

DIFFICULTIES SOLVED.

By Dougan Clark, M. D.

Is Not Sanctification a Gradual Work, and the Result of Growth in Grace?

As sanctification is a definite act of God's grace, there must be a definite time when that act is performed. There is a time when the penitent believing sinner is justified and regenerated, whether that time is manifest to his consciousness or not, and there is a time when the consecrated believer receives a clean heart, whether he is conscious of it at the moment of its reception or not. In point of fact, so far as the consciousness is concerned, experiences differ. Some begin to seek for a holy heart, and the light gradually dawns upon them, and at length, without any very distinct perception as to time and manner, they find themselves wholly surrendered to the Lord, and perfectly trusting Him and loving Him supremely. Others, after a definite and voluntary surrender, and an equally definite and voluntary act of faith, are flooded to overflowing with light, and love, and peace, and joy, experiencing, like the believers on the day of Pentecost, conscious and instantaneous filling of the Spirit and consequent cleansing of the heart.

Sanctification, being the work of the Holy Spirit, cannot be the result of growth in grace. There may be a growth before it, and a growth in it. The vessel may be filled today, but it may be so enlarged as to hold more tomorrow. Growth in grace does not consist in an increase of our own virtues; but an increasing sense of God's love to us, begetting a corresponding increase in our love to Him. In order to grow in grace, we must be planted in grace; and grace is the rich, warm, genial soil of God's infinite love.

PLAYING RELIGION.

Great multitudes of so-called Christians are simply playing religion. Their Christianity consists only in church membership, and this means no more to them than a lodge membership, or a connection with some social club. Some preacher persuaded them to join the church without a change of heart, or even telling them there is such an experience taught in the Bible. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of so-called preachers of the Gospel who are total strangers to this experience, to say nothing of the baptism with the Holy Ghost, and their one business seems to be to fill up their churches with members, no compliance with Bible standards being required. They are in every city, every State, and it is reported that they have their missionaries on the foreign fields—not to preach the Gospel, but something else that will only make polished sinners out of the poor heathen.

What can be done about it? Nothing. It is just another evidence that we are living in the last days of this dispensation. But, thank God, in the midst of all this, here and there, the Lord has his faithful ones, who have left all to follow Him, and they are letting their light shine, and testifying that Jesus is a Saviour from sin, and that He is the baptizer with the Holy

Ghost, who is the Spirit of Holiness, our Sanctifier. Rom. 15:16.

All that preach any other Gospel are enemies of the Cross of Christ, and strangers to the peace of the new birth brings to the believer.

But so many have stopped just over the line, failing to see that there is much more land to be possessed. Let us remember that Paul says that "being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." The Divine order is, first, freedom from a life of sin by believing in Christ, second, going on unto holiness, and, finally, reaching Heaven—the everlasting life" spoken of here, which is the blessed end for which we all are striving. So, according to Paul, we must be "made free from sin," "become servants to God," and "have fruit unto holiness," before we can reach Heaven. We are going to stick to the teaching of Paul. (Rom. 6th chap.) We believe it is safe.—Editorial in Way of Holiness.

A STATE AND NOT MERELY A BLESSING.

While entire sanctification is a blessing, it is also a state or condition of heart. We do not magnify the blessing. For it is "the fulness of the blessing of the gospel." But it is also a condition of heart; that is free from inbred sin. There are too many who have their minds wholly on the blessing. They think only of the raptures and ecstasies. They put their whole dependence upon their feelings. They estimate their experience by the feelings that possess them. They, like the multitude that Jesus fed are seeking him only for the loaves and fishes. They walk by feeling and not by faith. They estimate their experience by their emotions and not by their freedom from sinful tendencies. They are like children, who are always crying for sweet meats and confectionery.

Entire sanctification is a state and its normal condition is peace. That eminent saint, M. L. Haney, who has lately been translated, says in his book, "The Inheritance Restored," one of the most valuable books that the modern holiness movement has produced. "The state of sanctification is one thing and rapturous emotions are only incidental to that state. We may be exceedingly happy without being wholly sanctified; and we may be entirely sanctified and at the same time be filled with unutterable sorrow. Neither trials nor triumph, joy or sorrow makes the state of entire sanctification; but a state of sanctification involves each of these experiences. The soul is well pleasing in the sight of God when in the absence of joyful motions or in the sorest trial, it retains its integrity and reflects his image."—Christian Witness.

"The man who does not believe in foreign missions had better burn up his New Testament, for it is a record of foreign missions."

"You might as well try to cure smallpox by scenery as to try to save souls by improvement of environment."

SECRET PRAYER.

There is no theme so important in the Word of God as His commands to His people as to the duty of secret prayer. He was our God-man, our Immanuel: He knew, as no one in the world knows, the absolute necessity of being very much in secret prayer. Without it we lose our fellowship with God to a greater or a less degree, and generally lose it entirely.

He knows the nature of man and cannot be deceived. It is a terrible thing to know the history of the Church and learn its utter failures to get the world saved or filled with the Spirit. We do not know our own nature as He knows us, though we live with ourselves all our life. "Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly," is a direct command of Christ. He is a God of perfect love and knows the measure of demands in the soul as only God can.

What is our closet? Our closets are multitudinous. The farmer's closet may be in the hay loft, the open field where he is at work, or his bedroom. The mechanic's in his place of vocation; the banker, merchant and business men at their places of business, as well as in their bed chambers.

Then there is ejaculatory prayer, that can be used instantly, and may save multitudes of souls from sin and danger if they will use it.

"Prayer is appointed to convey
The blessings God designs to give.
Long as they live should Christians pray;
They learn to pray when first they live.

"Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air;
His watchword at the gates of death;
They enter heaven with prayer."

We have hindrances even when we come to the mercy seat. Prayer is the breath of God in man. We need God's breath every moment we live.

Reading the hymnology of the Church of ages past and present. We need secret prayer, especially in sickness and dangers unforeseen until we reach them.

Secret prayer has changed the world's history and the population of heaven, and been the source of healing to an innumerable multitude of sufferers.

Remember Christ's Gethsemane. Prayer moves or stays the hand of God who moves the universe by the pulse of His power.—Selected.

Jesus was the only begotten Son of God, and on the Mount of Transfiguration his glory, the glory that he had with the Father, shone forth. No wonder earthly-minded Peter wished to build tabernacles and dwell there; no wonder he was afraid as there came a voice saying, "This is my beloved Son: hear ye him." But the Son of God came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; and down on the plain there was a troubled father with his grievously tormented son. Jesus went down the mountain to restore that son to health.