



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.”

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ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION

By Rev. Joseph H. Smith

“The very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” I Thess. 5:23.

Here, and in many other places in Scripture, not the graveyard but the rending heavens is indicated as the terminus of our probation. His coming is more certain than our dying. Sanctification, while it is a requisite for the life that now is, is an essential for the life to come.

Three things concerning it appear upon the face of this text: By implication it is seen that there may be a state of **partial** sanctification; by specific petition it appears there is a state of **complete** or entire sanctification; in further prayer is shown the possibility of all-round and continuous **preservation** in this state of blameless Holiness.

And withal since, for such blessing, God is called the “Very God of **peace**” it is to be assumed that the persons thus prayed for already knew Him in peace; must as the Lord, in promising the gift of the Comforter, assigned as their ground of eligibility to this gift the fact of their previous acquaintance and fellowship with the Spirit, in distinction from the world which knew Him not and on this account could not receive Him in this perfected relationship as the Comforter. And this assumption is further sustained in the earlier parts of this epistle where the apostle cites the facts of their inward experience and the evidences of an outward transformation of life in proof of their election of God. Of the justification, adoption and regeneration of those for whom he prays there, then, can be no doubt.

And this, of itself, involves so true and so great a state of sanctification as to make this enlarging, qualifying or amplifying word “wholly” necessary in justice to their already very blessed state of sanctification. And it is to be noted that this same apostle, in writing to a church like that of the Corinthians, addresses them as the “**sanctified** in Christ Jesus,” when they were as yet but babes in Christ. And since all the truly “born again” have already a threefold sanctification—relative, outward, and inward—the advice of John Wesley is well to the point that when we are speaking of “this grace,” it is best for us to use some qualifying word as “entire,” or as Paul does here “wholly,” particularly when we are addressing those who are not yet familiar with such distinction; though of course also we have plain Scriptural precedent in the use of the simple strong terms “sanctify” and “sanc-

tification” without any such explanatory term. And it is a matter of universal experience that the normal convert, who already has this “peace of God” in the knowledge of sins forgiven, with power to walk in the Spirit, is still “longing to be perfectly whole,” and praying to “be made whiter than snow.” And this “wholeness and whiteness” is the “sanctified wholly” of our text.

Our use then of the single word “sanctification” will be understood here, please, to refer to the state of **entire sanctification**.

The **basal fact** in sanctification is **cleansing**. This cannot be too strongly impressed. The whole matter of salvation, in its three great epochs, has to do with man’s sin problem—justification, with its **guilt**; sanctification, with its **corruption**; and glorification, with its **consequences**.

And at the very heart of these is this truth, “Christ gave himself for us to **purify us unto himself**.” Likewise, the fundamental operation of the gift of the Holy Ghost is of the nature of baptism as with fire to “burn up the dross of base desire;” and the imperative requisite for the Judgment Day is that “perfect love which casts out fear, and gives us boldness for that day.” This is that Holiness without which it is stated “no man shall see the Lord.”

Perhaps I can offer no better definition of sanctification than that which was deduced from the perplexity of a distinguished lady, a college president’s wife, on this subject.

A great revival was progressing in the church and college with which she was identified. Many were being saved and many sanctified. It seemed to be going over this elect lady’s head. Her position and the prestige of her husband seemed to be standing in her way. She had not made the concession necessary to a clear understanding of the matter, and was confounding cleansing with forgiveness; and, allowing herself to be in a sinning and repenting state, supposed that as the Lord restored her to His favor that was all that was meant by cleansing. With the tide of the meeting, however, and a deeper awakening of her soul, she went into some retirement and in a couple of days came out with joyful testimony, saying, “Last night **when I had given up the last thing**, the Lord showed me what cleansing means by **giving me a clean heart**. Soon afterward, however, she returned to say: “You understand I do not say I am sanctified. No, not that! Only that God has given me a clean heart.” She was advised by the leader of the meeting to go back to the Lord and learn of Him what is the difference, if any, between having a clean heart and being sanctified. In another day she returned with

shining face and joyful praise to tell us that she had long thought that to be sanctified was to be put where one **could never** commit sin, nor even be **tempted**, but to be as angels in Heaven, incapable of making **mistakes**, and not needing any more blessings or growth in grace, etc.; but that the Lord had now shown her “**to be sanctified is to have a clean heart, filled with Christ’s love, and indwelt by the Holy Ghost**”; and that He had truly sanctified her soul.

Now, we repeat, we know of no better definition of sanctification than that. Ponder it well! Please! See, there are three clauses to it:

“A **clean heart**,” “Filled with Christ’s love,” “Indwelt by the **Holy Ghost**.” And primary and basal to these others is the **cleansing**.

This was deeply impressed upon the writer in his earliest ministry. When he was in a great national camp meeting at Round Lake, N. Y., a saintly old minister embracing him whispered in his ear: “Press the cleansing! Press the cleansing, Brother Smith!” And this we would do, as John Fletcher advises: “Whatever your blessing, if it has not freed you from all sin, in temper, desire and passion, do not stop until you have had, if need be, some half dozen blessings, until all sin be gone.” Neither the depths of our peace nor the heights of our joy, nor the greatness of our gifts or power; but “freedom from the law of sin and death,” is the vital matter in entire sanctification.

It was of this, Jesus, speaking to young converts, said, “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” And then He explained that He had reference to freedom from the bondage of sin, and that this freedom would result from and be secured by the “indwelling of the Son.” Of Him the Apostle Paul wrote, “He gave himself for the church, that he might sanctify and **cleanse** it.” Likewise, the **fundamental** operation of the gift of the Holy Spirit is not that of His endowment with power and conferment of gifts, but rather as a baptism, like as of a refiner’s fire in the purifying of the heart by faith. For this the Savior prayed the Father, that they who had already been separated from the world and given to Him might be “**sanctified**.” Before offering this prayer He had assured the disciples that, in answer thereto, the Father would send them another Comforter; and as this petition was keystone to the whole arch of that High Priestly prayer in John 17, it appears that the chief thing to be expected in the coming of the Comforter to our heart is our cleansing from all sin, that our being may be a fit temple of the Holy Ghost, as the Lord proceeded further to pray, “I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected in one.” So a

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