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DR. ADAM CLARKE ON SANCTIFICATION

To be filled with God is a great thing; to be filled with the fulness of God is still greater; to be filled with all the fulness of God is greatest of all. This utterly bewilders the sense and confounds the understanding, by leading at once to consider the immensity of God, the infinitude of His attributes, and the absolute perfection of each. But there must be a sense in which even this wonderful petition was understood by the Apostle and may be comprehended by us. Most people, in quoting these words, endeavor to correct or explain the Apostle by adding the word communicable. But this is as idle as it is useless and impertinent. Reason surely tells us that St. Paul would not pray that they would be filled with what could not be communicated. The Apostle certainly meant what he said and would be understood in his own meaning; and we may soon see what is his meaning.

By the "fulness of God" we are to understand all the gifts and graces which He was promised to bestow on man in order to his full salvation here, and his being fully prepared for the enjoyment of glory hereafter. To be filled with all the fulness of God is to have the heart emptied of and cleansed from all sin and defilement, and filled with humility, meekness, gentleness, goodness, justice, holiness, mercy, and truth, and love to God and man. And that this implies a thorough emptying of the soul of everything that is not from God, and leads not to Him is evident from this, that what God fills, neither sin, nor Satan can fill, nor in any wise occupy; for if a vessel be filled with fluid or substance, not a drop or particle of any other kind can enter it, without displacing the same quantum of the original matter as that which is afterward introduced.

God cannot be said to fill the whole soul while any place, part, passion or faculty is filled or less or more occupied by sin or Satan; and as neither sin nor Satan can be where God fills and occupies the whole, so the terms of the prayer state that Satan shall neither have any dominion over that soul nor being in it.

A fulness of humility precludes all pride; of meekness precludes anger; of gentleness, all ferocity; of goodness, all evil; of justice, all injustice; of holiness, all sin; of mercy, all unkindness and revenge; of truth, all falsity and dissimulation; and where God is loved with all the heart, soul, mind and strength, there is no room for enmity or hatred to Him, or anything connected with Him.

So when a man loves his neighbor as himself, no ill shall be wrought to that neighbor; but, on the contrary, every kind affection will exist toward him; and every kind action,

so far as power and circumstances can permit, will be done unto him.

Thus, the being filled with God's fulness will produce constant pious and affectionate obedience to Him, and unvarying benevolence toward one's neighbor; that is, any man, any and every human being. Such a man is saved from all sin; the law is fulfilled in him; and he ever possesses and acts under the influence of that love to God and man which is the fulfilment of the law. It is impossible with any scriptural or rational consistency, to understand these words in any lower sense; but how much more they imply—and more they do imply—who can tell?

Many preachers, and multitudes of professing people, are studious to find out how many imperfections and infidelities, and how much inward sinfulness, are consistent with a safe state in religion; but how very, very few are bringing out the fair Gospel standard to try the height of the members of the Church; whether they be fit for the heavenly army; whether their stature be such as qualifies them for the ranks of the Church Militant! The measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ is seldom seen; the measure of the stature of littleness, dwarfishness, and emptiness is often exhibited.

Some say, the body of sin in believers is, indeed, an enfeebled, conquered and deposed tyrant, and the stroke of death finishes its destruction. So then, the death of Christ and the influences of the Holy Spirit were only sufficient to depose and enfeeble the tyrant sin; but our death must come to effect his total destruction; thus our death is partially our saviour: and thus, that which was an effect for sin—"for sin entered into the world, and death by sin"—becomes the means of finally destroying it; that is, the effect of a cause can become so powerful as to reach upon that cause and produce its annihilation! The divinity and philosophy of this sentiment are equally absurd. It is the blood of Christ alone that cleanses from all unrighteousness, and the sanctification of a believer is no more dependent on death than his justification. If it be said that "believers do not cease from sin till they die," I have only to say they are such believers as do not make a proper use of their faith; and what can be said more of the whole herd of transgressors and infidels? They cease to sin when they cease to breathe. If the Christian religion brings no other privileges than this to its upright followers, well may we ask, "Wherein doth the wise man differ from the fool, for they have both one end." But the whole Gospel teaches a contrary doctrine.

It is strange that there should be found a person believing the whole Gospel system, and yet living in sin! "Salvation from sin" is the long continued sound, as it is the spirit and design of the Gospel. Our Christian name, our baptismal covenant, our profession of faith

in Christ, and our avowed belief in His Word, all call us so to this: can it be said that we have any louder calls then they?

Our self-interest as it respects the happiness of a godly life, and the glories of eternal blessedness—the pains and wretchedness of a life of sin leading to the worm that never dies, and the fire that is not quenched—second, most powerfully, the above calls. Reader, Jay these things to heart, and answer this question to God: "How shall I escape if I neglect so great salvation?" And then, as thy conscience shall answer, let thy mind and thy hands begin to act.

As there is no end to the merits of Christ incarnated and crucified; no bounds to the mercy and love of God; no end to the all-mighty energy and sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit; no limit to the improbability of the human soul; so there can be no bounds to the saving influence which God will dispense to the heart of every genuine believer.

We may ask and receive, and our joy may be full. Well may we bless and praise God who has called us into such a state of salvation, a state in which we may be thus saved, and by the grace of that state continue in the same to the end of our lives.—Sel.

SABBATH OBSERVANCE

After the stern: "Thou shalt not's" of the first three commandments, the fourth's, beginning "Remember thou the Sabbath day to keep it," may sound less imperative, yet God's constant insistence that this commandment be kept, proves it to be among the most important. Evidently there was no commandment the children of Israel broke more often as a nation, than this one. Nowhere do we find greater evidence of man's tendency to desecrate the Sabbath than we do in the group Moses led from Egypt. So recently and miraculously freed from galling slavery, so protected and provided for by God, without permanent homes to build, or competition to meet in business, we ask why these people would not rather obey God's command to keep the Sabbath and thus be spared the judgment that followed disobedience. Then, as now, while God says 'Remember' and offers inestimable rewards, man forgets and suffers.

Isaiah, Nehemiah, and Jeremiah continue to remind Israel of their covenant with God. "Verily, my Sabbath ye shall keep; it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you."

Thus Israel's Sabbath observance was the indicator of her spirituality. And this custom, among others that God instituted to keep man close to Him, was abused and dis-

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