

SANCTIFICATION: WHAT IT IS, AND WHY NEEDED.

By A. M. Hills, D. D.

We have seen what justification is. It is God's work done for us, making us at peace with His law and government.

Regeneration is God's work done in us, rectifying the attitude of the will toward Him and holy things.

But there is a great portion of our being lying back of the will—our deranged sensibilities, our appetites, and desires, and impulses, and passions. These have been corrupted by the fall and are the nesting place of depravity, the home of antipathies and disordered emotions and abnormal propensities to evil. What shall correct them? This internal chaos of conflicting desires and emotions and passions, this wilderness of rioting and clamorous lusts—what shall subdue it and bring it into subjection to the law of Christ or destroy the abnormalities altogether?

Justification has nothing to do with it. Pardon can not reach it. A man can not be pardoned for having inherited an evil disposition or an ugly temper any more than he can be pardoned for being born with a head on top of his spinal column. Pardon can only reach what we are responsible for by our own free choice.

Again regeneration does not remove it. Even Dr. Charles Hodge with his strong Calvinism says that in regeneration God only implants a new principle of righteousness that is at war with the principle of depravity. After that there is a civil war on in the soul. "The flesh lusteth against the spirit; and the spirit lusteth against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye may not do the things that ye would." A man trying to break away from evil is compelled to say, "When I would do good, evil is present with me: O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!"

You see justification removes from us the liability to be punished for past sin.

Regeneration removes from us the love of present sin. But what will take away from us the inclination to sin in the future?

Justification secures the pardon of actual sin. Regeneration plants within us the principle of right doing. But what will take out of us the principle of wrongdoing—the "inbred sin" that doth so easily beset us? That is the black drop that lies there at the fountain of our being, corrupting everything.

Justification remits the penalty of broken law. Regeneration plants the principle of obedience to law. But what will take out of us the spirit of disobedience to law, that miserable, wicked "carnal mind that is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be?"

Any thoughtful, discerning student of Scripture and of his own soul life will see that something is needed besides justification and regeneration. These are both excellent works of grace of their kind; yes, perfect of their kind; but any one can see that they do not do for and in our moral natures all that needs to be accomplished.

Has God a further blessing for us that will cleanse our sensibilities of all their

abnormal desires and appetites and passions and that will take the abnormal strength out of the necessary desires and appetites and passions? Can any grace of God remove the inborn inclination to evil, the principle of wrongdoing, "the easily besetting sin," the "spirit of disobedience," the "carnal mind that is enmity against God"?

We unhesitatingly answer "Yes." That is precisely what sanctification is, and what it does for our moral and spiritual being. It supplements what is lacking in the work of justification and regeneration. The latter two are simultaneous, always taking place at the same time. Sanctification is subsequent to them and so is called the Second Work of Grace.

As Bishop Tigert says, "We have never been specially wedded to the phrase, 'the second blessing;' but we have always contended that better than any other single phrase it sums up the essentials of the Wesleyan and Scripture doctrine, namely, (1) the incompleteness of regeneration; (2) the necessity of a second work, both gradual and instantaneous; and (3) its completeness and attainableness in this life."

"But," somebody asks, "why did not God do a complete work of salvation all at once?" One might as well ask why an architect first lays the foundation for a house and then builds the house upon it. Why did he not do both at once? It seems clear from the Scriptures that here must be, in the necessity of the case, two works of grace. Sinners are never asked in the Bible to be sanctified, nor commanded to be. They are only asked to repent of sin and to accept Christ by faith as a Saviour. It is as sinners that we accept Christ for our justification.

But the Scriptures make it plain that after we have been pardoned by Christ and regenerated it is then "the will of God" that we should be sanctified (1 Thess. 4:3). It is both the privilege and the duty of believers to receive the Holy Spirit by a conscious, definite act of appropriating faith just as they received Jesus Christ. There is the same reason for accepting the Spirit for His special ministry as for accepting the Lord Jesus for His ministry.

While it is as sinners that we accept Christ for our justification it is as sons that we accept the Spirit for our sanctification. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts" (Gal. 4:6). The gift of the Holy Spirit is grounded on the fact that we are sons by faith in Christ.

Let the believer, therefore, understand that God commands him to receive the Holy Spirit by faith for sanctification just as once he received Christ by faith for justification. This makes it plain why there are two works of grace and why both are never received at the same instant. There need, however, be no long space of time intervening between the two experiences. If a person has been properly instructed he might receive both blessings the same day. Indeed we have known two cases of a person receiving both blessings at the same altar service. This is clearly possible since no great lapse of time is essential, either to do or suffer more. We do not get this blessing by our doings or sufferings or

strivings or by growth, but by consecration and faith.

Let it be clearly understood that there are two sides to this blessing, the negative and the positive. The negative is first and is the supremely important feature of the experience. This negative side is the cleansing of our natures from inward sin. "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1). God has set His heart on making us holy. He gave His Son that we might be cleansed from all corruption and be like Himself. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). It is His will that we should be sanctified. He calls us to be sanctified (1 Thess. 4:3, 7). He chose us to sanctification" (2 Thess. 2:13). He commands us to be holy (1 Pet. 1:15, 16). He provided the baptism with the Holy Ghost for our cleansing (Acts 15:8, 9). It is this cleansing that makes us pure in heart and fit for heaven. We lay emphasis on this negative side because God does. The present holiness movement is a product of this emphasis. It is only by emphasizing this negative side that people in general get the blessing. Those who want something else beside cleansing and deliverance from the carnal mind may get that something else and it may prove a hindrance and a snare. By all means seek to be holy like God.

The positive side of this blessing is exhilaration of spirit and power for service. This is likely to come with the cleansing, and is promised (Acts 1:8). But notice that this is not the chief and fundamental idea. There is a class of teachers, headed by a prominent leader in this country, who talk only of the Holy Spirit baptism for power and service. But trainloads of people want exhilaration of spirit and power and prominence for every one that wants to be forever rid of sin and have a clean heart and be holy like God. The Bible idea keeps people from being deceived. Heart cleansing is the universal need. The Holy Spirit awakes this longing in our hearts and stands ready to gratify it.—Herald of Holiness.

SUCCESS.

I hold that man alone succeeds
Whose life is crowned by noble deeds,
Who cares not for the world's applause,
But scorns vain custom's outgrown laws;
Who feels not dwarfed by nature's show,
But deep within himself doth know
That conscious man is greater far
Than ocean, land, or distant star;
Who does not count his wealth by gold,
His worth by office he may hold,
But feels himself as man alone,
As good as king upon a throne;
Who, battling 'gainst each seeming wrong,
Can meet disaster with a song,
Feel sure of victory in defeat,
And rise refreshed the foe to meet;
Who only lives the world to bless,
Can never fail; he is success.

—Southern Workman.

"Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire: and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."