

The King's Highway.

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness.

And an Highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness—Isa. 35-8.

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CONSECRATION IN CONCRETE Or Holiness Applied.

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Usually in turning to the 12th Chapter of Romans as a great classic on consecration, we stop with the 2nd verse, and often indeed with simply the first verse. And this is no wonder for there is such a wealth upon the subject in just that verse. But still we ought not to stop till we have at last reached the end of the 2nd verse, for this second verse not only gives us a compact definition of what a wholly consecrated life is, in that it is nonconformity with this world, and transformation or a complete change of our form of life under the light and guidance of our regenerated minds; but it further states that the end or object in view in our thus presenting our lives in the body a sacrifice unto God, is that we may prove the perfect will of God. So that, just as repentance had been the condition met in order to find the mercy of God in our Justification unto life, so consecration is the condition required in order to our proving God's perfect will in our entire sanctification.

There are two statements in the 1st Epistle to the Thessalonians which each express the perfect will of God for us and which taken together form a sort of spiritual equation. These are:

- I. "Rejoice evermore; Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks." "For this is the will of God."
- II. "This is the will of God." "Your sanctification."

Now then, the proving of this as "good and acceptable" to our souls, the realizing of it in one's experience and the demonstrating of it in one's life, hinges upon the presentation of one's body as a living sacrifice unto God. By being made conformable to his death, we may know in our hearts and show in our lives this perfect will of God fulfilled in us.

But while this sets it forth in a bird's eye view of the entire matter, the chapter proceeds to set it forth more specifically. And several salient points or features of the perfect will of God are brought out particularly for our notice. Let us consider four of them:

God's perfect will,

- (1) As to our talents or gifts
- (2) As to our spirit in His service
- (3) As to opposition and enemies
- (4) As to humility.

The first of them we will find set forth in verses four to eight. And it is but another putting of the truth contained in our Lord's parable of the Talents. The departing Lord has given to every man according to his several ability. His riches and theirs will be made up of the legitimate increase of this investment He has made in His people. Every man is expected to keep his Lord's money in circulation. He is to gain more. Woe be to the preacher who has wrapped his talent in a napkin and buried it in a mine, or in real estate, or somewhere else in the earth. Woe be to the teacher who has wrapped hers up in fashionable attire and lost it in "society." Woe be to the steward whom the Lord has trusted with money and business, who has squandered it in self-indulgence or hidden it in treasures which moths corrupt and thieves steal, instead of furnishing the sinews of war for the Kingdom. In a word it is the will of God that we be spiritual reproducers. Not simply humanitarians, nor ecclesiastics, nor educators; but whether these or no, to be good stewards of the spiritual treasures of the Gospel and ministers of life and liberty to souls.

II.

The eleventh verse is much misunderstood and misapplied because of faulty punctuation. A friend who reads his Bible every day in seven different translations told me that ours is the only version in which this text is so punctuated as to suggest any reference to one's own business. All others show plainly that it speaks of the Lord's business, and the affairs of Christ's kingdom. Thus, "**Be not slothful, but diligent and fervent in spirit in the business of serving the Lord.**" Here, as everywhere, it is God's perfect will that we "seek first the kingdom of God," and instead of making the Lord's business an incident in our lives, to make our own busi-

ness the incident; for He hath said: "All these things shall be added unto you." Even in the prayer our Lord gave us as a model, these two things, "Thy kingdom come," and "Thy will be done," are set before even our petition for daily bread. It is evident that those to whom business is first and family prayer and soul-saving second, have not proven in their own hearts and are not proving to the world "what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

But it is particularly to the fervor in spirit we call attention here. God's will has to do not only with the mould or attitude of our mind but with the spirit of it. Fervent means hot, boiling, and Christ dislikes apathy. He cannot bear a church that is "neither cold nor hot." Fire is a frequent figure of things of the Spirit in the soul Paul says: "It is a good thing to be always zealously affected in a good cause." The conventionality that repressed feeling, in the pulpit, and in the pew is traitorous. Lest the flame in his soul and ministry would slumber, Timothy is exhorted by the apostle Paul to "stir up the gift of God that is within him." And Peter addressing holy souls, says: "Seeing ye have purified your souls (now) see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." Likewise, James declares that it is the "fervent prayer that availeth." Now God has fuel plenty to keep the fire within us burning brightly if we will look after the draughts. Oral prayer, confession with our mouths, and musings as well, upon the eternal truths of God and the terrible plight of men, will keep us fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

III.

It cannot but be that offences will come. Opposition will appear. Enemies will arise. But the first feature or element of God's perfect will for us in this respect is found expressed in the eighteenth verse. "If it be possible as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." These two qualifiers mercifully remind us that it does not

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