

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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Wishing Our Readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

THE BEAUTY OF HOLINESS.

"Beauty," says Young, "is fair virtue's face, virtue made visible in outward grace." "Beauty," says Michael Angelo, "is the purgation of superfluities." "Supreme beauty," says Winkelman, "resides in God." Another noted writer speaks of the "Ennobling inspiration springing from the sensibility of the soul toward beauty, and sublimity in the natural and moral world." As we contemplate the beauty of holiness we touch those hidden springs of ennobling inspiration.

It has been well said "that all the primary colors in nature coalesce to make pure white." It takes the red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet to make pure white; so the various attributes of holiness join together—coalesce—to produce the pure white light of the beauty of holiness.

If we hold to the figure seven as the number of primary colors, we may venture to use the same number in enumerating the elements that go to make up the beauty of holiness.

1. The beauty of holiness is the beauty of purity.
2. The beauty of holiness is the beauty of harmony.
3. The beauty of holiness is the beauty of devotion or consecration.
4. The beauty of holiness is the beauty of humility.
5. The beauty of holiness is the beauty of love.
6. The beauty of holiness is the beauty of Christlikeness.
7. The beauty of holiness is the beauty of perfection.

John Fletcher, writing on Christian Perfection, explained it thus:

"We mean nothing but the cluster and maturity of the graces which compose the Christian character in the church militant. In other words, 'Christian perfection' is a spiritual constellation made up of those precious stars—perfect repentance, perfect faith, perfect humility, perfect meekness, perfect self-denial, perfect resignation, perfect hope, perfect charity for our visible enemies as well as for our earthly relatives; and above all perfect love for our invisible God through the explicit knowledge of our Mediator, Jesus Christ; and as this last star is always accompanied by all the others, as Jupiter is by his satellites, we frequently use the phrase 'perfect love' instead of the word perfection, understanding by it the pure love of God shed abroad in the hearts of established believers by the Holy Ghost, which is abundantly given them under the fulness of the Christian dispensation."

Some writers, like Madame Guyon, of the Roman Catholic Church, wrote strongly, truly and beautifully on the subject of sanctification. A long time since there came to us a very remarkable and beautiful setting of this subject by an early writer. The article is not at hand as we write but the following notes made from it are very suggestive:

What is sanctified grace? The greatest

treasure with which the soul can be enriched—a treasure in comparison with which all else is valueless. It is that grace by which the soul comes into possession of faith like Abraham, patience like Job, hope like Moses, perseverance like Noah, meekness like David, temperance like Daniel, prayerfulness like Elijah, unworldliness like James, boldness like Peter, love like John, guilelessness like Nathaniel, devotion to God and to Jesus like Paul. It is that grace which will let you sing in trial like Paul and Silas, help you to pray out of prison like Peter, keep you in the hottest fire of affliction like the three Hebrew children. Sanctification is supernatural grace because it takes supernatural power to arrest, to control, to destroy. Sanctification is an habitual grace. Holiness becomes a habit on earth; here the saints do on earth as they do in heaven.

Sanctifying grace imparts sovereign and moral beauty to the soul so that according to St. Thomas Aquinas, that which is in God substantially by his essence is accidentally in the soul by divine participation. It is such beauty God Himself is captivated with it. "Thou art all beautiful: there is no spot on thee." It reflects the beauty of the face of God. Oh, the face of God! Did you ever see a soul lit up by divine glory? That is but the reflection of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Sanctification is a participation of the divine nature, a seed of divinity: "His seed remaineth in him." It partakes of the divine nature in the sense that iron partakes of the fire; the rough, rude iron put into the fire becomes radiant, brilliant and the fire may say to it: "I have imparted that to thee," so God may say to the soul, I impart to thee the glow and beauty and heat of my nature—the soul is bathed in God.

Sanctifying grace assures eternal salvation, conditioned of course upon its continuance in the soul by a living faith and obedience. Possessed with this no soul can be lost.

Sanctifying grace is susceptible of constant increase, and like other riches may be augmented. This is increased by divine bestowments, also by fuller requirements by exercise and practice. Sanctifying grace gives cause for God's complacency with His saints. God delights in His saints and takes pleasure in them. Sanctifying grace is that by which the soul enjoys God, abounds in His love and becomes more and more like Him—like Him in love, in humility, in sinlessness, in purity, in holiness—"We shall be like Him."

And now in closing let us add that sanctification, though instantaneously obtained, is ever capable of improvement, development and progression. As we began with Fletcher so shall we conclude with him by giving some rare words of his concerning growth in holiness and the fulness of God. Said he: "Filled with all the fulness of God describes a state of grace infinitesimally beyond entire sanctification. We enter the sanctified experience from the negative hemisphere, realizing the utter elimination of the sin principle through the cleansing blood. Having passed the sin side of the experience, we enter the glorious hemisphere of incoming and abounding grace

which is illimitable in this life and superseded by the glory of heaven, sweeps on in a geometrical ratio through all eternity, ever and anon flooding the soul with fruitions, amplifications, beatifications and rhapsodies eclipsing the most ecstatic hyperboles, while ages and cycles wheel their precipitate flight."

Perhaps there was no man of modern times that exemplified the doctrine of Christian holiness and manifested its beauty as did John Fletcher, of early Methodist times.

Fletcher had prestige of birth, being a Swiss of good family. He was not without inherited wealth and expectant of more; his scholarship was considerable; he lacked not ambition. He was going to join the army of Portugal, but a scalded foot prevented it. He was received into the best society in England, his adopted country, and he might have become a favorite. But he was, above all and better than all, acknowledged and admired as a man of God—the saintly Fletcher." Never was this epithet more accurately applied, it may be said, even honored. "For seraphic piety, for sanctity that had no perceptible spot or flaw, he stood alone." Wesley says: "I was intimately acquainted with him more than thirty years. During a journey of many hundred miles I conversed with him morning, noon and night, without the least reserve, and in all that time I never heard him speak an improper word or saw him do an improper action. Many exemplary men have I known, holy in heart and life, within fourscore years, but one equal to him I have not known—one so inwardly and outwardly devoted to God. So unblamable a character in every respect I have not found either in Europe or America." Southey says: Fletcher, in any communion would have been a saint." Isaac Taylor says: "He was a saint, as unearthly a being as could tread the earth at all." Robert Hall says: "Fletcher is a seraph who burns with the ardor of divine love. Spurning the fetters of mortality, he almost habitually seems to have anticipated the rapture of the beatific vision."

In 1769, Fletcher, at the request of Lady Huntingdon, became president of her seminary for educating young men for the ministry, at Trevecca, in Wales. Benson describes Fletcher at Trevecca in the following glowing language: "The reader will pardon me if he thinks I exceed; my heart kindles while I write. Here it was that I saw, shall I say, an angel in human flesh. I should not far exceed the truth if I said so. But here I saw a descendant of fallen Adam, so fully raised above the sins of the fall, that though by the body he was tied down to earth, yet was his whole conversation in heaven; yet was his life from day to day hid with Christ in God. Prayer, praise, love and zeal, all ardent, elevated above what one would think attainable in this state of frailty, were the elements in which he continually lived. Language, arts, sciences, grammar, rhetoric, logic, even divinity itself, as it is called, were all laid aside when he appeared in the school room among the students. And they seldom hearkened long before they were all in tears, and every heart caught the fire from the flame that burned in his soul."—Rev. G. W. Ridout, in the Pentecostal Herald.