



"You will know them by their fruits" Mt. 7:16

Features of The Sanctified Life

THE SANCTIFIED LIFE

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NB: In these pre-Azusa Street days, the scriptural term "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" was not used to refer to the charismatic experience (yet unknown), but to the then common sanctification experience-Edit.



6. How To Keep The Blessing

In one sense the blessing of sanctification keeps us. Hence it is very properly called "the keeping blessing." The constant indwelling of Christ, the easy exercise of faith, the restfulness and inner steadfastness of the experience, are all delightful features of the life, and contribute as well to its perpetuity.

The statement that sanctification is more easily kept than regeneration, seems quit incredible to some people. They wonder how a higher life and deeper grace can be more easily retained than a less exalted experience. The explanation is that inbred sin, the disturbing factor and bosom foe of the regenerated man, is cast out in the work of sanctification. The internal war is over. The battle is now on the outside. The life feels as if it was self-perpetuating. There is no fag or let-down in it, because Christ is ever in the heart. Brimful of holy energy it is always aggressive, and in addition has such unfoldings and disclosures of new strength and sudden developments of power which thrill the

possessor, and can only be explained by the indwelling presence of the Son of God. At once on awakening in the morning he may feel the blessing stirring in his soul. With every call to duty there is felt a great reserve of strength and a conscious adequacy for the occasion.

Yet, of course, there are things for the sanctified individual to do, and which not to do would rank him with antinomians and fanatics and result disastrously and suicidally to the blessing. There are precautions and observances that must be seen to. We never get beyond the need of means of grace while in this world of probation. Self-denial, cross-bearing, watchfulness and prayer are to be practiced up to the portals of the tomb. To deny and neglect these things is to write ourselves down as moral idiots and bring danger and ruin upon the soul.

The sweet grace of sanctification can be retained. Great and gracious as it is, there is no need of losing it. The author has enjoyed the experience for seven years. He knows of a lady who has possessed it unbroken for fifty years, and he heard an aged servant of God say once that he had enjoyed it uninterruptedly for sixty-two years.

But these people did something to preserve the grace. For just as neglecting to do certain things has caused the blessing to depart, so the doing of certain things commanded us will retain the gracious experience. There are several things which, if observed and practiced, will prevent all spiritual lapse and plant the blessing in us like a towering and immovable mountain.

The first is faith. We obtain sanctification by faith but it is also retained by faith. Faith is the vital point of union with Christ, and of course, Satan makes his strongest assaults at this point. If after the reception of the blessing he can make the soul doubt its presence or continuance, he at once secures a foothold again in the territory from which he was ejected, and will soon rob the heart of its birthright and treasure.

It is noticeable that immediately after a person has received the witness of the Spirit to sanctification, the Adversary charges down upon the soul with his doubts. It is well for all such assaulted individuals to remember that just as soon as the Son of God received the anointing or baptism of the Holy Ghost on the banks of the Jordan, that he was immediately afterwards driven into the wilderness and there tempted forty days by the Devil. He conquered by faith and in the use of the Word of God. We can do the same.

The writer made this discovery on the second day of his sanctification. He found that under the heavy pressure of dark spirits he kept sweet and still in soul by exercising faith and repeating a number of times through the time of spiritual trial the words "The blood cleanseth me from all sin," and, "The altar sanctifieth the gift." This quiet exercise of faith kept the experience as steady in the soul as a fixed star is in the heaven. He never forgot the victory nor the lesson learned at that time.

He found that a quiet, persistent faith will either keep in check or throw off the gloomy and dark influences of Satan as a mountain wall casts off the waves of the sea. That it was a tonic protecting from the malaria of doubt. He discovered that the simple repeating of certain passages of God's Word as quoted above had a strange strengthening effect upon the heart and vitalized the spirit of faith itself. He saw that there was a wonderful reacting influence on each other, the Word on the faith and the faith on the Word. Faith grew stronger by repeating passages of Scripture, and the Word became sweeter and stronger in its meaning under the increasing faith. In short, he found that Satan is powerless to despoil the soul of the pearl of great price so long as that soul believes God sanctifies it. That when a man drives a stake down here and says, Alabama, "Here we rest," he does rest, and the Adversary has to stand with impotent rage and see the smiling child of God with head anointed, cup running over and eating joyously in the presence of

his enemies, whether they be terrestrial or infernal.

Many of those who have lost the blessing make the confession, "I got to doubting." Who wonders at the loss? As Faith is the condition of the reception and retention of grace, then, of course, Doubt, which is its opposite, is the way to lose all we have. All sin and spiritual lapse is preceded by doubt.

It opens the door to Satan and he rushes in to sow tares in the wheat, and possess the house again which had been swept and garnished.

But faith keeps the door of the heart; faith retains the grace and presence of God, and makes it impossible for the devil to do his work. And so the just not only shall, but do, live by faith.

A friend of the writer was sanctified one day, and three days afterward the powers of darkness came down upon him and the Satanic whisper was fairly hissed into his soul: "You know you are not sanctified." But this time the great Enemy bore down upon one who was ready and able through grace to meet him. His reply was, "Is that so? Then if I am not sanctified, here goes again. My all is on the altar; the altar sanctifies the gift. I am the gift and therefore, I am sanctified. Hallelujah!" And lo I as suddenly as he came Satan left him.

From a lady friend he did not so soon depart. For several days after she received the witness of the Spirit to her sanctification the devil violently assailed her. Passing her several times during the time of her faith trial we saw the hunted, distressed and puzzled look in her eyes. She could not understand why this tight spiritual pressure should be on her. She did not remember that after the glorious experience on the banks of Jordan came the wilderness trial to Christ. There was no time to talk with her, so I gave her an encouraging smile and a grasp of the hand, saying, "All will be well; hold on by faith." She did hold on, quietly exercising a childlike trust until suddenly the Saviour appeared, scattered her tormentor; and angels came and ministered unto her. She obtained the lesson of her life, and today has no trouble in going through these character tests, but moves calmly and brightly through them all like a star through the night.

It is wonderful how quickly the lesson of faith is learned which retains the experience of holiness.

At first it may be an effort to exercise the belief and go on repeating the Word of God, especially when the joy of the soul may have run low or departed. But in a few hours or days one becomes established in the grace, there is a spirit or whisper of trust in the heart, and the soul settles down with a delightful sense of recumbency upon the love, power and protecting care of the Son of God.

It is now that the man sees the tremendous force of faith as by it he retains the greatest experience of the Christian life. He can now mentally exercise it. It seems to be the breath of his soul and is exhaled like breath. Instead of words being uttered, the thought itself is uppermost, "The blood cleanses me," "Jesus sanctifies me."

Still, while it may be hard at times to repeat those passages of God's Word which bear upon the soul-cleansing power of the blood, yet there is peculiar blessedness in such oral testimony and confession of the lips. In our own experience we have never had to repeat such words as "The blood cleanses me," "The altar sanctifies me," "Jesus saves me now," more than the third time before feeling the sense of victory in the soul, and hearing an inward hallelujah voiced by the answering Spirit who thus assured us that all was well.

The expression "exercising faith" means much. But it is a simple truth for all the blessedness it brings. Men know what it is to exercise their lungs and arms and body, but

seem bewildered when we tell them to exercise faith. If we exercise the voice or limb we use them. So to exercise faith we use it, trot it out, whirl it around, and propel it upward. Every effort makes it easier to do, and from uttering the words, "The blood cleanses," "Jesus sanctifies me," the soul gets so that, as we said before, it actually thinks these sentences of life. The heart literally broods on the atoning blood, and a feeling of trust encompasses the life like the mountains stand about Jerusalem.

One night at a preaching service we noticed the minister, who was a sanctified man, with head bowed and lips moving. It was during a protracted meeting and was one of those times when the air seemed to be full of evil spirits. The congregation appeared frozen, and the very atmosphere depressing. We thought that the preacher was praying, as we observed the motion of his lips and caught indistinct whispers. After the service was over we asked him if this was not the case.

His reply was: "No; I was not praying."

"What, then, were you doing?"

With the greatest seriousness and a tone that deeply impressed us he replied: "I was exercising faith!"

In a flash, then, I saw what a battle he had been going through; and that there in the pulpit he had met the devil and whipped him out by whispering passages of the Word of God and by the exercise of faith. There was a great victory that night in the sermon and at the altar, and this was the way it was won. What this brother did in the meeting and vanquishing of the difficulties of that night, we are to do with every spiritual trial and doubt flung in our way by men and devils. We are to believe through them into light.

Let no man who ever saw a person flash a lantern up a dark alley and make it a path of light from end to end, say he does not know what it is to exercise faith. It is to throw a headlight of belief on God's Word and work through a tunnel of spiritual gloom. It bores its way through the devil's suggestions and lies. It turns an X-ray on a wall of dark circumstance and reveals God on the other side. It steadily refuses to doubt the statement of God's Word and the witness of His Spirit. It says that light or no light, sensation or no sensation, feeling or no feeling, knowledge or no knowledge, when God says a thing is so, it is so. That this settles the matter finally and forever.

We fail to see how Satan can find entrance, much less be able to rob the soul of its greatest treasure when such a faith stands guard with unsleeping vigilance at the door. This is the victory that overcometh low spirits, a sinking heart, whispers of the devil and all the discouragements of this lower world-- even our faith.

The second thing necessary to keep the blessing of sanctification is obedience.

Faith is the heart condition, obedience is the life condition. If there is true faith within there will be obedience to God without. They walk together and they go down together. When faith fails disobedience sets in. When obedience fails faith sickens and will die if the course is persisted in.

When consciously disobedient to God faith feels paralyzed for the time, and the lips seem unable to frame the words, "The blood cleanses me now from all sin."

We do not mean to say that the blessing of sanctification is lost by one small act of disobedience, or by two or three such. We certainly believe that by a single act of murder or adultery the blessing would be forfeited. But there are failures of duty that may not be compared to these two sins. Grave as is any act of disobedience be it small or great in its nature, yet we can not believe that God suddenly leaves a man forsaken and cursed for one such omission or commission. We believe that sanctification, like regeneration, as a

rule, departs gradually. As the light fades out of the sky, so the glory leaves the soul. First joy goes, then liberty, and then the testimony. The man has become dumb.

Satan has again locked the lips, the daughters of music are gone, and the old heart burden has come back. The blessing has leaked out, as some of them say. Yes, and it leaked out through acts of disobedience.

Disobedience is a grave thing. We know a lady now eighty years of age who says that she deliberately disobeyed God fifty years ago, after having been a sanctified woman for several years.

She says that while God forgave her and she has not lost the blessing, yet her sanctified experience has never been the same. We believe that she has allowed Satan to keep her crushed down by this memory, when the atonement covers the whole thing and she should have gone free; but the fact that the memory of the act has so burdened her all through life shows the gravity of a single deed of disobedience. If we would keep the blessing of sanctification we must obey God. His Word must be kept. We can not violate His commandments. We must hearken to His calls and follow His leadings He can unmistakably impress His will upon us, and if we do it not, we will be certain to get into trouble.

We do not mean that every impression that comes to the mind is of God. Some of them are so far from being of heaven that we will please God by not paying any attention to them. He says, "My sheep know my voice," and that voice will sound in His Word, in His Providence, and in the whisper of the Spirit to the heart, guiding, restraining, teaching and leading.

We must obey God. What a joy it brings to the soul to be thus consciously submissive and doing the whole will of God. What a ring to the voice and what an added power to the life it brings. Satan feel helpless before a man with faith in heart and perfect obedience to God in life. In a word, we must "trust and obey," and in doing so will be invincible.

There is a lovely little hymn which bears the name "Trust and Obey." The chorus runs,--

"Trust and obey
For there's no other way,
To be happy in Jesus
But to trust and obey."

Neither is there any other way to retain the grace of sanctification but by this same Faith and Obedience.

The third essential is seen in "The Blood." The instant there is a conscious spiritual hurt we should fly to the blood of Christ and claim its immediate application. It is better not to lose time in argument or inquiry as to whether the act was wrong or not which brought the disturbed state of mind and heart. Better fly at once to the blood, obtain the instantaneous cleansing, and settle the other matters afterward.

Few realize the ever-present power of the blood of Christ. It "cleanseth." says John. It cleanses instantly, a it cleanses now, the very moment we claim its virtue by faith.

There is no need to be in condemnation a moment in case of sins of ignorance and surprise. The blood is available every second. Even in matters of graver nature, it is through lack of knowledge of the present power of the blood, that makes the man postpone his soul cleansing and recovery until certain mental agonies. Fervent supplications and physical humiliations shall have been gone through with.

The Bible does not say that the blood and something else cleanseth but the Blood. So, if

the world today would renounce its beads, pilgrimages, and works of righteousness, and look to the blood of Christ, it would be saved. If Christians would turn their gaze from the thought of growth, development and church work to the purifying blood of Jesus, the heart purity or holiness they desire would be instantly given. If sanctified people who have lapsed more or less in the sanctified life, and are trying to work their way back into the old-time favour and honour of Heaven would only look to “The Blood,” they would find themselves instantly healed, restored, cleansed, filled and fired again.

In recognition of possible weakness, mistakes and missteps; in view of the fact that some fiery dart of the evil one may pierce the Christian armour, God has provided the ever-present, ever-powerful, ever-cleansing blood of Christ. The instant that the soul is wounded it should fly at once, without the loss of a second, to the Saviour, and cry, Lord Jesus, apply thy blood; and it should stay at His feet until it is done.

This is not Antinomianism, abusing the grace of God, and sinning that mercy might abound; but a proper faith that comes at once to the Saviour when betrayed into sin. The spirit that would tarry and bemoan the past with profitless groans and paralyzed activities is not that which is enjoined in the Bible. It is not the act that most exalts God and His plan for our redemption.

That which honours Christ and His salvation is the immediate return to the Lord in case of departure, and the instant appropriation of the blood which cleanses through and through, and now, and for evermore.



7. Some Features Of The Sanctified Life

There is such a life. We are ushered into it on compliance with the conditions of consecration and faith, that stand like a great portal, barring out and yet opening in. With the experience of an instantaneous sanctification rushing into the soul, the sanctified life begins.

Of course there is skepticism with some about the individuality and distinctiveness of the life; but this doubting comes from those who have not gone through the portal. One can not know how a garden really looks until he enters the gate and strolls down the walks. He may have had descriptions and so formed ideas, but all know how every description comes short of the reality; and the road, lane, field, city, or landscape that has been portrayed with pen or tongue is always different from the mental conception when we see it.

Men may smile as they will over the statement that the sanctified life or experience differs from that of regeneration, but such smiles can not and do not alter facts. These persons in their derision simply show that they have not “entered in.”

Every life different from our own is necessarily a mystery. A worm is a tiny thing, and men may write learnedly about its sensations, but the fact remains that most of what is written is mere conjecture. The only way to know how a worm feels is to become a worm. So a bird can be held in or crushed by the hand. Some persons have written volumes on the habits and feelings of birds. But all written is the opinion of a being on the outside of the little songster. He can not know how a bird feels; to do that he must become a bird.

In like manner we study the angels. Much has been said about them, but how little is really known of their habits, labours, and joys? We have to study them from the outside.

They constitute a different order of beings from the human race, and are never to become men and women, just as we are never to become angels. We may affect great wisdom in writing about this heavenly order, but, after all, it is merely speculation. The only way to know how an angel feels is to become an angel.

The unconverted man looks at the regenerated man and thinks he understands him. He hears the Christian say that he “feels good and happy,” and his reply is, “So do I.” It would be very hard to convince him that the good feeling of the child of God runs on spiritual lines, while his moves on the physical. This very explanation would fail to explain to him or convince him. His idea of “feeling good” is mainly animal. He has, for instance, eaten a hearty meal, and now in dressing robe and slippers, stretched in an easy chair, cigar in mouth, he sits in lazy, dreaming mood, looking into the fire. He says he “feels good”; but any one can say that the entire sensation is purely animal. That it is a puppy-dog enjoyment, a cat-on-the-rug contentment. The child of God tells him that if he repents and believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, he will have a good feeling to sweep through the soul so much purer, better and nobler, that the other would not be worthy to be mentioned in the same breath.

Is it not strange that a regenerated man who can see these things, and can recognize the error of the unconverted in this matter should fall into a similar mistake when he sits in criticism and judgment on the life of the sanctified man? He hears him give his experience, and straightway asserts that he has all that the sanctified man possesses. Of course the person who has had the baptism of the Holy Ghost knows better, but is equally well aware that no human word or power can convince the converted man to the contrary; that this is the work of God. It takes the Holy Ghost, with the Word, to divide soul and spirit, joints and marrow, discern the depths of the heart, expose inbred sin, and reveal in startling light the difference between the two works of grace. So the sanctified simply says in reply to the regenerated man that if he consecrates perfectly, believes unwaveringly, and prays importunately that the fire will fall and he will know for Himself this secret of the Lord, which only the Lord can reveal.

In other words, “If any man will do His will He shall know of the doctrine.” Thus while it takes the Holy Ghost to convince him as He illumines the mind and reveals the deep things of God; still it is the duty of the sanctified man to stand firm for his experience and emphasize the distinctiveness and superiority of the work of grace. God will use that humble, faithful testimony not only for the good of the testifier, but make it “light sown for the righteous” which, under the divine blessing, will yet spring up in the conviction and purification of the believer.

There is then such a thing as the sanctified experience. There is, thank God, a sanctified life. It must be so recognized by the honest observer, and it is felt with thrills of joy by the possessor himself, who knows better than any one else its marked contrast to the former religious experience, and its blessed superiority at every point.

A volume might be written here, but we content ourselves with calling attention to several features of what we call the sanctified life or experience.

Perhaps the prominent feature is inward rest. The soul has been stilled and remains still. The spirit of worry is gone. There is a sweet disinclination to fret. An atmosphere of calm pervades the breast and penetrates the life. It abides steadily through the day, no matter what that day holds for us in the shape of labour, burdens, unpleasant people, and trying circumstances. There is no delight over the trying circumstances themselves, but a restfulness of soul in spite of them. Paul did not give thanks for everything, but said: “In everything give thanks.” It certainly would be a novel experience to many Christians to begin and end the day calmly; to wake up in the morning with a sweet serenity of spirit, and to go through each new day with a deep, still peace, whose steady flow delights as

well as astonishes him. And yet this is the plain promise of God, "Quietness and assurance forever," and this is the experience of a great and ever-increasing number in the land.

One of these, a lady friend, said to the author: "I am kept amazed at the inward rest and stillness of my soul. I never dreamed there was such a sweet peace for me, and I am disposed to wonder if there can be any mistake about it all. Ought I not to be more concerned about different things; and where is the ecstatic joy I felt in the first few weeks of the blessing?" She, in other words, under that word "concerned" was marveling over the absence of the old "fret" that used to be in her, and also failed to see that the great peace she now had was simply joy boiled down.

A second feature is that of a spirit of praise. Every child of God is conscious of this at times, but there are serious gaps and intervals when it is not felt. Moreover, the hour when it is realized, as a rule, in the regenerated life is one which abounds in helps and external causes of inspiration. All is going on well in the individual heart, family circle and church life. The meeting is being blessed, the work is succeeding, and faith has turned to sight. Well in body, well in soul, and everybody around is well--now, then, let us praise God. We simply ask here who could not do so under such circumstances?

The gift and grace we speak of under this head is a spirit of praise which abides in the soul under all circumstances. The inner bubbling of gladness is felt not simply when all is well, but when things are not well. It gushes up in the face of coldness, opposition, detraction, and wrong. It sings in spite of loneliness, and pain of heart and body. It praises God in the face of apparent failure. It can be cast off by loved ones and separated from the company of friends, and yet keep rejoicing. It can walk around the wall of Jericho thirteen times without seeing a crack, and yet shout. It can be unjustly condemned, whipped, put in a dungeon, and behold! At midnight it will burst into hosannas. It can, and does, cry hallelujah at all times.

The first two sanctified preachers the writer met impressed him with this spirit of rejoicing. He heard them say repeatedly in the Conference room and elsewhere: "Glory to God!" "Praise the Lord!" "Hallelujah!" This spirit, life and language was beyond the author of this book at that time, and his judgment of the phenomenon was that these utterances had first been genuine, but by frequent repetition had become mechanical, and that nothing but the expression of a mental habit was now before him; or, in other words, here were parrot-like utterances in the religious life. Two years after the writer obtained the same blessing possessed by these men of God, and found to his delight and astonishment that it was not a parrot at all, but a nightingale singing its very heart out on a rose bush in a moonlight night. He found there was a blessing which, when received in the soul, bubbles up in a tender holy joy, wreathes the lips with smiles, puts a shine on the face, a sparkle in the eye, and issues from the tongue in words and expressions of praise.

The wife of a minister received the blessing of sanctification in a gracious meeting held by the writer. She had been soundly converted, and was a faithful worker in the church. But she felt that disposition within to fret and worry over household and other matters. The sound of a dog barking at night was especially objectionable and trying to her. She called it nervousness. The night following the day she received the blessing she could not sleep for the happiness which filled her.

She said that the watch dog seemed possessed that night and barked for hours, but with her joy-attuned nature she heard the sound with new ears; the discordant sound was gone, and the dog seemed to say, "Praise God!" "Praise God!" Next morning while in the kitchen arranging things for breakfast she, by an unwitting movement of the hand, brought down a whole pile of tin and iron vessels with a great clash and clatter. Two days

before it would have been intolerable and upsetting; but with the holy joy and praise now welling up richly in her soul, she clapped her hands and cried out with shining face, "O the music! O the music!"

A third feature in the life of the sanctified is the blessed consciousness of a perfect love. Perfect not in the sense that it may not grow stronger and more intense as the years go by, but perfect as regards the absence of things contrary to love imbedded in the heart. It is a pure love. The former temporary hates, jealousies, envyings and bitterness toward certain people are all gone. A gentle, tender, loving feeling is in the heart for all men. This does not mean that we love all alike. This would be unnatural and impossible. There is a general love for the whole Race, peculiar affections for those naturally near to us, and special likings and attachments to others, who, by nature, temperament and character, draw us toward them. Yet to all different classes there is felt a pure, genuine love, although the love may vary in character and intensity.

On the Godward side we are thrilled to discover that the love we now bear Him is not now mixed as it had formerly been, and is supreme at all times. It is sweet and blessed beyond words to describe to feel the perfect love for God nestling in and warming the heart continually. King David is on his throne, the Absalom of rival affections is dead, and the kingdom within lies all fair, peaceful and beautiful, without a note of discord and a sign of insurrection.

Such a condition of soul, is found in its tenderness to all people, to prevent the fault-finding and uncharitable speech; while the same tongue in speaking of God and things divine almost insensibly, and yet naturally, is drawn into simple, unaffected and reverential language. Cheerfulness takes the place of levity, kindness displaces harshness, and from the lips that once found fault with God and assailed man, come the breathings of the loyal soul that find utterance in praises and ejaculations of love to God, and fervent "God bless you" to the children of men. And it abides. The fitfulness or fluctuation seen in the regenerated life is no more. The blessed experience is that of being fixed, grounded, rooted, settled in love.

A fourth feature is the working spirit, or desire and effort to do good. The instant the disciples received this grace they flew to the fields and vineyards of God. Two thousand years after I saw the same blessing fall upon a lady at the altar. I heard her cry, "O my husband!" saw her spring to her feet, rush into the audience, seize hold of the now tremendously convicted man, lead him to the altar, and in a agony of prayer and triumph of faith lay hold now on God, and behold! Salvation came down. The two works between that of the disciples and this woman was different in regard to magnitude of operations, but the same spirit was at work. Not all are called to public work, but those who have this blessing find work to do, and gladly do it. They feel strangely and powerfully wound up to do it. It may be laid out by the divine hand in a very obscure corner or restricted sphere; it may be a simple enduring at times, and which will be a doing of the highest order; it may be a marching today and a standing still tomorrow. God knows, and He will direct, and the sanctified soul will obey. The spirit of the working Christ abiding in us is bound to lead out in words and deeds that will bless the world in some way, and help to restore the departed Paradise.

Figures of a wound up and going machine, steam pulsating in cylinders, and the prophetic description of fire burning in the bones come to the mind in describing this divinely inspired activity.

The curve of the bow, the tautness of the string, the poise of the arrow, the coil of the spring are all felt when truly filled and empowered of God in sanctification. Such a one can not be idle. In some way, in small things or in great things, and in his or her own line and way, the sanctified person must and will work for God.

A striking feature about it is that this work does not seem to exhaust. The soul remains fresh.

There is a buoyancy felt throughout which delights the worker and gives moral force to the performance in the eyes of beholders. The soul is ever so full of rest as when engaged in this unfailling activity for heaven.

We remember a Bible picture of the seraphim, where they are represented with wings in swift movement, while their bodies were motionless. It is a striking illustration of the two-fold experience of work and rest in the sanctified life. High pressure work of brain and body, and profound calm and rest of soul. The man works now for God as he never did before, but he also rests at the same time with a depth and sweetness equally remarkable.

A fifth feature of the life is the delightful consciousness of being kept. It is difficult, if not impossible, to bend any set of words around the circle of this experience, or find sentences that can penetrate the intricacies of the grace as it affects the heart and life. Like a road has to be traveled to be known, so must the soul journey on this delightful way to know of what we are speaking.

Possession of the blessing is the only key to the understanding of this gracious mystery.

The author had read the word in the Bible, “Kept by the power of God,” and had heard it used by some who had a strange, sweet light on their faces, and a glad, exultant ring in their voices, but he failed to comprehend what they were talking about until at last he finally became an “overcomer” and obtained the “**white stone**, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.”

A kept life! Figures of restfulness, repose and protection arise at once to the mind; a child in the arms of its mother, a sealed fountain, a walled city, and yet all fail to measure up descriptively to this strange, sweet experience of the sanctified soul, that we call being “kept.” It is a spiritual sensation as distinct as the feeling of pardon. It sustains all through the trying hours of the day, is the last thing felt in the heart as we fall asleep, and the first realized in the soul on awakening in the morning. If this was the only feature of sanctification, it would pay ten thousand times over to obtain the blessing.

This chapter is a condensed statement of some of the features of the sanctified life. No one can read them without seeing it is a distinct experience; and any one hearing of such a life should never be content until he came into the same blessedness.



8. The Loneliness Of The Life

There are many paradoxes in the spiritual life. In the expression, “Alone, yet not alone,” we find one of them.

The Saviour was in one sense the most solitary of men, and yet in another he was not lonely. He said to His disciples at one time, “Will ye also go away?” and then added that he was not alone, for the Father was with Him. He who was in unbroken intercourse with the Father, and had angels ascending and descending upon him, never knew such a thing as men do of the heaviness of his own company or the oppressiveness of solitude. He was adjusted by His perfect life and nature to every condition and surrounding, and was full of rest everywhere.

The sanctified life being God-centered, and having Christ abiding within, satisfying

every longing of the heart can not be lonely in the sense that men use the term. Ennui is impossible with a soul in His Rest. Every minute has its charm, every occurrence brings or is made to bring a blessing, the day has its glory, the night its songs, solitude its sweetness, and God is seen and felt in everything. The old-time necessity, forcing one to take hat or bonnet and run off in social gossip to get rid of an hour or two that hangs heavily on their hands, becomes an unknown experience. The social life is not despised nor given up, for Duty still calls in this direction, but the visit is now undertaken in a new spirit, and one's room or home is not left because its stillness and quiet can not be borne.

The sanctified life is not lonely in the true and high sense of the word. It brings a spiritual and heavenly companionship that made Patmos an ante-chamber of heaven to John, turned a Bastille dungeon into a place of beauty and glory to Madam Guyon, and transforms the room of the invalid into a sanctuary of rest, fanned with angel wings and lighted up with the smile of Christ.

But in another sense the sanctified life is lonely. As viewed by the world it is painfully lonely, but as felt by the sanctified person himself it is lonely without painfulness.

There is a growing recognition of the fact of this separation and solitariness and a consequent shrinking from the experience upon the part of some, and an endeavor to so shift, change and adjust the life as to deliver the individual from that same dreaded feature of loneliness. This, of course, is done mainly by those who have not received the grace of sanctification, and so can not understand it. But there are also those who have entered "into the holiest" and have not studied the truth itself and its relations and demands as they should. So they are found in their efforts trying to win, conciliate, and keep up old relations, to improve Bible nomenclature and to fill up chasms dug between men in the spiritual life by the Holy Ghost. The result of this has been disastrous to the experience they professed. They regained their old company and associations, *but they lost the blessing*. They wanted to bring it from its marble pillar of flagellation, from its solitary position of suspicion and rejection, from its star like shining far above the flaring candles of earth, but in doing this the blessed Form (of Christ) disappeared, the star vanished, and the glory went out.

We might as well come to the knowledge of the Truth, act accordingly, and be saved any more failures of a heart-breaking nature. If we want this swan of the skies to sing and float high in our hearts, we must not try to make it like the other fowls in the barnyard. We must take it as it is. It is a blessing beyond all price in value, it is a life the sweetest of all under the sun, but coupled with this is the feature of a peculiar loneliness. We had better not divide asunder that which God hath joined together.

Let it be understood once for all that the loneliness we speak of is not a Pharisee separatism which holds itself better, and will have nothing to do with other classes of religious people. Nor is it the exclusiveness of a hide-bound bigotry, nor a timid shrinking from all social life, nor the repetition of the ghastly mistake of the Dark Ages when the church judged that the highest piety could not be developed in the daily walks of life and hence removed to the shadows and silence of the monastery and convent.

No such unnatural, unhealthy and un-Christian loneliness is taught by the Bible and wanted by the world. The genuinely sanctified man is a social man in the best sense of the word. He is in touch and sympathy with all classes of people, and, like his Lord, is found in the market-places as well as the synagogue, and, like Him, always doing good.

The loneliness we speak of is to be found in other directions.

First, sanctification has to be sought in a solitary way, or isolation from the world for the time being.

The disciples separated themselves from every pursuit and from the noise and rush of roads and streets and came together in the quiet of the Upper Room. Even then it was ten days before the holy fire descended. What if they had not thus specially removed themselves and given the undivided attention and desire of mind and heart to God. Then it is certain we would never have heard of Pentecost, at least through them.

Jacob in the obtainment of the Peniel Blessing went out by himself on the brookside. Afar off he could see the twinkling campfires, where wives, children and servants rested unconscious of the suffering and sorrowing man who wept and struggled alone all through the long hours of that starlit Syrian night.

It is not only well to be isolated at such a time, but necessary to obtain the revelation of the deep things of God. His voice is "a still small voice," and is not heard in its clearness amidst the world's loud talking, laughter and rush after money and pleasure. Certain instincts of the soul lead us away from the street into the sanctuary, or closet of prayer. And even when in a company of believers, like the case of the disciples, there must be a sinking away from each other and from every surrounding, a separation unto Christ alone, in the fulfillment of the prophet's words, when he says, "Each one mourned to himself apart."

We are confident that the difficulty with many in obtaining the blessing of sanctification is right here. They are not willing to be alone long enough for God to search them, and show them "the ground of their heart," the dark principle within, which when Isaiah saw in the stillness of the temple while waiting on the Lord, made him cry out, "I am undone."

It pays to wait in solitariness before God. And garrets, cellars, barns, and the silent grove looking down upon kneeling and prostrate figures have witnessed revelations of divine glory that myriads of our cathedral churches know nothing of.

Again, the very announcement of the fact that you are seeking sanctification will produce a remarkable falling away of friends and acquaintances. The loneliness is now not only that of your seeking God in privacy, but a solitarism made by people holding themselves aloof from you in mingled doubt, pity and wonder as to the final outcome of your present proceedings.

But for Gospel explanation this social withdrawal would be as mysterious as crushing. He that seeks sanctification asks only for Christ. He sees that "Jesus only" is necessary for happiness, and seeks alone for Him. He has found that business, pleasure, marriage, money, children, position, honour, travel, having all been tried, fail to satisfy the soul. The aching void is left in the heart. He now wants Jesus only.

This simplification of life, this one desire left out of thousands, lifts the man away from the everyday thought and practice of men. It constitutes a philosophy that is at present beyond them.

Being past their comprehension they fall into the mistake that the anxious-faced seeker before them is in an abnormal, unhealthy state of mind, in a word, deluded, and can only bring ridicule and failure on himself, and drag them with him into the maelstrom of public remark and judgment, if they are seen to be identified, associated with or in anyway connected with him. Hence in a figurative way the hands are washed, the skirts are shaken, and the feet walk off with those worldly, sensible heads.

And from a safe and respectable distance, rows of cool-looking eyes are turned critically, deprecatingly and pityingly upon the religious phenomenon before them at the altar, who wants Jesus and Jesus only. They hear him say he is willing to give up things that they know to be perfectly proper and legitimate; that he surrenders so excellent a thing as

reputation, which required them twenty to forty years to build up; that he is willing to be misunderstood, abused, slandered and rejected by friends, family and church itself, if necessary; in a word, they hear uttered many things which, in their earthly wisdom and cool, level-headed judgment and good horse sense they pronounce extravagant, if not fanatical, and so with many misgivings and shakings of the head they leave the man to himself.

Still again, the reception of the blessing of sanctification will cause a final falling away from you not only of acquaintances, friends, church labourers and fellow Christians, but one's kindred and oftentimes family itself.

The man, even with his new-found purity and joy, is at first aghast over this social landslide and the sudden sense of distance and separation from those whom he never loved so tenderly and so well before.

He tries to explain the new life to his friends, and they look at him as if he was talking Sanskrit.

He pours out his experience to his family; they listen with outward respect in some instances, with ill concealed amusement in others, with evident sorrow and mortification in still others, *and with unbelief in all.*

He next goes to old church workers or to the ministry, and with flaming tongue gives his experience and tries to get them to see it. But through all the conversation he is held at arm's length, the faces turned upon him are cold, skeptical, unsympathetic, and there is an evident reluctance to being seen with him on the street, and an equally manifest desire to get away.

After this the man rushes into the religious press if he is allowed, and pours forth the fact of the new found blessing in glowing sentences. Surely all will see it now. But the following issue of the paper contains three articles in reply, one exceedingly bitter, a second ridiculing, and the third in a patronizing and pitying manner, telling the sanctified brother that he, the writer, had received an hundred blessings like the one he had written about, and there was still a thousand left; to keep on and get all he could; that there was no end to God's blessings, and so they could not and should not be numbered.

Religious correspondence on the same line also proved failure. Some letters were answered in a curt spirit, some with an offended, and others with a bored tone. Some remained long unanswered and still others were never granted a reply.

It was exceedingly hard to give up the friends of a religious lifetime, even after all these disappointments and rebuffs; and so effort after effort was still put forth to get in touch with certain church members and ministers with whom in former days he had enjoyed sweet fellowship and prayed, preached, shouted, labored, and won victories for Christ together. But it was all in vain. A chasm had been dug by the Holy Ghost in a distinct work of grace. The love and inclination to be "in touch" was on the sanctified side, the shrinking and distrust was on the other side, and the moral impossibility of coming together was on both sides.

Two letters received in two months of one another from the same individual, but one written before, and the other after the party addressed had received the blessing of sanctification, would fully serve to show the chasm or distance we speak of. Indeed, there is no need to reproduce the letters entire, but simply the opening and concluding lines:

[Before.] MY **WELL BELOVED** BROTHER: I was delighted to receive your letter of the, etc., etc.

Cordially and affectionately yours,

[After.] Rev. _____, DEAR SIR AND BROTHER: Yours of the 15th inst to hand, etc., etc.

Yours Truly,

This last sent a pang through the heart on its reception, and caused additional wonder to the sanctified man as he realized that he never had entertained a warmer love for all men than now in this time of frosty notes, freezing bows and distant polar region manners.

But wonder or not, the fact remains that the man who obtains the grace of sanctification finds himself held off at arm's length by the church. He is viewed with suspicion, distrust, and even fear.

He is regarded as making claims to superior blessings and graces, and thus lauding himself over his brethren. He is supposed to ignore the Bible teaching of growth in grace, and all the melting, refining processes that come with time in the Christian life. He is felt to be presumptuous and arrogant in claiming to have reached at a single bound of faith what his brethren have been toiling after unavailingly along the Growth Route for twenty, thirty and forty years. In a word, in making the claims he does, he "reflects on the brethren," or as it is written in the Gospel, "Master, in saying this you speak against us." This, of course, means a permanent landslide of church friends and church people. They will, without doubt, "separate you from their company," and in so doing will feel they have discharged their duty and done God and the church a service. We must remember that they really and honestly regard people claiming sanctification as being deluded and fanatical.

In one of our large Western cities a young married lady obtained the blessing of sanctification in a meeting held by the writer. She had been a great church worker before, and with a number of prominent church women was a member of a tea drinking circle, which bore quite a high sounding name. This circle had weekly meetings, and was migratory in character, so that it was the custom for an executive committee to issue notices to the members of the day, hour, and private dwelling for the next Bon Ton Tea-Drinking Caucus. But on the news flashing around that she had swept into the experience of sanctification, the lady's name of whom we speak was promptly dropped. No notice came to her. She spoke to us about it with eyes moist and a pained tone: "My old friends have all met together this afternoon without me"; then with a flash of joy in her face she added: "But oh, I am so happy, my heart is singing all the time!"

I saw at a glance that she was drinking something better than tea, and was in a higher and more select circle than the Bon Ton Tea-Drinking Sisterhood.

There are far graver separations than this, but the instance serves to illustrate the point in hand and reveal the spirit at work of which we speak.

Finally the loneliness of the sanctified life comes as a result of the work of grace itself.

God Himself by a second work in the soul lifts the individual into another and higher plane of Christian experience and living. There is a deeper knowledge of the heart, and a more intimate union with Christ. There are profounder joys, deeper peace, clearer light, abiding purity and unbroken communion with God. Such a work that gives new views of God, brings the soul out on the victory side of salvation, flings aside the weeping willow and waves a palm branch, quits complaining and whining, and instead rejoices evermore, prays without ceasing and in everything gives thanks; such a divine work that produces as a result so great a change, is bound to lift the man away from the ordinary rank and file of Christians and land him in lonely spiritual altitudes. For the one party to be astonished at this, and the other to fret about it, argues the lack of thought and failure to see certain well known principles at work on earth, as well as a strange forgetfulness of Bible

statements.

The loneliness is nothing but **character distance**. It is a life removed by divine power. A chasm has been dug by the Holy Ghost. Men look across at each other, see each other, but can not touch as of yore, when all were on the same bank or shore of a common experience.

To attempt to bridge or fill up this moral space or gap between yourself and others when it was made by the Spirit of God, is to imperil and lose the grace you enjoy. It is not intended of Heaven that the space should be bridged. The Holy Ghost alone can bring your friends to you. You can not afford to go back where you once were.

Right here is a peril, and here many have lost the great blessing. They felt the loneliness and imagined they could go back and down into the neighborhood of a past grace, that they could discard their Canaan language, hide the new truths they had learned, say nothing of the precious secret, and so ingratiate themselves with their chafed and sore-spirited brethren as to win them. So the logs were hewn, the timbers laid, the passage way constructed and they went back in a sense, and became as one of them. But the distressing result was that while they came over to Moab by their bridge, they could not return to Canaan by it. It seemed to work only one way.

Shortly after the writer received the blessing of sanctification, he saw his ministerial brethren looking shy and standing off from him. They actually appeared uncomfortable in his presence. So he with the intention, not of giving up his blessing, but in the hope of showing them that he possessed the same love and friendship for them, was the same man, and they had nothing to fear, thought he would construct a little footbridge and go down to them as of yore. In a word, he had been accustomed to indulge with them in anecdotal conversation of amusing character, in preachers' meeting jocularity, etc. Once it seemed all right. Now he attempted it again as a sanctified man, hoping to win "the brethren." But he got such a look from Christ, and the footbridge shook so dreadfully, that he ran back in a hurry. In other words, he saw that he could not safely bridge the chasm; that to discard the Canaan spirit and language would result in leaving Canaan itself; that he would imperil the blessing he enjoyed by anything like compromise; and that **he must accept the loneliness that had come now as a feature of the blessing, as a result of the work of God in his soul.**

We have known numbers to remain weak in the sanctified life because of their ignoring the fact we have been enlarging upon; and we have known numbers more who have lost the blessing altogether. They could not understand the loneliness of the life as being the very handiwork of Heaven, and in attempting to get in touch with people spiritually below them, get out of touch with God above them.

We once had a Senator from Mississippi after the Civil War who was far ahead in his political and social economic views of the commonwealth he represented. Many of his constituency thought from his speeches in Congress that he was untrue to his State and her best interests. There were threats of recalling him. But he kept calmly on. He knew he was right. He was farther up the mountain than his fellow citizens, and his view of the future was clearer and more far reaching. He could not afford to come down. And he did not come down, but held on his way. He knew that in a few years his party adherents climbing up would see as he saw, and then endorse him. He would wait until then. And it all proved as he thought. In ten years the people reached the standpoint he had been on so long before, and saw as he saw, and recognized that they had wronged him. The beautiful thing about it was that he did not come down because they could not, or did not see as he did. He stayed up on the mountain side and waited for them to ascend. They ascended.

We are to do likewise, as sanctified people. We know the doctrine of the second work to

be true.

We have the experience. It lifts us up into lonely heights. The religious social world is farther down.

We call to them in gladness, and tell them what we have found and see. We speak of the widespread landscape, the nearness of heaven, and the cloudlessness of the place we hold. They may misunderstand us; moral distance accounting for that. They may misjudge us and say we are unsocial, unfriendly and altogether faulty. But we know in whom we have believed, and what we have received. We can not afford to go down because of adverse criticism and unjust judgment. Let them come up where we stand and see for themselves. Many will do this if we are true to God and remain on the heights.

Remember that this very loneliness of life will bring a blessing to men. It is not the man who spends his time in the crowd and merely reflects the opinion, spirit and attainments of men who most benefits the world, but the man who listens to and speaks of things that have their birth beyond and far above the street. John on the lonely Patmos saw more of heaven than the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem.

Such laymen bring the odor of the flowers of Paradise with them into their offices and stores.

Such preachers do not waste time in their pulpits on the questions of the day, about which most of their hearers are better informed than themselves, but gladden, revive and bless the audience with answers from heaven, and fresh tidings from the unseen but eternal world. Such writers give us books that are like Gates of Pearl, opening upon the City of God, while the chapters are like heavenly avenues fringed with trees of life and filled with flitting forms of spiritual truth and beauty.

We thank God every day for the conversation, preaching, writings and lives of these lonely men and women who find “sermons in stones, books in running brooks,” thoughts in stars, messages in flowers, see common shrubs by the road aflame and asparkle with divine glory, hear the surf as it thunders anthems of praise on the strand, and behold in the gold and crimson sunset one of the twelve gates of the Eternal City.

Most men note the storm, fire and earthquake that rend the mountain and shake the valleys. But these are they who stand at the entering in of the cave with mantle-wrapped head and hear the still, small voice that escapes the multitude. When they take away the veil to speak we notice that the face is shining. They have heard things that are only spoken in spiritual heights. And when they turn to speak or write or live before us, it is as if we had heard an angel singing in the evening sky, and life becomes invested with deeper and broader meanings, and a divine design is seen everywhere. Sorrow becomes a garment of moral beauty, Sickness and Disappointment methods of weaning the soul from clay, and the Earth itself is seen to be a college for the mind, a training school for spiritual activities, a theater for the display of God’s power in grace, and the very ante-chamber or porch of the world of Glory just hidden from us now by a curtain of blue spangled with silver stars.



9. Prayer And Reading

A distinguishing trait of the sanctified life is the spirit of prayer. In the regenerated life it come and goes, but in sanctification it abides. We do not mean to say that the individual is always praying aloud, although frequent ejaculatory supplications will escape the lips.

Nor do we mean that he is always mentally praying, although even there he far out-strips his converted brother; but we refer to an almost indescribable mood or frame of prayer that lingers and dwells in the heart. Just as a song sung upon a mountain-locked lake echoes and re-echoes, rocks on the billows, is blown about by the breezes, flung back from the hillsides, clings to the willow branches and absolutely seems to refuse to go from the spot; so the spirit of prayer abides in the soul. It remains in spite of everything. It is felt as we read the Word of God, as we look on sin, or sit in meditation before God. It arises in the hour of public worship, and in the rush of the street. It glows on Sunday, but it also burns on Monday. He who has the genuine work of sanctification finds this sweet gift of heaven, this very breath of God in him and upon him. It may be more or less ardent according to obedience and devotion, but it is there with all who are sanctified. The dead, flat, prayerless condition of the soul seen at times in the regenerated life, can not be in the wholly sanctified.

Not for the first time we understand the injunction of the apostle to “pray without ceasing.” A command that once seemed fairly to mock us. How faithfully we tried it, and misunderstanding the Word, and ignorant of the divine work in the soul that makes the duty not only possible but easy, we finally regarded the commandment as a standard lifted up to inspire one but never to be attained.

We failed to see that the unceasing spirit of prayer comes with the second work of grace.

It is not, however, the spirit of prayer we are calling attention to, but **the duty of prayer**. The one is the gift of God, the other the observance of the man.

It looks strange that there should be need to impress such a duty upon sanctified people who feel in them this prayerfulness or soul of prayer. But there is necessity for just such a stirring up of pure minds by way of remembrance.

There is undoubtedly a presuming by some sanctified people on the blessing of sanctification. It brings to the heart such a spirit of prayer that they take advantage of it and do not observe the prolonged seasons of supplication of which the Bible and holy biographies have so much to say! And that tell with such wonderful result on personal character and the moral history of the world.

There are as many grades of sanctified people as there are spiritual distinctions in the regenerated life. Some sanctified people live much closer to God than others who possess the same blessing; and the explanation is found in the observance or neglect of protracted waiting upon God in the closet of prayer.

The Lord announces himself a jealous God, and He will never give to the soul a blessing that will make it in a sense independent, and able to get along without frequent and deep communings with Himself. He wants the soul to be often in His presence, and when there to linger. The reasons for this are obvious at a glance.

He desires none of His children to possess stale experiences. He commanded fresh oil to be placed in the lamps, and new loaves on the table of the sanctuary. It is the ever fresh manifestation of God to the soul that is so attractive and impressive to the world.

Again, the deep things of the spiritual life are not given to the hurried visitor at the throne of grace, but to the lingerer at the Footstool of Prayer. It is marvelous what secrets such people obtain from the skies. They are ever astonishing others with their beautiful and blessed discoveries in the Bible and kingdom of Grace. They spend so much time on their knees listening at the gates of heaven to what is going on within, that there is no wonder they surprise those religious people who spend most of their time in listening to what people of this world are saying.

Still again a divine Ambassador and Messenger should be in constant touch with his

King and Government in order to do them justice and to benefit as well the people to whom he is sent. This is recognized as necessary in the affairs of the kingdoms of this world. A minister of Foreign Affairs, an Ambassador or Envoy Extraordinary would be felt to be making the name and the office a travesty, if he did not keep in closest touch and latest communication with the powers that sent him.

In like manner that servant of Heaven is most effective who has the longest and latest interviews with the Lord and Master who has sent him forth. It is wonderful how little moved and blessed we are under the words of spiritually dried Christians who have not seen Christ in days and weeks, and are running on a bare memory of former times of grace. And equally marvelous how the simplest utterances of men and women given to much prayer invariably move the heart.

Nothing can take the place of protracted prayer as a peculiar means of grace. Sanctification, with its great gift of the spirit of prayer, was never intended of God to release us at this point, but to multiply seasons and length of our supplications.

By it comes increased knowledge of God, deeper insight in the Word, a profounder acquaintance with the heart, a greater hatred to sin, a mightier love for holiness and souls, a growing boldness in prayer, a more regal faith, and that heavenly authority and power in eye, voice and life that is instantly seen and recognized by the multitude, whether they be religious or irreligious.

We have only to go to the Gospel to find the divine example of the very kind of prayer we are pleading for. Holy as the Saviour was we find Him spending a whole night at a time in supplication.

This being the expression of the pure heart and life of Christ, we might well afford to distrust a holiness experience that is content to move along without special and prolonged waitings upon God.

It is running the engine on what is called a dry boiler, and it is bound at last to injure the boiler.

Years ago we read that we were so constituted that just in proportion as the knees get soft the heart grows hard, and as the knees grow hard the heart gets soft. We have found it to be so in our own experience and in that of many others with whom we have conversed. In a word, we never enter upon a religious life in this world that releases us from the obligation and necessity of much prayer.

Some fancy this to be the case, but a fancy is one thing and a fact is another. Following these will-of-the-wisp fancies they will yet break their hearts over a granite fact of a backslidden life; and as all backsliding begins in the closet of prayer, the meaning of this figure is at once understood by the reader.

One of the early Bishops of our church was full of holy fire and power. He was a prince and prevailer with God and man. When he preached the fire of heaven would fall. Many used to wonder at his spiritual influence. When he was old and feeble, a preacher was assisting him to disrobe for bed. On passing his hand over the Bishop's knees he was struck with the rough, hard feeling of the skin. It was like a great corn on each knee. He asked the Bishop what produced it, when after some hesitation the aged servant of God replied: "It has been done through prayer."

What a revelation of weak religious lives, and what an explanation of powerless pulpits could be made today by the examination of the knees of God's people. How soft most of them would be found to be ! And how hard at the same time would be some of their words, how stony their feelings and how iron-like and pitiless their decisions and judgments.

Brainard was much given to prayer, spending thus four and five hours a day. **Payson** also knew how to tarry hours at a time in supplication. **Knox** was mighty in prayer. **Luther** prayed three hours daily, and **Wesley** did the same. All of us know how the world stands indebted today to those men for great spiritual blessings and moral uplifts that never would have come, first to them and then afterward to us, but for the fact that they know how to open the windows toward Jerusalem, and kneeling down, steadily look in that direction and wait until something happened. Something always does happen to such waiting. Isaiah says, "They mount up," and when they mount, they make others rise up with them.

Such an importunate man of prayer was **Fletcher**. Many will remember how once before going to his knees he told his servant to call him at the end of an half hour, as he had an important engagement. Promptly at the time appointed the servant opened Mr. Fletcher's study door and found the man of God with eyes uplifted, countenance rapt, and soul absorbed in earnest communion with Heaven. The servant, unwilling to break upon his devotions, stole softly away and came back an half hour later. But Mr. Fletcher was still in the same absorbed and rapt attitude. Again the servant retired unable to get his consent to disturb the man of prayer, and again returned at the end of the third half hour to find the man of God in the same position and perfectly oblivious of his surroundings and the flight of time. But the servant dared not disobey any longer, but crossing the room to the kneeling preacher, he said:

"Mr. Fletcher, I dislike to disturb you, but you told me to call you at the end of an half hour."

"What," cried Mr. Fletcher, "is it gone already!"

Is it any wonder that this man shook the church of which he was pastor to the center, and that when he preached, God answered by fire from heaven.

It was in full knowledge of the tremendous outgoing force from this practice that the disciples directed the brethren, to look out for certain men to serve tables, "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer."

If we as sanctified people are to retain fresh and bright experiences, if we would march forward to greater victories, if we would even hold our own we must abound in prayer.

A second great duty of the sanctified man is found in religious reading. Here again the breadth, depth and height of the holiness life in the individual is seen to be affected by the practice or neglect of this privilege and duty as well.

Our knowledge of sanctification is that with its entrance as an experience into the soul, there is immediately realized a keen relish for the Word of God and healthy appetite for all spiritual reading.

Hence to see people who claim this blessing careless of the study of the Bible, and failing to inform the brain and feed the soul from the wealth of holiness literature now in the providence of God all around us, is to make us marvel, grieve and even doubt concerning such a type of sanctification.

The double desire to be informed of the truth and delivered from ignorance and error, should be sufficient to cause sanctified people to read the Scriptures and all available good books with avidity.

In addition to his the very importance and momentousness of the doctrine calls for proper study and faithful investigation.

Sanctification claims to be the central idea of Christianity, the crowning doctrine of revelation, the moving force of the church, the qualification for service, and fitness for

heaven. With such bearings upon the individual, the church and the world itself, ought we not to seek to inform ourselves thoroughly in regard to this great privilege of the soul by going deep into the Word, and culling that literature which has proceeded from the pens of others who have penetrated deeper into the Bible than we have gone ourselves?

If the doctrine is false, let us find it out. If it is true, we owe it to God and our souls to learn all we can about it. In either case, we should read.

We have observed that when fanaticism has made its appearance in connection with the Holiness Movement, it has been where there was false teaching and pernicious literature. Ignorance has ever been and will ever be a hot-bed for error. Lift up the truth and folly and extravagance have to go.

Holy Fire is able to destroy fox fire, wild fire and false fire.

We have noticed that in those communities where, after a gracious holiness revival, a great many good books were bought, excellent religious papers subscribed for, and the Bible brought forward at once in faithful, daily study, that such towns and places were singularly free from "isms" of every kind. The magicians failed to put in their appearance with their rods, and if they did, the rod of Truth would promptly swallow up the rods of error.

Most thankful has the writer ever been, that immediately following upon his sanctification, he purchased every first class book on the doctrine and experience he could find. The blessed result in his mind and heart and on his life could not be estimated. At once he was made wise to recognize and avoid error in its various forms; while the various phases and aspects of the experience, the privileges and duties of the life became so quickly familiar as to give him every advantage and start him off with songs, assurances and victories that could and never would have been his but for this same diligence in the matter of reading. In addition to the thought of instruction is the fact of spiritual food. Devotional reading is a necessity. The soul must have it. Solid spiritual literature meets this want. To deprive the heart of that, is like denying bread and meat to the body. That spiritual starvation makes a weak Christian ought no more to surprise a person than that lack of material food makes a feeble body.

Every Christian with any experience at all knows the effect of newspaper reading and the world's literature upon the soul. What a dry, empty, unfed, unrefreshed, unrenewed and unsatisfied feeling is left in the heart after hours of such reading; while in spiritual books and papers, the soul at once recognizes its nutriment and ends each mental meal with a feeling of strength and satisfaction that is seen in the eye, is read in the face and is equally marled in the life.

Of course, the Bible outranks all other books, and so should be made prominent and preeminent.

Let the reader remember that when he prays he is talking to God, but when he reads the Bible, God is talking to him. Great is this difference, and few have appreciated it.

A much praised, but a much neglected book is the Bible. And yet it is God talking to us.

It is the soul's book. Other books tell of art, science, law, commerce, etc., but this book tells us about an invisible soul and its invisible home. It deals in spiritual things and tells us how to live spiritually and become fit to see God and live in a spiritual world.

It takes the Holy Spirit to unlock the book. He who reads simply with the eye of the Intellect will miss the glory of the book, and never realize the soul-food with which it is stored. It is well to ask the light and blessing of the Holy Ghost upon us each time that we read.

It is well not only to read prayerfully, but slowly and meditatively as we proceed. The careless and hasty reader will get no benefit. To pass food through a man hurriedly encased in a tin tube will give him no strength; and so a skimming over the Book or a shooting through the mind hastily of certain passages, more as a salve to conscience than anything else, will never give the spiritual life and vigor that is needed. How can it? A salve is not food. Food has to be masticated, digested, assimilated, to become blood, strength and life. So with the Word.

Muller advises the taking of ten or twelve rich verses in the Gospels or Psalms, and reading each verse over slowly four or five times before proceeding to the next. He says the effect will be blessed.

Let the reader try it!

Fletcher had a way of kneeling down before the Bible with a finger upon a passage, crying out, "Light, Lord." And he always got it.

Let the reader try it.

For over a dozen years the writer has read the Bible on his knees. He reads the entire volume through in that way once each year, and the New Testament oftener. It has been a great blessing to him. If the reader is so moved of God let him try it.

Anyhow, let us all pay attention to reading, avoiding every kind of literature that is hurtful to the soul, perusing no book that we would not like Christ to sit down and study with us, selecting the purest and best of religious volumes for our devotional reading, and above all taking the Word of God as the man of our counsel and constant companion.



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