

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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LET PATIENCE HAVE ITS PERFECT WORK

That Ye May be Perfect and Entire
WANTING NOTHING.

PATIENCE.

By Rev. John Wesley.

But how does this work differ from that gracious work which is wrought in every believer, when he first finds redemption in the blood of Jesus, even the remission of his sins? Many persons that are not only upright of heart, but that fear, nay, and love of God, have not spoken warily upon this head, not according to the oracles of God. They have spoken of the work of sanctification, taking the word in its full sense, as if it were quite of another kind, as if it differed entirely from that which is wrought in justification. But this is a great and dangerous mistake, and has a natural tendency to make us undervalue that glorious work of God which was wrought in us when we were justified: Whereas in that moment when we are justified freely by his grace, when we are accepted through the Beloved, we are born again, born from above, born of the Spirit. And there is a great change wrought in our souls when we are born of the Spirit, as was wrought in our bodies when we are born of a woman. There is, in that hour, a general change from inward sinfulness, to inward holiness. The love of the creature is changed to the love of the Creator; the love of the world into the love of God. Earthly desires the desire of the flesh the desire of the eyes and the pride of life, are, in that instant, changed, by the mighty power of God, into heavenly desires. The whirlwind of our will is stopped in its mid career, and sinks down into the will of God. Pride and haughtiness subside into lowliness of heart; as do anger, with all turbulent and unruly passions, into calmness, meekness, and gentleness. In a word, the earthly, sensual, devilish mind, gives place to "the mind that was in Christ Jesus."

"Well, but what more than this can be implied in entire sanctification? It does not imply any new kind of holiness: Let no man imagine this. From the moment we are justified, till we give up our spirits to God, love is the fulfilling of the law; of the whole evangelical law, which took place of the Adamic law, when the first promise

of "the seed of the woman" was made. Love is the sum of Christian sanctification; it is the one kind of holiness, which is found, only in various degrees, in the believers who are distinguished by St. John into "little children, young men, and fathers." The difference between one and the other properly lies in the degree of love. And herein there is a great difference in the spiritual, as in the natural sense, between fathers, young men, and babes.

Every one that is born of God, though he be as yet only a "babe in Christ," has the love of God in his heart, the love of his neighbor; together with lowliness, meekness and resignation. But all of these are then in a low degree, in proportion to the degree of his faith. The faith of a babe in Christ is weak, generally mingled with doubts or fears; with doubts, whether he has not deceived himself; or fear, that he shall not endure to the end. And if, in order to prevent those perplexing doubts, or to remove those tormenting fears, he catches hold of the opinion that a true believer cannot make shipwreck of the faith, experience will sooner or later show that it is merely the staff of a broken reed, which will be so far from sustaining him, that it will only enter into his hand and pierce it. But to return: In the same proportion as he grows in faith, he grows in holiness; he increases in love, lowliness, meekness, in every part of the image of God; till it pleases God, after he is thoroughly convinced of inbred sin, of the total corruption of his nature, to take it all away; to purify his heart and cleanse him from all unrighteousness; to fulfill that promise which he made first to his ancient people, and in them to the Israel of God in all ages: "I will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul."

It is not easy to conceive what a difference there is between that which he experiences now, and that which he experienced before. Till this universal change was wrought in his soul, all his holiness was mixed. He was humble, but not entirely; his humility was mixed with pride:

He was meek; but his meekness was frequently interrupted by anger, or some uneasy and turbulent passion. His love of God was frequently damped, by the love of some creature; the love of his neighbor, by evil surmising, or some thought, if not temper, contrary to love. His will was not wholly melted down into the will of God: But although in general he could say, "I come 'not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me,'" yet now and then nature rebelled and he could not clearly say "Lord not as I will but as thou wilt." His whole soul is now consistent with itself; there is no jarring string. All his passions flow in a continual stream, with an even tenor to God. To him that is entered into this rest, you may truly say,

"Calm thou ever art within,
All unruffled, all serene!"

There is no mixture of any contrary affections: All is peace and harmony after. Being filled with love, there is no more interruption of it, than of the beating of his heart; and continual love bringing continual joy in the Lord, he rejoices evermore. He converses continually with the God whom he loves, unto whom in everything he gives thanks. And as he now loves God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind, and with all his strength; so Jesus now reigns alone in his heart, the Lord of every motion there.

But it may be inquired, In what manner does God work this entire, this universal strange work, which so many will not believe, though we declare it unto them? change in the soul of a believer? this Does he work it gradually, by slow degrees; or instantaneously, in a moment? How many are the disputes upon this head, even among the children of God! And so there will be, after all that ever was, or ever can be said upon it. For many will say, with the famous Jew, Non persuadebis, etiamsi persuaseris: That is, "Thou shalt not persuade me, though thou dost persuade me." And they will be the more resolute herein, because the Scriptures are silent upon the subject; because the point is not determined, at least not in express

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