

"I Don't Feel"

By Rev. Geo. D. Watson, D. D.

How often does unbelief utter itself in these words, "I don't feel." I think that deep, warm religious feeling is vastly depreciated in these days by frozen, formal Methodists; so I do not mean to say any thing against holy feeling, but we want the right sort of feeling; that which is produced by the power of God in the soul, and not that which is produced by culture or human effort. There are four distinct things in salvation, and they apply equally to justification and sanctification. Two of them are on the human side, and two on the Divine side. In seeking justification there must be on the human side repentance and faith, and on the Divine side there must be pardon and the witness to it. In seeking sanctification there must be first perfect submission of self in God, then perfect faith in Jesus on the side of the seeker, and on the Divine side will be entire cleansing from sin, followed by the witness to it. This order of the few facts of salvation is absolutely unchangeable; so that to clearly feel that we are sanctified is the last step in the service, and yet the very one that many try to make the first. It is utterly impossible for you to feel your heart pure, until after the Lord has actually purified it; and then it is impossible for Him to purify you, until your faith touches the point where you claim that "He doeth it," and then again you can never exercise the perfect faith that He cleanseth until you have fully submitted your entire self to God. You see, then, how each step depends on the preceding one. Be sure of the first step—that you are utterly yielded up to the will of God, and the rest will follow in easy, quick and beautiful order. In reference to feeling, we are to remember two or three things.

1. Feeling is an effect of sanctification, and not sanctification itself. Now if you have any trouble on this score of not having holy emotion, fasten this on your mind. If feeling be an effect, then it must come after the cause which produces it. Do you expect the heat from the stove before you strike and apply the match to the fuel? What would you think of a person sitting by a cold stove, half chilled, and yet refusing to strike and apply the match to wood, by saying, "O! I don't feel warm enough yet; when I feel warm, then I will strike the match." That would seem very silly; and yet have you been doing the same thing in religion? Have you not been half chilled in your soul for dreary days, waiting for some celestial accident to warm you. You have been told to believe; to believe now; to strike the match of faith against the rock of God's promise, and apply it to your soul, and to do it just as you are. And you have falteringly held the match in your hand, saying, "I don't feel." If you feel warm first, then there is no need of the match, and if God gives you the feeling of purity first, then there will be no need of your faith at all. Feeling is Divine effect after faith.

2. The feeling of holiness is the work of God in the soul over which our will has no control. It is the Lord alone that cleanses our hearts, and it is the Lord alone that produces in us the feeling of being cleansed. If we attend thoroughly to the two things in our hemisphere of sanctification, submission and faith, the Lord will be sure to attend to the two things in His hemisphere of sanctification, cleansing and feeling. It is the Holy Spirit that influences the soul with love; it is the Holy Ghost that produces the soul sensation of purity; and when we try to feel pure, we are simply meddling with the incommunicable rights of Jehovah. You must solemnly agree to let God attend to His own business in your salvation; you must trust Jesus with a limitless trust, just as you are, and where you are, and fixing the entire responsibility of cleansing and of feeling upon Him. The very fact that you keep waiting for feeling, and trying to make yourself feel, is a demonstra-

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C. E. Stairs, Treasurer.

THE HIGHER MINISTRIES OF HOLIDAYS

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of grace. While we look at the seen, let us also look at the unseen. Let the symbol become a veil through which we can see Him "who is invisible." Let us use our happy surroundings as modes of expression between God and the soul, and the soul and God.

Such communings do not detract from the worth and wealth of a holiday; they rather enrich and augment it. They give freedom and height and expansion to the soul; and high spirits are good spirits, and good spirits are the very first essential to bodily health and exuberance. To "sit in heavenly places in Christ" makes one akin to the secret power which dwells in the blowing corn and the rolling wave.

tion of your unbelief; it proves that you are afraid to trust the Lord to do His part of the work; it proves that you are far more anxious to do the Lord's part of the work; than to do your own.

I can recollect no passage in Scripture where God is said to exercise faith. Neither do I know of a passage where we are commanded to produce the feeling of holiness. It is true, we are commanded to be holy, but we are distinctly commanded to be holy through faith, and not through feeling. God will never do our believing for us, nor will He ever allow us to do the cleansing and witnessing work, which belongs to the Holy Spirit. The best way to get sweet rest and contentment of spirit, is to surrender the question of our feelings entirely to Jesus; let Him do as He pleases in the matter. Did you ever hear the earth groan and bother itself about how to feel the spring and summer? it simply swings around to the sun, and the sun takes the contract to furnish the glow of summer. Swing round to Jesus, and let Him furnish the summer of the soul.

The King's Highway