

ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION

The doctrine and experience of entire sanctification came into renewed prominence during the Wesleyan revival in England which gave rise to the Methodist church. As with Luther the doctrine of justification by faith was not clear at first, so the doctrine of entire sanctification seems to have gradually shaped itself in the mind of Mr. Wesley.

The point of departure from the previous teaching was the recognition of the instantaneousness of the work of grace as opposed to the progressive idea of sanctification still taught by some of the leading denominations and as now accepted by many Methodists. In the fourth conference (June 16, 1747) this question was asked: "How much is allowed by our brethren who differ from us with regard to entire sanctification? They grant, (1) that everyone must be entirely sanctified in the article of death. (2) That till then a believer daily grows in grace, comes nearer and nearer perfection. (3) That we ought to be continually pressing after it and to exhort all others so to do.

"What do we allow them? We grant, (1) that many of those who have died in the faith, yea the greater part of those we have known, were not perfected in love, till a little before their death. (2) That the term sanctified is continually applied by St. Paul to all that were justified. (3) That by this term alone he rarely if ever means 'saved from all sin.' (4) That consequently, it is not proper to use it in that sense, without adding the word wholly, entirely, or the like. (5) That the inspired writers almost continually speak of, or to, those who were justified, but rarely of, or to, those who were entirely sanctified. (Note: That is, unto these alone, exclusive of others, almost continually). (6) That consequently, it behooves us to speak almost continually of the state of justification, but more rarely, at least in full and explicit terms, concerning entire sanctification. (Note: More rarely I allow, but yet in some places, very frequently, strongly and explicitly)."

As the importance of this teaching became clearer in his experience, he gave more attention to the preaching of the doctrine. Forty-three years later, and two years before his death, he wrote to Mr. Brackenbury as follows: "This doctrine is the grand depositum which God has lodged with the people called Methodists; and for the sake of propagating this chiefly He appeared to have raised us up" (Works VII, p. 163). One year later, and only two months before his death, he wrote to Rev. John Booth as follows: "Wherever you have opportunity of speaking to believers, urge them to go on to perfection. Spare no pains; and God, our own God, still give you His blessing." (Works VI., p. 238).

It is this: should we expect to be saved from all sin before the article of death?" These two elements, the progressive and instantaneous, must be taken into account in any true statement of the doctrine of entire sanctification. Wesley it must be remembered, struggled against the dominant belief in progressive sanctification which found its completion only in the article of death, and insisted upon the possibility of sanctification as an instantaneous work of grace, but in so doing he was careful to allow all that could be granted to his opponents.

Methodism, therefore, never carefully guarded this "great depositum" which was

lodged with them. Too much stress evidently was laid upon the progressive element, and not enough upon the instantaneous work of faith, although Mr. Wesley himself felt this tendency to drift in his own life-time and warned his people expressly against it. As early as 1766 he wrote, "A general faintness in this respect (on the subject of Christian perfection) is fallen upon the whole kingdom. Sometimes, I seem almost weary of striving against the stream of both preachers and people." Two years later he wrote to his brother Charles, "I am at my wits' end with regard to two things, the church and Christian perfection. Unless both you and I stand in the gap in good earnest, the Methodists will give them both up.

With this tendency to drift from this important doctrine, Mr. Wesley himself seemed to preach with more insistence upon this particular subject, and in proportion as he and his preachers kept this great faith before the people, the work of God prospered. He writes, "Therefore let all of our preachers make a point to preach perfection to believers constantly, strongly, explicitly . . . I doubt not we are not explicit enough in speaking on full sanctification, either in public or in private." To Mr. Merryweather he wrote: "Where Christian perfection is not strongly and explicitly preached, there is seldom any remarkable blessing from God; and consequently little to the society, and little life in the members of it. Therefore if Jacob Rowell is grown faint, and says but little about it, do you supply his lack of service. Speak and spare not. Let not regard for any man induce you to betray the truth of God. Till you press believers to expect full salvation now, you must not look for any revival."—Herald of Holiness.

SISTERS, WAKE UP!

By Mrs. J. J. Engbrecht

My God, my God, how long is our precious young generation going to last at this rate of immodest dressing all over the country! This is my heart cry after careful observation of conditions during thousands upon thousands of miles of travel this last summer, as husband and I, with our three daughters, were privileged to tour the country and sing and testify to the glory of God, proving to the world that we stand for true holiness and Bible modesty.

My observations have forced me to the conclusion that Satan is in a terrible hurry to destroy the human race, and, as in Paradise of old, has again chosen the fair sex as his instrument to give the death blow.

Our boys and men are tempted right into the pitfalls of sin. Our whole nation is already tottering right now, much as a result of immodestly dressed girls and women. Theaters, streets, churches and homes are about equally infested with these improperly dressed women. Most of the church-going crowd of today is already blindfolded by Satan.

But, my dear sister, who reads this plea, tell me, at the terrific rate that our holiness sisters are now yielding to the dictates of Paris fashion, who is going to be left over to uphold the Bible standard of holiness and Bible modesty by next summer?

Careless mother, wake up quickly! Repent and dress your daughters today. Tomorrow, I fear, they may be lost in a hopeless hell; for remember, whatsoever a careless mother soweth that shall she also reap. God's work is suffering through your carelessness right

now. You are heaping something terrible upon yourself and many others.

And some of you, dear and beloved ministers' and evangelists' wives, better wake up and "check up" on yourselves. I, too, am a minister's wife and therefore consider myself as your "close" sister. We should be ideal, living examples before our flock and at home. I say it with all kindness and Christian love, that I fear some of us are tearing more down through our appearance and behaviour than our husbands can build up by fasting and prayer and much earnest preaching.

Pray earnestly for our family, that none of us may ever compromise and backslide under the terrific shell-fire of the enemy. He will help us through.—Free Methodist.

DYING WORDS

Of Believers

"Lord Jesus receive my spirit."—Stephen.

"The best of all, God is with me."—Wesley.

"I am sweeping through the gates washed in the blood of the Lamb."—Cookman.

"I am in perfect peace, resting alone on the blood of Christ: I find this sufficient to enter the presence of God with."—Trotter.

"The battle is fought, the battle is fought; the victory is won."—Dr. Payson.

Of Unbelievers

"Hell is a refuge if it hides me from thy frown.

"I would gladly give £30,000 to have it proven there is no hell."—Charteris.

"Give me more laudanum that I may not think of eternity and what is to come."—Mirabeau.

"Oh, my poor soul! What will become of thee? Whither wilt thou go?"—Cardinal Mazarin.

The atheist Mobb's last words were: "I am taking a fearful leap into the dark."

Voltaire was a noted, wealthy infidel, yet his last words were: "I am abandoned by God and man; I shall die and go to hell."

"When I lived I provided for everything but death; now I must die, and I am unprovided to die."—Caesar Borgia.

Tom Payne, the popular infidel died drunk and swearing. His last words were: "Stay with me, for God's sake; I cannot bear to be left alone; it is hell to be left alone."

Sir Francis Newport, rising on his elbow when dying, exclaimed: "Oh, the insufferable pangs of hell! Oh, Eternity! forever and forever!"

"Until this moment I thought there was neither a God nor a hell. Now I know and feel that there are both, and I am doomed to perdition by the just judgment of the Almighty."—Sir Thos. Scott.

NATIONAL PROSPERITY

"From the time that, at my mother's feet or on my father's knee, I learned to lisp verses from the sacred writings, they have been my daily study and vigilant contemplation. If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will go on prospering and to prosper; but if we and our posterity neglect its instructions and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury our glory in profound obscurity."—Daniel Webster.

"The way to gain a good reputation is to endeavor to be what you desire to appear."—Socrates.