

The King's Highway.

And an Highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness:

The wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. Isaiah 35:8.

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TRIALS OF THE ENTIRELY SANCTIFIED.

Are trials and tribulations peculiar to the Christian life?

They are. Christianity is an antagonism to this wicked world. It always has been, and always will be. The more deep and thorough our piety, the more we are unlike the world, and the stronger its antagonism to us. Human depravity induces a dislike in wicked men to those who are holy, as their presence and sight is a rebuke to them. Bad men hate good men, though it is done against the gainsaying evidence of their own conscience. It is not true to fact or history that wicked men must love good men. The servant is not above his Lord; and in this world we shall have tribulation. This is not our paradise. We may have the smile of God, the peace of God, the grace of God, and the love and joy of God in this world, but not freedom from opposition, persecution, and tribulation.

There are a few things the Christian should not have long out of mind.

1. That all God's saints, in all ages, under all dispensations, and in all countries, have been the subjects of severe trials and tribulations. In this respect there have been comparatively no exceptions. Any man that has no religious trials, has no religion to be tried. If a man is of the world, he is no saint, and of course the world will love its own.

2. Tribulation, to a faithful soul, is no occasion for doubt or unbelief. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing had happened unto you."

3. We should never permit Satan to induce fretfulness in us, when passing through tribulation. Fretting is sinful, and should never be indulged, and Christ can save us from the very inclination to fret. Blessed be His name!

4. Our trials are our most valuable blessings. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more and exceeding and eternal weight of glory." In view of this, let us praise the Lord, and, like the apostle, "glory in tribulation." Of nothing else under the heavens is it said, that it shall work out for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Hallelujah! Let Satan do his worst.

5. Our trials are the greatest of our earthly safeguards. We are more in danger from flattery, adulation, and popularity, than from trials, and tribulation. The love of esteem and popularity is one of the strongest passions of the human heart, and is working havoc in the Church of Christ.

6. The more severe or fiery our trials, the more rapidly they carry forward the ends of moral discipline. The hotter the furnace, the sooner its work, and the more effectually it is done. A certain amount of searching, crucifying trial every child of God must pass through. It makes little difference who heats the furnace, or how hot it is, if "the form of the fourth" is in the midst. If we are hated, and despised, and rejected of men, for other reasons than any wrongs of our own, let us not be disheartened, as though some strange thing had happened unto us, "but glorify God on this behalf."

7. Our Lord Jesus Christ passed through the white-hot furnace of

tribulation, and presents an example for our imitation. He suffered all manner of tribulation, and was tempted in all points like as we are. "He was despised and rejected of men,"—was spit upon, and endured all manner of bitter, vile, and cruel treatment. He bore it all meekly—leaving us an example of meekness, endurance, and patience. O blessed Christ! let it be our glory and our joy to follow the beautiful example thou hast set!

What trials are peculiar to those entirely sanctified?

1. They are frequently tempted to withhold a confession of the blessing. Messrs Bramwell, Stoner, Carvosso, Mrs. Hester Ann Rogers, Rev. Asa Kent, and a multitude of others, have been severely tempted in this regard.

2. Their faith will be subject to severe trials. Faith is the direct point of union between the sanctified soul and Christ. This vital point will be early and artfully assailed. They are tempted to doubt whether they are sanctified wholly. Mr. Wesley says: "We find there is very frequently a kind of wilderness state, not only after justification, but even after deliverance from sin. The most frequent cause of this second darkness or distress, I believe, is evil reasoning. If this be the cause, is there any way to regain that deliverance but by re-suming your confidence?"

3. Their charity will be tried. Charity is one of the chief fruits of perfect love, which fill the Christian heart in entire sanctification, yet this very charity is subject to severe trials. Indifference, ignorance, and opposition to holiness in professors of religion will try their Christian charity. Bishop Peck says, "There is opposition to holiness of which its professors must become the direct objects."

4. Their patience will be tried. In this world of this Christian grace must be severely tried. The rashness of friends and the violence of foes will attack it. Enfeebled and irritable nerves will try it. Unreasonable provocations from friends or enemies will try it. A thousand nameless ills will put it to a thorough test. Oh, how needful the inspired direction "In your patience possess ye your souls!"

5. Their Christian firmness will be tried. The world is no friend to holiness; and multitudes, even in the church, through ignorance and prejudice, or the want of salvation, are unfriendly to holiness as a blessing distinct from regeneration, and will oppose any who preach or profess it. The wholly sanctified will have their firmness, tried by neglect, indifference, opposition, and persecution. How many have entered the path of holiness, and, for the want of firmness, have finally abandoned it! There is a powerful opposition to holiness in the world, and to some extent in the church; and this opposition the friends of holiness must encounter. Just in proportion as Christians dissent from the fashionable sins of the world, and lifeless formalism in the church, they will provoke opposition. "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried."

6. Their fidelity to God and man will be tried. They are in danger of compromising with the world, and of losing their aversion to sin. Christians are to bear a decided and unflinching testimony against all sin, wherever it may be found, either in or out of the church.

Bishop Peck says: "To give even implied approval or consent to the indifference or opposition of the church or individual, to the experience and spread of holiness, would bring evil upon your own conscience which you would be unable to bear."—Central Idea, p 308.

Every trial of the Christian tests his character, and helps him to ascertain how much moral integrity, or real solid worth he has.

What are the best helps to growth in grace?

"The best helps to growth in grace are the ill usage, the affronts, and the crosses which befall us."—Wesley.

A greater than Wesley says: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Therefore, "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf."

Man may trouble and distress me,
'Twill but drive me to thy breast;
Life with trials hard may press me,
Heaven will bring me sweeter rest.
Oh! 'tis not in grief to harm me
While Thy love is left to me;
Oh! 'twere not in joy to charm me,
Were that joy unmixed with Thee.
—H. F. Lyte.

THE WILL OF GOD.

BY ALFRED COOKMAN.

"This is the will of God, even your sanctification."—(1 Thess. iv:3.)

The doctrine which specially interests us here has, by some, been entitled the pearl of doctrines, the great central idea of our holy Christianity, the fount of present personal experience. It is doubtless for this reason that it has been the object of fierce assault, both in the Church and in the world, more or less, ever since Wesley's days.

This great doctrine has been strangely perverted by some, and by others greatly abused. The doctrine of justification by faith has scarcely been less opposed in the Roman Church than has this doctrine in the Protestant Church. Some of this opposition may have been occasioned by an incorrect and unjust apprehension of this great doctrine itself, but the great cause of it is, I apprehend, the natural hostility of the human heart to it until the soul is drawn toward it by the Holy Spirit.

I do not propose at this time, nor intend at any time, to preach this doctrine dogmatically. I wish to place myself, with these friends who even now are giving me their attention, in an attitude of waiting for divine enlightenment. I do not wish to, nor will I, place myself in a controversial attitude, nor allow myself to be placed there, for this controversial spirit has been a great hindrance in the past.

STATE THE DOCTRINE.

Let us now proceed to state the doctrine as we understand it.

If we should define entire sanctification as an entire consecration of one's self to God, with the present acceptance of Jesus as our perfect Savior, some of you might think this to be rather its condition than the thing itself; and yet the condition is so related to the experience, that it is with difficulty that we distinguish between the two.

CONSECRATION.

Let our first inquiry then be with

regard to entire consecration. This, of course, must include self, time, property, and, in short, all possible things of us, or connected with us. But, just at this point, some one may inquire, "What is the difference between the consecration necessary at conversion, and that which we are called upon to make in seeking this richer grace?"

In our view, the difference will appear in four particulars:

In the first place, when we come to God for pardon, we are dead—"dead in trespasses and sins;" but when we approach God for this richer grace, we have powers that have already been regenerated, and hence are living. Hence, said the apostle, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice."

The second difference is this: When we come to God for pardon, we seem to generalize and mass our offer of ourselves, saying very sincerely and reverently—

"Here, Lord, I give myself away,
'Tis all that I can do."

But when we would entirely sanctify ourselves to God, our consecration under the new and greater light becomes more careful, and intelligent, and specific, and if it is entire, it is not only myself, but these hands, these feet, these senses, my judgment, my will, my memory, affections, desires, imagination, principles, practices, hours, energies, reputation, the world, friends, worldly substance, home, my all. At last we seem to say: "More shouldst Thou have if I had more."

I give Thee all I know, and all I do not know. Some have been careful to write out their consecration. This was the case with President Edwards.

The third difference is, that when we thus come, yielding ourselves up intelligently and specifically, there is likely to arise in the mind some peculiarly trying test. It may be a very little thing, but it is none the less formidable or trying. Taking an apple in Paradise would seem to have been a very little thing; but what stupendous results followed. The test to you, my brother, may be some little thing connected with your habits, associations, or adornments, but it is important. I know not what it may be with others, but it will be explicit. It may involve some doubtful employment or indulgence, which was not discovered before, or it would have prevented your justification. It may be your hesitation or delay, and because of this your experience has been feeble and sickly. Before you can have this testimony there must be the most thorough submission, and this covers all things.

The fourth difference is, that the object of the two dedications is different. When you came to God at first, you were filled with grief and condemnation, and you came to sue for pardon. Pressed down by the gates of perdition, you exclaimed, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" You wanted then to be raised to the condition of childhood. But in seeking purity you are already a child, and you want now an increased ability to do and suffer all the will of your heavenly Father.

So much for the first part of the formulary of entire consecration. It will be entire if we make it to cover the test which God brings before the mind.

ACCEPTANCE OF JESUS.

But we represent entire sanctification, also, as the acceptance this moment of Jesus, as a full and perfect Savior. This, of course, suggests an exercise of faith, "not of works, lest any man should boast." If sanctification were consecration, then, it being our work, we could boast; but it being through the blood of Jesus Christ our Savior, it is not our work, but God's. Consecration brings us upon believing ground. When we take away all the obstructions, when we yield ourselves without reservation or hesitation in the entirety of our being and have the witness of the Spirit to that consecration, then we come where God can and will fulfill our desire. Mark this point. When we hunger and thirst after righteousness, feeling that we cannot live without it, and dedicate ourselves to do, or dare, or die for Christ, and at that point rest our faith on the Lord Jesus Christ, then the gift comes. We must rest our faith upon Jesus. There is none other upon whom to rest it. I know not how long you may rest there before the blessing consciously comes; it may be a moment or more, but the blessed Holy Ghost will come to you so that you can see, and feel, and know, and enjoy its verity and preciousness as never before, and you will be constrained to say—

"Tis done! Thou dost this moment
save
With full salvation bless."

Observe, that this cleansing is not for the future, not for a day or an hour, but for the present moment, and always for the present moment. One moment is given and the blood cleanseth; another, and the blood cleanseth; and thus we are constantly dependent upon this blood, and are constantly cleansed. As we live by believing, so the Christian lives by believing. Our breath is the bond that unites soul and body, and faith is the bond that unites our soul to Christ.

EXPERIENCE.

What, now, is the experience consequent upon this blessing.

I answer. It is twofold.

In the first place, it is purity. The Psalmist cried, "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." O let us think of this for a moment! Whiter than snow, not white as snow. O what purity this involves! Jesus speaks to the heart in answer to its prayer, and says, "I will: be thou clean."

The second consequence of this grace is a more regular and continuous growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Before this we were now rejoicing, and now lamenting; now upon the mountain, and anon in the deep valley; and after weeks and months, sitting down to review our experience we have been unable to say definitely that we have made any considerable progress. But when we receive Jesus as our perfect Saviour, then we grow steadily and constantly. We may not always have sunshine and flowers upon our way, but this grace will enable us to go on in darkness as well as in the light, over thorns which are intended to help us along; we say Amen to them. We have found the rock, and we stand upon it.

You may ask us whether we teach or believe that the sanctified never sin. I answer, that the sanctified do not wilfully sin, but they may through the wiles of the adversary be led
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