

Sanctification--No. 3

by Charles Finney

Entire sanctification is attainable in this life through the sanctification of the Spirit and the belief of the truth, and is an object of reasonable pursuit.

Scripture: Deuteronomy 10:12, Jeremiah 31:31-34, Ezekiel 36:25-27, 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24, Hebrews 11:39-40

Topics: "Sanctification", "Biblical Interpretation"

Description

Charles Finney emphasizes the attainability of entire sanctification in this life, arguing that perfect obedience to God's law is possible through natural ability and the provisions of grace. He outlines the importance of interpreting biblical promises correctly, asserting that God's character and intentions should guide our understanding of His promises regarding sanctification. Finney insists that entire sanctification is not only a command but also a promise that can be claimed by believers, conditioned upon their faith and obedience. He cites various scriptures to support his position, ultimately affirming that the church must pursue this state of holiness as a reasonable objective.

Transcript

TEXT.--1 Thess. 5:23-24. 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. Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it.

We have now arrived at a very important point in the discussion of this subject, and I beg your patient attention. Having shown,

- I. What I mean by the term sanctification;
2. What entire sanctification is;
3. The difference between entire and permanent sanctification;
4. What is not implied, and
5. What is implied in entire sanctification;

I am next, according to my plan to show,

- VI. That entire sanctification is attainable in this life.

1. It is self-evident that entire obedience to God's law is possible on the ground of natural ability. To deny this is to deny that a man is able to do as well as he can. The very language of the law is such as to level its claims to the capacity of the subject, however great or small that capacity may be. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." Here then it is plain, that all the law demands, is the exercise of whatever strength we have, in the service of God. Now, as entire sanctification consists in perfect obedience to the law of God, and as the law requires nothing more than the right use of whatever strength we have, it is of course forever settled that a state of entire and permanent sanctification is attainable in this life on the ground of natural ability.

2. The provisions of grace are such as to render its actual attainment in this life, the object of reasonable pursuit. It is admitted that the entire and permanent sanctification of the church is to be accomplished. It is also admitted that this work is to be accomplished "through the sanctification of the Spirit and the belief of the truth." It is also universally agreed that this work must be begun here; and also that it must be completed before the soul can enter heaven. This then is the inquiry, Is this state attainable as a matter of fact before death; and if so when, in this life, may we expect to attain it? It is easy to see that this question can be settled only by a reference to the word of God. And here it is of fundamental importance that we understand the rules by which scripture declarations and promises are to be interpreted. I have already given several rules in the light of which we have endeavored to interpret the meaning of the law. I will now state several plain common sense rules by which the promises are to be interpreted. The question in regard to the rules of biblical interpretation is fundamental to all religious inquiry. Until the church are agreed to interpret the scriptures in accordance with certain fixed and undeniable principles, they can never be agreed in regard to what the Bible teaches. I have often been amazed at the total disregard of all sober rules of biblical interpretation. On the one hand the threatenings, and on the other the promises, are either thrown away or made to mean something entirely different from that which was intended by the Spirit of God. I have much to say on this subject, and design, the Lord willing, to make the rules of biblical interpretation the subject of distinct inquiry at another time. At present, I will only mention a few plain, common sense, and self-evident rules for the interpretation of the promises. In the light of these, we may be able to settle the inquiry before us, viz: whether the provisions of grace are such as to render entire and permanent sanctification, in this life, an object of reasonable pursuit.

(1.) The language of a promise is to be interpreted by a reference to the known character of him who promises, where this character is revealed and made known in other ways than by the promise itself, e.g.

(a) If the promisor is known to be of a very bountiful disposition, or the opposite of this, these considerations should be taken into the account in interpreting the language of his promise. If he is of a very bountiful disposition, he may be expected to mean all that he seems to mean in the language of his promise, and a very liberal construction should be put upon his language. But if his character is known to be the opposite of bountifulness, and that whatever he promised would be given with great reluctance, his language should be construed strictly.

(b) His character for hyperbole and extravagance in the use of language should be taken into the account in interpreting the promises. If it be well understood that the promisor is in the habit of using extravagant language--to say much more than he means, this circumstance should in all justice be taken into the account in the interpretation of the language of his promises. But on the other hand, if he be known to be an individual of great candor, and to use language with great circumspection and propriety, we may freely understand him to mean what he says. His promise may be in figurative language and not to be understood literally, but in this case even, he must be understood to mean what the figure naturally and

fully implies.

(c) The fact should be taken into the account, whether the promise was made deliberately or in circumstances of great but temporary excitement. If the promise was made deliberately, it should be interpreted to mean what it says. But if it were made under great but temporary excitement, much allowance is to be made for the state of mind, which led to the use of such strong language.

(2.) The relation of the parties to each other should be duly considered in the interpretation of the language of a promise; e.g. the promise of a father to a son admits of a more liberal and full construction than if the promise were made to a stranger, as the father may be supposed to indulge a more liberal and bountiful disposition towards a son than towards a person in whom he has no particular interest.

(3.) The design of the promisor in relation to the necessities of the promisee or person to whom the promise is made, should be taken into the account. If it be manifest that the design of the promisor was to meet the necessities of the promisee, then his promise must be so understood as to meet these necessities.

(4.) If it be manifest that the design of the promisor was to meet the necessities of the promisee, then the extent of these necessities should be taken into the account in the interpretation of the promise.

(5.) The interest of the promisor in the accomplishment of his design, or in fully meeting and relieving the necessities of the promisee, should be taken into the account. If there is the most satisfactory proof aside from that which is contained in the promise itself, that the promisor feels the highest interest in the promisee, and in fully meeting and relieving his necessities, then his promise must be understood accordingly.

(6.) If it is known that the promisor has exercised the greatest self-denial and made the greatest sacrifice for the promisee, in order to render it proper or possible for him to make and fulfill his promises, in relation to the relieving his necessities, the state of mind implied in this conduct, should be fully recognized in interpreting the language of the promise. It would be utterly unreasonable and absurd in such a case to restrict and pare down the language of his promise so as to make it fall entirely short of what might reasonably be expected of the promisor, from those developments of his character, feelings, and designs, which were made by the great self-denial he has exercised and the sacrifices he has made.

(7.) The bearing of the promise upon the interests of the promisor should also be taken into the account. It is a general and correct rule of interpretation, that when the thing promised has an injurious bearing upon the interest of the promisor and is something which he cannot well afford to do, and might therefore be supposed to promise with reluctance, the language in such a case is to be strictly construed. No more is to be understood by it than the strictest construction will demand.

(8.) But if on the other hand the thing promised will not impoverish or in any way be inimical to the interests of the promisor, no such construction is to be resorted to.

(9.) Where the thing promised is that which the promisor has the greatest delight in doing or bestowing; and where he accounts it "more blessed to give than to receive;" and where it is well known by other revelations of his character, and by his own express and often repeated declarations, that he has the highest satisfaction and finds his own happiness in bestowing favors upon the promisee, in this case the most liberal construction should be put upon the promise, and he is to be understood to mean all that he

says.

(10.) The resources and ability of the promisor to meet the necessities of the promisee, without injury to himself, are to be considered. If a physician should promise to restore a patient to perfect health, it might be unfair to understand him as meaning all that he says. If he so far restored the patient as that he recovered in a great measure from his disease, it might be reasonable to suppose that this was all he really intended, as the known inability of a physician to restore an individual to perfect health might reasonably modify our understanding of the language of his promise. But when there can be no doubt as to the ability, resources, and willingness of the physician to restore his patient to perfect health, then we are, in all reason and justice, required to believe he means all that he says. If God should promise to restore a man to perfect health who was diseased, there can be no doubt that his promise should be understood to mean what its language imports.

(11.) When commands and promises are given by one person to another, in the same language, in both cases it is to be understood alike, unless there is some manifest reason to the contrary.

(12.) If neither the language, connection, nor circumstances, demand a diverse interpretation, we are bound to understand the same language alike in both cases.

(13.) I have said, we are to interpret the language of law so as to consist with natural justice. I now say, that we are to interpret the language of the promises so as to consist with the known greatness, resources, goodness, bountifulness, relations, design, happiness, and glory of the promisor.

(14.) If his bountifulness is equal to his justice, his promises of grace must be understood to mean as much as the requirements of his justice.

(15.) If he delights in giving as much as in receiving, his promises must mean as much as the language of his requirements.

(16.) If he is as merciful as he is just, his promises of mercy must be as liberally construed as the requirements of his justice.

(17.) If "he delighteth in mercy," if Himself says "judgment is his strange work," and mercy is that in which he has peculiar satisfaction, his promises of grace and mercy are to be construed even more liberally than the command and threatenings of his justice. The language in this case is to be understood as meaning quite as much as the same language would in any supposable circumstances.

(18.) Another rule of interpreting and applying the promises which has been extensively overlooked is this, the promises are all "yes and amen in Christ Jesus." They are all founded upon and expressive of great and immutable principles of God's government. God is no respecter of persons. He knows nothing of favoritism. But when He makes a promise, He reveals a principle of universal application to all persons in like circumstances. Therefore the promises are not restricted in their application to the individual or individuals to whom they were first given, but may be claimed by all persons in similar circumstances. And what God is at one time, He always is. What He has promised at one time or to one person, he promises at all times to all persons under similar circumstances. That this is a correct view of the subject is manifest from the manner in which the New Testament writers understood and applied the promises of the Old Testament. Let any person with a reference Bible read the New Testament with a design to understand how its writers applied the promises of the Old Testament, and he will see this principle brought out in all

its fulness. The promises made to Adam, Noah, Abraham, the Patriarchs, and to the inspired men of every age, together with the promises made to the church, and indeed all the promises of spiritual blessings,--it is true of them all, that what God has said and promised once, He always says and promises, to all persons and at all times, and in all places, where the circumstances are similar.

Having stated these rules, in the light of which we are to interpret the language of the promises, I will say a few words in regard to when a promise becomes due, and on what conditions we may realize its fulfillment. I have said some of the same things in the last volume of the Evangelist. But I wish to repeat them in this connection, and add something more.

(1.) All the promises of sanctification in the Bible, from their very nature necessarily imply the exercise of our own agency in receiving the thing promised. As sanctification consists in the right exercise of our own agency, or in obedience to the law of God, a promise of sanctification must necessarily be conditioned upon the exercise of faith in the promise. And its fulfillment implies the exercise of our own powers in receiving it.

(2.) It consequently follows, that a promise of sanctification, to be of any avail to us, must be due at some certain time, expressed or implied in the promise: for if the fulfillment of the promise implies the exercise of our own agency, the promise is a mere nullity to us, unless we are able to understand when it becomes due, or at what time we are to expect and plead its fulfillment.

(3.) A promise in the present tense is on demand. In other words, it is always due, and its fulfillment may be plead and claimed by the promisee at any time.

(4.) A promise due at a future specified time, is after that time on demand, and may at any time thereafter be plead as a promise in the present tense.

(5.) A great many of the Old Testament promises became due at the advent of Christ. Since that time they are to be considered and used as promises in the present tense. The Old Testament saints could not plead their fulfillment to them; because they were either expressly or impliedly informed, that they were not to be fulfilled until the coming of Christ. All that class of promises, therefore, that became due "in the last days," "at the end of the world," i.e. the Jewish dispensation, are to be regarded as now due or as promises in the present tense.

(6.) Notwithstanding these promises are now due, yet they are expressly or impliedly conditioned upon the exercise of faith, and the right use of the appropriate means by us, to receive their fulfillment.

(7.) When a promise is due, we may expect the fulfillment of it at once or gradually, according to the nature of the blessing. The promise that the world shall be converted in the latter day, does not imply that we are to expect the world to be converted at any one moment of time; but that the Lord will commence it at once, and hasten it in its time, according to the faith and efforts of the church. On the other hand, when the blessing promised may in its nature be fulfilled at once, and when the nature of the case makes it necessary that it should be, then its fulfillment may be expected whenever we exercise faith.

(8.) There is a plain distinction between promises of grace and of glory. Promises of glory are of course not to be fulfilled until we arrive at heaven. Promises of grace, unless there be some express or implied reason to the contrary, are to be understood as applicable to this life.

(9.) A promise also may be unconditional in one sense, and conditional in another; e.g. promises made to the church as a body may be absolute and their fulfillment be secure and certain, sooner or later, while their fulfillment to any generation of the church or to any particular individuals of the church, may be and must be conditioned upon their faith and the appropriate use of means. Thus the promise of God that the church should possess the land of Canaan was absolute and unconditional in such a sense as that the church, at some period, would and certainly must take possession of that land. But the promise was conditional in the sense that the entering into possession, by any generation, depended entirely upon their own faith and the appropriate use of means. So the promise of the world's conversion, and the sanctification of the church under the reign of Christ, is unconditional in the sense, that it is certain that those events will at some time occur, but when they will occur--what generation of individuals shall receive this blessing, is necessarily conditioned upon their faith. This principle is plainly recognized by Paul in Heb. 4:6, 11: "Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief;" "Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."

I come now to consider the question directly, and wholly as a Bible question, whether entire and permanent sanctification is in such a sense attainable in this life as to make its attainment an object of rational pursuit.

Let me first, however, recall your attention to what this blessing is. Simple obedience to the law of God is what I understand to be present, and its continuance to be permanent sanctification. The law is and forever must be the only standard. Whatever departs from this law on either side, must be false. Whatever requires more or less than the law of God, I reject as having nothing to do with the question.

It will not be my design to examine a great number of scripture promises, but rather to show that those which I do examine, fully sustain the position I have taken. One is sufficient, if it be full and its application just, to settle this question forever. I might occupy many lectures in the examination of the promises, for they are exceedingly numerous, and full, and in point. But as I have already given several lectures on the promises, my design is now to examine only a few of them, more critically than I did before. This will enable you to apply the same principles to the examination of the scripture promises generally.

1. I begin by referring you to the law of God, as given in Deut. 10:12: "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul." Upon this passage I remark:

(1.) It professedly sums up the whole duty of man to God--to fear and love Him with all the heart, and all the soul.

(2.) Although this is said of Israel, yet it is equally true of all men. It is equally binding upon all, and is all that God requires of any man in regard to Himself.

(3.) Obedience to this requirement is entire sanctification.

See Deut. 30:6: "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." Here we have a promise couched in the same language as the command just quoted. Upon this passage I remark:

(1.) It promises just what the law requires. It promises all that the first and great commandment any where requires.

(2.) Obedience to the first commandment always implies obedience to the second. It is plainly impossible that we should "love God, whom we have not seen," and "not love our neighbor whom we have seen."

(3.) This promise, on its very face, appears to mean just what the law means--to promise just what the law requires.

(4.) If the law requires a state of entire sanctification, or if that which the law requires is a state of entire sanctification, then this is a promise of entire sanctification.

(5.) As the command is universally binding upon all and applicable to all, so this promise is universally applicable to all who will lay hold upon it.

(6.) Faith is an indispensable condition to the fulfillment of this promise. It is entirely impossible that we should love God with all the heart, without confidence in Him. God begets love in man, in no other way, than by so revealing himself as to inspire confidence,--that confidence which works by love. In Rules 10 and 11, for the interpretation of the promises, it is said, that "where a command and a promise are given in the same language, we are bound to interpret the language alike in both cases, unless there be some manifest reason for a different interpretation." Now here, there is no perceivable reason why we should not understand the language of the promise as meaning as much as the language of the command. This promise appears to have been designed to cover the whole ground of the requirement.

(7.) Suppose the language in this promise to be used in a command, or suppose that the form of this promise were changed into that of a command. Suppose God should say as He does elsewhere, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul; who would doubt that God designed to require a state of entire sanctification or consecration to Himself. How then are we to understand it when used in the form of a promise? See Rules 14 and 15: "If his bountifulness equal his justice, his promises of grace must be understood to mean as much as the requirements of his justice." "If He delights in giving as much as in receiving, his promises must mean as much as the language of his requirements."

(8.) This promise is designed to be fulfilled in this life. The language and connection imply this: I "will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul."

(9.) This promise as it respects the church, at some day, must be absolute and certain. So that God will undoubtedly, at some period, beget this state of mind in the church. But to what particular individuals and generation this promise will be fulfilled must depend upon their faith in the promise.

2. See Jer. 31:31-34: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt, (which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord;) but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember

their sin no more." Upon this passage, I remark:

(1.) It was to become due, or the time its fulfillment may be claimed and expected, was at the advent of Christ. This is unequivocally settled in Heb. 8:8-12, where this promise is quoted at length as being applicable to the gospel day.

(2.) This is undeniably a promise of entire sanctification. It is a promise that the "law shall be written in the heart." It means that the very temper and spirit required by the law shall be begotten in the soul. Now if the law requires entire sanctification or perfect holiness, this is certainly a promise of it; for it is a promise of all that the law requires. To say that this is not a promise of entire sanctification, is the same absurdity as to say, that perfect obedience to the law is not entire sanctification; and this last is the same absurdity as to say that something more is our duty than what the law requires; and this again is to say that the law is imperfect and unjust.

(3.) A permanent state of sanctification is plainly implied in this promise.

(a) The reason for setting aside the first covenant was, that it was broken: "Which my covenant they brake." One grand design of the New Covenant is, that it shall not be broken, for then it will be no better than the first.

(b) Permanency is implied in the fact, that it is to be engraven in the heart.

(c) Permanency is plainly implied in the assertion, that God will remember their sin no more. In Jer. 32:39, 40, where the same promise is in substance repeated, you will find it expressly stated that the covenant is to be "everlasting;" and that He will so "put his fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from Him." Here permanency is as expressly promised as it can be.

(d) Suppose the language of this promise to be thrown into the form of a command. Suppose God to say, "Let my law be within your hearts, and let it be in your inward parts, and let my fear be so within your hearts that you shall not depart from me. Let your covenant with me be everlasting." If this language were found in a command, would any man in his senses doubt that it meant perfect and permanent sanctification? If not, by what rule of sober interpretation does he make it mean any thing else when found in a promise? It appears to be the most profane trifling, when such language is found in a promise, to make it mean less than it does when found in a command. See Rule 17.

(4.) This promise as it respects the Church, at some period of its history, is unconditional, and its fulfillment certain. But in respect to any particular individuals or generation of the church, its fulfillment is necessarily conditioned upon their faith.

(5.) The church, as a body, have certainly never received this new covenant. Yet doubtless multitudes in every age of the Christian dispensation, have received it. And God will hasten the time when it shall be so fully accomplished, that there shall be no need for one man to say to his brother, "Know ye the Lord," for all shall know Him from the least to the greatest."

(6.) It should be understood that this promise was made to the Christian church and not all to the Jewish church. The saints, under the old dispensation, had no reason to expect the fulfillment of this and kindred promises to themselves, because their fulfillment was expressly deferred until the commencement of the Christian dispensation.

(7.) It has been said, that nothing more is promised than regeneration. But were not the Old Testament saints regenerated? Yet it is expressly said that they received not the promises. Heb. 11:13, 39, 40: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Here we see that these promises were not received by the Old Testament saints. Yet they were regenerated.

(8.) It has also been said that the promise implied no more than the final perseverance of the saints. But I would inquire, did not the Old Testament saints persevere? And yet we have just seen, that the Old Testament saints did not receive these promises in their fulfillment.

3. I will next examine the promise in Ezek. 36:25-27: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." Upon this I remark:

(1.) It was written within nineteen years after that which we have just examined in Jer. It plainly refers to the same time and is a promise of the same blessing.

(2.) It seems to be admitted, nor can it be denied, that this is a promise of entire sanctification. The language is very definite and full. "Then," referring to some future time when it should become due, "will I sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean." Mark the first promise is, "ye shall be clean." If to be "clean" does not mean entire sanctification, what does it mean?

The second promise is, "from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you." If to be cleansed "from all filthiness and all idols," be not a state of entire sanctification, what is?

The third promise is, "a new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and will give you a heart of flesh." If to have a "clean heart," a "new heart," a "heart of flesh," in opposition to a "heart of stone,"--be not entire sanctification, what is?

The fourth promise is, "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments to do them."

(3.) Let us turn the language of these promises into that of command; and understand God as saying, "Make you a clean heart, a new heart, and a new spirit; put away all your iniquities, all your filthiness, and all your idols; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them." Now what man in the sober exercise of his senses, would doubt whether God meant to require a state of entire sanctification in such promises as these? The rules of legal interpretation, would demand that we should so understand Him. Rule 5: "The interest of the promisor in the accomplishment of His design or in fully meeting and relieving the necessities of the promisee, should also be taken into the account. If there is the most satisfactory proof, aside from that which is contained in the promise itself, that the promisor feels the highest interest in the promisee, and in fully meeting and relieving his necessities, then his promise must be understood accordingly."

If this is so, what is the fair and proper construction of this language when found in a promise. I do not hesitate to say that to me it is amazing that any doubt should be left on the mind of any man whether, in these promises, God means as much as in his commands couched in the same language; e.g. Ezek. 18:30, 31: "Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit; for why will you die, O house of Israel?" Now that the language in the promise under consideration, should mean as much as the language of this command, is demanded by every sober rule of interpretation. And who ever dreamed, that when He required His people to put away all their iniquities, He only meant that they should put away a part of their iniquities?

(4.) This promise respects the church, and it cannot be pretended that it has ever been fulfilled according to its proper import, in any past age of the church.

(5.) As it regards the church, at a future period of its history, this promise is absolute, in the sense that it certainly will be fulfilled.

(6.) It was manifestly designed to apply to Christians under the new dispensation, rather than to the Jews under the old dispensation. The sprinkling of clean water and the outpouring of the Spirit, seem plainly to indicate that the promise belonged more particularly to the Christian dispensation. It undeniably belongs to the same class of promises with that in Jer. 31:31-34, Joel 2:28, and many others, that manifestly look forward to the gospel day as the time when they shall become due. As these promises have never been fulfilled, in their extent and meaning, their complete fulfillment remains to be realized by the church as a body. And those individuals and that generation will take possession of the blessing, who understand and believe and appropriate them to their own case.

4. I will next examine the promise in the text, 1 Thess. 5:23, 24: "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. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." Upon this I remark:

(1.) That according to Prof. Robinson's Lexicon, the language used here is the strongest form of expressing perfect or entire sanctification.

(2.) It is admitted, that this is a prayer for and a promise of entire sanctification.

(3.) The very language shows, that both the prayer and the promise refer to this life, as it is a prayer for the sanctification of the body as well as the soul; also that they might be preserved, not after, but unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(4.) This is a prayer of inspiration, to which is annexed an express promise that God will do it.

(5.) It is, from the necessity of the case, conditioned upon our faith, as sanctification without faith is naturally impossible.

(6.) Now if this promise, with those that have already been examined, do not honestly, and fully, settle the question of the attainability of entire sanctification in this life, it is difficult to understand how any thing can be settled by appeal to scripture.

There are great multitudes of promises to the same import, to which I might refer you, and which if examined in the light of the foregoing rules of interpretation, would be seen to heap up demonstration

upon demonstration, that this is a doctrine of the Bible. Only examine them in the light of these plain, self evident principles, and it seems to me, that they cannot fail to produce conviction.

I will not longer occupy your time in the examination of the promises, but in my next will mention several other considerations in support of this doctrine.

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