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THE

OCTRINE OF HOLINESS

AS

TAUGHT IN THE WORD OF GOD.

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DOCTRINE OF HOLINESS

AS TAUGHT IN THE WORD OF GOD.

PERHAPS among the "signs of the times," which are so full of hope to Christian men, we may reckon the increasing desire to make "the word of God," and not creeds and confessions of faith, or human standards, the great arbiter in controversy and fountain of religious opinion. The practical and reverent admission of this supreme authority of the holy word is the only thing now really requisite for the removal of every serious error from religion, and for accomplishing the unity, in opinion and experience, of all true Christians throughout the world. Happy will be the condition of the Church when that fast approaching day shall come in which the servants of our common Lord shall feel a pure solicitude to ascertain the mind of their Master, as revealed in his word, that they may believe and enjoy and live according to it. The Churches of Christ will then enter upon such a rest as they have never before known, when the distracting theories and human errors which have so long disturbed their peace, and marred their purity and usefulness, shall be laid aside, and "the Bible alone" shall be exalted as the sole and sufficient standard of Christian truth, experience, and duty. In preparing this paper it has been our honest desire to conform to this rule, and be guided by it alone.

Our inquiry is, What is the *Doctrine of Christian Holiness* as taught in the word of God? To ascertain its biblical significance we must, as in many other truths revealed there, trace its meaning from the original and ceremonial sense of the terms, until we are led out into that wider, more personal, and spiritual application of the doctrine. "The shadow of good things to come" thus leading us to the substance to which they referred. It is evident that in the New Testament the terms "holiness," "sanctification," "perfection," are used with *more* significance and depth than they are in the Old Testament. Yet to the Old are we indebted for the true meaning of the New, as the Paschal Lamb enables us all the more clearly to understand and appreciate the Lamb of God.

Under the law of Moses there was a Church purity, or ceremonial sanctification, obtained by compliance with certain prescribed rights and ordinances of an external character; but the "holiness" thus realized did not necessarily include internal or personal purity. The unclean," who had become such by violating the ritual observances or requirements of their dispensation, and so were excluded from privileges of public worship or approach to God in his sanctuary, were to regain their lost relation of ceremonial holiness by "diverse washings and carnal ordinances imposed upon them," "sanctifying to the purifying of the flesh." It is in these terms, and their application, used in that typical, ceremonial sense, that we are to seek for the key to their higher meaning, when employed to express the blessings of the new and better covenant of our own dispensation. Let us then, first of all, try to ascertain correctly,

I. THE NATURE OF SANCTIFICATION, as described and required in both the Old and New Testaments.

The verbs "to sanctify," "hallow," and "make holy," and the nouns "holiness," "sanctification," and "saints," are used in the Jewish Scriptures in reference to a variety of objects, and in different applications or meanings. They are applied to things inanimate, animate, and moral, and in senses very distinct. The introductory step in our investigation must be to discover,

The *Nature* of "sanctification," or "holiness," in *its legal or ceremonial signification*, as described in the Old Testament. This can be ascertained only by an examination of the application of the terms to the subjects said to be sanctified, the methods of purification, and the sense in which they were hallowed. Let us consider, then,

1. The *Subjects* of ceremonial sanctification. The terms are applied to things inanimate, and institutions of divine ordination, as land and houses, (Exodus iii, 5, Lev. xxvii, 14;) to Jerusalem; the oil for anointing, called "holy oil;" (Psalm lxxxix, 20;) to the vessels of divine service; (Ezra ix, 28;) to the vestments of the priesthood; to the altar of sacrifice; to the temple of God, called a "holy and beautiful house;" to the Sabbath which the Lord hallowed, and the days and feasts which he sanctified. Again, they are applied to things animate, but irrational, which also are not capable of a moral character, or personal purity, such as the firstlings of the flock, and the various animals and sacrifices offered to God, all of which were called "holy unto the Lord." Besides inanimate and animate objects the terms are applied to rational beings. These had a capacity for personal holiness, and some of them enjoyed it; but before that, and in the wider and ceremonial sense here under consideration, they were all legally holy;" such as all the firstborn, the tribe of Levi, the family of Aaron, the congregation of Israel, of whom it is said, "All the congregation

are holy," and to the Israelites generally, who are called a "holy nation."

These various inanimate, animate, and rational objects and beings were the subjects of that legal holiness of which so much is said in the early Scriptures.

2. *The Methods or Means of Sanctification.* These were three, and were adapted to the nature and character of the things or persons to be hallowed.

(1.) Metallic objects which could endure it were sanctified by fire—"as gold and silver are purified"—the dross and earthly particles were purged away in the furnace, and the metals passed into a higher condition of refinement; and in this metaphorical sense God is said to "purify the sons of Levi."

(2.) The bodies and garments of the priests and people, and the sacerdotal vestments, were purified by washing in water. This removed defilement, and made them clean; and in this sense God declares, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and idols will I cleanse you."

(3.) That ceremonial sanctification was completed—whether fire or water had been previously applied—by the sprinkling of atoning blood upon the persons, the vestments, the altar and vessels of divine service. So it is said, "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood." Purification by fire, by water, and by blood. Of this purity circumcision was the sacrament and seal to the people, and it entitled its human subjects to Church relation and approach to God.

3. *The Sense in which they were Sanctified.* It is manifest that in the usual significance applied to holiness, as purification from sin, that there would be inaccuracy in attributing sanctity to many of the objects here mentioned. But the Bible definition of sanctification advanced in this paper, will remove misapplica-

tion, and give a clear and distinct sense of sanctification in every case and to every object thus "hallowed."

Three things were included in the process of legal sanctification, and each was essential to the others, and the whole necessary to its proper reality and completion.

(1.) The first was a *separation* from a common, secular, or profane use. In this sense the seed of Abraham was separated to be the inheritance of the Lord from among the nations of the earth; (1 Kings viii, 53;) and he says to them, "I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from all other people that ye should be mine," (Lev. xx, 26;) so he "separated the tribe of Levi" from among their brethren the children of Israel, (Deut. x, 8,) from all secular duty or toil. The firstborn he separated and claimed as his portion, as he separated a seventh part of the week and constituted it holy time, sacred to rest and devotion. The vessels of the temple service were selected to be exclusively for sacred use; the firstlings of the flock were set aside and marked for Jehovah as his own. The "chosen people" were separated from the outside world by the choice and call of God and the seal of circumcision, and made a "peculiar people" for him who thus separated or sanctified them from among the nations. (See Deut. xiv, 2.) The prophets of God were thus sanctified, or separated for their destined work, as the Lord says to Jeremiah, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest out of the womb I sanctified thee; and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." (Jer. i, 5.) The next step in sanctifying them was,

(2.) By *preparation*, or process of purifying. The inanimate, by refining or washing, the rule laid down being: "Everything that may abide the fire ye shall

make it go through the fire, and it shall be clean: and all that abideth not the fire ye shall make go through the water. And ye shall wash your clothes on the seventh day, and ye shall be clean, and afterward ye shall come into the camp." (Num. xxxi, 23, 24.) The animate but irrational were to be unblemished, and then prepared by washing and sprinkling, (1 Chron. iv, 6,) and the rational were to undergo covenant purification. So the Israelites were to be circumcised and instructed to perform "diverse washings," and to offer prescribed sacrifices, the propitiatory blood of which was to be sprinkled upon them, so that they might be cleansed, and thus prepared to approach God in the congregation, and find acceptance. Without this preparation they dare not come nigh the holy place.

The priesthood were sanctified, not only by being separated from all secular callings, but by special purifications and anointings. Divested of their common raiment, they were washed in the laver provided for the purpose, and then clothed in their holy and beautiful vestments, and anointed; and were thus fitted and prepared to stand at the altar and minister before God in his sanctuary. Kings and prophets were similarly qualified: "I have found David, my servant; with my holy oil I have anointed him." And when Isaiah was to be sent, "the live coal from off the altar" conferred the requisite preparation, his "iniquity being taken away, and his sin purged," and he made God's holy and willing messenger.

(3.) What was thus separated and prepared was then *devoted* or *consecrated* forever to the service for which it had received a fitness. The inanimate things, as temple, vessels, etc., could not be taken and again employed for common purposes. To do so was profanation which God would punish, as he did Belshazzar's

sacrilege in taking and drinking wine out of the holy vessels of Jehovah's temple. The animals were equally dedicated. They were the Lord's, and must be kept and employed for him. The shepherd felt as he looked upon them that they could not be exchanged or used, for they belonged to the Lord. The rational, whether priests, people, or other servants of God, were consecrated persons, on whose time and powers the Lord alone had an unqualified claim.

The offices of prophet and priest of God were for life. They could not throw off the character to which they had been consecrated, and return to secular callings without sin. The people of Israel were in such holy covenant that they were pledged to love and duty; so that to forsake their God and worship aught but him was regarded as adultery, "as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband." They were "his saints," and must not forsake him for another God. Their relation, as his devoted people, declared their duty. His "vows were upon them." Their dedication to him and his service was the high design and holiest part of their sanctification. "No devoted thing that a man shall devote to the Lord, of all that he hath, both of man and beast, and of the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed; every devoted thing is most holy to the Lord." Lev. xxvii, 28.

Ceremonial Sanctification, or *legal holiness*, then, was the *separation* of any thing or person or institution from a common, or secular, or profane use, followed by a suitable *preparation* which qualified it or them for being permanently *consecrated* to the holy service of Almighty God. These were types of purity. To what better things did they point? This leads us to the consideration of holiness in its higher significance—that

II. SANCTIFICATION *in its MORAL or EVANGELICAL SENSE, as enjoyed by the Saints of Christ.*

Our best guides to find the true meaning will be the ideas of legal purity already traced, for they lead us to the facts in which they themselves are fulfilled. They then retired, having answered the purpose of their institution in guiding us to "Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, which speaks better things," of grace and purity, than their ordinances ever did, during more than two thousand years in which, by their repetition, they declared their own inefficiency and typical character, and at length "ceased to be offered," when the Lamb of God, "by one offering, perfected forever them that are sanctified."

1. The *Subjects* of evangelical holiness, according to the New Testament, are men: the characteristic of our dispensation is, not a splendid temple, gorgeous services, costly sacrifices, repeated washings and anointings, but it is real holiness, derived from a true atonement, and exhibited in all the power and consistency of the holy heart and life of redeemed sinners. The soul and body of man, his purposes and actions, are the subjects of moral sanctification. These are "holy brethren," "saints of Christ Jesus," "Israel after the Spirit." For in Christianity "neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth anything, but a new creature;" "he is a Jew," in this latter sense, "who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." No longer a ceremonial and external sanctification, but a real personal holiness of heart and life.

2. The *Methods* of Christian sanctification are described as being altogether divine and supernatural. The laver, the furnace, the animal sacrifices, and

anointing oil, have all passed away as means, and are only remembered and mentioned as "figures of the true." In their stead we have the divine word to be believed, the divine Sacrifice to be relied upon, and the divine Agent of holiness to be yielded to, in order to our sanctification.

In condescending to the weakness of our understandings to comprehend the supernatural process by which we are purified from sin, God sees fit still to employ figures which assist our faith and judgment.

(1.) We are sometimes spoken of as *gold* which has to be *refined* as by *fire*.

This most valuable of all metals is made, in a figure, a representative of the worth of the precious human soul, and of its capacity of moral refinement. God values the one as man estimates the other, and his process of purification is analogous. Hence we are said to be "purified as by fire;" "purged" as gold and silver are purified. In his method of sanctifying, God "sits as a refiner" to purify; the Holy Ghost is to us "as a refiner's fire." That sacred fire goes through our nature as the sanctifying flame, and consumes our sins—as the alloy is separated from the gold—"by the spirit of burning." Isa. iv, 4. Again,

(2.) Our sanctification is represented under the idea of a *fountain* for our defilement, in which we are to "*wash* and be *clean*."

The day has arrived, foretold by God twenty-five centuries ago, when there should be "a fountain opened to the house of David for sin and for uncleanness." We are, accordingly, exhorted to "wash away our sins, calling upon the name of the Lord;" to "draw near, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water;" and are "saved by the washing of regeneration." The purifying power of Him who leads us to that fountain is

"like fuller's soap," to cleanse and whiten ourselves and the "filthy garments," or habits of the soul.

"Putting off," like defiled and discarded raiment, "the old man with his deeds;" and having been "washed and sanctified by the Spirit of our God," "putting on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," (Col. iii, 9 and 10,) we are then clothed with garments of salvation and robes of righteousness, "arrayed in fine linen, clean and white," and so fitted to approach God as "a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable through Jesus Christ."

Leaving the figure, that "fountain" of purification is "the precious blood of Christ," who died to save us, not in our sins, but from them; the blood of him who "poured out his soul unto death" in order "that he might sprinkle," not the mere congregation of Israel, but "many nations," that the millions of mankind might rejoice in the experimental knowledge of the truth that he sanctifies his people "with his own blood."

These are the means by which we are made holy. All Christians, always and everywhere, and in proportion as they are pure and perfect, exulting in this truth, and uniting with his saints on earth and in heaven, to

"Glory in his sprinkled blood,"

and ascribe the honor and power of their salvation to the Lamb of God, "who loved them, and washed them from their sins in his own blood."

(3.) The *greatness* of this salvation from sin is manifest in the way in which its truth and reality are contrasted with the representative and superficial sanctification conferred by "those feeble types and shadows old." The evangelical methods are real and not typical; the means employed possess a merit and efficacy

exclusively their own; and the result is that Christian holiness is personal and moral, and not merely relative and ceremonial; it is internal and diffusive, making perfect "as pertaining to the conscience," and purifying the heart, thus fitting sanctified man to render more exalted service to Him who has called him with his holy calling.

The *Meritorious Means* of this Sanctification we are taught to trace to the death of Christ.

"For if the blood of bulls and goats, etc., sprinkling the unclean, sanctified to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" "By the which will we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all;" "The blood of the Covenant by which" the believer "was sanctified:" We are "sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints."

The *Efficient Means* is the agency of the Holy Ghost, who applies the efficacy of that blood to the human soul. We are sanctified "in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." "Being sanctified by the Holy Ghost," (Rom. xv, 16;) His holiness, expressing not merely his own nature, but his especial office as making men holy.

The *Condition* of our sanctification is believing in Christ. All our salvation, and every step in it, is "through faith in his blood." The condition is, "Believe and thou shalt be saved." That salvation being in the degree of our faith up to the measure of the trust we exercise, "purifying their hearts by faith." Let us now ascertain further,

III. The *SENSE*, experimentally considered, in which Christian men are sanctified.

The three ideas of ceremonial holiness throw much

light on this part of our subject. They are carried into the New Testament, and present there to our view the nature of moral purity as consisting of separation from sin, preparation for God, and consecration to holy service. There these figures become realities, the ceremonial is merged in the moral and spiritual, and these types of purity become real holiness; holiness, not merely in the external and visible, but in the inward and unseen; not only in the body, but especially in the soul and spirit of man.

(1.) *Separation* is the first fact in Scriptural holiness.

Sanctification begins in yielding to the call of God. "Ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit."

In calling them to holiness, the language of the Lord is, "Come out from among them, and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you;" "put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts." "I have chosen you out of the world;" "a chosen generation unto me." God thus "calls out of the world a people for his name," and *separates* them from sin and sinners. And this is the first act of sanctification, as it really applies to human character experimentally.

(2.) *Preparation*, by cleansing from sin and communicating purity, is the next step in the process. Here, also, the types of old strikingly prefigured this grace of God wherein we stand.

"Having therefore these promises"—that if we would come out from among sinners, God Almighty would receive and save us—"let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Christ "gave himself for us, that he might purify unto himself a peculiar people." And

when "washed and sanctified," they "put on" the holy and beautiful substitute for the character which they have to "put off"—"putting on the new man"—the saintly costume, expressing the nature and relation of this fitness for God which follows our separation from sin; the fitness which qualifies us for fellowship with the saints of Christ, the holiness which will be to us "the wedding garment" when we are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb of God.

Of this holy state our baptism is the visible symbol, and our Church relation the expression and privilege. God thus transforms sinners into saints, by turning them from disobedience to the wisdom of the just, and making ready a people prepared for the Lord. Sanctification, then, in reference to man, its recipient, and so far as it signifies his "cleansing himself," is for him, in obedience to the call to holiness, to turn from his sins to God; while on the part of God, its bestower, it is the reception of the man, thus separated, into his favor, and the shedding upon him the baptism of purification to wash away his sins, and the gift of "a new heart and right spirit," so as to endow him with the grace and power necessary for his saintly position and duties. First separated, and then "sanctified and meet for the Master's use and *prepared* unto every good work."

(3.) *Consecration* is the last thing which completes the fact of sanctification. It is the consequent dedication to God's worship and service of the person thus "freed from sin" and made holy; not merely to become, but to continue sanctified, by devoting his purified powers to holy purposes. The New Testament language which expresses this, is still derived from the ceremonial sanctity and service already explained. The sacrificial and sacred import of the terms "present," "offer," "yield," and "vessels," "sacrifice,"

“instruments,” and “priesthood,” as applied to Christian men, will be apparent.

As the utensils, vestments, and persons of the temple were “holy” by separation, fitness, and devotion to sacred use, so sanctified man is to “present himself a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God,” as the “reasonable service,” for which the other parts of his sanctification have fitted him.

He has been “purified from dead works” to “serve the living God.” So that, “If a man purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master’s use.” Living henceforth “no longer according to the former lusts in his ignorance; but as He who hath called him is holy, so he is to be holy in all manner of conversation,” yielding his “sanctified members instruments of righteousness unto God.” “Being made free from sin,” by separation and purity, “they become the servants of God,” ready for all his perfect will, whatever that will may be; so that, “whether they eat or drink, or whatever they do, they do all to the glory of God;” and can say, “Stablish thy word unto thy servant who is devoted to thy fear.”

Separation, according to the Scriptures quoted, seems to express *man’s* conditional act and duty in sanctification, what he can accomplish in “cleansing himself.” Under the leading and encouragement of the Holy Spirit, it is the turning round of the human will and purpose, choosing the holy service of God, daring to be singular, bidding farewell to sin and sinners; so separating himself from them for time and eternity, that we may speak of him, if the term be admissible, as being in a state of relative sanctification; no longer standing in connection with the unholy and profane, but desiring earnestly a full and personal relation with the saints of God.

Preparation is *God’s* especial part in sanctification. Man may will to do right, “come out and be separate,” and “turn unto God,” but he cannot wash his heart from sin; he can only wait on God to do it for him, and thus make his sanctification real and personal. It is the office of the Holy Spirit, when man submits himself to his blessed action, to sanctify and fit him for all practical goodness.

Consecration expresses what God then requires from man’s fidelity, that, having been made holy, he may, through grace, remain so. This faithful dedication is the saint’s *perseverance* in purity—the free and yet conditional devotion of his powers to the holy life for which his sanctification has fitted him. It is continued, practical sanctification.

These ideas of holiness will never alter; they suit eternity as well as time, and qualify for that world where holiness is the fitness for seeing the face of God, and for eternal companionship with “the spirits of just men made perfect.” There will this separation, fitness, and dedication be carried to their highest point of power and blessedness.

Separation from sin and sinners forever. We shall there “discern the difference between the righteous and the wicked,” for it will be absolute separation. Both “grow together until the harvest,” but then “the wheat and the tares” will be disconnected. “The King” himself in solemn judgment will make that division eternal. “He shall separate them, the one from the other, as the shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats;” and will welcome the holy to the heaven “prepared for them from the foundation of the world”—a prepared place for a prepared people.

This preparation or fitness will be their qualification for their position, where they shall be presented “faultless before the throne of God.” The ultimate object

of the Saviour's sacrifice being, "that he might wash and cleanse us by the washing of water by the word, and present us to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

And our dedication to purity and its services there is equally intended and secured. "They shall serve God day and night in his temple" forever. They will be "pillars in the temple of God, to go out no more." Inscribed with the victor's title, and bearing that new mysterious "name" worn by the citizens of "the holy Jerusalem." Beautiful as useful will be that permanent sanctification in a state where the eternal decree is, "He that is holy, let him be holy still."

This is sanctification. How reasonable and lovely it appears. How consistent with all the teachings of the book of God. *Moral, Evangelical Sanctification*, as acquired by Christian man, may, then, be defined as a separation of the true servants of Christ from sin, accompanied by a purifying preparation of their nature through the agency of the Holy Spirit, and completed by a permanent consecration of all their ransomed powers of thought, affection, and action to the service of Almighty God: separation and preparation being the means, and consecration the end or crown of sanctification.

I now approach that important point in this subject in which we are at present more especially interested. But here also the exegesis attempted will, we believe, guide us safely to a correct understanding of the mind of God, as to the *degree* or *extent of sanctification* offered in the Holy Scriptures to the faith and experience of Christian men.

THE EXTENT OR DEGREE OF SANCTIFICATION OR HOLINESS ATTAINABLE IN THIS LIFE.

No book is written with the exactness with which the Holy Spirit has written the Bible. The words in which he teaches us theology are definite, and free from all confusion as to either thought or terms. Our duty as students under such a teacher, is clear—to accept his instructions reverently, and without qualification or unhallowed criticism, as becomes the professors of an "obedient faith."

Does the Bible, then, teach that God in regeneration communicates to converted man the full grace of Christianity, so that he has but to retain the virtues of that grace, and need not look for anything beyond it? Is this all, or is there any further blessing, similar in nature, but greater in degree, which he may seek in penitent faith till he is exalted to its enjoyment?

Reasoning a moment from analogy, we may observe that it is manifest that God, in distributing the blessings even of nature and life, does not at first confer all the fullness and perfection of the gifts bestowed. Maturity of life, or of strength or development, is not conferred upon the child. He is not created as perfect in these respects as he may become. God grants life, but under conditions for its progress to manhood, which must be complied with if that maturity is ever reached. Meanwhile the little child, nourished with milk, weak and dependent, is a long way, both in stature and time, from that "perfect man" which he may become hereafter when, matured in strength, life, and endowments, he will answer every purpose intended by his divine Maker.

So "the morning light" is not "the perfect day," though it shines to it. Growth in nature shows the same progress and development, "First the blade, then

the ear, and then the full corn in the ear." Mental progress also illustrates the fact. "We know in part," and think and speak as children, till, "when we become men, we put away childish things." We attain unto manly thought, as well as manly life, after life is given, and the power of thought bestowed, by "going on to" physical and mental "perfection."

There is a difference of degree, a distinction in the measure bestowed. The one is the prerequisite of the other; but, whether the transition be rapid or slow, the two conditions are not identical, and not confounded together. There is an order and progress in the works of God, as they are led forward to that perfection of which he has made them capable.

The rule holds good in spiritual life, and in the progress of our moral recovery from sin to perfect holiness. God, in saving men, grants all the grace necessary to call forth our strength and fidelity, and lead to desire and capacity for higher grace. His rule of communicating is, "Whosoever hath" (that is, improves what he hath) "to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance." Matt. xiii, 12. "Grace to answer grace." God furnishes Christian man means of progress, with the design that the grace being improved, "the man of God may become perfect." Progression is a law of life, nothing being created or regenerated as perfect as it may become.

In sanctification we speak not of a difference in nature, for true holiness (as true life in the child) dwells in the regenerate; but of the degree or measure in which that holiness is enjoyed by those who have attained the higher grace of the Christian covenant. But let God himself decide the question. I ask your attention to the important fact, as preliminary, that,

1. The Holy Spirit employs terms of *comparison* or *degree*, when speaking of purity as enjoyed by Chris-

tians, and also of the faith which is the condition of its bestowment. Hence such phrases as "full" and "fullness," "more," "most," "most holy," "more excellent," "holiest of all," as well as the strong terms "perfect," "entire," "complete." These certainly announce a distinction, and an important one, as also do the words "lacking," "in part," "wanting nothing," "thoroughly furnished."

Surely there is an advanced state of grace over mere justification for Christian men expressed in the terms, "Full of the Holy Ghost and of faith," and, "that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God," "the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ." Who can doubt that there is a higher experience included in the terms, "Till we come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;" "if thy body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light;" "of full age, having the senses exercised to discern both good and evil." Again, lower degrees are implied as well as higher degrees expressed, when, not satisfied with the term "holy," the author of the Bible employs such phrases as "most holy" and "holiest of all." About thirty-five times is that one phrase "most holy" employed to express the degree of sanctity of certain things. To say that parts of a building could be made one more "holy" than another, and yet deny the same conditions to the experience of the Church of Christ, is limiting the Holy One of Israel, and asserting that he could effect that in a mere edifice which he was unable to accomplish in human souls. The Spirit of grace certainly speaks of a yet unattained degree of moral excellence when he urges a Christian believer to "go on to perfection."

Consistently with this the Scriptures represent faith in the heart as differing in degree—in some feeble, in others strong; and the sanctification experienced is

in the same measure. Of one class it says, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" "weak in faith;" while of the other it says, "He was strong in faith, giving glory to God;" "O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt!" While it is represented as capable of increase and perfection: "that we might perfect that which is lacking in your faith," "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith," "faith that will remove mountains, "laugh at impossibilities," and stand unmoved, resting alone in the promise and power of Almighty grace. Corresponding with these conditions of faith are the terms representing the unlimited power and more abundant grace of God, reserved and ready for believing man: "He giveth more grace;" for "he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think;" "they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness," while degrees of love—the fruit of this grace and faith—are frequently referred to, as where the Lord inquires "Which of them will love him most?" and declares it a correct conclusion that it would be "he to whom he forgave most." "That your love may abound more and more in knowledge," etc.

But let us advance further, and trace what the Scriptures say of

2. The *degree* of sanctification implied and promised to regenerate man, as exhibited in the *methods* employed to make him holy.

When God speaks of sanctification under the idea of refining *gold* or silver by *fire*, see what an unlimited influence he intimates in the process: "I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin." All gold, as one observes, is not refined to the same degree and height of purity; but true gold, though in the lowest degree of fineness, will endure the furnace and the touchstone, and by that

trial is distinguished from counterfeit metal. Yet here the Purifier of our souls has engaged to purge our nature "as gold and silver," repeating the trial till the process is complete, and the image of our Refiner is clearly reflected in the purified spirit of man.

When *water* is the figure, and our sanctification is described under the method of *washing*, the degree is as complete as the element and the agent can make it: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and idols will I cleanse you;" "Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." And,

When the sanctification is by *blood*, it is equally complete in the degree of holiness expressed and conferred: "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin;" "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." See again,

3. The *degree* of sanctification in the *experimental sense*, in which men are sanctified as the separated, prepared, and dedicated servants of God. Entire sanctification, as thus realized, may be ascertained by the degree in which a man of God is separated from all unrighteousness; abstaining not merely from sin, but "from all appearance of evil;" who "condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth," but keepeth "himself unspotted from the world;" a man whose preparation for God has been perfected when, like Isaiah, he saw himself in the light of the divine purity, and discovered his remaining carnality, and was convicted for a further work of holiness to remove the spiritual sin which that light revealed as still existing in him; when the "live coal from off the altar" completed his purification, his remaining iniquity being taken away and his sin purged, and he thus prepared, by

(2.) "*Perfection*" is the next term used. It is properly designated "*Christian Perfection*," being a relative term, denoting that maturity of spiritual Christianity in the hearts of Christ's saints which leads to a maturity of practical Christianity in their lives. The sense of the term may be ascertained by a comparison of its use elsewhere, such as "So the house of the Lord was perfected," (2 Chron. viii, 16,) or "Bringing no fruit to perfection." The word then means completion, the adding of the last thing required to finish—ripeness or maturity. This feature of our full redemption is spoken of in the Bible as

▲ *maturity of spiritual life*, into which we are quickened by the power of God, so that we are raised from a state of mere evangelical childhood into a maturity of Christian life and manhood, of which our Lord Jesus Christ himself is the model, and in which condition we become possessed of a moral power, culture, and stability not enjoyed before. "Babes in Christ" are "saints;" but they are not yet "men," "perfect men" in Christ Jesus, "wholly sanctified." The former are immature and weak, needing elementary instruction; the latter are strong, victorious over the world and Satan, and enjoy the higher experience, knowledge, and efficiency of their manly life. The apostle clearly states the steps by which we reach this standard of Christian excellence: "We all come, in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine," etc., "but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." "As he is so are we in this world;" for "every one that is perfect shall be as his Master."

A *completeness of his Christianity* is another feature of this state of grace, rounding off the character into a harmonious whole, and finishing it according to the divine design; making his nature a holy and beautiful temple, to be the "habitation of God through the Spirit;" so that of such a man God himself says he shall be "perfect and entire, wanting nothing;" "perfect and complete in all the will of God;" "God dwelleth in" him, "and his love is perfected" in him; "Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God;" "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

The *design* of this perfection is, that redeemed man may glorify his God in his whole experience and duty. All the virtues of Christianity are added to his character with this intent, so that he "shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." "Patience" has "her perfect work" in him. The law of love controls his language; for, "if any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body:" and he becomes "perfect in every good work to do His will." Thus the "man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

This is a question of degree or measure, of the attainment of which it may be truly affirmed that "when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away," or lose itself in the greater grace given, by being blended in a more perfect purity and radiance, as the morning light "shineth more and more" till it has melted into the "perfect day."

(3.) "*Perfect Love*" is the last great term by which the Christian Scriptures describe this hallowing change. There is something seraphic about the phrase. Not only is the understanding and conscience

and will sanctified, and the Christianity that adorns them perfected, but the affections also are fired with love. Man has a heart, and the grace of God cultivates and hallows it. With the heart he loves, and the life follows the heart; and so God wills that the love of that heart should be "perfect love." The term shows that holy love, too, admits of *degrees*. Its source is divine, for "God is love;" and its highest forms and manifestations are how God and Christ love: "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you;" "his great love wherewith he loved us;" "that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."

In the perfection of this holy love we are brought to the nearest conformity to Him whose nature it is. In this sanctified affection we are to "abound more and more," making "increase to the edifying of itself," until we love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves.

This "perfect love casteth out fear." "Herein is our love made perfect." "Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." "If we love one another God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."

The word "perfected" is used evidently to signify completion, as when our Lord says, "I must do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected;" referring to his being made a complete and actual Saviour by his atoning death, and thus finishing the work of human redemption. So God completes our recovery from sin, and puts the finishing grace on our salvation when he perfects a Christian in his "own image of love." This "perfect love" is the fulfilling of the law, "the bond of perfectness," which binds together, like the shining girdle, the

whole circle of moral excellences into one united and graceful Christian character.

So that the degree of Christian sanctification attainable in this life, according to the teaching of the word of God, consists in a maturity of the great vital principle of Christianity—it is the pure and perfect love of God, with a corresponding love to all others for his sake, filling the soul to the exclusion of everything opposed to its own nature, and producing a perfect acquiescence to the will and commands of God, in the life and conversation.

Let us now consider whether this view of the doctrine is sustained by the inspired teaching of the New Testament Churches, in which we shall find additional evidence of its nature, and also ascertain the condition on which God offers it to Christian men.

5. The *apostolic teaching* of the New Testament Churches on experimental religion, and their distinctions and exhortations when speaking of Christian experience, show the correctness of this exposition.

(1.) To me it seems evident that they did *not* teach that *regeneration* conveyed the *full measure of grace*. Else, why should St. Paul say to those whose Christian position he recognized as "saints in Christ Jesus," and "brethren beloved," that they were still "carnal" and but "babes in Christ?" Or, why did he pray for the Thessalonians that God "might perfect that which" was "lacking in" their "faith?" Why did he say to the Corinthians, "And this also we wish, even your perfection," or urge the Hebrews to "go on to" it if they had reached it already in regeneration? surely he would have used other phraseology than this had there been no such second blessing, or higher degree of grace to "go on" to, which was their privilege and duty. But he assumes that there was this higher life, which they might reach, and in these strong

terms urges them that "leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ" they "go on unto perfection;" so that they may remain no longer "children," or "babes" in Christian experience, but spring up to the maturity "of full age" and Christian manhood, where "strong meat," and not "milk," would be their appropriate nourishment when they had thus reached "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," of "perfect" men in Christ Jesus.

St. John does not say that "he that feareth" hath no saving grace or Christian love, but that such a Christian was "not made perfect in love" while these doubts and fears were struggling in his soul; and he points out the more excellent way, in which they might realize that that "which was lacking" and partial in their piety and enjoyment would be supplied and completed by the gift of that "perfect love" which would "cast out fear," and enable them to walk unblamable in grace before God.

(2.) It is equally evident that this *higher* measure of purity, life, and love was taught by the apostles as *attainable* and *desirable*; and that they earnestly exhorted and prayed that their converts might be raised to its enjoyment. Hence such language as this to the Thessalonians: "The will of God, even your sanctification." St. Paul recognized they were already "sanctified in Christ Jesus," "called to be saints;" but that they were as yet only partially sanctified; and he prays that what was deficient might be supplied—"The very God of peace sanctify you wholly;" and that, in this state of entire sanctification, their "whole spirit and soul and body" might be "preserved blameless" to the close of life. Again he says to the Colossians—whom he calls "saints and faithful brethren in Christ," (chap. i, 2,)—that he and Epaphras were "laboring fervently for" them in "prayers," that they might stand "perfect and

complete in all the will of God." And to the Hebrews, who were "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling," (iii, 1,) but as to maturity of grace and experience were yet only "babes in Christ," he says, (xiii, 20,) "Now the God of peace. . . through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ." And St. Peter says to the persecuted saints whom he addressed, who were already "begotten again unto a lively hope," and the "elect" of God, that there was a higher state of holiness for them, and adds, "The God of all grace. . . after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." 1 Pet. v, 10.

It is not necessary to multiply these quotations; enough are here to prove that there was a state of grace *beyond the present experience* of these Christians to which their inspired teachers earnestly desired to lead them, and that these primitive Christians were taught to cherish the hope of a complete salvation, and to say, He "will perfect that which concerneth me." Again,

(3.) The inspired ministry also *recognized the distinction* among their converts of those who *enjoyed*, and those who did *not* enjoy, this blessing of a full salvation. Of the difference between the two classes they say: "For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." 2 Pet. i, 8, 9. Like many Christians now who are resting at ease in our Zion, satisfied with what God did for them in days gone by, and forgetting what is "the hope of" their "calling."

To those who were *not yet* fully saved they

declared, "And this also we wish, even your perfection;" "He that feareth is not made perfect in love;" "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure;" and, "When for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God, and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them who are of full age," etc. And he accordingly urges them that, "leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ," they should "go on to" Christian manhood. While, to those who *enjoyed and professed* this higher state of grace, they say: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently;" "Let us, as many as be perfect, be thus minded;" "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect;" "In him verily is the love of God perfected."

And the *examples* of such shining piety are commended to our imitation; as Enoch, Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Noah, Job, and Daniel, whose faith, patience, purity, and lovely character God bore witness to, and could say, That man was perfect and upright. A similar condition is positively enjoined upon us: "Walk before me and be thou perfect;" "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect;" "Brethren, farewell; be perfect, and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

6. We are further taught that the *intercessions* of the glorious Head of the Church, and the *leadings* of his Holy Spirit, are all *designed* for our being introduced to this state of grace. Full salvation has been provided by the atoning blood. He who shed it desires to see its virtue displayed in his people. One

of the last of his utterances on earth was for them in this regard. What Christian can read his words without realizing the intimate connection of this doctrine of holiness with the conviction and salvation of mankind universally, or without desiring to realize their full significance in his own soul? "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." To this sanctity and perfection we should become devoted by all our love to Christ and by our desires of a conformity to him; for "every one that is perfect shall be as his Master." How long time would it need to convert the world were this prayer answered to-day in the Church? Is not every approximation to it the power by which chiefly revivals are originated and continued in the earth? For, can we imagine such Christlike, perfect Christians in any community without sinners around them being aroused and led to God by their holy and devoted efforts? Such saints cannot live and pray in vain.

7. The Scriptures already quoted show that the blessing of entire sanctification is granted on the condition of *faith* in Jesus's blood, and being by faith, it must be *instantaneous*; for at any moment that we believe, God, who is faithful, is *then* pledged to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Whatever growth there may be up to the moment of its reception, there is, of course, an instant when spiritual sin—or what remains of the carnal mind—is destroyed, and our old man is crucified with Christ. There is a moment of our regeneration, and there must be a moment when we are sanctified wholly; when the hallowing flame falls from heaven on the heart, and

our Refiner purely purges away our dross; when the live coal from off the altar sanctifies our nature, and our sin is purged, and we are perfectly prepared for holy service.

No limitation in the sense of any of the figures employed to describe it can be used as an argument against this instantaneous communication of the grace, so long as we bear in mind the supernatural power of God by which it is effected. The bullock on Elijah's altar on Mount Carmel, and the twelve barrels of water with which it was drenched, seemed to the eye of man to require long hours of burning and days of heat to consume and evaporate the whole. But to the majesty of "the God that answereth by fire" there was no difficulty or delay. In response to his servant's prayer, "the fire of the Lord fell, and" evidently in a moment, "consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench." 1 Kings xviii, 38. Why should almighty grace delay when human faith is ready? "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day;" and he assures us that he can and will, when he is trusted, "Finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness" for those who stagger "not at the promise of God through unbelief, but" are "strong in faith, giving glory to God." It is "a great salvation," but

"Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,
And looks to that alone,"

"being fully persuaded that what he" hath "promised he" is "able also to perform." We are taught that God has suspended all the degrees of our salvation upon our faith. The hour of our faith is, therefore, the hour of his grace, so that the blessing is instantaneous in its communication, though there may be, and usually is,

a growth up to the moment when it is bestowed, as there is a growth in it after its reception.

8. The truth and reality of this doctrine of a full and perfect salvation comes to us thus sustained by the authority of the Holy Scriptures, and it has been *enjoyed and witnessed as a personal experience* by Christians of all communions and in every walk of life. It is the high honor of our own denomination that it has been held and professed, in manifest and beautiful consistency, by thousands of the followers of "that great divine of Christian experience," John Wesley. The ministry of Methodism has ever faithfully explained and advocated this glorious doctrine; while it has also been equally ready to rescue it from the abuses and discredit to which it has been occasionally exposed by the oddities or follies of some, who, while obtrusively and inconsistently professing it, have been no credit to its Christlike liberality, its common sense, or its purified human nature. Well we know that the profession of this high experience by a miserly Christian, or any other man or woman whose conduct is not manifestly consistent with what is "pure, lovely, and of good report," is an offense to its pure spirit, and has also too often disgusted sensible men, and, very properly, made them unwilling to receive such testimony when there was in the lives and tempers of such persons an absence of the holy "fruits" of the doctrine, which alone can justify a profession of it. Who that loves purity can cease to hope and pray that this glory of teaching, witnessing, and defending the full salvation of scriptural holiness may *never depart* from the ministry and membership of our Church? We have been raised up especially for *this* purpose, to "spread scriptural holiness," and so long as we are true to our divine mission we shall be true to this doctrine.

If, then, gospel authority and personal experience concur to commend this truth to our acceptance, we are religiously (and we might say, logically) bound to maintain it, if our faith is not to stand in the unbelief of those who reject or misapprehend this doctrine. The testimony of God and the witness of his saints are greater than the doubts, fears, or reasonings of men, for it is a positive against a negative faith. Happy they who thus "follow on to know the Lord," to realize the extent of his power to save. They shall "know his going forth is prepared as the morning;" that he giveth not only "the former," but also "the latter rain," to mature his harvest in their hearts, so that their fruit of holiness may be brought "to perfection." To them the future and its possibilities are in the care of a holy Providence which commands their fullest confidence, removing anxiety and "casting out fear." Their completed grace and intimate fellowship with God makes them meet for the inheritance with the saints in light; and instead of dropping out of this life with its secularities and deficiencies surrounding the heart, the perfect will of God has been so done in them, as in Enoch and Elijah and the other "spirits of just men made perfect," that their souls are relieved of the abruptness of the change, and enabled with ease to glide through death into the paradise for which perfect love has fitted them. In the prospect of that solemn but, to them, welcome hour, they can each delightfully say,

"Grant *this*, and then from all below
 Insensibly remove;
 Our souls the change shall scarcely know,
 Made perfect first in love."

And in the last day they shall say, "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the

day of judgment, because as he is so are we in this world." Yes, and its sweets remain to hallow the soul when time and judgment have passed forever. We are told that, "Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away," but this perfect and eternal "charity" shall never fail. Love, "the divinest of the train," will still abide to bless the soul it has sanctified forever!

9. According, then, to the teaching of the Bible, we may *define* Entire Sanctification, or Christian Perfection, to be that *completed change wrought in the heart, purposes, and life of redeemed man*, by which he is *separated from all sin, spiritual and actual, fully prepared and fitted for God, and unreservedly devoted or consecrated to his service*; a change produced by the merits of the death of Christ our Saviour, and wrought by the operation of the Holy Ghost our Sanctifier, including in its scope the whole of our being and powers, and, in its degree, a perfecting of the various parts of our spiritual recovery, in life, purity, and love, received by faith, and therefore instantaneous, and made, by the will of God, the privilege in this life of every regenerated man.

III. Let us now, in conclusion, *test the correctness* of this exegesis of the doctrine of holiness by applying it to other objects in the Scriptures which are described as sanctified or hallowed. There can be no truer test of accuracy, in the science of interpretation, than to find that the definition will explain such passages, and unfold a consistent and beautiful aspect of the general idea. It thus becomes a key, which fits into every groove of holiness, and unlocks their true and manifest meaning without a strain on either their sense or connection. Illustrative instances must be few in view of the extra length of this paper, but two

or three of the more important ones may be profitably referred to.

1. *God* himself is holy, and the definition best explains in what sense he is so. Let us refer to that difficult text in Isaiah, (chap. v, 16.) "And God, that is holy, shall be sanctified in righteousness." What is the meaning here? It is at once apparent that "sanctified," in the usual sense of being cleansed from sin, would be a violent and inappropriate interpretation of the passage, and another meaning must be found. Apply the exposition advanced in this paper, the true biblical idea of holiness, and see how consistent and solemn is the truth here announced. Taking the term "sanctified" in the sense of being separate from all sin, prepared for all goodness, and perpetually devoted to everything holy in thought, act, and purpose, how eminently does it apply to God, the source of purity, who is himself the *pattern* of all that he requires us to become! His sanctity corresponds with ours in all these three particulars, so that the holiness of God implies "an essential and eternal *distance* from all that is evil; the *possession*, in an ineffable degree, of all spiritual and moral excellences and perfections; and a *constant observance* in all his administrations and ways of that which is most pure, righteous, and good:" the difference between him and man in this respect being, that he *is* holy naturally, whereas we have to be *made* so graciously. Our sanctification had a beginning, and is derived; his is essential and eternal; but both are similar in their nature. "God, that is holy," is thus "sanctified in righteousness." In that righteous administration he not only preserves and vindicates the sanctity of his own character and law, but also maintains and promotes holiness by his example, his sanction, and his grace, in the world which he governs after the counsel of his own holy will.

2. *The Lord Jesus Christ* is holy also in the same sense. It is written, "Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world;" and again, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." Now, no interpretation of these words is admissible that does not assume the always immaculate character of the Son of God. Of his absolute purity we are assured. In what sense, then, did God the Father "sanctify" him, or he "sanctify himself?" Let us apply our exposition here.

He was *separated* by God and his own active concurrence to become, in a pure and holy human nature, the Mediator for mankind. His incarnation was unique, his soul and body spotless, and his life and powers devoted to his Father's will. He says, "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world." He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners;" "he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."

Preparation for his great work is the second sense of our Lord's sanctification. To fit him for his office he was commissioned, immaculately incarnated, and anointed from on high. Hence he says, "A body hast thou prepared me." He was made "as a lamb without blemish and without spot;" "anointed with the Holy Ghost and power," and was thus prepared—sanctified—for his mission and sacrifice. And in this sense, "being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation."

Consecration to the work for which he was thus supernaturally fitted is the last feature of our Saviour's sanctity. Full, continued, and complete was that consecration. In every hour of his devoted life he could say, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish his work;" "And now, O Father, I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work

which thou gavest me to do:" glorification and service so perfectly rendered and accomplished that the divine Father could freely say, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." He was "sanctified," then, in the sense that he was separate from sin and sinners, prepared supernaturally for his perfect priesthood, and became and remains in his devotion to it "consecrated for evermore."

3. *The Ministry of the Christian Religion* is our last illustration. They, too, are sanctified in the sense laid down: "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord;" a holy minister of holy things, made so

By *separation* to their office. He who set apart Levi and his sons separates these Christian ministers to become pastors and teachers of the Church of God. The minister is "called of God as was Aaron." Conscientious of that call, he "confers not with flesh and blood," realizing that he is "separated unto the Gospel of God:" His secular plans of life are given up in obedience to that call, and he becomes separated "for the work whereunto" the Holy Ghost has called him. Each true minister can say, "God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace," hath revealed "his Son in me that I might preach him among the heathen." Called and designated to be, not a mason, or merchant, or farmer, or stock-broker, or aught else, but a preacher of God's holy word, a minister of Jesus Christ, who "forsakes all," and leaves the nets and ships and receipt of custom henceforth to other men, and goes forth to the higher vocation to which God has separated him. That separation from secular callings is to be so complete that he is enjoined to "give himself wholly to" his sacred office, and in that separation he finds his official sanctity. His freedom from worldly care is provided for by the fact that God makes it the "duty" of his pastoral charge to give

him an adequate support, and no doubt but that he blesses their secular toil that they may be able to fulfill this obligation.

In the former dispensation he expressly separated tithes and land as a "holy portion" for "the ministers of the sanctuary." Ezek. xlv, 4. The support of the preachers of the Gospel is therefore not a donation, it is a claim by God upon the property and honest industry of the members of the Church, who are to sustain this separation of their minister by freeing his mind from anxiety, and enabling him to give himself up, without distraction, to his sacred duties. "They which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple," for "so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel," and not by the secular toil from which God has separated them.

Preparation is the second feature of Ministerial Sanctification. This preparation is the gifts and graces for the office to which he is called—gifts of utterance, of purity, of divine illumination and sacred unction—received by endowment of the Holy Spirit, under commission from the Lord Jesus Christ, and sealed in a divine ordination, the evidences of which are recognized by the Church of God as sufficient proof of the call and fitness of a sanctified ministry. They are made "ambassadors for Christ." "Thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee . . . and shalt hear my word and warn them from me;" "The Holy Ghost hath made them overseers of the flock of God;" "He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." Their divine Master says, "I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." To this work the holy minister of God is *consecrated*. It is his life work. He who put him into the office

requires him to "make full proof of his" ministry. He is devoted to this duty, and to this alone, "a chosen vessel unto" God "to bear" his "name before" men. "I was made a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me . . . that I should preach the unsearchable riches of Christ." "Laying aside every weight" and worldly inducement, his purpose is to finish his "course with joy, and the ministry which" he has "received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God," remembering the solemn charge of his Master, "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them . . . continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."

Such is his vocation. To it he is "sanctified." He can neither enter the ministry without the call of God, nor leave it without his permission; so that no man can step in and out of the pastoral relation at his pleasure or convenience; to-day a minister of holy things, to-morrow a secular man, buying and selling and getting gain. God forbids this officer of his to entangle "himself with the affairs of this life." He cannot therefore pass from the altar to the exchange, from the communion table to the counting room, without disobeying God, and exposing his holy office to the contempt of the world, and becoming a stumbling-block and a snare to many souls. He cannot "serve two masters," nor "separate himself" from the holy ministry, so long as strength and acceptability remain, without danger of falling from grace, and incurring the "woe" which awaits that man, who will be the most wretched of all men; the man who, instead of fulfilling, has deliberately forsaken "the ministry which" he "received of the Lord Jesus." His Master and Judge warns him of the danger: "O man of God, flee these things;" and urges him to keep his consecration to his office "without spot, unrebukable until the appearing

of our Lord Jesus Christ." Such a man voluntarily resigns the pursuit of wealth and ease that he may "win souls;" but this faithful laborer shall have his "hire," for God esteems him worthy of it. His gains will be glorious, a wealth that will outlive the grave, and shine forth when all the gold of earth shall vanish; then will the gems that he has gathered in his self-denying toil be his "joy or crown of rejoicing in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming."

The *design* of such a ministry is the promotion of holiness in its highest forms and its eternal blessedness. This, and nothing less. Hear what the holy word says: "He gave . . . pastors and teachers." With what design? "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." "Christ in you the hope of glory, whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus; whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working which worketh in me mightily."

Consistently with these quotations we may define the sanctity of these authorized teachers and exemplars of holiness: The minister of Jesus Christ is sanctified for his office by a divine designation and call, which separates him from common and secular pursuits; by a preparation of supernatural endowment and fullness of grace; and also by a faithful and permanent consecration to the duties of his ministry, so that the full and final salvation of the souls under his care may be secured, and they at last be presented faultless before the throne of God as the high design of his holy ministry.

Such is the doctrine of Holiness as taught and exemplified in the word of God. Where is the Christian who would not desire to become what God here pictures to our view? or where is the minister who does not long to have its power and unction in his study and pastoral intercourse, and in his pulpit labors, as he would delight at last to present these faultless and perfect saints to their glorious Saviour "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing?" Into this "holiest of all" states of grace regeneration is the prerequisite and faith the condition of entrance. To those who inquire, "Shall I rest in regenerating grace—does this contain the whole design of God's mercy for me, or is there something higher and better still to be attained till my purity is complete, my Christianity matured and my love perfected"—to all such, hungering and thirsting for the holiness of this higher life, the Spirit in the word says, "Go on unto perfection." In obedience to the divine direction they will find that God has indeed "obtained a rise in blessing" in the experience of his servants, and that, in following on to the Lord, it may truly be said, in the language of our hymns, that "the holy to the holiest leads."

The consistency of the exegesis of this paper with the doctrine taught by Mr. Wesley and the theologians of our Church will, we hope, be apparent, though tracing it out I have simply aimed to ascertain what the doctrine of the Bible on the nature and extent of Christian sanctification.