

SANCTIFICATION

by A. Paget Wilkes

Wilkes' exploration of the doctrine of sanctification as 'righteousness imparted,' analyzing the constituent elements of human nature—conscience, will, mind, memory, imagination, affections, and desires—and how Christ works to sanctify and restore the soul.

5 Chapters

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Sanctification

Part 1

Revival Classics dot com presents Sanctification by A. Paget Wilkes read by Patricia Knowles. Sanctification by A. Paget Wilkes. Chapter 1. Sanctification its necessity.

We are going to consider together that great word found in the New Testament sanctification or holiness. The authorized version translates the original indiscriminately by these two words. We shall first consider its necessity, then its nature, its way and lastly the time of its realization.

There are two great words in the New Testament relative to the state and position of the believer. Justification and sanctification. Speaking roughly we may say that justification means being counted righteous and sanctification made righteous.

When a man is born again God both counts him righteous, forgiving all the past and makes him righteous giving him a new nature. Hence Paul when writing to the Christians of his day though many of them were carnal calls them saints or sanctified ones. Sanctification however may be divided into two parts.

Regeneration or sanctification begun and entire sanctification which is the work completed and which is the subject we are considering. In this connection it is interesting to note that John Wesley entitles his great classic on the subject entire sanctification. Some may inquire why talk so much about this second work of grace in the heart? Why teach sanctification? And for convenience sake let me say I shall speak of entire sanctification merely as sanctification to distinguish it from regeneration.

Why says the inquirer emphasize it so much? Why not speak about the person and presence of the Lord Jesus himself? Well we shall see the reason as we go on. I do however hope that all of us believe that a second work of grace in the heart is necessary. It is blessed to get out of Egypt but shall I say more blessed to get into the land of Canaan.

I suppose that all Christian workers have found it much easier to lead people out of Egypt than to get them into the land of promise. It was so in the days of Moses. Only Joshua and Caleb, two out of that great host ever reached the land and it was left to the second generation to inherit it.

Oh how hard it is to get all the Egypt or the murmuring and unbelief out of the hearts of God's children and lead them into the country that flows with the milk and honey of the word. Let me repeat therefore it is most necessary to preach the blessing before we talk about the blesser. But it is not the blessing we want says someone, it is the blesser.

No that is not true. We need both. We need the blessing and the blesser.

Will you turn with me to Revelation chapter 3. Here the Lord diagnosing the state of the Laodicean church and calling them wretched, miserable, poor, naked and blind. Finally adds the most blessed promise. Behold I stand at the door and knock.

If any man hear my voice and open the door I will come into him and will sup with him and he with me. But I want you to notice that those two do not come together. In between the description of the lukewarm Christian and the wonderful promise of an indwelling Christ we have these words.

I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou mayest be rich and white raiment that thou might be clothed and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear and anoint thine eyes with thysel that thou mayest see. Here is the blessing. It is not till we have received this that he adds behold I will come in even the blessed Lord Jesus himself.

I'm going to speak therefore on the sevenfold necessity of being sanctified holy. The first we will consider is a vision of Christ. Follow after peace with all men and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord, states Hebrews 12 verse 14.

Here then is the first reason for this great work to be done in our hearts. The necessity of having a second work of grace taking away the depravity of our nature is that without it we cannot see the Lord. Blessed are the pure in heart said Christ for they shall see God.

Matthew chapter 5 verse 8. The desire of every true Christian is to see the Lord Jesus. We long for him to be made manifest to our souls. That moreover was his last great promise that if we keep his two commandments i.e. believing and loving mentioned in 1 John 3 verse 23 and 24 he would manifest himself to us.

Why is it that he is not real to us? Is it not because we fail in believing and loving? But why do we thus fail? Surely it is because the unbelief, the carnal mind, that depravity of heart which weakens and hinders and destroys our faith and love. When that is removed he says we shall see him because we are enabled to believe and love with all our hearts. Yes we shall see him in his word.

We shall see him in nature. See him in his people. See him in the sacraments.

Do we? When the heart is pure it shall be so. We shall see the Lord. Hallelujah.

Have you ever studied in the Word of God the subject of seeing the Lord Jesus? The wise men when they saw the little babe of Bethlehem knew it was the Lord. It led them to worship, adoration and sacrificial giving. The shepherds too that came and saw the babe they knew him.

Their vision led to praise and thanksgiving and testimony. The day that Simeon came into the temple no doubt there were numbers of other babies in their mother's arms. Mary was just an ordinary peasant woman.

You and I would doubtless have passed her by but Simeon didn't. He saw the Lord and knew him to be the Savior of the world. Lord now let us thou thy servant depart in peace he cries for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.

Yes it made him both praise God and pray for a blessing on Joseph and Mary. Later on Anna came in. She too saw the young child and she too knew it was the Christ.

At once she begins to give thanks and spread it all abroad. The Samaritan woman when she saw him after she had received the cleansing water in her soul knew him to be her Savior. Her natural idea of a Messiah was of course that he would be a mighty king and national deliverer.

But as soon as her heart was made pure she sees and believes that the lowly carpenter he that spake unto her was the one. Yes standing beside her looking into her face and bringing salvation to her soul. This beatific vision made her a missionary at once.

Oh that this sanctifying baptism in his blood and by his spirit may be ours. So shall the interior eye of faith be opened and we shall go hence seeing the Lord testifying to his grace praising his name telling the good tidings abroad and being made missionaries of the cross indeed. I pass on now to the second reason.

Oneness with Christ. John 18 verses 17 to 21 includes the words sanctify them through thy truth that they may be one. Here is another of the deepest reasons for our being sanctified that we may be one with Christ.

In John 15 the Lord had said to his disciples now you are clean and then in the 17th chapter goes on to pray father sanctify them. The two words in the Greek are quite different from each other. Had I time I could take you through several different scriptures and show you instances of their difference.

For example in 2 Timothy 2 21 if a man therefore purge himself from these he shall be a vessel sanctified. The first word is the same as in John 15 while the second is that used in John 17. Again in 2 Corinthians 7 verse 1 let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit perfecting holiness.

We find the same distinction. Yes you are clean if you are a Christian at all. You are one with the vine and yet the Lord prays oh father make them clean and make them one.

There is therefore a deeper purity and a closer union than some of us know anything about. In the epistle to the Romans we find the double union with Christ very clearly set forth. In the sixth chapter the Apostle speaks of a union with Christ in death burial and resurrection but in the seventh he talks about a oneness with Christ in marriage bringing forth fruit unto God.

He goes on to explain that there cannot be a oneness with Christ and bringing forth fruit until the old husband is gone. What a picture of the carnal mind and the old man is the husband in Romans 7. There can be no divorce, no suppression, no putting him down in the cellar or up in the attic. He has to die.

Without this decease there can be no remarriage and no oneness with Jesus Christ the heavenly bridegroom. There is a striking parable of this in the Old Testament in the story of Abigail's marriage with King David after the death of Nabal. Fool was his name and folly his nature.

When Abigail went home and told him how desperate it was we read that his heart became like a stone within him but it was the Lord who gave him his coup de grâce. So shall it be with us. If in faith we say the word, take sides with our heavenly bridegroom and speak the word of condemnation to the Nabal within the Lord himself will do the rest.

What we are after is not some wonderful blessing that is going to make us independent of the Lord Jesus but a blessing that will make us one with him. One in desire. One in will.

One in motive. One in God's desire for the salvation of a lost world. One with Christ.

That is what we are seeking. If this is not so we shall get very little worth having. Religion does not consist in ecstasies and emotions and talking in tongues if I understand it right.

It means that I am brought into oneness with Christ over a lost world and if I am brought into oneness with Christ it will make a tremendous difference in my life. I can look out on the world as Christ looks on it and feel as he feels. Love as he loves and walk as he walked.

You remember Paul prayed that he might know the fellowship of his sufferings. I do not think that this refers to the past sufferings of Christ. It certainly does not mean emotional sentiment about the suffering of Christ on the cross.

He is surely thinking about his present sufferings. His bitter disappointment as he looks at the poor lukewarm languishing church. Oh what disappointment and sorrow and suffering the Lord Jesus has over his people and we may know something of that too in fellowship with him.

That is the suffering I want to enter into. May the Lord so sanctify our hearts that we may all be one with him for union with Jesus demands the cleansing sanctifying experience of which we are thinking. Let us now consider the third necessity for sanctification.

Usefulness and power. 2 Timothy 2 verse 21 says if a man purge himself he shall be a vessel sanctified and meet for the Master's use. It is blessed to see the Lord blessed to be one with him but there is a further reason that makes sanctification a necessity.

It is declared to us in that above passage. What a marvelous verse that is. Those of us who know the awful weakness the failures and the miserable slipshod makeup that some of us have can never cease to marvel that God can not only make us a vessel unto honor or that he can sanctify us but that he can make us fit for his using and ready for every good work.

Here is the reason why we lack power and are so unusable in God's surface. We are not yet clean within and the Lord knows that if he began to use us we would get puffed up with pride. As Commissioner Brangle says don't pray Lord use me but Lord make me usable.

God is using men and women today to the utmost limit of their ability. He will look after the using if we will only get detached from ourselves so that we can praise the Lord if someone else is used as much as ourselves. Oh what liberty that is.

Some of us know the bondage of jealousy and envy that springs up in our hearts when we hear of some other Christian worker being used more than we are and some of us know the inward freedom when we do not care who is used if only the Lord Jesus is glorified. Oh how we have longed for that inward purity that absence of jealousy pride and every evil work. Till we are free we are not meat for his use.

That is the reason why we need a clean sanctified heart. God can then take us up as he pleases. He can put us down as he pleases for he knows that we shan't grumble or murmur but will still praise him because we are occupied and satisfied with the Lord Jesus himself rather than with our service for him.

Yes God has got to do a deeper more drastic and more real work in our hearts than we dreamt of when we were in the land of Egypt. All we thought of then was that we were in bondage. Thank

God we are out of bondage but when we get into the wilderness we begin to find how much there is of Egypt still in us.

We begin to find out from bitter experience how much there is of this corrupting evil thing. No we don't want it to be there but there it is all the same creeping into all we do and say. It is like an unclean fountain pouring out its evil thoughts all the time.

How can the Lord Jesus take us and use us till he has made us clean and free and whole. There is yet another reason for our need of sanctification. The power to love.

1 Peter 1 22 says, seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth see that you love one another from a pure heart fervently. And 1 Timothy 1 5 says, the end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart. The kingdom of God is not meat and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

That is to say it is not the meat and drink of the body but it is the meat and drink of the soul. We may call righteousness which is faith and love the meat while peace and joy are the drink of the soul. There are a lot of people who are spiritual drunkards they want nothing but peace and joy mere emotional experiences but faith and love are not emotional they are very practical.

Love is not necessarily emotional at all it is solid real and full of good works. The secret of the ability to love is a pure heart. Love to God and man pure and unadulterated cannot proceed out of a heart that is still defiled with bitterness and envy.

Just as you cannot put the new wine of joy into old bottles so you cannot put a patch of heavenly love onto an old garment. The garments of holiness the raiment of love unpatched and unspotted have to be put on that the shame of our nakedness do not appear. Oh that God may give us a yearning desire to have love out of a pure heart.

Yes you say we like the word love but we don't like the words a clean heart. Well David did not object to them anyhow did he and I am willing to be in David's company and cry with him as he did in Psalm 51 verse 10. Create in me a clean heart oh God.

Oh do be careful about despising God's words for Christ has declared whoever is ashamed of me and of my words of him will I be ashamed. Love out of a pure heart can anything be more beautiful. Let us seek in these days with all our mind and soul and strength and God will purify and fill and cause us to overflow.

The word of God presents us with still another reason why we should be entirely sanctified and that is preparedness for the Lord's coming. 1 Thessalonians 5 verse 23 the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. I wish you would take your Bible and look into this matter carefully.

Take such passages as 1 Thessalonians 3, 12 and 13. 1 John 3 verse 3. 2 Thessalonians 1, 10 and 12. Titus 2, 13 and 14 and many more if not all other passages relative to this theme.

And you will find that holiness of heart and his appearing are never separated. Oh how ashamed we should be if he came and found in our heart envy and pride and malice and uncharitableness and belief the fear of man and the shame of the cross. I do not know how much you want left in

your heart.

I do not want any of it left. Ah you say we must have a little sin to keep us humble. Do you really believe that? Sin never makes us humble for if it did the devil ought to be the humblest creature on earth.

No no only the grace of God can make and keep men humble. This is a solemn deeply solemn aspect of the matter. The white robes, the wedding garment, preparedness for the appearing, the fitness and not merely the right to enter the marriage supper of the Lamb are surely the holiness of heart wrought out for us his purchased blessing.

Without it alas we may be left outside to pass through the days of the Great Tribulation those saved as by fire. Do not be content with the right to enter. We need the fitness.

Imputed righteousness gives the former but his imparted righteousness Christ as our sanctification appropriated and put on can alone make us ready for his appearing and when he does appear we may not be ashamed before him. What is our sixth reason? The ability to praise in time of reproach. Wherefore Jesus also that he might sanctify the people with his own blood suffered without the gate.

Let us go forth unto him bearing his reproach. By him let us offer the sacrifice of praise. Hebrews 13 verse 12 to 15.

In passing I want you to notice particularly the words sanctify with his own blood. There is a form of doctrine that is preached nowadays that makes sanctification the result of the Holy Spirit's indwelling. This of course is true but not the whole truth.

In Romans 5 verse 9 we read that we are justified by his blood but here we learn that his blood sanctifies our hearts. The meaning is plain. Before the Holy Ghost can come and take possession there has to be a cleansing of indwelling sin from the heart through the efficacy of the blood of Jesus.

The body of sin has to be destroyed by the cross. The disease of the soul has to be healed by his stripes. Here is a reason why so many people who come to meetings and pray and consecrate themselves asking to receive the Holy Spirit yet as far as we can see never do receive.

At best they are satisfied with mere notions. There is no reality. They fail to see that before the Spirit of God can come in and take possession we need to be sanctified by his blood.

His blood doth make me holy for in it is a sin-destroying power. I merely say that in passing. The point of the passage before us is that without his sanctifying grace and power we cannot go into him without the camp bearing his reproach.

Here is a very real result of sanctification. The ability to bear the reproach of Christ and not be ashamed. May I ask you when you are traveling in a train for example are you ashamed of the Lord Jesus? How many Christians I find as I travel about are ashamed of him.

They have no power to confess him or win others to him. Some of us have suffered from that false shame haven't we? There are men who naturally have a very strong character and yet when it comes to witnessing for Christ they are utterly weak. It takes more than mere strength of natural

character to eradicate that fear of man and the shame of the cross.

Oh isn't it amazing that we should ever be ashamed of Christ. What an awful day that will be. Perhaps the most awful moment when we look back on all this so-called fashion of the world and remember that we were ashamed of him in its presence.

Beloved may we get it all out of us in these days. Do you believe it can be done? I know it can. Out of the most timid person God can take away the fear and false shame if they will only let him sanctify them entirely by his blood.

But you won't let him do it unless you are convicted over it, unless you feel that your witness and worship and testimony have been miserable performances and cry out oh that God would bring me into a place where I can help someone and be a blessing. You remember the little boy who was asked why the lions could not eat Daniel and he replied because he was three parts grit and all the rest solid backbone. Jesus sanctifies the people by his own blood in order that we might go without the camp bearing his reproach.

The body of the sin offering was burned outside the camp. It was entirely consumed after certain parts had been burned upon the altar. The fire speaks to us of the Holy Ghost and the word body reminds us of St. Paul's striking words the body of sin, the body of death and the body of the flesh.

Why does the Apostle use these expressions? Surely that he may show us that he is talking about sin as a totality, an entity, not mere guilt, habit or action, but an entity to be destroyed and consumed. The blessed result will be that we shall have power to bear his reproach and by him offer the sacrifice of praise in the midst of persecution and shame. We can never get real praise and thanksgiving out of a heart that is not made clean and sanctified by his blood at least in circumstances of suffering and reproach.

And now lastly we close this chapter with another and perhaps the most important result and necessity of a sanctified experience, the power to obey. 1 Peter 1.2 says elect according to the full knowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience. It is not too much to say that the heart of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is to make us obedient just as the essence of that sin which ruined the human race was disobedience.

We are not only like lost sheep losing our way, ignorant of the way back, but we all have gone our own way, a very pleasant way and a very respectable way maybe, but our own way away from God nevertheless. The purpose of redemption is to bring us back to the place of perfect obedience. The Lord Jesus himself came to show us its reasonableness righteousness and blessedness by himself living a life of unswerving obedience to the will of God the Father.

Are we assured that such a life is impossible without first experiencing an entire sanctification of our nature, the cleansing of every bit of rebellion, self-will and self-pleasing. God the Holy Ghost can bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ so and only so shall we gladly obey and follow in his steps. Unto obedience.

We know perfectly well the value of these words. We ourselves do not want smart kind of people as our servants. We want men and women whom we can trust.

They may not be very brilliant but if they are perfectly faithful and obedient we are satisfied. What a comfort it is to have men and women like that about us and how disappointing it is to have the exact opposite. Is it otherwise with God? By no means.

He too does not want brilliant men and women so much as those who will be sanctified unto obedience. Oh may he make us such. May he take all the disobedient spirit and self-pleasing out of our hearts at this time.

Some of us know so well our own slipshod nature. We may cover up and conceal it very cleverly from our friends but we know and God knows all about it. Thanks be to him that he can alter it and sanctify us spirit soul and body so that we obey him and be ready for him to use us for his glory.

These then are some of the reasons why we need this great work of sanctification in our souls. Let us glance at them again as we close. One, we need sanctification that we may see the Lord.

Till the heart is pure there can be no vision. Sin and fear and unbelief blur and dim the sight of our soul. Matthew 5 verse 8, Hebrew 12 verse 14.

Two, we need sanctification that we may be one with Christ not only in will but in desire and affection, mind and motive. Yes in all the powers and affections of our soul. John 17.

Three, we need it that we may be a vessel meet for his using. Power and usefulness are dependent on the sanctification of our nature. 2 Timothy 2 verse 21.

Four, we need it that we may love. This cannot be until all evil has been cleansed from our heart. We cannot love till we are sanctified within.

The pure essence of love can only be poured in and out of a clean vessel. 1 Peter 1 verse 22. Five, we need to be sanctified that we may be ready for him at his appearing.

That the shame of our nakedness may not appear and that we may be confident before him when he comes. 1 Thessalonians 5 verse 23. Six, we need it that we may be enabled to bear his reproach without the camp and offer therein praise and thanksgiving, rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing and in everything giving thanks.

Hebrew 13 verses 12 to 15. And finally, we need it that we may be perfectly obedient to our master. Until all self-will and self-pleasing has been taken out of our hearts, we cannot follow in his steps.

1 Peter 1 verse 2. May the Holy Ghost make these simple thoughts a blessing to our souls and stir up our hearts to seek and obtain all that is purchased and procured for us through the sacrifice of his dear Son. Amen.

Part 2

Chapter 2. Sanctification, its nature. We are now to consider together the nature of that great experience described in the word of God as sanctification or the entering into a state of holiness of heart. We may define it as righteousness imparted, just as justification may be called righteousness imputed.

Hebrews 12 verse 14. The sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord. I think it may help us if we glance for a moment at the constituent elements of our nature.

The activities or I might say faculties of the human soul may be described as follows. Conscience, will, mind, memory, imagination, affections, and desires. Though of course it is obvious that in each one of these mental activity is present.

There can be no exercise of any of these faculties without the activity of the intellect and yet for practical purpose we can divide our nature in some such fashion. We are all conscious of these faculties and their activity and we are all equally conscience if we will but reflect that every one of them has been distorted, perverted, poisoned, and rendered ineffective by the work of Satan, the arch enemy of man. But the son of man was manifest to destroy the works of the devil, sanctify the soul, and bring us back again to a perfect happy confidence in God.

I think therefore it may be helpful to consider what is done in the various faculties of our nature, taking them one by one and finally investigate the cause and root of all the trouble. But above all I want you to be convinced that God desires to purify all these faculties and powers so that everything within shall bless his holy name and there be nothing remaining that cannot say amen and hallelujah to his gracious will. Do we believe it possible or is it too good to be true? Surely not with such a God as our God and such a Savior as the Lord Jesus Christ.

First of all then there is the conscience. Hebrews 9 verse 14 says, How much more shall the blood of Christ purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? When as a sinner we seek and find pardon of our sins, the clamor of our awakened conscience is forever stilled. The blood of Jesus silences its fierce and implacable accusations.

Its sting is extracted. Its voice is silenced. But there is a still greater change.

The conscience is renewed. Some of the most unregenerate men and women have been most conscientious. But when the grace of God reaches the heart, the conscience is both enlightened and renewed.

Our text, however, speaks of a yet deeper experience. Purify from dead works to wait on the worker, even the living God, not merely freed from past sin and guilt, nor from mistaken and misguided zeal, but from doing things in our own strength and urge to wait on the one who works for us. The conscience is cleansed and purified.

And it is the blood of Jesus that does the work. The allusion in our text is to the sprinkling of water containing the ashes of the red heifer upon the priests who had been engaged in burying the bodies of the dead slain by the plague, instead of waiting in prayer and praise and worship in the holy place. So shall it be with our conscience when we apprehend the blessed cleansing of the blood of Jesus in all its fullness.

We shall wait on God who waits to work for us. Now, the will. Galatians 2 verse 20 says, I am crucified with Christ.

The will is the citadel of my soul. We may call it the ego, the very self of man. Till this is captured, till this is surrendered, there is nothing.

When we are born again of his spirit, it is then that through God's free grace, the will is transformed. The ego is crucified with Christ. The self-will, the rebellion, the disobedience are removed.

There is, in other words, a real surrender to the claims of God. In a way that, I suppose, we shall never understand. This is accomplished through the sacrifice of Calvary.

I am crucified with Christ, says the apostle. Through his death and sufferings is dealt the death blow to my self-will and rebellion. Here is sanctification begun, a glorious beginning when the citadel falls.

This is, I know, wrought in us by the Holy Ghost, but it is only possible because he who knew no sin was made sin for us. And yet, though the citadel may have fallen, sanctification is certainly not complete. Many suppose that the surrender of the will is all.

Alas, we soon discover our mistake. When the devil did his work, he made a thorough job of it. Every part of our nature was twisted, perverted, poisoned, and vitiated by his serpent virus.

But praise be to God, he can effect a perfect cure and thoroughly undo all that the devil has wrought within. Strictly speaking, our conscience and will are the two great spheres of our nature in which God's regenerating grace operates. Our conscience is purified, Hebrews 9.14, and our will is crucified, Galatians 2, verse 20.

But entire sanctification covers wider and deeper grounds than these. Number three, the desires. Galatians 5, verse 24.

They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. I have spoken of ground deeper than the conscience and the will. I refer, of course, to the desires of the heart.

In the Greek and Hebrew originals of the scripture, there are some 16 words used to express the noun, and about 26 the verb desire. Sanctification reaches these deep places of the soul. Most of us are all too conscious of the truth of Wesley's line, my will seemed fixed, yet wide my passions rove.

Conscious that lower and deeper down than our wills, there are hankering desires so strong that they bring again into captivity the will that has been set free. Let us look well to our hearts. What are our real desires? Desire nothing but God, said John Wesley.

Do we? Are there no hankering desires for worldly things, ease, comfort and pleasure? As the Lord draws nigh to ask, what shall I do for thee? We say, Lord, give us the plenitude of thy spirit. But do we find in our hearts desires for other things stronger, far than the petitions of our lips? 1 Peter 1.13 says, set your hope or desire perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Are our desires thus fixed? The word of God speaks a good deal of this permanent fixing.

Here it tells of our desires being fixed. The psalmist cries, my heart, or my affection, is fixed. The prophet Isaiah talks of our mind or imagination being stayed or fixed on God.

And yet before this fixing and establishing of our desires wholly Godward can be secured, the Holy Spirit uses a stronger word, crucifixion. They that are Christ's have crucified the desires. Here is the nature of true sanctification.

There has to be a cleansing of dross from the desires of our soul. Our conscience can be cleansed from dead works, Hebrews 9 verse 14. Our will can be crucified with Christ, Galatians 2 verse 20.

And our worldly and carnal desires too can be nailed to the cross, Galatians 5 verse 24. And number four, the affections. In Deuteronomy 30 verse 6 it says, the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul.

There is one command, the greatest in the word, more beautiful than all others. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and mind and soul and strength. There is a promise too more comforting and precious, the one I have just quoted.

The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart to love. Why is that command so beautiful? Is it not, thou shalt serve or worship or obey in the first place, but thou shalt love. We can't conceive of anyone giving such a command unless he first loved the one to whom he gave it.

No man asks the love of a woman unless he first loves her. So too of God. He could not bid us love him with all our heart if he had not first loved us.

Why is consecration and devotion to God so difficult with some of us? Surely it is because we are not in love with him. Let us imagine the case of a young man who has to go to his place of work some 10 or 12 miles distance every evening. He has to go in all sorts of weather, wet or fine, hot or cold, storm or sunshine.

Oh, how he grumbles and murmurs as he has to toil along in a blizzard or a gale of wind. Let him, however, fall in love. The woman he loves residing at the end of his journey.

How easy is his road now. How delightful his daily travel bringing him to the one he loves. There is no complaining now.

Hardship is now no hardship at all. So may it be when our hearts are circumcised to love the Lord with all our strength. I ask you to notice the word circumcised.

Saint Paul, in applying it to our sanctification in Colossians 2, verse 11, uses another word for circumcised, never found anywhere outside the New Testament. A very strong word, a quote, putting away from and out of, unquote. Us, the whole body of the flesh, the whole body as opposed to the part taken away in physical circumcision.

Yes, it is a blessed taking away from and out of us all that deflects our love and mars our wholehearted devotion to the Lord that we love and feign would follow. The imagination every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Genesis 6, verse 5. The subject of the imagination in the scriptures is very wide and deeply interesting.

The prophet Jeremiah speaks much of, quote, walking after the imagination of our hearts. And in every case, he uses it in contradistinction to the law or the voice and the word of God. The imagination is followed and trusted and obeyed rather than God's word, etc.

There are three distinct words in the Old Testament, all translated imagination. The first means formation. The second means device.

And the third means stubbornness. It is the last that Jeremiah uniformly employs. We may say that imagination, the faculty that is always forming and giving shape to things that do not exist, is the stronghold of unbelief.

We imagine that God is hard and austere, that his way is difficult, his will unbearable. We imagine trouble that never comes, difficulties that never appear. This is all the work of unbelief.

Unbelief says it can't be done. It's too good to be true. Unbelief whispers that sin is too strong, the giant's too great, the circumstance is too difficult, and the price too costly.

Unbelief paints upon the imagination fearful specters of failure and disappointment and all sorts of trouble. Oh, that diseased imagination permeated and saturated with the poison of unbelief. Can it be healed and made pure? Can it be filled with praising, believing, loving, rejoicing thoughts of God? Hear what the psalmist said as he saw the people lovingly giving their all to God.

Oh, Lord God, keep this forever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people and prepare their heart unto thee. 1 Chronicles 29 verse 18. Yes, the heart will never be established or fixed till the imagination is cleansed and that too stayed upon God as the prophet Isaiah declares.

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind, and it's the imagination in the original, is stayed upon thee. Oh, beware of forming a God of your own, one made after your own likeness, the outcome of your diseased imagination, saturated as it is with the poison of unbelief. Yes, God can sanctify even our imaginations and cast out all unbelief so that we shall walk not according to the imagination of our own evil hearts, but according to his law, his voice, and his word.

Number six, the mind. Renewed in the spirit of your mind, it says in Ephesians 4 verse 23. In speaking of the mind, I shall only refer to it in the sense of the thoughts of the heart.

Some people seem to think that God cannot deal with our thoughts, and yet in Proverbs 23 7, as a man thinketh in his heart, so he is. So a thought, you reap an act. So an act, and you reap a habit.

So a habit, you reap a character. So a character, and you reap a destiny. Truly, the thinkings of our heart are the most important of all.

I am well aware that desire, imagination, and will are all elemental in the construction of our thoughts. But for the sake of plain people, I think we may consider the cleansing of the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit as a separate theme. There are, quote, thoughts of evil, unquote, passing through our minds.

They come in a moment and are gone as quickly, leaving no stain, no sense of guilt, no sting, or aftermath of pain. Of these I am not speaking, but there are, quote, evil thoughts, unquote, arising from the heart that mar and scar, blister and burn, that whirl us along in captivity and hold us there. These are they which fix and make our character.

Is there no balm in Gilead for these wounds? Is there no remedy, no deliverance, no inward cleansing of the source from whence they spring? Must censorious, bitter, complaining thoughts, not to mention others more polluted, always arise? Verily, nay, the blood of Jesus Christ does avail, not only to pardon, but to cleanse and remove the evil, making us pure at the source and fountainhead of our being, or as the scripture declares, renewed in the spirit of our mind. Surely this touches the cause and source of all the trouble, not the mind, but its innermost spirit. He can bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

2 Corinthians 10 verse 5. Now number seven, the memory. I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance. 2 Peter 3 verse 1. Perhaps there is no part of our nature that reveals the evil effects of the fall of man more than our diseased memory.

Why is it that we find it so easy to remember the evil and forget the good? For this there must be some reason. God's plaint through the prophet Jeremiah was ever, they have forgotten me, days without number. Moses in the closing charge to the Israelites reiterated again and again, remember, remember, and lest thou forget, lest thou forget was his constant warning.

Remember the bond service in Egypt. Remember the sin in the wilderness. Remember the judgment of Pharaoh, he says.

Remember that God is the giver. Remember the hindering amulek. Remember the Sabbath.

Saint Pete repeated it also more than once, that he wrote to put them in remembrance, though they knew it already and were established in the truth. Oh, how treacherous and fickle and foolish is the memory even of the saint. There are only three things that can change and heal and keep it fresh.

One, the word of God. These things have I told you that you may remember. John 16 verse 4. And two, the spirit, the Holy Ghost shall bring all things to your remembrance.

John 14 verse 26. And three, the blood of Jesus. This do in remembrance of me.

Luke 22 verse 19. How can we remember unless we read and meditate on his word? How can we remember unless his blessed spirit be the divine remembrancer? Come thou everlasting spirit, bring to every thankful mind all the Saviour's dying merit, all his suffering for mankind. Come thou witness of his dying, come remembrancer divine.

Let us feel thy power applying Christ to every soul and mind. How shall he keep us in remembrance unless the blood has first been applied to cleanse and heal the water of the word, the spirit and the blood? These three bear witness and keep the memory pure, fresh and true. Such, dear friends, is a sevenfold work of sanctification.

Our conscience purified from dead works and renewed, our will transferred, transfigured, I crucified with Christ, our affection circumcised, our desires nailed to the cross, our mind renewed

in the spirit, our imagination stayed or fixed on God, and our memory healed. And now, before we close, I want to look a little deeper to find out the cause of all the trouble. Whence comes the perversion, distortion, defilement and disease of these faculties of the soul? The story of the fall directs our minds to Satan, the great archenemy of man.

Here is the primary cause. But is there no secondary one with which we can deal? There is. As we read our Bible daily, we cannot have failed to notice something which appears everywhere in its pages again and again as the reason of our disasters.

That something has many names or designations. Here are some of them, though there are many more. The old man, the old leaven, the carnal mind, indwelling sin, the evil heart of unbelief, the body of sin.

Had I time, I could take each of these and show you that these designations, so carefully chosen of the Holy Ghost, give us different aspects of our evil nature, inherited from our first parents. The cause, however, is but one, depravity of nature imparted by Satan to the human race. Here I have only time to speak of three, the carnal mind, the sin that dwelleth within, and the evil heart of unbelief.

So, the carnal mind. The special mark of this designation is idolatry, or perhaps we may say hostility and enmity towards God. That aspect of depravity that says no to God's command.

Something within us that says, I won't obey when he orders. As Christians, of course, we would never utter the words with our lips, but often in our hearts these sentiments are obtained. Yes, I will go nine-tenths of the way, but here on one point I will not obey God.

Alas, we have all felt its power, this rebellious spirit, this carnal mind, which is enmity to God. Thank God he can deal with his own enemies. He has gifts for the rebellious also.

He can take away even this spirit of idolatry, for such it is. It is not our business to destroy this tenacious foe. We have but to acknowledge and humbly confess the awful fact of its presence before him, and he will cast it out.

The sin that dwelleth in me. The special mark of this designation is impotence. In Romans 7 verse 19, the evil which I would not, that I do.

Here it is not I won't, but I can't. I can't keep sweet. I can't keep control of my temper, my passions, my disordered desires.

I can't love and suffer and obey. I can't cast out this critical, censorious spirit or stop the murmuring, complaining thoughts of my heart. I've tried a thousand times but can't.

Yes, the sin that dwelleth within, this natural depravity, is the paralyzing thing that makes us cry every time. The evil that I would not, that I do, and the good I would, that I do not. Now the evil heart of unbelief.

But there is something worse, far worse, even than I can't or the I won't. Its reigning power can be defined. I don't believe it can be any different.

Here is the root of the whole trouble, as I have already pointed out. All other sin can be detected by a holy ghost reveals it to us. We can never feel unbelief to be sin, the sin of the world, the one most orphaned, damning sin.

It causes terrible pain. To have no confidence in a husband or wife or parent is the most cruel thing on earth. It ties the hands of those who want to help us.

If we don't believe that our would-be benefactor has true disinterested motives, he may try to help us as much as he will, but he can't. Not that he won't, but he can't, because we won't let him. Let us apply all this to our relationship with God.

Can we not begin to see that worse than any evil under the sun is an evil heart of unbelief towards a God of love? I want you, however, to notice that this unbelief is not necessarily in our wills, if we are true Christians. It lies lower than the sphere of the will. It is the poison that vitiates our whole nature, our mind, memory, imagination, and can only be dislodged and cleansed by the mighty power of God.

Here then is the cause of all the disorder and distortion in our God-given faculties, this trinity of evil, disobedience, impotence, and unbelief, three names or designations of that inward bias implanted by the devil, that carnal and depraved nature inherited from our first parents. Can God's sanctifying grace radically deal with so grave a problem and so mighty a force? Can he make us free and clean and whole? Can he sanctify every part of our nature? In reply to this question, may I turn you to that wonderful Old Testament story as told in 1 Kings 20. It is hardly necessary to point out that King Ben-Hadad, mentioned there, was a hereditary foe of God's people, surely a striking type of our inherited evil, a veritable barabbas, merciless and unrelenting, demanding and seizing all in his power, as the opening verses of that chapter describe.

You can no more satisfy or appease the carnal mind than quench Vesuvius. You will notice as you read the story the conflict and the victories, two of them, but God's intention was more than victory. He has made us more than conquerors through Christ.

After his second defeat, Ben-Hadad escaped and fled to Ephek, where we read in the marginal versions he hid himself in a chamber within a chamber. What a picture of the elusive power of indwelling sin! Feeling a little secure, he comes forth to plead for his life. Oh, how humble he appears and consecrated! All the cities I took, says he, shall be given back to you, and you can even make streets in my capital, Damascus.

Yes, the old man can be both humble and consecrated, if only his life is spared. We know the rest of the story. Ahab spares him, makes a covenant with him and sends him home.

He does not, however, hesitate to murder one of his loyal subjects, Naboth, as is told in the next chapter, though sparing his deadliest foe. In the following chapter we read of Ben-Hadad once more in the saddle and at war, giving instructions to his guards, quote, to fight with none save the king of Israel, the very man who had spared his life. That is true of the carnal mind every time.

It can never change its enmity. It can no more be altered or changed than Ben-Hadad. Later on we read of Elisha healing the Syrian commander of leprosy and sending home, clothed and fed, the army which came to take him prisoner.

But Ben-Hadad still remained the same old, ungrateful, unrelating enemy to God and his people. So it is with the carnal mind. Oh, in what solemn fashion does the Spirit of God give us warning? A prophet of the Lord goes to the king covered with his own blood, for no mere word of warning, however solemn, would suffice.

But his wounds shall speak, his blood and suffering shall bring conviction. The man appointed of God to utter destruction, says the prophet, has escaped. Therefore thy life shall go for his life.

And so indeed it came to pass. Shall we not see in this type the Christ of Calvary? God has appointed to utter destruction the man of sin within our hearts. Shall fear or unbelief spare him? Nay, let us cry with one accord, Crucify him, crucify him, away with him.

Let none of Ahab's spirit lurk within our breasts. Only believe. Let us consent to the curse and we shall see Jesus lifted up as a servant and made a curse for us.

Then let us bow in faith and worship, praising him till we find in blessed experience that all the evil is cast out, our hearts purified, and that everything within us does bless his holy name. Amen.

Part 3

Chapter 3. Sanctification, its way. 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 Thessalonians 5 verse 23.

We are now to consider together the way that God takes in purifying the heart. Hitherto we have thought of the necessity and nature of this great experience. May his spirit direct our hearts into another of its blessed secrets.

I remember hearing our brother, Mr. George Grubb, once say that God answers man's query, how, with a gift. And so most assuredly he does. How can a man be born again, said Nicodemus? How can you get the living water seeing the well is deep? How can we eat thy flesh and drink thy blood? How wilt thou manifest thyself to us and not unto the world? How are the dead raised up? To each and all of these queries, the Lord replies, it is the gift of God.

He so loved that he gave. I will give you living water. I will give my flesh and blood for the life of the world.

I will give you another comforter. Thou fool, God giveth it a body. And so it is with the experience that we are considering.

It is a gift and a gift is a gift. Oh, let us get hold of this blessed fact. Repentance, faith and consecration are all man's part.

But sanctification is a gift, something that God does in and for us. Every time he says it, God giveth. May he pour some of this blessed balm into some tired, defeated hearts.

How then are we made pure within? How can the imagination, the mind, the memory, the desires and affections, conscience and will be made perfectly whole so that all that is within me shall bless his holy name? This is what we are to consider. First of all, God himself does it by love. The God of peace himself sanctify you wholly.

Faithful is he that calleth thee. 1 Thessalonians 5, 23 and 24. This is our first declaration.

It is God that does the work, the God of peace. Not, be it incidentally noted, the God of power or love, but of rest. The God who giveth rest himself sanctifies us.

It is nothing that we do or struggle into. It is not a mental position which we adopt and then hold on to. It is a real thing, a practical emancipation from inward evil which God gives to the soul.

Will you notice with me the three words in verse 24? Faithful, calleth and do. Faithful is he who calleth thee who will do it. God's faithfulness, God's love and God's power are all taxed to the utmost in accomplishing this great work.

Here, for the moment, I want to emphasize the second of these words, calleth, the indication of his love. God commandeth men everywhere to repent, but here he calls. When John Wesley was asked when one should preach the doctrine of entire sanctification, he replied, never until men are hungry and seeking for it.

And when we do, let it always be by drawing rather than by driving. Yes, he calls us, woos us, allures us, invites us to enter the land of rest from inbred sin. I am always suspicious of the modern method of trying to screw people up into a state of consecration.

The Lord Jesus in dealing with men and women always approached them in such a way that of their own accord they confess their sin and need. His treatment of the woman of Samaria is a beautiful instance of this gracious method. He gave her an opportunity to run away from him.

It was so, too, as he dealt with the woman taken in adultery, John VIII, how easy it would have been for her to slink away when all eyes were directed to the runaway Pharisees. But faith in his tenderness and grace held her fast till his pardoning, sanctifying grace had done its work. He draws you now, he calls you, poor, defeated, discouraged soul.

He tells you that it is he himself who does the work, the very God of peace himself. One of the most wonderful themes in the word of God is his message through the prophet Jeremiah. Turn, will you, to the opening chapter of that prophecy.

It is conceivable, he says, that a man who has put away his wife for unfaithfulness and sin will ever take her back again. Why, the very land would be polluted. But yet he cries, I will receive you, if only you will return.

That's verse 13 of chapter 3. Only acknowledge your iniquity. That is the sole condition. His plaint was, they have forgotten me days without number.

The reason why we can't get deliverance and victory is that we will not return with all our hearts, just as we are, sin and all to him. Like the prodigal of old, with our rags upon us, he bids us come and then he himself will sanctify us wholly. This is the first secret of inheriting the blessing.

How hard it is to believe this wonderful thing. So poisoned have been our hearts that we find it almost impossible appropriately to believe that God blesses so. May all the poison of distrust, suspicion and unbelief be extracted from us and heavenly holy faith infused within our wounded, weakened souls.

Sanctification its way, number two, by chastening. He chasteneth us for our profit that we might be partakers of his holiness. Hebrews 12 verse 10.

In this 12th chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, we get another secret. If you will read it carefully, you will notice the word endurance translated in verse 1 as patience, but in verses 2, 3 and 7 as endurance. The Lord Jesus, we are there told, endured two things, the cross and the contradiction of sinners.

The writer uses this as a warning and a model for us. His argument is this. If Christ, the sinless one, could endure the gainsaying and rebuke of sinners, how much more should we, the sinful, endure patiently the chastening and rebuke of a loving heavenly Father? There can be no

sanctifying grace without this.

Are we prepared for his convicting, chastening word? Can we take rebuke and reproof through his people, other Christians, without getting offended? Without conviction for holiness, we can get nowhere. Not only is it necessary for our own holiness, but it is a priceless asset in our service. Unless we ourselves have been convicted of sin, we can never produce conviction in others.

We may preach like angels, but it will only be tinkling cymbals and sounding brass. God must chasten us if we would be partakers of his holiness. The word here is *aiōnis*.

That, in verse 14, is a little different. The former speaks of a state, the latter of a process bringing us into that state. How extraordinarily exact is the word of God! I cannot imagine how a deep student of Scripture can be other than a believer in verbal inspiration.

The very words, nouns, verbs and adjectives are all used with such precision and exactitude of meaning. When the Spirit of Truth first visits our hearts, he reproves and rebukes and makes us miserable. No one ever got miserable over his sins apart from the Holy Ghost.

Praise God for all the misery and conviction. Remember it is his chastening hand, and there can be no living faith apart from conviction. It can only operate in a heart broken up and convicted of the Holy Ghost.

Has he been putting the plough through the fallow ground, breaking up the hardness and self-righteousness in your heart? Have you had a vision of your lovelessness and joylessness? It is the chastening hand of the loving God who has called you. Don't be afraid of it. Don't run away from it.

Welcome it. Bow down before his presence. He wants you to be a partaker of his holiness.

Remember Jesus Christ enduring the rebuke and gainsaying of sinners. He invites you, draws you, allures you, and in tenderness chastens you, that you may be sanctified in truth. You will never get the blessing by understanding the doctrine, or by study, or by knowing all about its philosophy.

You can't get in head first. Bow, oh bow before his chastening, convicting hand. So shall you enter in.

Hallelujah. Number 3. By the Promises 2 Corinthians 7 verse 1. Having therefore these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. And 2 Peter 1.4. That by his exceeding great and precious promises you might be partakers of the divine nature.

The divine nature, what is it? God is a spirit. God is light. God is love.

God is a consuming fire. That is the fourfold definition of God's nature, as given us in the New Testament. God is a spirit.

His nature is spiritual. When we partake of it, we too shall become spiritual. Understanding spiritual, eternal, and heavenly things, it will take the carnality out of us.

God is light. That is to say, bringing sweet and clear assurance to our souls. It will take the darkness out of us.

God is love. We shall be partakers of this also. It will take the malice from us.

God is a consuming fire. It will destroy all the dross of selfishness and sin. And all this is for us through the promises.

These are what convey to us the blessing. I have never heard of any soul entering the blessed state of sanctification other than through the promises of God. We need to get alone and read and re-read, affirm and reaffirm, plead and plead again the great and precious promises before the Lord.

Last night, wrote a young man to William Carvozo, as I was pleading the promises of God for entire sanctification, I suddenly found faith springing up in my heart and I was enabled to believe the work was done. This is the only way to wrest the devil's weapons from us. The written word alone avails.

The Lord Jesus in the wilderness used it thus. The words he quoted from the book of Deuteronomy were all selected from the story of his people in the wilderness. He himself in the desert puts himself back with his people in that same position and meets the enemy with words of victory where they had met defeat.

Study the context of the words he quoted and compare them with the temptations of the Lord Jesus if you wish to get out of the wilderness into the promised land of Canaan's rest. God sanctifies through his promises. Through them he draws, encourages and sets his seal.

God lovingly calls, he lovingly chastens and convicts and now he lovingly offers to us his exceeding great and precious promises. To the call and to the conviction he adds the encouragement of a promised blessing. Lay hold, lay hold with all your might that the thing is promised.

Number four, by the blood of Jesus. Jesus that he might sanctify the people with his own blood. Hebrews 13 verse 12.

We now come to the heart of the whole matter, the meritorious cause of the great transaction. In Romans 5 verse 9 we read that we are justified by his blood. But here we are told of deeper things, sanctified by blood.

So many miss the blessing because they never see the cross of Christ as the means of their sanctification. That he died for their sins they know well enough but that he died to put away sin is hidden from their eyes. They have seen him as the Lamb of God who died in their stead on behalf of their transgressions but they have never beheld him lifted up as a serpent, made a curse on their behalf to take away their sin and cleanse all the old serpent virus from their nature.

St. Paul speaks of the cross, St. John tells of the blood, St. Peter seeks to show us of the stripes and sufferings of the Saviour to make us free and clean and whole. The mystery we may never understand that faith believes and appropriates all that his death has secured for our sanctification. Never have I felt my need of the blood of Jesus, said that great man John Smith of the early Methodists, more than I do today and never have I made such use of it.

What use are we really making of it at this very hour? Ten years ago perhaps we were saved through the merits of the blood of Jesus but today at this moment what is it to us in its practical working? In St. John chapter 6 we read of four blessings secured for those that eat his flesh and drink his blood, the gift of eternal life, here is feeding on him as the Passover lamb, an indwelling Christ, here is a partaking of his sacrifice as the peace offering, the power to serve, here is feeding upon the sin offering on others behalf and a future and everlasting salvation, eating of Christ as the trespass offering. Oh let us learn this lesson well, the Holy Ghost can never enter to abide with us except on one ground, the sacrifice of the slain lamb. No tears or prayers, no repentance or vows of consecration, no works of obedience will ever avail to ensure his indwelling.

He can only enter our hearts as an abiding guest in response to faith in the blood of Jesus. We are sanctified and made clean by his blood not by our tears. We are crucified with him through his cross and not by our own suffering or mortification.

Our poor diseased nature is made whole by his stripes not by any efforts or vows of consecration on our own. Let us look again upon his cross where he the spotless one was made sin. If all the imaginations of all men were rolled into one could they ever fathom the mystery or understand what it meant for the spotless son of God who had never experienced a sinful thought, an angry temper, a jealous feeling, a lustful desire, who no more knew from experience what sinfulness was than you or I know what the angelic state may be.

Could they ever imagine I say what it meant for him to have the unfathomable ocean of the world's sin turgid with all the unthinkable unprintable filthiness of hell surge over his spotless soul. No we cannot understand but we can believe that he is able to sanctify us with his blood. When this lays hold of us and we do believe and venture on the atoning sanctifying blood of Jesus what confidence is ours.

Faith rests no more upon feeling, no more upon silogism, no more upon mere truths or even the promises of God alone. It finds a rock beneath its feet the great historic fact of his sacrificial atoning death and can cry the cleansing stream I see I see I plunge and oh it cleanseth me oh praise the Lord it cleanseth me it cleanseth me yes cleanseth me. When you know and feel that you are made holy by his blood there will be an end of pride.

The theory that the Holy Spirit enters our hearts and keeps us from yielding to sin is wholly inadequate. Before this takes place there has to be a definite instantaneous and radical adjustment of our soul a purifying of the secret springs of our being from that tendency of evil inherited from Adam. Then can he enter to keep us from falling moment by moment and from yielding to temptations of the tempter now increased and intensified a hundredfold though thank God they are from without instead of from within.

This sin-destroying sanctifying experience is affected by his death the blood shedding of the Son of God upon the cross and apprehended by the living faith of a humbled soul and its blessed effects maintained moment by moment as we walk in the light. Number five sanctification by the Spirit. 1 Peter 1 2 by the Spirit all that we have said is true God the Father by his calling chastening promising love does the work.

The Lord Jesus by his death and blood shedding procured provided and forever secured the boon divine and yet without the agency of the Holy Ghost may we say it in all reverence all this would

have been in vain. It is expedient said the Saviour that I go away for if I go not away the comforter will not come unto you but if I depart I will send him unto you. John 16 verse 7 blessed indeed for us that it should be so if the Saviour had remained on earth how few of us would have seen him every train and ship and caravan would have been crowded with pilgrims the world over to see Jesus how few comparatively of the poor would ever have got a glimpse of his face but the comforter has come that all may see the Lord it is he that takes the things of Christ and shows them to us.

Do you say you cannot understand you cannot grasp the meaning how can the blood of Jesus shed two thousand years ago cleanse my heart how can my selfish nature be crucified with a Christ nailed to the cross so long ago how can my diseased memory mind and will be made whole by the lacerated body of Christ at Calvary to your how dear soul the Lord replies I will send the comforter and he shall teach you all these things it is he who applies the blood listen to these exquisite lines of Charles Wesley written over 150 years ago come thou everlasting spirit bring to every thankful mind all the Saviour's dying merit all his sufferings for mankind true recorder of his passion now the living faith in part now reveal his great salvation unto every faithful heart come thou witness of his dying come remembrance our divine let us feel thy power applying Christ to every soul and mine what exquisite designation of his office true recorder of his passion witness of his dying remembrance our divine yes we are all dependent on him what need there is to wait upon him alone in our rooms beware of the greatest of all dangers seeking to enter through the operation of our own understandings or the struggles of our own wills or by both some try one way some the other and some both they are all equally futile only the Holy Ghost can show us the way and only the Holy Ghost can bring us in if the Lord Jesus had to offer himself through the eternal spirit how much more are we dependent upon his constraining compelling enlightening enabling power as we wait then upon God pleading the promises knowing our own impotence idolatry and infidelity let us remember he is there to help us to believe and bring every thought unto captivity to the obedience of Christ number six sanctification by the word mark 1 42 as soon as he had spoken immediately the leprosy departed from him and john 15 verse 3 now you are clean through the word which i have spoken our meditation is drawing to a close but there is one very important consideration in the subject before us we have seen that God gives us and uses his promises to affect the sanctification of our hearts we can only really believe God the finished work of Christ and the operating presence of the Holy Ghost through the written word there is always the intermediary of blessing by hiding a definite promise of God in our hearts appropriating it using it against the attack of the devil and through it believing God by this means and this alone we are able to reach our desired end the sanctification of our soul and yet after we have done this stepped out on the promise burned our bridges behind us God has still a further work to do through his word by it he seals his own work the scriptures provide us with repeated instances of his working thus take the cleansing of Isaiah the prophet there we see that after the live coal had touched his lips and he had felt the burning cleansing flame the seraphim spake again lo this has touched thy lips and thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin purged in the story of the afflicted woman described in mark 5 we read that she felt in her body that she was healed of all that plague the lord stayed her steps and lest in the coming days by trusting to mere experience she should cast away her confidence he gives her a word of sealing to her soul thy faith he says has made the whole not by prayer decision consecration earnestness or zeal but by simply believing thou art restored oh how she must have hid that word in her heart just one other example the story from which i have

selected my text told us in mark 1 40 and 41 the poor leper had sought the lord in despair and yet in faith self-desperate he had believed the savior was moved with compassion stretched forth his hand and touched him neither the touch nor the compassion affected the cure but as soon as he had spoken the work was done so believe the promises just as you are you need no special one for yourself they are all yea and amen in christ jesus come boldly wait humbly believe simply take freely but when you have and are resting in the faithfulness of him who has called chastened promised and led you by the holy ghost to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness then wait still upon him in quietness and expectancy till he seals what he has done with a word from his lips but wait believing that he has done it just five little sentences that have been made a blessing to many and may help you also what i give god takes what he takes he cleanses what he cleanses he fills what he fills he seals and what he seals he uses may your faith not your understanding lead you up these easy steps slowly surely may you go test each one as you take it they will bear all your weight lean hard walk firmly say excelsior as you rise keep praising only believe so shall the work be done the god of peace himself he calls you today he gives you promises today his loving hand has been chastening you giving you a bad time today well look up and thank him when you do you will find the sun coming out and with the tears and the sunshine you will get the rainbow the way god blesses you is in just the simple steps i have tried to indicate may every one of us enter into the land of promise the land that flows with milk and honey the land that is the gift of god the land of plenty and a land that you enter into without effort of your own it is all yours that wonderful land of promise in christ jesus

Part 4

Chapter 4. Sanctification. It's time. Today, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Hebrews 3, verses 7 and 8. We have come to the last and perhaps the most important of our studies. We have seen the necessity, the nature and the way of God's sanctifying grace and we seek to know when it can be ours. Wilt thou be made clean? When shall it once be? When can we enter the land of rest from inbred sin and receive the abiding comforter within our hearts? To this question there is but one answer.

Now. For whether we enter it next week, next month or next year, by the time that we get there it will be now. Then why not today, at this hour? We make this reply simply because the sole condition on our part is faith.

If then it is by faith and not by consecration, and faith much less by consecration alone, it must be now. In this connection I want to quote from John Wesley, the great servant of God and also from John Fletcher, the vicar of Maidley, whom John Wesley believed to be the saintliest man since the days of the Apostle John. Look for it, said he, that is Mr. Wesley, 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 works. If by works you want something to be done first, before you will believe, you think, I must first obey, or to do thus and thus, then you are seeking it by works unto this day. If you seek it by faith you will accept it as you are.

If as you are, accept it now. Accept it by faith, accept it as you are, accept it now. The words of John Fletcher of Maidley are even more emphatic.

Fight the good fight of faith, break through all temptations, dejections, wandering worldly thoughts, all unprofitable companions and the backwardness of an unbelieving heart and a carnal mind. Struggle till you touch Jesus and feel healing, comforting virtue proceeding from him. And when you know clearly the way to him, repeat and touch till you find he lives in you by the powerful operation of his Holy Spirit.

You must also remember that it is your privilege to go to him by such a faith now and every succeeding moment, and that you are to bring him nothing but a tired, distracted, tossed, hardened heart just such as one as you have now. Here lies the grand mistake of many miserable but precious souls. They are afraid to believe lest it should be presumption, because they have not yet comfort, peace, joy, love, etc., not considering that this is to expect the fruit before the tree is planted.

Beware then of expecting any grace previous to believing. When, however, we say that faith is the sole condition of receiving this glorious experience, we need to add that we do not mean by faith a cheap and easy believism. Faith is a mighty living force wrought in us by the Holy Ghost, whereby

we are enabled to lay hold upon Christ as our sanctification and full redemption.

It will help us, therefore, in this, our closing Bible reading, to see the conditions under which a living effective faith can operate, the groundwork of our believing into full salvation. So one, an earnest desire. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, Matthew 5, verse 6, and what things soever you desire when you pray, believe that you receive, Mark 11, verse 24.

Surely I am not mistaken if I say that in the hearts of many a great desire has been awakened for an uttermost and complete salvation. We have been getting a vision of fullness of life and liberty and joy in Christ that has caused us to seek with all our hearts. The Lord Jesus, in speaking of the gift of the Holy Ghost, in Luke 11, verse 13, precludes that promise with a parable of a little hungry boy, not asking for aeroplanes or bicycles or cricket bats, but for bread and butter, the very necessities of life.

Our children coming home late for dinner, very hungry and tired, don't fold their arms and say, if it's your will, Mother, to give us our dinner, we should like to have it, but if not, then it's all right. No, oh dear, no, they ask and make a noise till they get it. Are we like that spiritually? Are we hungry and thirsty? Is our soul fainting within us for a life of love and joy and peace and power? Do we ask and seek and desire and long for a full and joyous, exuberant salvation in Christ, free from a censorious, critical, hard and unforgiving spirit, delivered from discontent and a murmuring, complaining disposition, freedom from all sin and not merely our uncomfortable and unpleasant iniquities, from all self-pleasing and waywardness of soul? Then faith can begin to operate here and now, if such is our deep desire.

2. Conviction Present your bodies, which is your reasonable service. Romans 12, verse 1 and 2 Here, I believe, is the second condition of an effective faith, the recognition of the reasonableness of God's claims. I am not speaking here of consecration itself, but of a recognition of its reasonableness.

Do we believe that what God asks of us, a wholehearted devotion to himself, a true and loyal love to him, is right, reasonable and the best thing for us? To do his will is the safest, sweetest and surest thing on earth. Have you ever noticed those wonderful words of the Lord Jesus? Whosoever shall do the will of my Father, the same is my brother and sister and mother. What, the mother of the Son of God? Well, he has said it.

We should never have dared to utter such things, but they came from his lips. I leave these wonderful utterances for your own further meditation. I have not time to follow them out.

He that does God's will, the same is Christ's brother. She that lives in the perfect will of our Father in heaven is the very mother or sister of the Saviour of the world. So to do the will of God must indeed be good and perfect and well-pleasing.

Let this be our objective. Don't, however, get confused over it. Consecration of our all to God is not one of the conditions for receiving the Holy Ghost.

If it were, it would be by works, for consecration is another name for good works. Consecration is rather the result of the blessing than a cause or condition of receiving it. Because we cannot yield all in happy, loving obedience to our Father in heaven.

We need a blessing. It is the entire sanctification of the heart that makes it possible for us to render a perfect concentration of all our being's ransomed powers to the Lord. But we must have this as an objective.

We must see that if the blessing we get does not lead to this, we are following mere will-o'-the-wisps. God must convict us of the sin and unreasonableness of living for ourselves in any part of our life. Hunger and thirst, the deep desires of the soul, are followed or accompanied by a painful conviction that there is much within us that does not bless His Holy Name, and give a glansome yes to all His reasonable demands for a holy, consecrated life.

Let us look the matter in the face, shut our ears to all the whisperings of unbelief, and dare to believe in the reasonableness of God's holy claims. 3. Enlightenment Psalm 43, verse 3 says, Send out thy light and thy truth, let them lead me. I am perfectly well aware that self-desperate souls do sometimes enter into the most blessed experience of God's grace without much definite enlightenment of their spiritual understanding, because God is so gracious to our poor, ignorant and stupid minds, and yet it makes the way much easier if we are enlightened.

Faith can operate with greater certainty. So many earnest ones are floundering about because they are not only ignorant of the devil's devices and the way of their own deceived heart and nature, but also of God's way of deliverance. There are souls in different stages of development, needing different presentations of truth, but I have a peculiar sympathy with those earnest and holy consecrated souls who, though devoted to God, are yet experiencing constant defeat and discouragement in their hearts and lives.

It is to them I wish to speak just at this point. Everywhere I go I meet with such. I believe a little enlightenment will greatly forward the effective operation of faith.

Conversion and the new birth deal largely with the conscience and the will of the unregenerate. The ego, or I, is crucified with Christ. The will is changed and made one with His.

Sanctification, on the other hand, deals with that which is not I, but sin that dwelleth in me. The poison still lurking in our desires, affections, memory, mind and imagination, frequently bringing our regenerate and transfigured will again into bondage. Not I, but sin.

No more I than the watch I carry so close to my body is part of that body. No more I than the bacilli of the poor leper's blood is part of him. No, just as they were an abnormal intrusion into his system, so it is with the sin that dwelleth within.

The I won't, the I can't, the I don't believe, that awful trinity of evil, are like leprous bacilli poisoning our whole nature. If I am a truly surrendered soul and a real follower of Christ, the trouble is not in my will. Hence, consecration and decisions of my will to correct and purify are of no avail.

We need a power from without, something outside ourselves. That power is Jesus' blood. And faith, and faith alone, is the faculty that can apprehend, appropriate and apply it to our struggling, defeated souls.

Ah yes, if the trouble is in ourselves, how can we be free? But thank God, his word reveals to us that it is not I, but something detached from myself that has fastened itself upon me. It was grafted in with the hands other than mine. The devil put it there.

And the Son of God came down to destroy the works of the devil. Oh, let us cease from all struggling and attempting by our willpower. Let us only believe that the blood of Jesus Christ does cleanse us from all sin.

If only we will walk in the light, humbling ourselves under the mighty hand of God. Does someone object and say, if it is not I, where does the responsibility come in? God does not hold us responsible for having our evil nature. We did not choose it to be there.

But he does hold us responsible for retaining it, when he has provided a perfect way for his death and burial. Only pride, sloth and unbelief hinder that death sentence being carried out. May God make us earnest to seek and believe for a perfect deliverance of this sin from within.

For this and this only is the condemnation that we believe not. I am equally aware that what I have been saying is to some almost unintelligible. The truth is hidden from their eyes.

May I say they are not ready for it. Before God can deal with the evil within, or they by faith claim and trust him for the purifying operation of the blood of Jesus, there has to be a practical repentance. There is, in short, real trouble in an unsundered will.

God cannot deal with the inward evil till we have dealt with the outward in true repentance. It may seem hardly necessary to dwell upon this aspect of things, and yet I am persuaded that not a few who are seeking an inward cleansing and a baptism of the Holy Ghost are unable to exercise the faith that receives because of unrepented sin. Yes, a plain, simple, practical repentance is what God requires.

That letter has to be written, that cheque dispatched. The one who has wronged you forgiven. The hidden sin confessed to the party concerned.

This is how the Spirit is convicting and directing some. You, maybe, are trying to understand the theory of sanctification and the doctrine of a higher life. The Lord just now wants you to attend to the practical things of the lower one.

You will never get enlightened as to inbred sin and its destruction through the cross of Christ until by grace you have obeyed his voice. I say by his grace because if you will only seek him, he has gifts for the rebellious also. He will give you grace and power to repent and be reconciled to your brother if only you will seek his face.

But after we have obeyed, let us beware lest we think we have got the blessing of which we speak. There is always a sense of rest following upon repentance and obedience. But it is a great danger to suppose that this is all.

Nay, rather let us go on to perfection which the God of all grace has promised to work in us after that we have suffered a little while from the testing and trial of our faith. As I look back on my own life, how vividly do those times of repentance stand out in my mind. I should not be writing this if God had not gifts for the rebellious also and given me grace to straighten out and make amends for evil done in my life.

Now number five, humility. Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God. 1 Peter 5 verse 6 If I had to state in the simplest form the conditions for receiving heart cleansing from the hand of the

risen, exalted Jesus Christ, I should say one, humble yourself under the mighty hand of God and two, only believe.

Humility and faith. This I know contradicts a good deal of modern teaching that makes consecration or surrender the main element in securing the promised gift of sanctification. God's wonderful promises were not given to earnest, devoted, consecrated souls but to poor, miserable backsliders.

If you knew the gift of God, said the Lord Jesus to the Samaritan woman, not if you knew how wicked you are or what a hell is waiting for you or how mighty a sin is, no, nor if you had consecrated yourself to me I would have given the gift, no, no such thing. He never said to the poor leper seeking cleansing, if you give yourself to me, body, soul and spirit, I will cleanse you of your leprosy. He never said to his timid, frightened disciples behind closed doors after his resurrection, if you will make a full and complete surrender, I will give you the Holy Ghost.

No indeed, for it is all of grace, all a free gift, all of him. The consecration follows out of a grateful heart for what he has done and given. As I have moved about the country, I have met many, very many, who have long been struggling to inherit the blessing through absolute surrender and wholehearted consecration.

In utter despair and weariness of spirit, they have come to me confessing that they were nothing bettered but rather growing worse. What a joy it has been to proclaim the way of faith and show them that, instead of consecration, the Lord is asking of them a humble, lowly confession of sin and bidding them to tell him of the I won't, the I can't, and the I don't believe that they find in their heart. How often I have seen when with tears and lowliness of spirit they have gone down to the bottom and brought to Christ none of their goodness or earnest desire, but only the sin, the fear, the unbelief and the unwillingness, rebellion and every evil thing within, confessed it all to him and then triumphantly stood upon the promise that if they have done their part, he has done his.

How often I say, have I seen fullness of assurance and joy well up in the soul and overflowing sweetness and light to all around. But yet in other cases I have noticed that it has been far harder to come thus to the Lord in humble and broken confession than in consecration. They love to give and offer and present their all to God, but alas, the proud unbroken spirit will never let them seek for the blessing as a poor leper, a blind beggar or a helpless paralytic and so they have gone empty away.

Yes, the repentance of believers, as John Wesley called it long ago, is sine qua non for the effective operation of a living faith. Let no inability to surrender all, let no failure to consecrate ever keep you from Christ. Come as you are, tell him all about it, the idolatry, the impotence, the unbelief, and then only believe.

So shall this triple stronghold of the Jebusite, that Jebus, J-E-B-U-S, which just exactly beats us saints, J-E-B-U-S, just exactly beats us saints, be utterly captured and destroyed by him whose name is called Jesus, the one, the only one, who just exactly saves us sinners, J-E-S-U-S, Jesus, just exactly saves us sinners, yes, and sanctifies as well. I have a number of letters in my hand received from saints who have thus entered into rest. I will read but one.

I am so happy I hardly know how to thank you. For a week after I asked, I went on believing God had cleansed my heart, though I did not feel any different. But on Monday, when I was on my way home, I suddenly knew I was cleansed and I began running along the road and singing aloud, and I have been singing ever since.

It is so wonderful, I cannot praise God enough, yet so simple that I wonder I have never asked him to do it before. I am amazed at the difference it makes to me. Two things have happened to me in the last two days, which a little time ago would have made me angry.

Now I don't want to be angry. I don't even have to fight the angry feelings. And the worldliness has gone too.

There is a dance going on in the room below me, and two weeks ago my feet would have been itching to dance. Now, instead of envying the people, I begin to feel sorry for them. But best of all is the wonderful joy and peace within.

I am as sure the Lord is with me as if I felt my hand in his. These last days have been heaven on earth to me. I can never praise him enough.

I feel like the old man who was so amazed at the love of Jesus in dying for him that he said, When I get to heaven, I will never let him hear the end of it. It is wonderful to find the Bible a new book, and prayer a delight it never was before, and to be able to tell people of all the wonderful things God has done for me. Not only that the Lord Jesus is wonderful, but the wonderful things he has done.

There is salvation as well as a saviour, and listen to this sentence, and be alternately shouting and singing praises, or silent with amazement at his greatness of his love and fullness of his salvation. I would rather get letters like that than cheques of a thousand pounds. 6. Faith Purifying their hearts by faith.

Acts 15 verse 9 That we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Galatians 3.14 Purifying their hearts by faith. When shall we be made clean? When will it be? As soon soever as with deep desire, convicted of our need, and impotence, enlightened as to the cause and seat of the evil, truly repentant, and with genuine abasement, we can only believe.

Then and there the blessing is ours. The Lord Jesus never said only believe to a Pharisee in his self-righteousness and formalism, never to a Sadducee in his rationalism and so-called wisdom. He said it and says it still to the needy, penitent seeker at his feet.

Fletcher of Maidley said, When I stand in unbelief, I am like a drop of muddy water dried up in the sun of temptation. But when I do believe and close in with Christ, I am like that same drop of water on the boundless ocean of life, light, liberty, power, and love. Yes, you say, I know whom to believe, but what and how is my difficulty? Well, first the how of faith.

We believe God through his promise and his word. Don't let us try any other way. Rest in the written word.

Take hold of some definite, explicit statement of the Lord. They are bound throughout the precious volume. Thus saith the Lord.

The Lord hath spoken. Don't grieve the spirit by putting the statement down to Paul or Peter or John. The apostles were not the authors of these exceeding great and precious promises.

They are the very words of God himself. That is how to believe him. But you inquire, on what exactly is my faith to rest in the matter of so great an experience as entire sanctification? The hand of faith must have some explicit thing to grasp and lay hold upon.

Yes, thank God, it must and has. The blood of the Lamb, the cross of Calvary, the wounds and stripes of Jesus. They made their robes white in the blood of the Lamb.

Then why not you? The old man was crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed. Then why not yours? Healed by his stripes. Then what hinders you? The only reason that the Holy Ghost can bring an indwelling Christ into your heart is the blood of the Lamb.

Look upon it thus as you seek his incoming. The blood of Jesus is the price paid for the boon divine. That price is ample, yea, more than enough.

Then why not in faith bring it with all boldness and claim the purchase of his blood? No tears, no consecrations, no vows, no fastings, no earnest endeavour, no struggles or good intentions will bring the Comforter to your soul. He responds to one thing and one thing only, a bold, unswerving, unflinching faith in the sacrifice of Calvary. Dare to believe that all you have confessed before is nailed to the cross.

Or, if you prefer it, that the blood does just now make your heart clean. Or, if the Spirit has led you thus, that this very moment the efficacy of his stripes and open wounds does make you sound as well as safe. And like the woman of old, you too shall be made perfectly whole of the plague of your heart.

Faith must rest somewhere. When the assaults of the devil and the storms of unbelief sweep over your soul, there is but one foundation that will stand the strain. Faith even in God's truth.

Mere generalities about his love and promise will avail us not. Seeking to believe in his abiding presence, because we are consecrated or engaged in earnest endeavour, mere feeling or philosophising, none of these things will enable us to withstand the onslaughts of the devil. I am crucified with Christ, therefore he lives in me.

My union with him rests upon his death. He has cleansed me by his blood, therefore he abides within. Here is faith's solid, mighty resting place.

Will you not look up in the face of God and say, Here I am, Lord, I have confessed all my impotence, my idolatry, my infidelity to thee. I have told thee I cannot follow thee. I see all sorts of difficulties cropping up.

I see scorn and criticism awaiting me. I am so utterly impotent. I cannot do anything, and I confess it all to thee.

But thou hast promised to give the Holy Ghost to those that ask, to rebels also, if only they hunger and thirst after thee. Lord, my only plea is the blood of Jesus. He may keep you waiting a little time, but he will come.

He has never yet denied the humble soul, never. If he has not come to you yet, there is only one of two reasons. Either you have not humbled yourself under the mighty hand of God, or you are not believing.

The trying of your faith worketh patience, it says in James 1 verse 3. We cannot repeat it too often. The blessing of which we are speaking of is by faith, and faith alone, that all the glory may be God's. And yet, before closing, I want to speak of one more thing, the testing of faith.

May I ask you, when you get alone, to read over very carefully 1 Peter 5 verses 6 to 11. Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, casting all your anxiety upon him, the devil whom resist steadfast in the faith. These are three simple conditions on our part.

And then we read, The God of all grace, after that you have suffered a little while, make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you. Take note of the words printed in capitals. If the little seed freshly sown could speak, it would say beneath the cold dark clods of earth, suffering a little while.

It is not otherwise with the seed of faith. That's Luke 17 verse 5. When you have definitely trusted and seem in utter darkness, say, a little while, and he shall come. Begin to praise by faith.

Stop praying, for there is a time when prayer is positive sin, because it is nothing more than the expression of unbelief. Praise should and must take place. Praise to God and testimony to men of what you believe that God has done in your soul.

When the testing of your faith has done its work, the Holy Ghost will make real all that you have trusted him for. The Lord says to us once more, Only believe. If you will obey him and do what he bids, you will soon say to all around, Faith triumphant, faith triumphant, knowing not defeat or fear.

And in your own soul you will know that the very God of peace himself does sanctify you wholly, spirit, soul and body, and preserve you blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus. And you will praise him throughout eternity that he who has called you has been faithful and has done it forever, even for you, sanctification for your soul. Amen and Amen.

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