



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

THE SANCTIFIED LIFE

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NB: In these pre-Azusa Street days, the scriptural term "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" was not used to refer to the charismatic experience (yet unknown), but to the then common sanctification experience-Edit.



1. Different Theories In Regard To Sanctification Or Heart Purity

The Saviour in His Sermon on the Mount said: "Blessed are the pure in heart." Can any

one believe that Christ would bless a class of people who do not or cannot exist? If men so insist, then do they make the Saviour speak an absurdity.

Regeneration implanted spiritual life in the soul, cleansed the nature from personal sin and guilt, gave a title to Heaven and communicated power over the world, the flesh and the devil; but neither the Bible nor experience say it made us holy. It is a pity that some people do not study the meaning of the word regenerate. The trouble today is that it is loaded down with definitions that do not belong to the word; for some have made it mean anything and everything in order to leave no room for a second work of grace.

It is well to remember that *a new heart is one thing, and a pure heart another*. They are not synonymous. A man can have a new heart which loves God, and yet not possess a pure heart from which self, man-fear, love of praise and other similar things are banished. The new heart comes with regeneration, the pure heart by the Baptism of fire. We are born unto one and baptized into the other. Born of water and the Spirit, but baptized with fire.

All churches agree that heart purity or sanctification is to be possessed. They only differ as to the time in which it may be obtained, and as to the agency or power through which it is effected. But this is a very great difference, and of gravest importance to the soul seeking to be holy. We call attention to some of these views:

The Purgatorial Theory

This, as is well known, is held by the Roman Catholic Church.

They believe in pardon here in time, but that purification is obtained by flames burning in a kind of middle world, which they call Purgatory. The objection to this theory is that the Bible does not teach it, and there are some of us who want a “thus saith the Lord” on so vital a matter. An additional objection to this teaching is that it ascribes to a material flame what should be accomplished by the blood of Jesus Christ. There goes up a protest from the heart as we see the crown which belongs to the Son of God placed upon a bit of fire, and a marvelous work of grace which is attributed by the Bible to Him, ascribed to a flame, which we know to be an unintelligent and unspiritual agency.

The Death Theory

There are many who believe and insist that purity or holiness can only come to the soul in the moment of death. The serious objection to this view is that there is nothing in the Bible to give foundation for such a teaching. Moreover this idea of death purification springs from the old (Augustinian) false notion that sin is in matter. This position has long ago been made untenable. The absurdity of saying that sin is in a non-intelligent substance must at once strike the reader. So we conclude that sin is not to be found in wood, leather, cloth, skin, bone, muscle, or any other form of matter. It must and can only exist in spirit. The view, therefore, that located sin in the material nature of man, failed to see that the body was simply an unconscious instrument of the soul within; and supposing that the word “flesh” in the Bible meant the body, they fell upon the conclusion that the only hope of deliverance was by laying down the body in the grave.

An additional fault we find with this view is in its attributing purifying power to Death. Death is not an entity, but simply a dissolution of soul and body. There is nothing in the parting of the two natures to produce holiness. Moreover, if Death purifies or sanctifies then it is a saviour. Indeed, it does what Christ has not been able to do, according to these false notions. He could pardon, but Death they say purifies! Nor is this all of the absurdity of this view; for if Death purifies us, then is Death a friend! But the Bible distinctly says that Death is an enemy; “the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.”

We can not but offer the following thought to all who believe that we are only made pure and holy by death; that if this be so, then it is a great pity for people to get well who are sick. All drug stores should be discontinued, and physicians should be remonstrated with who are trying to restore indisposed and diseased people to health and life. They should be told that they are making a great mistake. "Do you not know, Doctor," we should say to them, "that if you let this man die he will become pure; but if you restore him, you are simply helping to protract and prolong sin in him and in his life?" The utter untenableness of the idea is seen without our adding another argument.

The Reformation Theory

Those who hold to this simply bid men to quit their badness. The exhortation is to stop doing wrong, join the church, lead a moral life, and the first thing they know they will be clean and pure.

This is the world's idea of holiness. It makes a man his own saviour, and as a moral procedure is nothing but whitewashing. The trouble with whitewash is that it comes off in a driving rain or through the course of time. The fence has not been changed, but simply coated. The old rotten plank is still underneath. We want something better than this in religion. It is not a coat of paint we want, but a new fence, not to be whitewashed, but washed white. The world white-washes, but Jesus washes white. We read once of an old inn in England called The Inn of the Black Dragon. A gentleman bought it, and not liking the sign painted it out, and on the new coat of paint had the picture of a white lamb drawn. The hotel was now the Inn of the White Lamb. And so the sign creaked in the breezes for several years, pelted by the snow and rain and rocked by the wind. One night there was a fearful storm, and next morning the landlord, on walking out on the pavement, glanced upward at his sign, and lo! The lamb was gone, and there pawing in the air was the old black dragon. The last storm of rain had washed off the lamb.

Herein is seen the trouble with the Reformation business. It is a skin-deep matter. It is manner rather than morals. It is a superficial coat instead of a radical change, and any time under a severe provocation the lamb is likely to disappear and the dragon take the deck.

We once saw a lad holding a piece of candy with the word LOVE appearing in red color on the end of the stick. On biting off an end of it, the word was still seen. Deeper down he went in saccharine bites, but the word LOVE was always there. In fact, it ran through the whole stick. This is the way we want cleansing. We desire it through and through. No matter how deep men may go in their investigation, nor how knives may chop us off here and there, yet, recognized by men and felt by ourselves, we want the purifying work of Christ to abide.

The Zinzendorfan Theory.

This teaching affirms that purity is obtained in regeneration. Concerning this false piece of theology, Mr. Wesley said that such a doctrine had never been heard of until Zinzendorf, a German Count, arose to teach it. It is well known how he wrote and preached against the heresy.

Truly, it seems that Methodism has drifted marvelously when her preachers can turn against the well-known declarations of her founder, and proclaim the opinions of a German Count as Methodist truth, when Mr. Wesley opposed and denounced it wherever he went. William Bramwell declared that he foresaw this doctrine would be the devil's big gun; and so it as proved. The amazing subtlety as well as fatality of this movement of Satan is seen at once when we call attention to the fact that he secures the same end by this teaching that he did when he had men believing for ages that they could never be made pure and be saved from sin in this world. As light poured in on men's minds

through the pages of Holy Writ, and they saw that holiness was promised and possible, the great Adversary changed his tactics and taught that heart purity or holiness is obtained in regeneration. The astonishing fact is that by two such different teachings the same result is achieved --sin is left in the heart. For if men are taught that they have all in regeneration, the "pressing after," the "groaning for" the full deliverance does not take place, and so the fallen nature is left unpurged in the soul.

As we stated in a chapter in "The Old Man," if regeneration is purity, then the advocates of this doctrine should have the following proofs: They should have analogies of nature teaching perfection in birth; the statement of God's Word declaring regenerated people to be pure; and the testimony of God's children saying that they have so found it in their experience. But when we come to look for these evidences, there is not one to be found. As for the analogies in nature, while we have abundance to prove perfection in creation, there are none to teach perfection or cleanness in birth.

Nothing is born physically perfect in the animal kingdom, whether among beasts or men. A careful examination will prove this. As for the Bible, it distinctly recognizes and names a principle or nature of evil left in the child of God. In one place it is called a "filthiness of spirit"; and anyone can see that this could not be a material something. As for Christian testimony, we find that while men will insist in controversial articles, hundreds of miles away, that they obtained all in regeneration, yet when it comes to standing up in a testimony meeting where many eyes are upon them, and above all God is felt to be searchingly and powerfully present, that at such times and places they are most significantly silent. In addition to all this is the voiceless but strong opinion of the families and friends of these brethren that they did not "get it all" at conversion, that regeneration, whatever else it may have accomplished, had not made them pure.

The Growth Theory

Many thousands hold to this in all the different churches. (This view dominates today. ES)

Their position is that pardon and spiritual life are realized in regeneration, but holiness or entire sanctification comes as a development. It is away over yonder in the future somewhere. It is dim from its great distance from us. If we attain at all, it must be by the long process of a silent growth.

This method, among other excellencies, disturbs no one's sensibilities by the noise of a sudden arrival. In the concern for the feelings of certain people, it looks like they do not propose to arrive at all.

The mistake that these brethren make is in confounding purity and maturity. Maturity, mellowness or ripeness comes with the passing of time, both in nature and grace, but the blessing we are contending for is not maturity but purity--a grace that is to be obtained as suddenly and obviously as pardon.

Moreover, the people of God who hold to the growth view are confronted with the embarrassing fact that they can not present a single instance of a Christian coming to this blessing by development.

This embarrassment is manifest when asked to produce a witness. They cannot do it. Such a person has never and will never be found. Repeatedly the author has asked the question of large congregations in all parts of the United States, that he might establish by the answer the real truth, and he has never yet found a single person who received it by growth. On the contrary, many thousands have stood on their feet to witness that they obtained the grace instantaneously by an act of faith in Christ.

We can not but affirm that if a man had been traveling on a train from St. Louis to Cincinnati for a week, and had not reached his destination, that there would be reason to believe he was on the wrong track. But what if he had been going a year!--and what if he had been traveling twenty or thirty years, yes, forty years, and still had not reached Cincinnati! Then he ought to know he was on the wrong track, and the most sensible thing to do would be to change cars, conductors, tickets, direction and everything. Not less true is it that if a person has been seeking for complete sanctification along the Christian growth line for ten, twenty or forty years, and has not yet obtained the rich grace, that here is unmistakable evidence that he is on the wrong route. It would be wisdom indeed to look in the Word and see if there is not a speedier and truer way.

Of course, the advocates of the Growth Theory have Scriptures to quote to prove their view. One very popular verse is "grow in grace"! To which we reply, Certainly!; but this does not say "grow into grace." There is a great difference between "grow in" and "grow into." No man can grow "into" a grace of God, but after being inducted by divine power, it is the most natural and easy thing for him after that to "grow in grace." A tree can not grow into another field, but if transplanted can easily then grow in it. So a sinner cannot grow into repentance. God's power puts him there, and being there, then he grows in grace. So a Christian can not grow into sanctification. Again the divine power is used to place him in the new experience, but once in, then he can grow in grace. Again, no saint can grow into heaven. Here God lifts him the third time and plants him in the fields of life.

Immediately he begins to grow in grace in heaven. So we grow in grace in regeneration, sanctification, and heaven; but we could not and did not grow into a single one of them.

There are other Scripture passages which they quote, but as we have answered them in "The Old Man" we will not repeat here.

The Imputation Theory

This is held by a number of excellent people. They say that the heart is never made entirely clean in this life, but purity is imputed to it through Christ. One of these advocates was talking with a Bishop in the M. E. Church, and in the course of the conversation said: "My heart is dark and foul; I find corruption in it. But Jesus comes and throws His white robe of purity over my black heart, and no one can see the blackness. And when Christ appears for His own He will come to me as I am thus covered up, and will take me off with His robe." The Bishop meditated a moment and said: "Yes; Christ is coming for His own one of these days; and when He arrives He will do this very thing. But the black and foul do not belong to Him, so He will take His robe and leave you."

Imputed purity will not do. We want something deeper and more subjective. We know what imputed purity in a legal sense in the Bible means; but that same Bible teaches that we are brought into heaven not simply in a legal way, but are fitted for it as well. It is not only an imputed purity, but an imparted purity. The Word say: "From all your filthiness will I cleanse you"--"I will purge away thy dross and take away thy sin." This is what God promises and what the soul craves and must have to see God.

"What is imputed purity," said a man once, "but a snowstorm in a barnyard?" "Yes," replied a Salvation Army Captain, "and what if there should be a thaw!"

The trouble is that the "thaw" does come in such cases, and then what a moral, or rather immoral, spectacle we behold! Let men deny and argue as they will, the yearning for a pure heart is left in the regenerate soul, and it is a longing not for something imputed to it in a hazy kind of way, but something given and enjoyed as a blessed, blissful possession. Moreover, the fact that this longing is in the regenerated heart shows that it is a grace as

yet unpossessed, and so should inspire and urge the believer on unweariedly until he comes into the realization of the crowning blessing of the Christian life.



2. The True Theory

The true theory of entire sanctification is that it is an instantaneous work of God wrought in the soul of a regenerated man or woman in answer to perfect consecration, unswerving faith, and importunate prayer.

That *there is a growth in grace* before the reception of this blessing, and a rapid growth afterwards, is hereby affirmed, and no intelligent teacher of holiness thinks of denying. But neither the ante growth or the post growth is the work itself of which we speak. That work, which cleanses the heart from all sin, no matter how preceded by mortification of spirit and crucifying of the flesh, is done in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, by the mighty power of God.

We are never to confound the things we do with what God does. We get ready or Him. We place ourselves in position, and the fire descends. We sanctify ourselves that He might sanctify us.

It is God's work. The Bible abounds in such statements. "Create in me a clean heart, O God." "He will purify the sons of Levi." "From all your filthiness and all your idols will I cleanse you." "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

This purification is never attributed as a result to death or growth in grace, but is always declared to be the work of God.

It is therefore quite astonishing when we declare the fact of God's cleansing the heart from all remaining sin that men should call it "our theory." It is not our teaching, but the Bible's own statement. *It is impossible to read the Word without seeing it everywhere.*

It is wonderful how the plain setting forth of God's Word is called a "theory," and so branded and avoided. A presiding elder was speaking to a sanctified preacher on his district, and said: "I recognize your lovely spirit, excellent life and faithful ministry, but I cannot endorse your theory."

The preacher replied: "Well, here is a remarkable thing. Suppose I am presented with an apple which is large and rosy, has a pleasant smell and delicious taste; and I say to it, **Apple, you are large, rosy, fragrant and luscious**, but I can not endorse the tree that grew you. Now, brother, this speech would not be more surprising and unreasonable on my part than yours to me; for you admit that my spirit and life are all right and gospel labors successful, and yet refuse to endorse the very blessing by which I obtained this spirit and achieve this success."

It is nothing on earth but the opposition of the carnal mind to the divine way of doing things. This is God's method of purifying the heart. He does it Himself. In like manner men resisted the faith theory of justification in Luther's time, and so men oppose the faith theory of an instantaneous sanctification today. But it will yet be seen on earth, as it will be perfectly known in heaven, that the "Second Blessing Theory," so often ridiculed and assailed, is God's way of sanctifying the soul. The ridicule hurled at it is no indication of

its not being true, for it stands in good company in the matter of an undeserved discredit. So the multitude jeered at Christ on the cross. So men laugh at the Bible, and at the doctrines of the Resurrection and the Final Judgment. And so have I seen them laugh at revival meetings when the Holy Ghost was saving people and they were shouting the praises of God.

Men mocked at Pentecost, and continue to ridicule the truth and work of God. A minister said in the preachers' meeting of a large Western city that "he was convinced that the whole second blessing movement was born in hell." There was not a preacher present who enjoyed the blessing of sanctification. Most of them were skeptical in regard to the matter, and were trying to keep it out of their churches; but at this fearful remark there was a chorus of protesting voices from the entire body: "No, no, brother; don't say that!" The speech of the excited man bordered wonderfully near to blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. To say that the holiness movement, inspired and swept onward by the Holy Spirit, is a work born in hell is frightfully similar to the utterance of the angry Jews when Christ by the power of the Spirit cast out devils in their presence. They said He did it by the power of Beelzebub, locating the power and origin of the miracle in hell. It was then Jesus turned and said: "The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven." This He said, Mark writes, "because they said He had an unclean spirit." They gave a divine work a hellish origin.

But no matter how men deny and resist, the Bible teaches that the purification of the heart is the work of God. Peter tells how this purifying came by faith on the day of Pentecost, and John states that it is while "we walk in the light," "having fellowship one with another," that then "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." As thus taught in God's Word, it is a divine work and subsequent to regeneration. Mr. Wesley says the last quoted verse is one of the strongest passages to teach the second work. Of course, the word "cleanseth" is in the present tense, and this very fact gives the idea of the constant, unbroken, perpetual sense of cleanness that comes with the blessing of entire sanctification. But not less clear is the truth that this cleansing from all sin came while the man was "in the light" and enjoying Christian "fellowship."

But, says an objector, I do not believe that God has to do His work over again. The answer to this is that sanctification is not the doing over of regeneration, but is a different work altogether. The second work being not to improve regeneration but to eliminate the fallen nature.

Still, with this explanation, the objector has spoken hastily in saying God does not have to do his work over again, This He certainly does in the recovery of every backslider.

But, says the objector again, I do not believe that God does a second work; I believe He accomplished everything He has to do in one work.

The reply to this is that, plausible as is the speech, everything contradicts it in nature and grace.

The first contradiction is from the world, which as it rolls through space says God made me by six distinct touches or works; every one was different, and all six together made me the habitable earth I am today.

The second contradiction comes ***from the human family***. When Adam was created, the race in its federal nature was not completed. It takes not only male but female to make man, and the two were not made at once. God first created man and then afterwards made the woman and brought her to Adam. There are few but will admit that the second work was an improvement on the first. So it took two works to make what is properly called man. The author cannot see how a woman can consent to fight the second blessing when she is a second blessing herself.

The third contradiction is seen in *the two covenants God has* at different times given the world.

The Bible says there were two, and Paul distinctly says that the first was not perfect. Some people insist that every one of God's works is perfect; they seem to know more than the Lord Himself, for He affirms in His own Word that the first covenant was not faultless, while in James we read that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above," showing that there is a difference in God's gifts, some being good and some perfect. Regeneration is never called perfection in the Bible; but being regenerated, we are told to go on to perfection. So the first covenant not being faultless, God gives another that is perfect, in which the "old sin is purged"; there is no more "remembrance of sin," and the worshiper himself is "made perfect." Two works are beheld in regard to the covenants.

The fourth contradiction to the statement that *God does everything in one work* is seen in what took place with the disciples on the day of Pentecost. They evidently received a new divine work or grace on the morning of the tenth day. That they were converted men and women when they went into the upper room there can be no doubt if language means anything. Christ said they were branches of the true Vine, that their names were in the Book of Life, and that they were not of the world, even as He was not of the world. He had sent them forth to preach the Gospel, but this He has never done with sinners. They had cast out devils, and Christ said that a devil could not cast out a devil, else was the house of Satan divided. In addition to all this, days before He had breathed upon them and said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Who can read these statements and descriptions and not see that they were saved men and women? Yet on the morning of the tenth day suddenly the power of God fell upon them and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with new tongues. Peter leaped to his feet and cried out: "This is what Joel said should take place in the last days."

This one speech of Peter proves it was a new grace or blessing received. Here was something long ago prophesied just sent down upon them. Certainly this could not be pardon and regeneration, for men had enjoyed the justified experience all along. Surely the patriarchs, prophets, David, Simeon, Anna, and John the Baptist had religion. The very astonishment and gladness of the disciples showed that the blessing was new. Suppose, for instance, one of us should promise our children a remarkable breakfast. They could scarcely sleep for thinking what it would be, but of course looked for dainties and luxuries. But next morning, on filing into the dining room, they discovered the same old breakfast of bread, meat and coffee. One thing is certain, they would not be in a rapture, and none of them would spring on a chair and cry out in enthusiasm: "This is what Joel said should take place." If what happened at Pentecost was what had been experienced before, how can the joy and astonishment and quotation of Peter be reconciled with the facts? No! Instead of this we are brought face to face again with the second work of grace. 'The marvelous change that took place in the disciples from this hour settles the fact that it was a second work, not of pardon and life, but of purity and power.

The fifth contradiction is seen in what took place with *the Saviour on the banks of Jordan* when He was baptized with the Holy Ghost. All of us know that Christ was without sin, that Satan could find nothing in Him in all His beautiful and holy life; and yet on the banks of Jordan He received what had not come upon Him before, in the anointing or Baptism of the Holy Ghost. There are two works accomplished in the Baptism of the Holy Ghost as received by the Christian believer -- "purifying the heart" and "endowment of power." In Christ's case, there was no fallen nature or moral taint of any kind to be purged away. All that could take place with His spotless human nature was the empowering of the Spirit. Hence the Holy Ghost did not descend on Him with fire, as in

the case of the disciples, but as a dove.

That the Saviour did receive the enduement of power then, is seen by the clear statements of Scripture. It was after this memorable morning that it is said that "He went forth in the power of the Spirit." This was not said of Him before. We are also made to remark the effect of this anointing immediately upon His ministry. We read that He went up to Nazareth and on the Sabbath day entered into the synagogue, and when the roll of Scripture was put in His hands He stood up to read, and selected as His text from Isaiah the very thing that had happened to Him on the river Jordan: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me: because He hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord," etc. We read that He then sat down and began to preach, and all marveled at His words. Moreover, the discourse was so heart-searching and incisive that the officials of the synagogue became enraged and took hold of Him violently and tried to hurl Him down a precipice.

Now lest any one should think this was Christ's first public talk or sermon, the Scripture says He stood up that day in the synagogue "according to His custom." The difference was that He had received the anointing of the Holy Ghost, and His words, now power-freighted, were simply overwhelming. It does seem to us that, in view of this occurrence, men should be slow in saying God does everything in one work. He does not. He did not even do so with His own Son. And when we hear a man say that he obtained all in repentance, and then note the one absolutely perfect man who ever lived receiving on the banks of Jordan the anointing of the Holy Ghost, we are made to marvel at some people's mental density or spiritual arrogance.

The sixth contradiction is to be found in *the two touches laid by the hand of Christ* on the eyes of the blind man. It does seem to the writer that this second touch was given by the Saviour, if for no other reason than to close the mouths of people who say that God does everything in one work.

Vision came with the first touch and perfect vision with the second. This very order ought to prepare the people to see how that love comes with one operation of divine grace and perfect love with another.

The seventh contradiction is seen in *the word Redemption*. Usually men think that the word stands for one work, when it really covers four. The first work wrought in the salvation of a soul is conviction. This can never be done by a man. It is a divine work. It takes the Holy Ghost to burden a man for his sins, and when it is done that man is miserable and restless, and oftentimes can neither eat nor sleep. Still the man is not saved; he is simply convicted. But when he repents and believes on the Lord Jesus Christ the Holy Ghost works again and this time regenerates him. Still there is a third work, for Paul writes to regenerated people, and says, "This is the will of God even your sanctification," and still again, "The God of peace sanctify you wholly." He who regenerates can sanctify us wholly. But there is yet a fourth divine work, and this time upon the body. It is called the resurrection. The body is a part of man and is included in redemption. It is to be raised from the dust and out of death, and renewed with transcendent glory. This is the last work. Redemption is then completed. Instead, then, of one work, redemption includes four! --conviction, regeneration, entire sanctification, and resurrection. And yet there are some people who say that God does everything in one work.

Thus we meet the objections that God never has to do His work over again, and never does but one work. The sweeping away of these opposing thoughts leaves us with the blessed truth that God can and will and does purify the pardoned soul. It is His work and our privilege. Thank God that when Christ came to this world He did not appear in our midst with one gift of grace, but with two.

He had no empty hand, but both were full for the human family --Pardon in one for the sinner, and Purity in the other for the believer. May every child of God lose no more time, but press forward at once and receive the blessing that has been waiting so long for him.



3. The Blessing Is Obtainable Now

If God *can* purify the heart and did not, He would be a strange God. There would be justification for the charge of divine indifference and even cruelty, if this were so.

If the Divine Being wanted to purify the soul and could not, then we have a weak and helpless Lord to worship. But who will say for a moment that He cannot? And who would believe that He does not want to? The fact is that God is able and willing to sanctify the soul. If He is able and willing to do it, there certainly is no need of postponing the work to the hour of death. To thus delay our expectation to the very brink of the grave is to reflect on the goodness as well as holiness of the Almighty. We cannot afford to do this.

Certainly if God is willing to do the work, and He alone can do it, why should we not seek it now, expect it now and receive it now? How may such a wonderful blessing be obtained? Let us see if we can present the matter in such a way that the hungry, watchful soul can go right into this beautiful grace of God.

God's House

One of the frequent descriptions given of man in the Bible is that of a house, building or temple.

“Ye are God’s building,” says the apostle; and again, “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?” We were originally made or built for God to dwell in. Satan marred the plan of Heaven by taking possession of us. Some of you have seen a beautiful dwelling pass out of the hands of the first owners and finally become the abode of poverty and degradation. The writer once looked through a famous hotel that in its palmy days had seen in its spacious rooms and halls the beauty, chivalry and statesmanship of a large Southern State. But at the time he viewed it, about the only thing left of the magnificence was its colossal size. It had become a tenement for the vilest and most poverty-stricken classes in the city. The paint had faded from the wall, doors were gone or hanging on a single hinge, and windowpanes were broken and stuffed with rags. Dark-looking, dissipated and ragged figures lounged about the portals or hung out of the windows; dogs and pigs roamed unchecked through the lower halls and galleries; and one could scarcely realize that this place had once been as attractive as it was now revolting.

So Satan took God’s building and rubbed off the colors of grace and innocence, planted decay and moral ugliness where he could, filled the door of the mouth with all kinds of uncleanness, hung forbidding looks out of the windows of the eyes, and shocked the beholder in every way. But through grace this house is redeemed from the devil. It becomes the Lord’s again. It is washed, cleansed, and warmed, and recognized as God’s property. Everybody marks the delightful change.

There is one thing, however, that constitutes a painful experience to the redeemed man himself and observer alike; the Saviour is not an abider in this house that belongs to Him. He is a visitor, coming and going, but not a steady, constant indweller. This visiting Christ, now consciously in the soul and now as consciously absent, *will upon compliance*

with conditions on our part come into us and take up His fixed and unchanging abode. When this happens, sanctification happens. His purifying Spirit goes through the soul, and Christ enters to leave no more if we will have it so.

How is this entering in and blessed possession to take place? Remember that the Savior's word is that if we will do certain things, "We will come unto Him and make our abode with Him." And remember that visiting is one thing and abiding is another. Some of you will recall the first time you ever saw your wife.

She was paying a visit at your father's home. It was a brief call, but it affected you forever and changed the house itself. The room she stood in looked different, the furniture assumed a new and peculiar luster, the goblet out of which she drank water you quietly set aside as your own, determining that no other lips should desecrate it. The old brick walk down which she went, and the gate with its overarching trees through which she passed, took upon themselves a subtle charm and glory. This was only a visit, but a year from that time she came again, and this time to stay. She came with trunks and baggage and took up her abode. She was now your wife.

The blessing we speak of changes Christ from a visitor to an abider in the heart. His visits were beautiful and blessed, but alas for the absences! How we used to sing: "Return, O Holy Dove, return," and: "How tedious and tasteless the hours When Jesus no longer I see."

The indwelling is what we want; Christ to move in, take possession and never leave us any more.

Taking Possession of a Home

This is brought about by a method similar to what we see when a person moves into an earthly home:

First, the house is to be emptied. If a man purchases a building from you, there is one thing he expects, and that you do, -empty it for him! He does not want your old goods and chattels. He has furniture of his own, and doubtless much better than the kind you possess. So in offering yourself as the Lord's dwelling place, He demands that you let everything go, keep nothing back and, in a word, empty yourself.

This is only another way of describing consecration. A man who is laying everything on the altar is simply emptying himself. As the consecration proceeds, the person is conscious of an increasing emptiness, and just before the blessing comes, in describing his experience he would say: I have given up everything, am all emptied, and have nothing as yet in return except the conviction that I have done right.

I once illustrated this emptying process in my church in St. Louis. In front of the pulpit stretched a large altar in the form of a semi-circle. Its shape was made to stand for the heart. At the beginning of the illustration there were a number of persons in the altar, along with their books, papers, overcoats, hats, etc., etc. The preacher quietly put the individuals out and off the platform, saying that he would not let a single human being fill the place where Christ should reign. After this he threw out the hats, overcoats, gloves and wraps, declaring that the dress question should be settled in that manner. Then he removed the handsome chairs from the stand, affirming that rich furniture should not be an idol with him. Then he picked up some books and papers and put them outside the altar, with the remark that men's writings and opinions should not stand a moment before the known will and command of God. About this time the altar looked exceedingly empty; but still the preacher was not satisfied. Going about it, he found minute things, like bits of paper and thread on the floor. Stooping down, he carefully picked them up and cast them outside the altar rail saying: "Nothing, no matter how small, shall stay." At last only

himself and the Bible were left inside the altar-heart. Whereupon, after placing the Holy Book in the very center of the altar, he himself stepped out, declaring as he went that the Word of God should alone rule and reign in that heart.

A hundred or more people stood around looking at this figurative sermon. There was not an individual who looked into the emptied, silent altar, with the solitary Bible in the center of the platform, but felt solemnized, and grasped with a convicting clearness what emptying of the heart meant and must be in order that Christ might come.

With many, this is unquestionably the hard thing to do. Yet it must be done. It may take days, but there will be no divine incoming until there is the human emptying. How is it possible to fill us until we are first emptied? How could God truthfully say we had His fullness when something of self and the world was left? Emptied first; filled afterward is the order. The disciples were ten days in the upper room engaged in the human part of the work. We once thought they were ten days getting filled with the Holy Spirit, but no they were ten days getting themselves emptied. It does not take God ten seconds to fill thoroughly to overflowing the self-emptied man. God moves at once into the vacated dwelling.

Second, the house must be cleansed. That individual would be lacking in self-respect who would turn an untidy and defiled building over to the man who had purchased and desired to move into it.

So there is a cleansing of hands and hearts to obtain Jesus, the indwelling Sanctifier, in our souls.

There was a cleansing in regeneration from all personal guilt and sin. Yet is there a deeper purifying for the man in whom the Son of God will abide forever. The disciples, in the sixteenth chapter of John, were called “clean” by Christ, but in the seventeenth chapter He prayed His Father to “sanctify” them, and sanctify means to make pure and holy. To obtain this profounder purification that removes the fallen nature itself, we are called upon to cleanse ourselves first. This does not mean that the regenerated man is a sinner. What is meant will be taught him in that hour when he pants for Jesus to come into him.

Sanctify yourselves; for the Lord your God will sanctify you. There is a double sanctification here: a human and a divine. We sanctify and then God sanctifies. We cleanse the life and He cleanses the soul.

We attend to the seen and He to the unseen.

A woman will wash the windows and floors of the house for the new owner, but we never yet knew the incoming female satisfied with the washing or house cleansing of the outgoing woman. She at once travels over the track of her scouring predecessor with soap, brush and broom, giving what she calls a better cleaning. So in like manner, deep as may be our purifying, God purifies until deeper.

We may brush down the spider webs, but it takes the Lord to kill the spider.

Third, you must stand at the door of an emptied and cleansed house and watch and wait for the coming of the owner. This is what we have seen people do. The house had been prepared and the former possessor stood with keys in hand awaiting the arrival of the new purchaser.

So should the seeker of sanctification stand at the door of his emptied heart and look up for his descending Lord. We never knew of Christ coming with this blessing to any other than to such an upward looker and expecter. As the writer recalls certain ones he has seen sanctified, his heart melts and eyes fill from the bare memory as he sees them again with that indescribably heartfelt gaze, the soul in the eyes, looking and longing for Jesus to

descend and fill His new blood-bought home.

Of course, we do not mean that the physical glance is always upward. Sometimes it is not and the head is bowed, but the soul-gaze is always heavenward, no matter where the bodily eyes may be resting.

Moreover, we can recognize the fact of this spiritual uplook and feel at the same time that something will soon happen to the wistful gazer, and it does.

Happy is the man who will not allow himself to be diverted and distracted, but having emptied and cleansed his heart, will stand waiting with ardent prayer and expectation for Christ to descend, fill, and ever after remain as the glorious indweller of the soul. It is the attitude of surrender and devotion, the spirit of faith and the grace of supplication all united in one person. Such a one will not be disappointed. Christ is certain to come. He cannot stay away.

At this juncture comes the filling, or taking possession. Just as an earthly owner sweeps up with carriages and vans to move into his new home, so Jesus descends in chariots of fire *with the furniture of heaven* to fill and take possession of the perfectly consecrated and waiting soul. What an epoch, and what an experience! Who can forget it? The very memory after years fills the eyes and sets the soul on fire anew.

“Jesus comes. He fills my soul,
Perfected in love I am;
I am every whit made whole,
Glory, glory to the Lamb.”

Or, as sung by Charles Wesley over one hundred years ago:

“He visits now the house of clay;
He shakes His future home;
O wouldst thou, Lord, in this glad day
Into thy temple come.
“Come, O my God, Thyself reveal
Fill all this mighty void;
Thou only canst my spirit fill;
Come, O my God, my God.”

We recall a lady who the morning she received this blessing was leaning against a great pillar in the center of the church. What a hungry, wistful look she had! Her hands were folded and eyes looking upward, when suddenly the glorious blessing came! With a great rapturous cry that went through every heart she fell forward as if shot through the heart with a musket ball.

Another lady we remember who had consecrated believed, prayed, waited, looked and received Jesus into her soul in the sweetest, gentlest way. We saw her afterwards at the altar with an uplifted look, and perfectly abstracted from her surroundings. With a strange, sweet smile on the face, her eyes seemed fixed on worlds out of sight. For an hour she never moved a muscle nor closed an eyelid. People passed before her, but she seemed to look through them. It was like one hanging out of a window of Time, gazing into Eternity. She seemed to be looking at Christ and into heaven, while the soul's voiceless content and immeasurable calm was written in every line of the rapt countenance. No one was able to behold her without their tears gushing. All felt that Christ had come to His home and was abiding therein. A soul was hushed into perfect rest in the midst of a stormy world. The redeemed, encircled in the divine arms and pillowed on the divine breast, was looking into the face of the Redeemer.

“Blessed quietness; holy quietness,
What assurance fills my soul;
On the stormy sea, Jesus speaks to me,
And the billows cease to roll.”



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