

complete in Him," though daily needing to humble oneself because of failure. It is not my practical sanctification that gives me title to a place among the saints in light. It is the glorious fact that Christ has died and redeemed me to God. His blood has cleansed me from all, or every, sin; and I now have life in Him, a new life, with which guilt can never be connected. I am in Him that is true. He is my sanctification, and represents me before God, even as of old the high priest bore upon his mitre the words "Holiness unto the Lord," and upon his shoulders and his heart the names of all the tribes of Israel. He represented them all in the holy place. He was typically their sanctification. If he was accepted of God, so were they. The people were seen in the priest.

And of our ever-living High Priest we may well sing:

"For us He wears the mitre
Where holiness shines bright;
For us His robes are whiter
Than heaven's unsullied light."

That there should be a life of corresponding devotedness and separation to God on our part no Spirit-taught believer will for a moment deny, as we will now consider.

SANCTIFICATION BY THE WORD OF GOD: EXTERNAL RESULTS

IN His great high-priestly prayer of the 17th of John, our Lord says of the men given to Him by the Father, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth. As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth" (vers. 16-19). This precious passage may well introduce for us the subject of practical sanctification--the ordering aright of our external ways, and bringing all into accord with the revealed will of God.

At the outset we shall do well if we get it fixed in our mind that this is very closely related to that sanctification of the Spirit to which our attention has already been directed. The Spirit works within us. The Word, which is without us, is nevertheless the medium used to do the work within. But I have purposely dwelt separately upon the two aspects in order to bring the clearer before our minds the distinction between the Spirit's sanctification in us, which is the very beginning of God's work in our souls, and the application of the Word thereafter to our outward ways. New birth is our introduction into God's family; but although born again, we may be dark as to many things, and need the light of the Word to clear our bewildered minds. But through the sanctification of the Spirit

we are brought to the blood of sprinkling: we apprehend that Christ's atoning death alone avails for our sins. We are sanctified by the blood of Christ, and able to appreciate our new position before God. It is now that in its true sense the walk of faith begins, and thereafter we need daily that sanctification by the truth, or the word of God, spoken of by our Lord.

It is evident that in the very nature of things this cannot be what some have ignorantly called "a second definite work of grace." It is, on the contrary, a *life*—a progressive work ever going on, and which ever must go on, until I have passed out of the scene in which I need daily instruction as to my ways, which the word of God alone can give. If sanctification in its practical sense be by the Word, I shall never be wholly sanctified, in this aspect of it, until I know that Word perfectly, and am violating it in no particular. And that will never be true here upon earth. Here I ever need to feed upon that Word, to understand it better, to learn more fully its meaning; and as I learn from it the mind of God, I am called daily to judge in myself all that is contrary to the increased light I receive, and to yield to-day a fuller obedience than yesterday. Thus am I sanctified by the truth.

For this very purpose the Lord has sanctified or set Himself apart. He has gone up to heaven, there to watch over His own, to be our High Priest with God in view of our weakness, and our Advocate with the Father in view of our sins. He is there too as the object of our hearts. We are called now to run our race with patience, looking

unto Jesus, with the Holy Spirit within us and the Word in our hands, to be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. As we value it, and are controlled by its precious truth made good to us in the Spirit's power, we are sanctified by God the Father and by our Lord Jesus Himself. For in the 17th of John He makes request of the *Father*, "Sanctify them through Thy truth." In Eph. 5: 25, 26 we read, "*Christ* loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that *He* might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word." Here it is Christ who is the sanctifier, for He could ever say, "I and the Father are one." Here, as in John, sanctification is plainly progressive; and, indeed, that washing of Ephesians is beautifully illustrated in an earlier chapter of John—the 13th. There we have our Lord, in the full consciousness of His eternal Sonship, taking the place of a girded servant to wash His disciples' feet. Washing the feet is indicative of cleansing the ways; and the whole passage is a symbolical picture of the work in which He has been engaged ever since ascending to heaven. He has been keeping the feet of His saints by cleansing them from the defilement of the way—those earth-stains which are so readily contracted by sandaled pilgrim-feet pressing along this world's highways.

He says to each of us, as to Peter, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me." Part *in* Him we have on the ground of His atoning work and as a result of the life He gives. Part *with* Him, or daily communion, is only ours as sanctified by the water of the Word.

That the whole scene was allegorical is evident by His words to Peter, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." Literal feet-washing Peter knew and understood. Spiritual feet-washing he learned when restored by the Lord after his lamentable fall. Then he entered into the meaning of the words, "He that is *bathed** needeth not save to *wash* his feet, but is clean every whit." The meaning is not hard to grasp. Every believer is bathed once for all in the "bath of regeneration" (Titus 3: 5, literal rendering). That bathing is never repeated. None born of God can ever perish, for all such have a life that is eternal, and consequently non-forfeitable (John 10: 27-29). If they fall and sin, they do not need to be saved over again. That would mean, to be bathed once more. But he that is bathed needs not to have it all done again because his feet get defiled. He washes them and is clean.

So it is with Christians. We have been regenerated *once*, and never shall be a second time. But every time we fail we need to judge ourselves by the Word, that we may be cleansed as to our ways; and where we daily give that Word its rightful place in our lives, we shall be kept from defilement and enabled to enjoy unclouded communion with our Lord and Saviour. "Wherewithal," asks the psalmist, "shall a young man cleanse his way?" And the answer is, "By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word."

* As many now know, this word means a complete bath, and differs from the word used later for "wash": in the same verse.

How necessary it is then to search the Scriptures, and to obey them unquestioningly, in order that we may be sanctified by the truth! Yet what indifference is often found among professors of a "second blessing" as to this very thing! What ignorance of the Scriptures, and what fancied superiority to them, is frequently manifested!—and that coupled with a profession of holiness in the flesh!

In 1 Thess. 4: 3 there is a passage which, divorced from its context, is often considered decisive as proving that it is possible for believers to attain to a state of absolute freedom from inbred sin in this world: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." Who can deny my title to perfect holiness if sanctification means that, and it is God's will for me? Surely none. But already we have seen that sanctification never means that, and in the present text least of all. Read the entire first eight verses, forming a complete paragraph, and see for yourself. The subject is personal purity. The sanctification spoken of is keeping the body from unclean practices, and the mind from lasciviousness.

Grossest immorality was connected with, and even formed part of idolatrous worship. The Greek mythology had deified the passions of fallen man; and these Thessalonian Christians had but just "turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God." Hence the special need of this exhortation to saints newly converted, and who were living among those who shamelessly practiced all these things. But think of calling for this upon men freed from inbred sin! And the saints, as God's

temple are to be characterized by a clean life, not by a life polluted by fleshly lusts

Another aspect of this practical sanctification is brought before us in 2 Tim. 2: 19-22. We might call it ecclesiastical sanctification; for it has in view the faithful believer's stand in a day when corruption has come in among professing Christians, and the church as a whole, viewed in its character as the house of God, has fallen, and become as a great house in which good and evil are all mixed up together. It is a matter of most solemn import that, whereas here and elsewhere in Scripture he who would walk with God is called to separate himself from unholy associations and the fellowship of the mixed multitude, even though it be found in what calls itself the Church, yet there are large numbers, who testify to "living without sin," who nevertheless are united in church (and often other forms of) fellowship with unbelievers and professing Christians who are unholy in walk and unsound as to the faith. For the sake of such it will be well to examine the passage in detail.*

The apostle has been directing Timothy's attention to the evidences of increasing apostasy. He warns against striving about words (verse 14), profane and vain babblings (verse 16); and points out

* As I penned a paper on this subject some time ago (published in *Help and Food* for August, 1910, under the title "From what are we called to purge ourselves in 2 Tim. 2?"), I have largely availed myself of what was then written, in the following paragraphs.

two men, Hymenæus and Philetus, in verse 17, who have given themselves over to these unholy speculations, and have thereby, though accepted by many as Christian teachers, overthrown the faith of some. And this is but the beginning, as the next chapter shows, for "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived" (3: 13).

Now I apprehend that the first verse of chapter 3 follows verse 18 of chapter 2 in an orderly, connected manner. The apostle sees in Hymenæus and Philetus the beginning of the awful harvest of iniquity soon to nearly smother everything that is of God. Go on with these men, listen to them, fellowship them, endorse them in any way, and you will soon lose all ability to discern between good and evil, to "take forth the precious from the vile."

But ere depicting the full character of the rapidly encroaching conditions, Timothy is given a word for his encouragement, and instruction as to his own path when things reach a state where it is impossible longer to purge out the evil from the visible church.

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord* depart from iniquity" (or, lawlessness) (verse 19). Here is faith's encouragement, and here too is the responsibility of faithful-

* See the Revised. It is the acknowledgment of the Lordship of Christ.

ness. Faith says, "Let the evil rise as high as it may—let lawlessness abound, and the love of many wax cold—let all that seemed to be of God in the earth be swallowed up in the apostasy—nevertheless God's firm foundation stands, for Christ has declared, 'Upon this rock I will build My Assembly, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it'!"

But this brings in responsibility. I am not to go on with the evil—protesting, perhaps, but following it still—though it be in a reserved, half-hearted way. I am called to separate from it. In so doing I may seem to be separating from dear children of God and beloved servants of Christ. But this is necessary if they do not judge the apostate condition.

To make clear my responsibility an illustration is given in verse 20: "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor." The "great house" is Christendom in its present condition, where good and evil, saved and lost, holy and unholy, are all mixed up together. In 1 Tim. 3: 15 we read of "the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." This is what the Church should ever have been. But, alas, it soon drifted away from so blessed an ideal, and became like a great man's house in which are found all kinds of vessels, composed of very different materials, and for very different uses. There are golden and silver vessels for use in the dining-room; and there are vessels of wood and earth, used in the

kitchen and other parts of the house, often allowed to become exceedingly filthy, and at best to be kept at a distance from the valuable, and easily scratched or polluted, plate up-stairs.

"If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (verse 21). The parable is here applied. The vessels are seen to be *persons*. And just as valuable plate might stand uncleansed and dirty with a lot of kitchen utensils waiting to be washed, and then carefully separated from the vessels for baser uses, so Timothy (and every other truly exercised soul) is called upon to take a place apart, to "purge out himself" from the mixed conditions, that he may be in very deed "a vessel unto honor, *sanctified*, and meet for the Master's use, prepared unto every good work."

Unquestionably this sanctification is very different from the Spirit's work in the soul at the beginning, or the effect of the work of Christ on the cross, by which we are set apart to God eternally. It is a practical thing, relating to the question of our associations as Christians. Let me follow out the illustration a step further, and I think all will be plain.

The master of the great house brings home a friend. He wishes to serve him with a refreshing drink. He goes to the sideboard looking for a silver goblet, but there is none to be seen. A servant is called, and inquiry made. Ah, the goblets are down in the kitchen waiting to be washed and separated from the rest of the household vessels.

He is indignantly despatched to procure one, and soon returns with a vessel purged out from the unclean collection below; and thus separated and cleansed it is meet for the use of the master.

And so it is with the man of God who has thus purged himself out from what is opposed to the truth and the holiness of God. He is sanctified, or separated, and in this way becomes "meet for the Master's use."

Of course it is not enough to stop with separation. To do so would make one a Pharisee of the most disgusting type; as has, alas, often been the case. But he who has separated from the evil is now commanded to "flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." To do this, what need there is of the daily application of the word of God, in the Spirit's power, to all our ways!

And this, as we have seen, is true feet-washing. Through the Word we are made clean at new birth. "Now are ye clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (John 15:3). That Word is likened to water because of its purifying and refreshing effect upon the one who submits to it. In it I find instruction as to every detail of the walk of faith. It shows me how I am called to behave in the family, in the church, and in the world. If I obey it the defilement is washed out of my life; even as the application of water cleanses my body from material pollution.

Never shall I attain so exalted a state or experience upon earth that I can honestly say: Now I am

wholly sanctified; I no longer need the Word to cleanse me. As long as I am in this scene I am called to "*Follow* peace with all men, and holiness (or, sanctification), without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14). This one passage, rightly understood, cuts up by the roots the entire perfectionist theory; yet no verse is more frequently quoted, or rather misquoted, in holiness meetings!

Observe carefully what is here commanded: We are to *follow* two things: peace with all men, and holiness. He who does not follow these will never see the Lord. But we do not follow that to which we have attained. Who has attained to peace with all men? How many have to cry with the psalmist, "I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war"! (Ps. 120:7). And who have attained to holiness in the full sense? Not you, dear reader, nor I; for "in many things we all offend" (James 3:2). But every real believer, every truly converted soul, every one who has received the Spirit of adoption, does *follow* holiness, and longs for the time when, at the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ, "He shall change these bodies of our humiliation," and make them like "the body of His glory." Then we shall have reached our goal: then we shall have become absolutely and forever holy.

And so when the apostle writes to the Thessalonians, in view of that glorious event, he says: "Abstain from all appearance (every form) of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto (or, in) the coming of our

Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it" (1 Thess. 5: 22-24). This will be the glad consummation for all who here on earth, as strangers and pilgrims, follow peace and holiness, and thus manifest the divine nature and the fruits of the Spirit.

But so long as they remain in the wilderness of this world they will need daily recourse to the laver of water—the cleansing word of God—which of old stood midway between the altar and the holy place. When all are gathered home in heaven the water will no longer be needed to free from defilement. In that scene of holiness therefore there is no laver; but before the throne John saw a sea of glass, clear as crystal, upon which the redeemed were standing, their trials and their warfare over.

So throughout eternity we shall rest upon the word of God as a crystal sea, no longer needed for our sanctification, for we shall be presented faultless in the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.

"Then we shall be where we would be;
Then we shall be what we should be;
Things that are not now, nor could be,
Then shall be our own."

RELATIVE SANCTIFICATION

NOTHING more clearly establishes the proposition we have been insisting on throughout—that sanctification is not the eradication of our sinful nature—than the way the word is used relatively, where it is positively certain there is no work of any sort contemplated as having taken place in the soul of the sanctified. Having carefully considered the absolute and practical aspects of sanctification, without which all profession is unreal, it may now be profitable to weigh what God has to say of this merely outward, or relative, holiness.

Already, in the chapter on sanctification by blood, we have seen that a person may in a certain sense be sanctified by association and yet all the time be unreal, only to become an apostate at last.

It is also true that in another sense people are said to be sanctified by association who are the subjects of earnest, prayerful yearning, and may yet—and in all probability will—be truly saved. But they are sanctified before this, and in view of it.

The seventh chapter of 1 Corinthians is the passage which must now occupy us. It contains the fullest instruction as to the marriage relation that we have in the Bible. Beginning with verse 10, we read, "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: but and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and