

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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IS CHRISTIAN PERFECTION POSSIBLE?

The idea of perfection as predicated of mortal man is in general a startling proposition. "There is," says Mr. Wesley, scarcely any expression in Holy Writ which has given more offense than this." Man's deeply fallen condition as a child of Adam, his inherited depravity, his moral helplessness and his manifold infirmities even under grace, his peccability at his best estate, together with his external environments, all seem to negative the possibility of his perfection in any sense. It is an offensive term with worldly persons, and even nominal professing Christians scout the idea, and yet in various matters and relations people demand perfection. If they would purchase a horse they require him to be perfect, without blemish. If they would purchase a piece of real estate, the title must be perfect. In a curriculum of study in a college or high school there is a standard of perfection, and scholars who reach that maximum standard are pronounced perfect. This is allowed. But when it comes to Christian character, perfection is repudiated and pronounced fanatical. And yet worldly men demand perfection of Christian professors, and reject Christianity because of Christian imperfections.

That perfection of some sort is taught in the Bible cannot be intelligently denied; and perfection not as it relates to God, nor as it relates to unfallen angels, but perfection in its application to godly men. Job was said to be a "perfect man and upright" (Job. 1:1). "Noah was a just man and perfect" (Gen. 6:9). God said to the priests, Levites and others, "Thou shalt be perfect with thy God" (Deut. 18:13). And said to Abraham, "Walk before me and be thou perfect." The Psalmist said, "Mark the perfect man and behold the upright" (Ps. 37:37). How could the perfect man be marked if there were no specimens to be scrutinized? The Lord said of His ancient Jewish bride: "Thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty, for it was perfect through my comeliness which I had put upon thee" (Ex. 16:14). "Thou wast exceeding beautiful" (ver. 13).

And our blessed Lord in concluding His sermon on the mount, said: "Ye shall therefore be perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:4-8). "And He gave some apostles, and prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints" (Eph. 4:11-12). "If any man

offend not in word, the same is a perfect man and able to bridle the whole body" (James 3:2).

The question, then, to be considered is, what is the perfection which is required and which is attainable under the gospel dispensation? The Word of God must be the guide and criterion in answering this question.

Human philosophy is at fault in all these spiritual matters. "The things of God knoweth no man save the Spirit of God." The defective examples of nominal Christians must not be taken as the touchstone. There must also be a wise discrimination as to the sense in which perfection is predicated of any subject.

We give an example or two:—

St. Paul says (Phil. 3:12): "Not as though I had already attained, neither were already perfect, but I follow after." Here perfection is disclaimed. But in the 15th verse perfection is claimed for himself and for others by implication. "Let us therefore as many as be perfect be thus minded."

Obviously the term "perfect" cannot be understood to mean the same thing in both of these instances. How, then, shall it be understood and construed?—Witness.

Dr. A. Clarke: "What, then, is this complete sanctification? Is it the cleansing of the blood, that has not been cleansed?—it is washing the soul of a true believer from the remains of sin." Clark's Theology, p. 206.

Rev. Richard Watson says, concerning the nature and extent of Christian purity: "By which can only be meant our complete deliverance from all spiritual pollution." Institutes, Vol. II, p. 450.

Bishop Foster, in Christian Purity, p. 122, says that a person entirely sanctified is in "a state in which he will be entirely free from sin, properly so called, both inward and outward."

Bishop Simpson says: "Christian perfection is a term used to denote a state of grace implying purity of heart, or a heart cleansed from all sin. * * * Sanctification is that act of the Holy Ghost whereby the justified man is made holy."

One of the strongest arguments for a sanctified church in any community, is the fact that in that place a sanctified church is despised. If the people were all sanctified, such a church among them would stand in high esteem. Jesus says, "Because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

DO WE MAKE TOO MUCH OF HOLINESS?

We might better ask: Can we make too much of Holiness? The assertion is often made that we can and do make too much of Holiness. We doubt if those who make this charge really understand or appreciate the importance and value of Holiness.

Can we make too much of that which is fitness for Heaven and will keep its possessors out of hell? Can we make too much of that which is the central idea of Christianity, the sum and substance of the Bible, the first and great commandment, and which comprises all the decalogue? Can we make too much of that which is the soul of all right living and thinking and acting? Can we make too much of that which is necessary for every-day experience and happiness? In view of all Holiness is and all it means for both this world and the world to come, we fail to see how those who apprehend the importance of Holiness can make too much of it. We are sure too much can not be made of Holiness on the dying bed to which we are all hastening. All our life ought to be measured from the viewpoint of the bed of death.—Sel.

HOLINESS A REALITY.

Our God loves to hear and answer prayer. The grand old experience of heart purity is finding a place in many hearts of his children. Holiness is more than doctrine—it is reality. It is the standard of the Bible: "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." It is the will of God: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." Thess. 4:3. It is the call of God, for "God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." Thess. 4:7. Then it is God's appointment, for "God hath not appointed us unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." Jesus died to sanctify the Church: "Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate." It is the power of God: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." It is the blessing of God: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

It is religion made easy; the only thing that will prepare us for His coming, as He admonished His Church to be without "spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." It will be the Bride of Christ that will meet Him when the trump shall sound and the Lord appears in mid air. Let's be sure the Holy Ghost abides and the victory is ours.