

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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Mrs. Wm. Churchill, June 23
P. E. D.

THE NEW TESTAMENT STANDARD OF PIETY.

Rev. William McDonald:

"Hast thou not died to purge our sin,
And risen thy death for us to plead?
To write thy law of love within
Our hearts, and make us free indeed?
That we our Eden might regain,
Thou diedst, and could not die in vain.

"The promise stands, forever sure;
And we shall in thine image shine,
Partakers of a nature pure,
Holy, angelic, divine;
In spirit joined to thee, the Son,
As thou art with the Father, one."

The question is often asked, "To what extent may we be saved from sin in the present life? or, What is the New Testament Standard of Piety?"

Jesus answers this question: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." This standard may need some explanation.

What is it to be perfect as God is? We are not expected to be omnipotent, or omnipresent, or omniscient, or eternal; and still, we are to be like God. We are to be made partakers of "his holiness"—the "divine nature." We are to be pure as he is. This was our original state. We were created in the "image and likeness" of God, which consisted of "righteousness and true holiness." The design of the atonement is to restore man to that original state.

Dr. Adam Clarke says: "This perfection is the restoration of man to the state of holiness from which he fell, by creating him anew in Christ Jesus, and restoring to him that image and likeness of God which he lost. A higher meaning it cannot have; a lower meaning it must not have."

Mr. Richard Watson says, "Sanctification is that work of God's grace, by which we are renewed after the image of God." The holiness of God is manifested, he says, "in restoring man to a sinless state, and to the obliterated image of God in which he had been created."

But it is claimed that we can never be as perfect in this life as Adam was before his fall. If by this is meant, that we can never possess Adamic purity, we dissent. But if

by it is meant that we can never arrive at Adamic perfection, we agree. We see a vast difference between Adamic purity, and Adamic perfection. Adam possessed a threefold perfection; physical, intellectual and moral. We may never possess Adam's physical perfection. The atonement does not claim to reach that in the present life, but has provided for any loss which may have been sustained, in the resurrection, when our bodies will not only be restored to all their original perfection, but will be "like unto Christ's most glorious body," who is the second Adam. Nor shall we possess his intellectual perfection. His knowledge seems to have been intuitive, as is illustrated in his calling all the beasts by name. But with regard to moral perfection, we are not able to see why our loss in the fall is not provided for in the gospel. Adam was only required to love God perfectly, and this is the standard of gospel requirement. If we do not misunderstand and misinterpret Dr. Clarke and Mr. Watson, this is their ground. Dr. Clarke claims that a lower meaning it must not have, while Mr. Watson claims that the image lost in the fall is restored by Christ.

Mr. Charles Wesley has described this state thus:

"My heart, thou knowest, can never rest
Till thou create my peace;
Till, of my Eden re-possessed,
From every sin I cease."

But we must go to the Bible for correct descriptions of this state. St. Paul informs us that "new man" with which we may be clothed, "is, after God, created in righteousness and true holiness." We are to "walk in the light as he [God] is in the light." But what is the extent of that light? Answer: "In him is no darkness at all." "As he is, so are we in this world," when our love is made perfect. He who has the hope in him of seeing God as he is, "purifieth himself, even as he is pure." This language is not to be misunderstood. When we have availed ourselves of the provisions of the atonement to the extent to which they are offered, and may be received we

are, in our capacity, perfect as God is in his.

"Can we be as perfect as God is?" Why not? Is God unlike himself? If we are made partakers of his holiness—of his nature—his image and likeness—are we not like him—as he is—in purity? When the "body is dead because of sin," and the "Spirit of God dwells in us;" when Christ "dwells in us," and he and the Father make their abode with us;" when we are "filled with the Holy Ghost," and possess "all the fulness of God," are we not like God?—as God?

"Then you make us God." By no means. Is one ray of light the sun? and yet, is it not like the sun? Is one drop of water the ocean? and yet, is it not like the ocean? The quality is the same. The difference is only in quantity. May I not, then, be like God and not God, as a ray of light is like the sun and still not the sun? or, as the drop is like the ocean, and yet not the ocean?

The perfection of God is absolute—to which nothing can be added. The perfection of man is relative—to which endless additions may be made. While nothing can be added to the perfection of God—he being perfect, both in quality and quantity—endless additions may be made to man's perfection, his being only a perfection in quality. Hence, man may be like God, and yet not God.

Suppose we fill a vessel with the water of the sea, and then submerge it in the sea, we have an illustration of Christ's saying, "I in you, and you in me." The vessel is in the sea, and the sea is in the vessel; yet all of the sea is not there. What the vessel does contain, however, is as pure as the great ocean which surrounds it. It would be quite improper for any one to affirm that, because the sea is in the vessel, every man who carries a bottle of sea-water in his pocket carries the whole ocean there. And yet it is true that the only difference is in the quantity. The quality is the same. He has the ocean, but not all of it. So the Christian may carry God in him, but not all of him.