

**JOHN WESLEY SPEAKS ON SELF-DENIAL**

The denying ourselves and the taking up our cross, in the full extent of the expression, is not a thing of small concern: it is not expedient only, as are some of the circumstances of religion; but it is absolutely indispensably necessary, either to our becoming or continuing His disciples. If we walk not in the way of the cross, we are not following Him; we are not treading in His steps.

The doctrine of self-denial is, of all others, most opposed by numerous enemies. All our nature must certainly rise up against this, and men take nature, not grace, for their guide, abhor the very sound of it.

Satan, the great enemy of our souls, well knowing the importance of this doctrine cannot but move every stone against it.

Even those who have in some measure shaken off the yoke of the devil, yet they are no friends to this grand doctrine of Christianity. You are little acquainted with mankind if you doubt this. There are whole bodies of men who do not declare war against self. How readily do the Antinomians of all kinds, from the smooth Moravians to the boisterous, foul-mouthed Ranter, join the cry, with their silly, unmeaning cant of legality, and preaching the law? Therefore you are in constant danger of being wheedled, hectored, or ridiculed out of this important Gospel doctrine either by false teachers, or false brethren.

Now, it is undoubtedly pleasing, for the time, to follow our own will, but by following it in anything, we, that far, strengthen the perverseness of our will and increase the corruption of our nature.

On the whole, then, to deny ourselves, is, to deny our own will, where it does not fall in with the will of God; and that however pleasing it may be. It is to deny ourselves any pleasure which does not spring from, and lead to, God.

Anyone that would follow Christ must not only deny himself, but take up his cross also. A cross is anything contrary to our own will, anything displeasing to our own nature. So taking up our cross goes a little farther than denying ourselves; it rises a little higher, and is a more difficult task to the flesh and blood—it being more easy to forego pleasure, than to endure pain.

In running, "the race that is set before us," according to the will of God, there is often a cross lying in the way; something which is not only not joyous, but grievous; something which is contrary to our will, which is displeasing to our nature. What is to be done? The choice is plain: either we must take up our cross, or we must turn aside from the way of God.

The nature and ground of taking up our cross does not imply the disciplining ourselves; the literally tearing our own flesh; the wearing hair-cloth, or iron-girdles, or anything else that would impair our bodily health; but the embracing the will of God, though contrary to our own; the choosing wholesome, though bitter, medicines; the freely accepting temporary pain, of whatever kind, and in whatever degree, when it is either essentially or accidentally necessary to eternal pleasure.

The great hindrance of our receiving or growing in the grace of God is always the want of denying ourselves, or taking up our cross.

A man hears the word which is able to save

his soul: he is well pleased with what he hears, acknowledges the truth . . . yet he remains "dead in trespasses and sins," senseless and unawakened. Why is this? Because he will not part with his bosom sin. He came to hear of full lust and unholy desire; and he will not part with them. Therefore no deep impression is made upon him, but his foolish heart is still hardened; that is, he is still senseless and unawakened because he will not deny himself.

But this man did receive "the heavenly gift"; he did "taste of the powers of the world to come"; he saw "the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"; the peace which passeth all understanding did rule in his heart and mind, and the "love of God was shed abroad" therein, "by the Holy Ghost which was given unto him"; yet he is now weak as another man; he again relishes the things of the world, and has more taste for things which are seen than for things which are not seen; the eye of the understanding is closed again, so that he cannot "see Him that is invisible"; his love is waxed cold, and the peace of God no longer rules in his heart. And no marvel he has again given place to the devil, and grieved the Holy Spirit of God. He has turned again unto folly, to some pleasing sin, if not in the outward act, yet in heart. He did not stir up the gift of God which was in him; he gave way to spiritual pride, or spiritual sloth, or anger, or stubbornness, or self-will . . . He made shipwreck of the faith, for want of self-denial.

Why this state? He does not fervently serve the Lord by doing good to all men. Why does he not continue in prayer? Because in times

Unconverted man: Not Christ, but I;  
Slothful Christian: I, then Christ;  
Earnest heart: Christ and I;  
Utterly devoted: Not I, but Christ.

of dryness it is pain and grief to him. Why does he not continue in works of mercy? Because he cannot feed the hungry, or clothe the naked, unless he retrench the expense of his own apparel, or use cheaper and less expensive food. Therefore his faith is not made perfect, neither does he grow in grace, because he will not deny himself, and take up his cross daily.

We may learn that it is not enough for the Minister of the Gospel not to oppose the doctrine of self-denial. Nay, he cannot satisfy his duty by saying a little in favor of it. If he would be pure from the blood of all men, he must speak of it frequently and largely; he must inculcate the necessity of it in the clearest and strongest manner; he must press it with his might, on all persons, at all times, and in all places.

See that you apply this, every one of you, to your own soul. Meditate upon it when you are in secret; ponder it in your heart. Take care not only to understand it thoroughly, but to remember it always. Delay not the time, but practice it immediately, from this very hour! Practice it daily, without intermission, from the hour you first set your hand to the plow, and enduring therein to the end, till your spirit returns to God!—Wesleyan Methodist.

In order to grow in grace, we must be much alone. It is not in society — even Christian society—that the soul grows most vigorously. In one single quiet hour of prayer, the soul will often make more progress than in days of company with others. It is in the desert that the dew falls the freshest, and the air is purest.

—H. Bonar.

**BETHANY REPORTS**

The beginning of the year marks the beginning of the second term at Bethany. All the students are back to studies after the Christmas recess. One new student has enrolled since the opening of the second term.

The Bible Department completes its first semester's work at the end of January. In the meantime the students of this department are engaged in making last-minute reviews for mid-term examinations.

Rev. Scammehorn, Meaford, Ont., and DeVerne Mullen were recent visitors at Bethany, and while here, they were guest speakers in a chapel service.

The regular Saturday evening Christian Youth Crusade services, which are held under the direction of the Evangelistic Association of Bethany, are being well attended.

At the present time the combined library and study hall is undergoing alterations. One of the partitions has been removed so that the room is now almost twice its former size. Some new library furnishings will be installed. Our goal, for the present time, is 5,000 books. Already, contributions have been made by some, and others have promised donations toward the realization of our goal.

Mr. and Mrs. Dean Farnham, Victoria Corner, N. B., visited Bethany shortly before Christmas. Their donation of vegetables to the school is greatly appreciated.

**WEDDINGS**

Phillips—Du Plessis

On Dec. 23rd the Reformed Baptist Church at Fredericton, N. B., was the scene of a pretty wedding when Hazel Beatrice Du Plessis became the bride of Norman Archibald Greer Phillips. Rev. H. E. Mullen performed the ceremony.

Carton—Trecartin

On the 6th of January, at 4 o'clock, in the Millville Reformed Baptist Parsonage, Rev. J. A. Owens united in marriage, Arthur Roy Carton, of Hainsville, and Evelyn Anna Eliza Trecartin, of Lr. Caverhill. They were attended by Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Thibideau.

**OBITUARY**

Miss Clara Scott

Miss Clara Scott passed away Wednesday night, Oct. 19th. She had been in failing health for some time, but her sudden passing came as a shock to her many friends. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. N. Scott, who predeceased her several years ago. Miss Scott was in her 73rd year, with the exception of a few years she had spent her life in Woodstock. She was a member of the Ref. Baptist Church, joining it when just a young girl, and as long as her health permitted was a faithful worker in both church and Sunday School. She leaves to mourn her passing, two nieces, Mrs. Grace MacKilligan, of California, and Mrs. Bertha Henderson, of Nova Scotia, besides other relatives.

Funeral was held Saturday afternoon, conducted by Rev. B. M. Hicks, of Ref. Baptist Church, assisted by the choir; also a duet by Mr. and Mrs. Edward Mutch.

Burial in Woodstock cemetery.