

SANCTIFICATION AN EXPERIENCE

"BY the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. . . . For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:10-14).

Before coming to God there is in every soul a twofold nature of sin — actual, committed sin and inbred sin. At justification those actual transgressions which we have committed are pardoned, or blotted out. That comes through repentance. His Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. There is a witness within our heart. The moment God comes into the heart we have passed from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. Everything pertaining to sin is gone. Justification frees the heart from all committed sin.

There is also a witness to the world; for we read, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." It matters not what we profess, the witness that is to be manifest to all we come in contact with is that we have love one to another. There will be nothing in the heart that will work ill to one's neighbor. In the Epistle of John we read, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (I John 3:15). If you have anything in your heart that would work ill to your neighbor, or to anyone, you are a sinner. When God saves you He takes out sin. But if you commit sin again, you are a sinner. There is no such thing as "once in grace, always in grace" in the Gospel.

Carnality Dates Back to the Garden

The inbred sin, which was born in us and which we are not responsible for, dates back to the Garden of Eden when our forefathers disobeyed the commandment of God. And they not only disobeyed the commandment of God. but they came out from under the power and dominion of God and went under the command of Satan. Adam and Eve believed Satan and disbelieved God. They were not only disobedient — God could have forgiven that —. but through rebellion to God and obedience to Satan they took upon themselves the very nature of sin. They lost the nature of holiness and degenerated into a state of carnality. Babies, in the arms of their mothers, will show signs of carnality. They will become angry and will scream and cry when things do not please them. Nevertheless, Jesus said, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." The righteousness of Christ is imputed to the child until he comes to the age of accountability; and through the righteousness of Christ the child would enter into the Gates of Heaven. Because he is not responsible for sin, the child is exempt from punishment.

But later the sin-principle in the heart impels the person to commit sin of some kind. When he repents of his sin and turns to God, those sins are forgiven. But there still remains in the heart the sin-principle which was born in him. He is not responsible for it; it was handed down from his fore parents. But God has made a way, through the offering of His Son, whereby one might be sanctified by a second, instantaneous work of grace in the heart and that principle of sin be eradicated. Therefore it is necessary to seek sanctification.

The Light of Sanctification

Every soul who is born again rejoices in the grace of God when he receives the wonderful experience of salvation. But it will not be long until the soul will hunger for more of God. Many of us sought for years to find it; and finally God let us receive light on that marvellous experience of sanctification. We sought it, not knowing what it was; but we hungered on until the light came.

There will not be sin in your life while you are justified, yet you will hunger to be rid of those things which hinder. You long to be free from the carnal tendencies in the heart which cause you trouble, and

which have often caused you to flee to your knees. Not that you had committed sin, but you long for a deeper experience with God — to be sanctified, and find in God that perfect rest of the soul.

There is nothing so wholesome to the soul * as the experience of sanctification. The righteousness of God floods every avenue of one's being; and he knows that he is sanctified. He must make a consecration of his life to God to be saved. And he needs to consecrate deeper to receive sanctification.

The Church Without Spot or Wrinkle

Paul writes to the Ephesians in his Epistle, saying: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing" (Ephesians 5:25-27). When Jesus asked His disciples, "Whom say ye that I am?" Peter, out of the depths of his heart, exclaimed, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Immediately the Son of God said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Jesus was drawing the confession of His* Sonship from the hearts of those disciples and getting them ready that He might establish His Church. The Church that the gates of hell shall not prevail against consists of individuals who are born from above and who have that same confession in their hearts. Here it says that He "loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it." What can "sanctify and cleanse" but sanctification?

Jesus Prayed for Our Sanctification

To receive the experience of sanctification, there must be a setting apart of one's self. Jesus set Himself apart, for He said in the prayer for the sanctification of the disciples, "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." Jesus was already perfect, but He set Himself apart, or gave Himself, that the disciples and all who believe on Him might be sanctified. We know that the Father answered every prayer of Jesus. Down to this present day He is answering the prayer which Jesus prayed; and He will answer it until the Church is caught away in the clouds. It is a wonderful thing to be set apart as a part of the body of Jesus Christ, that "glorious church" not having "spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing," but holy and "without blemish.

When God was about to take the Children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage He chose Moses to lead them and gave him Aaron for a helper. Finally, after all those signs and wonders had been performed, the night came when God was to work a miracle through the sacrifice of a lamb. Each family took the paschal lamb; and when it was slain they put the blood on the lintels and doorposts of their houses. It was a type of, and pointed down to, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ when He hung upon the cross and shed His Blood for us. The death angel passed over Egypt that night; and in every home that had no blood on the lintels and doorposts, the first-born of the family lay dead in the morning. But in the homes of the Children of Israel, because they had the blood upon the lintels and doorposts, there was not a death. That was typical of salvation.

God Spoke from Sinai

Under the leadership of Moses, the Israelites started on their journey to the promised land. God baptized them as they passed through the Red Sea. They had the pillar of fire by night and the cloud by day to guide and protect them. When they came to Mount Sinai God called Moses up into the mount and told him to speak to the Children of Israel and tell them to come up to the mount that God might write His law on their hearts. But when God came down and the mountain began to quake and smoke, and there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud covered the mountain, and there was the voice of the trumpet, exceedingly loud (Exodus 19:16), the people removed and stood afar off. They said unto Moses, "Let not God speak with us, lest we die" (Exodus 20:18, 19; Deuteronomy 5:25).

They drew back from the commandment of God and refused to go near that God might write His words on their heart. The Bible tells us that with many of them God was not well pleased, and they died in the wilderness. God commands that we should be sanctified. Do we dare draw back today from the commandment of God? We read in Hebrews 10:9, 10, "Then said he [Jesus], Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. . . . By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." There is no sanctification except through the offering of the body of Jesus.

We have a right to claim the experience. The body was offered. The sacrifice was made. God did everything necessary in the giving of His Son to make provision that we might have the perfection in our lives which is required of a child of God. Jesus became the offering for actual transgressions, and He became the offering for the Adamic nature. He fulfilled it all. He also bared His back to the smiters that we might be healed. We have it all on the cross — salvation, sanctification, and healing.

Oneness Comes Through Sanctification

In the prayer of Jesus in the 17th chapter of John we read, "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are." When you have the oneness with Christ in your heart you can bow your head at your work for a moment in prayer — if it is only for a moment and God will answer. Sometimes one has been on the bus, or at work in the home, in the office, or in other places, and God has laid it on the heart to pray, and God has answered that prayer.

There is a oneness between the soul and God when one has the experience of sanctification. And when that oneness exists between the heart and God, it also exists between the brethren. We know the disciples were sanctified, because they were all in one accord; and they could not have been in one accord if they had not had that experience. As they sat in the upper room they were praising and magnifying Jesus, and God answered and sent the gift of the Holy Ghost upon them. The Word says, "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."

The Fire upon the Altar

The type of sanctification was also contained in the ordinances or ceremonies under the Law. We read in Leviticus 6, verses 12 and 13: "And the fire upon the altar shall be burning in it; it shall not be put out: and the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order upon it; and he shall burn thereon the fat of the peace offerings. The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out." In the Tabernacle was the brazen altar where the sin-offering was made — a type of justification; and there also was the golden altar. The fire was kept burning on the golden altar, and the incense from the beaten oil continually ascended unto God. When the fire of God falls on the sacrifice of your soul and sanctifies the soul, the incense of praise arises continually.

It seems that to keep the fire, the sanctifying flame, burning in the heart, there is a task or something that we must do. We cannot feed the flame on just a testimony or a sermon or by mingling with God's people; but we individually must have the "beaten oil." There must be perseverance, consecration, lining ourselves up to the Word of God, and holding the integrity of our hearts under provocation. All through the night the light must be kept burning — "unto the morning."

Circumcision a Type of Sanctification

When Abraham was ninety-nine years old, God gave him the covenant of circumcision. It is a type of sanctification. The Israelitish child was circumcised when he was eight days old. The experience of sanctification always follows the experience of salvation, or the new birth. It may be eight days after, or one hundred days, or it might be only one minute after; but one must be born again first, before he is eligible to make a consecration in order that he may be sanctified. The length of the time does not matter. But sanctification always follows the experience of salvation. It is a second, definite work of

grace whereby the heart is circumcised or made holy. You will never be sanctified wholly until you are first born again and have the witness in your heart that you are God's child.

Love Perfected in the Heart

When God sanctifies a soul, that one is filled with perfect love toward God; and when one's heart is filled with love toward God, it will be filled with love for all God's creatures. If you get that marvellous experience of sanctification, you would not exchange it for the world. When you go deep enough in consecration and yield your all to God, He will give you the experience. "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Hebrews 13: 12).