

HOW TO CONSERVE THE EXPERIENCE.

That an experience usually called sanctification has become widespread in the churches, none can deny. Even its enemies admit that it has become epidemic; whether considered as a good, or an evil, it is extensive.

If it is an unmixed blessing, as its friends and advocates believe, the question arises, How shall it be conserved? All experiences fluctuate and all decay and die, unless fostered and fed. Entire sanctification is not an exception, it must have nutriment, or like any other living thing, it will decline and perish.

What shall the nourishment be? The answer in every mouth is, Get up great camp meetings and conventions and preach on the subject exclusively; and press the people to consecrate themselves and believe at once. And having done so to the best of your ability, claim and confess.

"Stand on the promises" and "reckon yourself dead indeed unto sin and alive unto God through Jesus Christ."

These methods have been productive of great good. They have been the stepping stone, doubtless, to true faith which has brought the seeker into the glorious light and liberty of the truly sanctified. And no harm can result from their continued use where there is deep conviction of remaining sin, and a quenchless longing for holiness. But where they resolve themselves into stale routine and formality, error and spurious work are sure to follow. The great deficiency at this time in the so-called holiness meetings is the utter absence of what Charles Wesley calls

"A sensibility of sin,
A pain to feel it near."

There is too much apparent self-satisfaction and jovial rejoicing.

There is exultation in holiness, but not so much as to exclude all penitential feeling. Our family name is sinner, and the hole of the pit from which we were dug must not be forgotten. A test of a holy state is abhorrence of sin, and growth in grace after sanctification means growth in repugnance to sin—a stronger perception of its turpitude. The moment we begin to toy and tamper with sin, and express apologetic words and sentiments toward popular vices, we are fallen from the grace of entire sanctification. No sanctified person falls externally until he has first fallen internally. Sin is first excused, then played with, then committed. Pope says:

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As to be hated, but to be seen;
But seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

We do not sufficiently rebuke imprudence, nor require ourselves and others to abstain from the appearance of evil. On this account many stumble and some fall, who by timely caution might be saved.

Some seem to think that there is no room for mourning or repentance in an entirely sanctified state. This is a mistake. The best life is marred by faults and delinquencies. And our past sins must ever be a cause of grief and sorrow. Why? Not because they bring present guilt, but

because they inflicted wrongs in the past, which are still active in producing injuries which perhaps can never be counteracted by us.

Not that the memory of forgiven sin will produce misery, but humiliation and sorrow which are so healed by grace as to be consistent with perfect bliss in the holy abhorrence of sin.

"Remember, Lord, my sins no more,
That them I may no more forget."

We must remind ourselves also that more watchfulness and prayer and the acquisition of more divine knowledge which is put within our reach might have saved us from some of those faults and shortcomings which we regard as unavoidable. The first step therefore towards the conservation of the revival of holiness at the present time is deep humiliation, penitential confession, and sorrow, and prayer, in view of all our mistakes, blunders and failures. Nor will such self-abasement abate our happiness one whit—but rather enhance.

The apostle speaks of a godly sorrow and a repentance that needeth not to be repented of. Surely there can be no element of torment in such sorrow, but in place thereof it is solemn joy. Some of my hallowed moments have been when I prostrated myself in the dust before God, and deplored afresh all my past sins and failures and unprofitableness. Such contrite recollection is healthy, and serves as a present and future guard. To lie for a season in sackcloth and ashes and contemplate the vileness of sin, and how much agony it has cost my blessed Saviour, and how near my own sins have again and again brought me to the very brink of ruin, and from which we have been snatched, only by the amazing mercy of God in Christ.

Let us not forget "there is a time to weep." The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit—"a broken and contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." (Psa. 51:17).

Let us hold a convention in the dust to conserve the revival of holiness.—Dr. A. Lowery, in the Evangelical Messenger.

THE POWER OF LOVE.

Love lifts up the lowest to the highest places the lowly born by the side of the bright particular star. It binds us to earth; and when our loved one has been taken from us, it lifts us to heaven. Who shall tell its glories and its victories? Without it, a life passed is like a year gone by without any summer—cold, chilly, unfruitful, without pleasure or charm. With it, the worst state is endurable. The palace is but a stable or an outhouse without it—a very prison; the very prison when the loved one shares it is a palace. Such is particular love. When that has grown into general love for our fellows, and love or adoration for our Maker, we shall not be far off paradise, for indeed heaven's harmony is universal love.—H. Friswell.

"Do good with what thou hast; or it will do thee no good."—William Penn.

The strength of a nation is in proportion to the number of its virtuous homes, founded upon supreme affections.—Jos. Cook.

FIRST THINGS FIRST.

Beast, bird, reptile, insect, all "lower" animal life, puts first things first, fulfils its destiny. "Man's chief end is to glorify God." He alone, of all that lives, does not always fulfil his "chief end" by putting "first things first."

The first thing for all is to be "reconciled to God," to yield heart and life to Him, to take Jesus Christ as a friend to love, a Saviour to trust and a Sovereign to obey. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness."

The first thing for parents is to train their children to realize God's presence as their Heavenly Father and Friend. It is duty to feed and clothe their bodies, and to train and educate their minds, but first and most important is to shape their immortal spirits for an immortal destiny.

The first thing for the young, starting in life, is to take Christ as Pattern, Leader, Controller, and Guide in that life. The choice of a path through life, work, trade, profession, is important; but most important of all is it to have Christ in that path. With Him all will be well, without Him ill, in any path.

The first thing in business is to be right. Business must "pay" to carry on. But the first thing is not "Will it pay?" but "Is it right?" If not, it can never "pay." "What shall it profit a man if he should gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

The first thing in school is the moral and spiritual impress made upon the child; the sense of honor, truth, right. No matter how he may advance the pupils, if the teacher's moral impress upon them be not for the better he comes short.

The first thing in public life is the welfare of the country. The legislator who makes that welfare secondary, in any way, to his personal interests betrays his trust.

The first thing in the Church is not to solve social, political or economic problems, but to save men and women and children from sin; and saved men and women will make a better social order, a better world. First things first!—E. S. in Presbyterian Record.

"Everyone is to bear his own cross, not his neighbor's; and his cross of today, not of yesterday or of tomorrow."

"I can't" does not sound well from a Christian's lips, except where sin is concerned. Then it is a mark of strength.

Tell me how a professor of religion spends his Sabbaths, and I will tell you in what state his soul is.—John Angel James.

"The man who talks much about himself is advertising a poor article and one in which the public is seldom interested."

"One beauty of the Christian life is that we can begin it anew each day. One day's mistakes need not spoil a whole life."

"If you want a man to do another good act, commend him for the one he has already done. Commend him in any case."

Do noble things, not dream them all day long; and so make life, death, and that vast forever, one grand sweet song.—Kingsley.