?

The fruits of inbred sin are pride, anger, self-will, jealousy, covetousness, peevishness, impatience, hatred, variance, emulations, strife, envyings, unbelief, and such like. These do not reign in the justified believer, but keep up more or less of a warfare within the soul; "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other." Inbred sin manifests itself to the consciousness of the partially sanctified by clinging to the appetites and tendencies of the soul and seeking and struggling for unlawful indulgence. Hence the risings of anger, pride, self-will, &c.

107. Is the emotional experience in the moment of sanctification various?

There is doubtless as great a variety as in justification and regeneration. Some are exercised in one way, some in another; some have one class of emotions, and some another. Sometimes there is an unusual illumination of soul. Sometimes, a sweet resting and sinking into Christ. Sometimes great joy and ecstasy, though this is not the general experience. Sometimes there is an astonishing increase of faith, and assurance that all sin is gone. Sometimes an overwhelming sense of the divine presence.

Sometimes the cleansing energy comes in a mighty torrent, and sometimes in a gentle breeze. Glory to God! Although there is a diversity of operation both with respect to the divine and human spirit, yet the blessed results are the same. Let us never mark out a way for God, but seek the cleansing power of the Holy Ghost, until it comes just as He is pleased to manifest it.

Let the prayer of your heart be, --

"Come as thou wilt
I that resign
But O, my Jesus, come."

Sanctified souls are inclined to name the blessing after their principal

sensations, harmonizing with their emotional experience.

1. One person realizes principally a marked increase of faith, and he calls it "the rest of faith."
2. Another is conscious of a deep, sweet resting in Christ, and he calls it "resting in God."
3. Another is permeated with a sense of the divine presence, and filled with ecstatic raptures, and calls it "the fullness of God."
4. Another feels his heart subdued, melted, refined and filled with God, and calls it "holiness."
5. Another realizes principally a river of sweet, holy love flowing through the soul, and he calls it "perfect love."
6. Another is prostrated under the power of the refining and sin-killing Spirit, and calls it "the baptism of the Holy Ghost."
7. And another realizes principally a heaven of sweetness in complete submission to God, and he calls it "entire sanctification."
8. While another may feel clearly and strongly conscious of complete conformity to all the will of God, and calls it "Christian perfection." If genuine, the work wrought in each case is essentially the same.

108. Will Christian perfection make all persons act just alike, and appear to equal advantage?

Christian perfection removes all sin, and makes the soul perfect in love; but it is no part of its office to destroy personal distinctions or innocent peculiarities. It will give a good, sincere, pure heart; and, other circumstances being equal, it will invariably impart, in all respects, real and manifest superiority. In the essentials of Christian character it will make any man superior to what he was without it.

109. Will a state of entire sanctification clearly evidence itself by the absence of all sin?

It will; and any sin, whether of motive, of will, of the desires, or of the life, negatives its existence. Men may know as surely that they are in a sanctified state as that they are in an unsanctified state, and may know it in the same way by consciousness and by the testimony of God.

Those who are pure in heart, and filled with the Holy Spirit, obey God decidedly, constantly, unhesitatingly, unreservedly, cheerfully, and easily; to such the will of God is the supreme end of all controversy. The question of obedience is never raised, but is settled.

110. Will entire sanctification enable me to pray, believe, and rejoice every moment, even in the severest trials?

It will, doubtless, so far as it is naturally, or perhaps I should say physically, possible. While the soul may have seasons of heaviness, sore conflicts, and protracted trials, which are often very necessary, it may still possess a heaven of peace, and love, and light in its ocean depths. This enables the sanctified soul to pray, and believe, and rejoice, every moment, or to "rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks."

"I worship thee, sweet will of God
And all thy ways adore,
And every day I live, I seem
To love thee more and more."

111. Are deep grief and sorrow of soul incompatible with perfect love?

They are not; and although grace in the depths of a sanctified heart secures abiding peace, light, and love, yet it does not exempt from occasions of grief and sore trial. It affords grace to endure all things, even joyfully, through the presence of God. The sanctified soul is never without comfort. It has in the fullest sense the "Comforter."

Mr. Wesley says: "Nay, the mind itself may be deeply distressed, may be exceeding sorrowful, may be perplexed, and pressed down by heaviness and anguish, even to agony, while the heart cleaves to God by perfect love,

and the will is wholly resigned to Him. Was it not so with the Son of God himself? -- Plain Account, p. 73.

Mrs. Hester Ann Rogers says; "Satan suggested I ought not to have felt any grief; but the Lord teaches me I may feel grief very sensibly and keenly, consistent with pure love and entire resignation."

We must let the idea of holiness stand alone in our minds -- separate entirely from all accidents of joy or sorrow, or indeed any other state of the emotions. If the soul is now consciously disentangled from every sinful affinity, and in a state of present positive concurrence with the will of God, that is holiness.

The purest of men are sometimes in heaviness of spirit; they often wade through deep waters of affliction sometimes they pass through fiery trials from sickness or poverty, or from the bereavement of friends, and they may be grieved, depressed, and afflicted; but they are not without grace, and comfort in the Holy Ghost. The quiet of their spirit is untouched, and they are never destitute of peace.

112. What is the rest which the sanctified soul enjoys?

The Saviour says, "My peace I give unto you." "The work of righteousness [holiness] shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever."

1. It is not a state in which we do not sympathize with the joys and sorrows of others.
2. It is not a state of exemption from physical or mental suffering.
3. It is not a state of exemption from the Christian warfare, or a state of inglorious ease from labor and Christian duty.
4. It is a state of settled and complete satisfaction in God, He being "all in all" to the soul.
5. It is a state of rest from the former servitude to doubts, fears, and inbred sin.
6. It is a state of rest, in which the tumult of the heart has been hushed into calmness; and fear, and discord, and doubt have given place to quietness and assurance.
7. It is a state of deep and permanent quietude and assurance in respect to all our interests, temporal and eternal.
8. It is a state of sweet rest from all conflict between the will and the conscience. "The body of sin has been destroyed," and the soul has peace with itself inward quietude. "It will feast your souls with such peace and joy in God (says Wesley) as will blot out the remembrance of everything that we called peace or joy before."

"Now rest, my long-divided heart;
Fixed on this blissful center, rest;
Nor ever from thy Lord depart
With Him of every good possessed."

113. What are the natural and necessary indications of a pure heart?

A pure heart differs vitally from an impure one in the fact that its expressions of goodness are natural and spontaneous, the fruit of a gracious nature, and not unnatural and forced.

The Saviour says, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." The streams partake of the nature of the fountain. The heart gives character to the life by a law of necessity. It breathes itself through all our activities, and a pure heart will be indicated,

1. By pure and holy conversation. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." If the heart is right, the conversation will be sweet, truthful, humble, heavenly, and holy.
2. By opposition to all impurity. A pure heart loathes sin, and has no affinity for it. It shrinks from it instinctively as a worm would from a fire.

3. By watchfulness. The love of purity begets watchfulness against impurity. The pure heart is watchful instinctively.
4. By reluctance to mingle with the (carefree and merry), the vain, and the worldly. It has no moral affinity for such society, and no taste for such associations. The charm of the world has been broken. [The pure heart has tastes, motives, communings, and enjoyments totally dissimilar to the worldling.](#)

This perfect love is a foretaste of the bliss of heaven. Thomas Moore refers to it:

Go, wing thy flight from star to star,
From world to luminous world,
As far as the universe spreads its flaming wall,
Take all the pleasures of all the spheres,
And multiply each through endless years,
One minute of Heaven is worth them all!

114. Is it not very difficult to retain the clear light of full salvation?

We answer, No. It is less difficult than to retain the continuous light of justification and neglect full salvation. In order to retain justification, we have to live obediently, and that can be done more easily with a pure heart than with an impure one. All things considered, the easiest religious life is the fullest and least obstructed religious life. A little religion is more difficult to retain than a heart full. Full salvation includes clear light, a submissive will, strong faith, nearness to God, intense spiritual affinities, worldly charms broken, and healthful activities, all of which combine in making the religious life natural and easy by the grace of God.

A purely religious life is more of a sweet divine charm than a tedious service, and more easy than difficult to the soul fully saved. The nearer we get to Christ, the more strongly we are attracted toward Him, and the difficulty or easiness of a Christian life is as we follow Christ closely or afar off.

115. Does entire sanctification secure the "full assurance of faith"?

It does; and is we believe, the only grounds for "the full assurance of faith." It cuts the knots of doubt and uncertainty, and makes the evidences of Christian experience strong, and the path of duty plain.

Inbred sin -- the discordant antagonism of grace in the partially purified heart -- is fruitful of more darkness, doubts, and uncertainty than all other causes. The heart, when cleansed from all vile and degrading passions, such as leanings to pride, envy, jealousy, impatience, and unsanctified fear and uneasiness, has rest and abiding assurance. This assurance is greatly important. Massillon, the French bishop and pulpit orator, said: "You cannot serve God with pleasure, only when you serve Him without reservation. From the moment you make Him entire master of your heart, hope, confidence, and joy will spring up in the depths of your soul."

"To be assured of our salvation," (said St. Augustine) "is in arrogant stoutness; it is faith; it is no pride; it is devotion. It is in presumption; it is God's promise." With this experience and assurance, we can say with Rev. James Brainerd Taylor, "I have been in the fountain and am clean; " or, like Alfred Cookman, "Alfred Cookman washed in the blood of the Lamb." Bishop Latimer said to Ridley, "When I have the assurance of faith, I am as bold as a lion. I can laugh at trouble. Without it, I am so fearful a spirit that I would run into a very mouse-hole." This assurance has been illustrated by saints in all ages. The martyrs, standing in this clear light, and gazing on the glories of Christ, forgot the fagots and fires kindling at their feet. St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, a disciple of St. John the evangelist, was full of this assurance and of the Holy Ghost. His zeal was as quenchless as an angel's, and his faith triumphed over death in its most appalling forms. While the wild beasts were ready to be let loose upon him to tear him in pieces, he boldly declared to Trajan, the Roman emperor, "that he would rather die for Jesus Christ than rule to the ends of the earth." Mary Dyer, who was hung in Boston, in 1660, for being a Quaker, was so filled with assurance, that on her way to the gallows she said:

“This is to me an hour of the greatest joy I could enjoy in this world. No eye can see, no ear can hear, no tongue can utter, and no heart can understand, the sweet incomes, or influence, and the refreshings of the Spirit of the Lord, which now I feel.”

116. Is an entirely sanctified state a blissful one?

Holiness is bliss itself! -- conscious purity – soul harmony! Supreme delight in God, and the object of its delight always present. Loving God with all the heart and soul is the highest bliss of which our nature is capable. The pure heart can triumphantly say:

“I love thee so, I know not how,
My transports to control
Thy love is like a burning fire
Within my very soul. “

In reading the gospels and epistles we are struck with the joyousness, hope, and triumph, mentioned of believers everywhere. The words which we see most frequently are “Love,” “Joy,” “Peace,” “Praise,”

“Thanksgiving,” “Joy unspeakable and full of Glory.” The primitive church was a “royal priesthood,” “a holy nation,” going to Mount Zion with songs and triumph and not a company of weeping, doubting, fearing, trembling, groaning profess.

O the blessedness of full communion with Christ, and His lovely image shining upon our hearts! Holiness secures a moral standpoint, where “Immanuel,” “God with us,” “The Rose Of Sharon,” “The Lily of the Valley,” “the brightness of the Father’s glory” is clearly apprehended, and His charming glories are poured upon the soul. The life of Christ in the entirely sanctified, is a life of love, pure, boundless, changeless love. This experience once possessed and established in the soul, carries the peace, the triumph, the serenity of heaven with it. It has been beautifully said,

“The opening of the streets of heaven are upon the earth.” Even here we may enjoy many a sweet foretaste of coming bliss.

“God is love,” -- infinite love! Who can fathom it?
“Yes, measure love, when thou canst tell
The lands where seraphs have not trod,
The heights of heaven, the depths of hell,
And lay thy finite measuring rod
On the infinitude of God.”

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