



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

# **PERFECT LOVE**

*By John Allen (J. A.) Wood*

## **CONTENTS (10 of 141 pages)**

Index of Authors Cited  
Reprint Notice  
Preface  
Second Title Page

Section 1	<b>TERMS SIGNIFYING COMPLETE GOSPEL SALVATION</b>
Section 2	<b>JUSTIFICATION</b>
Section 3	<b>THE NATURE OF REGENERATION</b>
Section 4	<b>REGENERATION AND ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION NOT IDENTICAL</b>
Section 5	<b>THE TIME BETWEEN REGENERATION AND ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION</b>
Section 6	<b>THE NATURE OF CHRISTIAN PERFECTION</b>
Section 7	<b>HOLINESS ATTAINABLE</b>
Section 8	<b>DIRECTIONS FOR OBTAINING HOLINESS</b>
Section 9	<b>THE EVIDENCES OF PERFECT LOVE</b>
Section 10	<b>THE PROFESSION OF PERFECT LOVE</b>
Section 11	<b>WITNESSES OF PERFECT LOVE</b>
Section 12	<b>REASONS WHY EVERY CHRISTIAN SHOULD BE ENTIRELY SANCTIFIED</b>
Section 13	<b>MINISTERS SHOULD BE ENTIRELY SANCTIFIED</b>
Section 14	<b>HOLINESS MUST BE PREACHED</b>
Section 15	<b>HOLINESS IDENTIFIED WITH</b>

## THE PROMOTION OF THE GENERAL WORK OF GOD

### Section 16

#### RESULTS OF NOT SEEKING HOLINESS

### Section 17

#### TRIALS OF THE ENTIRELY SANCTIFIED

### Section 18

#### HOW A STATE OF ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION MAY BE RETAINED

### Section 19

#### OBJECTIONS TO CHRISTIAN HOLINESS

### Section 20

#### OBJECTIONS TO SEEKING PERFECT LOVE

### Section 21

#### ADVICE TO THOSE PROFESSING PERFECT LOVE

### Section 22

#### HOLINESS HISTORICALLY

### Section 23

#### MISCELLANEOUS

### Section 24

#### THE AUTHOR'S EXPERIENCE

#### CONCLUSION

---

## The History of Holiness

### SECTION 22

#### HOLINESS CONSIDERED HISTORICALLY

*188. Where has the doctrine of Christian perfection been in the past history of the church that we seem only to hear of it now?*

The implication of this question is not the fact in the case. This doctrine is not new. It is as old as the Bible, and some parts of the Bible are nearly four thousand years old. It is taught and enforced in the moral law given at Sinai to the Israelites. When Abraham was ninety years old, the Lord appeared unto him, and said, "I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect." This is proof that this doctrine was inculcated four hundred years before the giving of the law.

This doctrine has always existed in the church with more or less clearness. That the Apostolic Fathers, Martyrs, and primitive Christians believed in, and walked in the light of this grace, is very evident. They lived and died abiding in Christ, under the cleansing blood of the atonement. It was this grace that gave them their great success, and afforded them sustaining power in the jaws of death. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, who was given to the wild beasts at Rome when one hundred and seven years of age, said, "I thank thee, O Lord, that thou hast vouchsafed to honor me with a perfect love towards thee."

The primitive Christians received Christ and his word in such searching thoroughness and fullness, as to disarm death of its terrors in its most sudden, violent, or tormenting forms; they were ready to go and meet their Lord. When threatenings were sent to Chrysostom from the hand of the Empress, he replied, "Go tell Eudoxia that I fear nothing but sin." Irenaeus taught that those were perfect "who present soul, body, and spirit faultless to the Lord.

Therefore those are perfect who have the spirit and perseverance of God, and have preserved their souls and bodies without fault."

Clement, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, says: “Ye see, then, beloved, how great and wonderful a thing love is, and that no words can declare its perfection. Let us beseech Christ that we may live in love unblamable.”

Macarius taught the doctrine more clearly than any of the Fathers. Of our duty and privilege, he says: “It is perfect purity from sin, freedom from all shameful lusts and passions, and the assumption of perfect virtue; that is, the purification of the heart by the plenary and experimental communion of the perfect and divine Spirit.”

*189. Did the general church abide in this simple way of faith in Christ, and in his power to save to the uttermost?*

No; if she had, we believe the world would have been converted long ago, and the eleven hundred years – the long night of the dark ages – would never have given birth to Mohammedanism, Arianism, and Greek and Roman Catholicism. The mystery of iniquity, which the apostles declared had begun to work in their day, developed itself in one corruption after another in the church, even from the first century; so that in the third and fourth centuries there were many human devices to supplant simple faith in Christ.

In the third century, contemporary with the early corruptions of the Roman Church, in her alliance with the Emperor Constantine, a branch of the Western Church broke away from its fellowship with Popery, and fled to the mountains of Piedmont, to enjoy the unrestrained liberty of worshiping Christ in scriptural purity and simplicity. There, until the present time, this ancient church of the Vaudois has remained, and the gates of hell have not prevailed against her in her many persecutions of fire and sword by the bloody Church of Rome.

They kept their residence in the Waldensian mountains, and valleys of the Alps, and of the Pyrenees, where age after age they found an asylum from the tyranny of Popery. They have kept their testimony pure in the word of God, and their doctrine and discipline have been preserved from the time of the primitive martyrs, and they are now the principal regenerators of Italy. They hailed with joy the early Hussite reformation and the great reformation under Luther, having kept alive the Scripture doctrine of justification by faith, and sanctification by the Holy Ghost.

Their faith in the pure word of God, and their evangelical experience, sustained them though centuries of darkness and persecution. Their apostolic origin, perpetuity, general orthodoxy, evangelical simplicity, and sanctity of character, have been repeatedly admitted by the Church of Rome herself, although they have been the objects of her most cruel persecutions for more than a thousand years.

It was among their descendants, the Moravians, that Mr. Wesley found this doctrine, which had been kept as a lamp of celestial fire in their experience. Count Zinzendorf told Mr. Wesley “For ten years I have not done my own will in any thing, great or small. My own will is hell to me.”

*190. Did not the doctrine of Christian perfection originate with Mr. Wesley and the Methodist Church?*

By no means. The outlines of this doctrine and experience, as we have seen, can be culled from the writings of the best divines from the time of Christ. Mr. Wesley and his coadjutors taught it as they found it in the Bible and experienced it in their own hearts. The essential elements of the Wesleyan doctrine have been developed from the earliest ages of the church in proportion as vital Christianity has prevailed. Every great evangelist since the apostles, who has made his mark on his age, has taught the doctrine with more or less distinctness. In all the great reformations, this doctrine and experience was broached, but it was not the time for its full representation and spread, as the church was not clear in her justification, and was struggling with the innovations and corruptions of Popery.

In France, in 1620, it was taught by Molinos, who suffered imprisonment and death for this scriptural truth. It was then called mysticism, or Quietism. Archbishop Fenelon, a French bishop, taught the experience in all its essential items, though he mixed with it much of error and human merit. Any man who could cry out, as he did, “O Lord, take my heart, for I cannot give it; and when thou hast it, oh, keep it, for I cannot keep it for thee; and save me in spite of myself; for Jesus Christ’s sake,” can not drift very far from the truth.

*Madam Guyon was clear in the experience*, and for her devotion to God and his truth was imprisoned in the French Bastille for four years.

*George Fox*, the founder of the society called Friends, taught that it was the privilege of Christians to be fully saved from sin, and was imprisoned and greatly persecuted for teaching and professing Christian holiness nearly a hundred years before the Wesleys began to preach it.

[Samuel Rutherford](#), more than two hundred years ago, said: “Christ is more to be loved for giving us sanctification than justification. It is in some respects greater love in him to sanctify than to justify, for he maketh us more like himself in his own essential portraiture and image in sanctification.”

In the ritual of the Protestant Episcopal church we have the following: “Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Vouchsafe to keep us this day without sin, and grant thy people grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and with pure hearts and minds to follow thee.”

No Christian in the world would hesitate to offer these prayers, and yet they are perfectly accordant with the doctrine of Christian perfection, and a perpetual endorsement of this doctrine in the most solemn spiritual services of that church.

### *191. How was Mr. Wesley led to receive and teach the doctrine?*

He says: “In the year 1725, being in the twenty-third year of my age I met with Bishop Taylor’s ‘Rules and Exercises of Holy Living and Dying.’ I instantly resolved to dedicate all my life to God, all my thoughts, and words, and actions.”

[Bishop Taylor](#) was an eminent prelate in the English Episcopal Church.

“In the following year, 1726,” he says, “I met with Kempis’ ‘Christian Pattern.’ The nature and extent of inward religion, the religion of the heart, now appeared to me in a stronger light than ever it had done before.”

[Thomas Kempis](#) was an Augustine monk, distinguished for his apostolic simplicity and purity.

His “Christian Pattern” has been translated into all modern languages, and published in more than a thousand editions.

“A year or two after,” he says, “Mr. Law’s ‘Christian Perfection,’ and ‘Serious Call,’ were put into my hands. These convinced me more than ever of the impossibility of being half a Christian.” At this time Mr. Wesley became determined to be all the Lord’s, to give him his soul, his body, and his substance.

[William Law](#) was a divine of the Church of England, and his “Serious Call to a Holy Life” was pronounced by Drs. Johnson and Gibbons as one of the most powerful works on devotion in the English language. The great soul of Wesley communed with these eminent men of God, and their writings had much to do in moulding his remarkable character. “In 1729,” he says, “I began not only to read, but to study the Bible, as the one, the only standard of truth, and the only model of pure religion.”

Dr. Stevens, in his History of Methodism, says: “The holy club was formed at Oxford in 1729, for the sanctification of its members. The Wesleys there sought purification, and Whitefield joined them for that purpose.”

These divinely prepared instrumentalities in connection with association with the Moravians gradually led Mr. Wesley into the clear light and truth of this blessed doctrine and experience, and he felt divinely called to spread it through all lands. He thus became the great evangelist of Christian perfection.

Alexander Knox said, in the North British Review: “In John Wesley’s view of Christian Perfection are combined in substance all the sublime morality of the Greek Fathers, the spirituality of the mystics, and the divine philosophy of our favorite Platonists. Macarius, Fenelon, Lucus, and all their respective classes, have been consulted and digested by him; and his ideas are essentially theirs.” Mr. Wesley’s call, and his day were extraordinary. At that time God raised up three extraordinary men, of whom it may be said, “Their sound went forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.” There was John Wesley to formulate the doctrine and preach it, Charles Wesley to put it into poetry and sing, and John Fletcher to refute those who wrote against it. They scattered this truth all over England and the United Kingdom, and the fruit thereof shakes today like Lebanon.

### *192. What was the chief characteristic of original Methodism?*

Christian Perfection was, and has always been, the peculiar and distinctive doctrine of Methodism, the leading and

central truth in her doctrinal teachings. As already noticed, it had been held before with different degrees of clearness by numerous individuals, but it had never been the distinguishing principle of any branch of the church. It was formulated by Mr. Wesley, and has been declared, from the commencement, to be “the depositum committed to the people called Methodist,” and that God’s design in raising up our church “was to spread scriptural holiness over these lands.” We admit Christian holiness should not be regarded as the doctrine of a sect, but the crowning doctrine of the Bible, yet it has been this which has mainly distinguished Methodism, and warranted the encomium of Dr. Chalmers: “Methodism is Christianity in earnest.” To confirm this I will quote from Dr. Warren, of Boston University, and Dr. John McClintock, two of the leading minds of the Church.

Dr. Warren says: “In Luther’s mind, justification by faith was the central idea of Christianity, and in Calvin’s the decree was the central idea. But Methodism, in respect to its inmost spirit and essence, is a viewing of Christianity from the standpoint of Christian perfection, or perfect love. In Mr. Wesley’s experience, the struggle was for entire sanctification and so, in the study of the doctrines of the Bible, he looked at them all from the higher stage of religious consciousness, and perfect love became the formal principle of his theology.” -- Introduction to Theology.

In his Centenary Address, Dr. John McClintock says: “Knowing exactly what I say, and taking the full responsibility of it, I repeat, we are the only Church in history, from the Apostles’ time until now, that has put forth as its very elemental thought the great, central, pervading idea of the whole book of God from the beginning to the end the holiness of the human soul, heart, mind, and will. Go through all the confessions, of all the churches, and you will find this in no other. It may be called fanaticism, but that, dear friends, is our mission” ... There is our glory. There is our power, and there shall be our triumph.”

### *193. How did this doctrine stand related to original American Methodism?*

The same as it did to English Methodism. It was the grand theme preached, and urged upon believers by the leading minds of the American Methodist Church, and a large number of both preachers and people enjoyed the experience. No inconsiderable proportion of our early ministers enjoyed and professed this grace; among these were Bishop Coke, Bishop Asbury, Bishop George, Bishop McKendree, Bishop Hamline, Drs Olin, Bangs, Fisk; Revs. Merritt, Garrettson, and a great multitude of mighty men of God.

As in England, during the life of Mr. Wesley there were special seasons of the revival of the preaching and experience of this doctrine, so at different periods during the century of American Methodism, this experience has had its prominent seasons of revival, and then it has waned and the love of many waxed cold.

Soon after our war with England there was a mighty outpouring of the Spirit, and thousands of believers entered into the rest of perfect love. At that period Bishop Asbury wrote in his journal: “Our pentecost has come for sanctification. I have good reason to believe, that upon the eastern shore of Maryland four thousand have been converted since the first of May, and a thousand sanctified.” Rev. Henry Boehm gives an account of some of the work at this time, in his diary. (See question 136.)

The work at that period was under the labors of Bishops Asbury, Mckendree, George, and Jesse Lee, Freeborn Garrettson, Benjamin Abbott, and Peter Vanness.

Some forty years ago there began a revival of this work extending through New England, New York city, and especially through western New York, led on by Bishop Hamline, Dr. George Peck, Dr. F. G. Hibbard, Dr. John Dempster, Dr. Nathan Bangs, Dr. William Reddy, Dr. Jesse F. Peck, Dr. Thomas C. Upham, Rev. B. W. Gorham, Rev. B. T. Roberts, Rev. William McDonald, and especially by Mrs. Phoebe Palmer.

Under these devoted leaders the work gradually spread through the church, and the subject received more attention than during many years previously. Dr. Stephen Olin, president of Wesleyan University, alluding to the work at that time, said: “For nearly the last half century, little has been said about it in this country. Now the doctrine is reviving again. With it will come many blessings, great power and grace.”

During this period it was extensively written upon, and special meetings for its promotion were started in several of our chief cities, and many entered into the experience. [Mrs. Phoebe Palmer](#) was an honored instrument in the hands of God in promoting this work. During forty years, a special service has been held each week at her residence in New York, and Christians of all lands and all sects have visited this meeting, and been led into the King’s highway of perfect love.

She and her devoted husband traveled extensively in Canada, in England, and all through our own country teaching the doctrine of full redemption through faith in the blood of Christ; and God made her an evangelist of light and love to thousands and tens of thousands on both sides of the Atlantic.

She gave constant prominence to this experience, and her spirit was fragrant with its sweetness and power. She believed it, and published it. She enjoyed it, and professed it, and lived and died in its inspiring triumphs, while others now enter into her labors.

She wrote more upon the subject than any other female writer in the church, and the light of eternity alone will fully reveal her success in leading sinners to Christ and saints to the cleansing fountain.

During this period [Rev. Charles G. Finney](#), president of Oberlin College, and [Professor Mahan](#), of the Congregational Church, experienced this grace, taught it to their theological students, and wrote much upon the subject. For years Oberlin College sent out but few young men to the ministry who did not either profess or believe in this doctrine. Although President Finney mixed the doctrine with some new-school Calvinistic sentiments yet in the great essentials he harmonized with the Wesleyan view.

*Note: This author wrote this near the time of both Palmer and Finney, and so did not enjoy the luxury of hindsight that we can exercise. In retrospect, it was found that Finney did not harmonize at all with the Wesleyan view even though he appeared to do so, since he made liberal use of their terms, but conveniently re-defined them according to his own backwoods theology. He did not preach a complete sanctification, just a complete consecration. The walking before Him was not done by grace, but by will. (by this I do not imply that will is not used. The sanctified fear God, and in fear will to keep their lowly wills submitted to His will, and empowered by His grace. )*

*Palmer likewise was later found to be quite a disappointment, in that her doctrine and methods encouraged many to claim a pure heart "by faith" before they actually had it. This led to great numbers claiming the grace who did not have it, and never did obtain it -because they thought they must already have it.... Others around them were not so blind and saw the inconsistency of their fruits. Legions observed their stark nakedness, and said, "Well, if this is purity of heart, I don't want it!". Who can blame them? She also used many other short-cuts that were not profitable. See the "Dancing with Ichabod" page on the website [www.enterhisrest.org](http://www.enterhisrest.org) Earnest Seeker*

#### [194. What is the object of the National Camp-meeting Association, and how does it stand related to this doctrine?](#)

This association has for its special object the promotion of Christian holiness. It was providentially called into existence in 1867, at the close of our late civil war. The work of this association constitutes an important item in the revival and spread of this doctrine. Never perhaps, since the days of primitive Christianity, has there been a more general manifestation of the spirit and power of God to purify human hearts and save sinners than at the services of this association.

The organization is composed of some twenty ministers and laymen, and has held forty-four national camp-meetings, distributed through fifteen states of the Union, besides tabernacle meetings held on both shores of the continent. Through this instrumentality, an interest has been awakened on the subject deeper and more general than ever before. The great gatherings at Vineland, Manheim, Round Lake, Oakington, Des Plains, Hamilton, Urbana, Moundsville, Landisville, Cedar Rapids, Wesley Grove, Clear Lake, Old Orchard, Sacramento, Salt Lake, and San Francisco, will never be forgotten.

These names are embalmed with sacred remembrance of the marvelous power of God in the hearts of many thousands. Through this instrumentality, during the past ten years, a multitude of the membership of our churches have been quickened in their religious life, and many of our ablest ministers have been entirely sanctified, and become advocates of this special doctrine of the Bible and Methodism. The comparatively low religious life of the whole American Protestant Church at the close of the war felt the impulse, and has been benefited by this revival of Christian holiness. In "The Abiding Comforter," Rev. Anthony Atwood says: "This association has done a service for all the churches of every name, as well as led many thousands from the way of sin to a life of piety." The doctrinal teachings of this association are nothing new, or strange; its members, with only one or two exceptions, are all members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and hold no more, nor less, than the doctrines taught by the standard authorities of the church --Wesley, Fletcher, Watson, Clarke, Benson, Foster, and Peck, all of whom recognize Christian perfection as the distinguishing doctrine of Methodism. The association has aimed only at pushing this doctrine and experience, as taught by the church, to the front, and giving it the prominence which its

importance and its relations to the general work of God demand.

Dr. Fowler, editor of the *Christian Advocate*, says: "The advocates of the higher life have a legitimate idea, and it is producing a marvelous and most salutary effect, not only in this country, but in England, Scotland, Germany, and France. We bid them God speed. They are rendering familiar, outside the pale of Methodism, a great truth which Fletcher taught, and also lived, a hundred years ago, and which Wesley pronounced the 'grand depositum of Methodism,' -- that for which, he believed, Methodism was chiefly raised up." -- Editorial in *Advocate*.

The great Head of the church has set his seal of approbation upon their labors, and the results have been marked and hopeful. A general impulse has been given to the work, and a large number of state, conference, and local associations, for the promotion of holiness, have been formed; and special meetings in its interests have multiplied, so that they are now held in all our cities, large towns, and in many villages throughout the country. Nor are these meetings confined to our own denomination, but are attended by members of other churches. Union camp-meetings, union conferences, and conventions have been held in its interest in both this country and in Europe. In England, and, Germany, conventions have been held, at which, in some instances, a thousand ministers of all denominations have been present, sitting together in delightful Christian fellowship and brotherly love. Our eyes have seen Presbyterian, Baptist, Congregational, Lutheran, and Methodist ministers and bishops all present, and united in sweet harmony at great meetings for the promotion of holiness.

Dr. H. Bannister, writing of the results of this association, for the *Advocate of Holiness* in 1875, says: "During almost fifty years' connection with Wesley's communion, I have never seen such an apparent growth of the spirit of holiness manifest in the humble, exemplary lives of God's people as at the present time. I believe that agencies, instituted of set purpose in the name of the God of truth and holiness, to effect this growth, have not wrought in vain. Though no partisan in their behalf, I have rejoiced in them all." Its banners are now floating in almost every breeze. The conscience of the Church on this duty has been quickened, and our ministry generally have come to see the subject in a clearer light, and to urge the duty with greater intensity of interest." Within the past few years there has arisen a literature on this subject, in the form of books, magazines, papers, and tracts, such as the church has never possessed before. The hymnic, biographic, didactic, and periodic literature devoted to Christian purity is now more abundant than that devoted to any other item of Christian doctrine; and much of this has been created and guided by the best and purest minds in the church.

*This great repository of wisdom fell into neglect, but this website hopes bring its neglected store of practical wisdom back into use so that multitudes may again walk with pure hearts blameless before their God. Earnest Seeker*

*195. Do not the formation of associations, and holding special meetings for the promotion of holiness, tend to division in the church?*

No. This has been asserted over and over again, but never proved. We wish to meet this question squarely. No legitimate efforts to promote holiness tend to division among Christians. The direct opposite of this is true. Sin alienates and divides; holiness unites and binds together, and constitutes the strongest bond of union in the church of God. Any other union in the church is but a rope of sand.

Holding special meetings for the promotion of holiness and pressing it upon the attention of the church by associations, organized only for mutual co-operation in such work, will create division only where it ought to -- among dead, worldly professors, who attend theaters, parlor dances, festivals, places of amusement, and play euchre, and yet belong to the church, and desire to run it on the line of their spirit and lives. Proud, fashionable, and worldly people in the church, annoyed by those deeply devoted to God, have made this cry from the days of Wesley.

Bishop Foster well says: "We cannot doubt that in many, perhaps most instances, they have been driven to separate and class efforts, from the indifference and coldness of the body of their brethren, and in many instances of the pastors. The cure of the evil must be sought and found, not in surrendering the doctrine or experience, but in a general movement of the sacramental host to higher experience." -- *Christian Purity*, p. 276.

Rev. Dr. Stevens, in his *History of Methodism*, says: "The professors of sanctification were generally distinguished more than other Methodists as 'calm and sober-minded.' Quietness without 'quietism' became a characteristic of them as a class, and among preachers and people, they were considered by Wesley to be his most prudent, most reliable coadjutors." -- *History*, vol. i. p. 405.

We maintain that the fruit of these organizations and meetings, and of this doctrine and experience, after more than one hundred years of trial, has proved good. The late Bishop Thomson said in the N. Y. Advocate: "It is not saying too much to aver that they (the professors and advocates of this doctrine) form the most loving, spiritual, and effective membership in the churches to which they belong."

These very persons (connected with these associations) constitute no inconsiderable part of the attendants and workers in our prayer, class, and revival meetings. Facts are stubborn things, and William Pitt once said in the British Parliament, "One fact is worth a thousand arguments." The facts that we present are these:

1. It cannot be shown that these associations or meetings have ever divided the church.
2. The Protestant Church has never been so much united as during the past ten years, and yet the doctrine of holiness has never received as much attention by all denominations as during that time.
3. As to the Methodist Church, she was never more united in all her connectional interests and work. She has increased more during the past ten years than during any decade of her existence – more than double any other decade. Her total increase in ten years has been 4,024 ordained itinerant ministers, 4,501 local preachers, and 635,101 in her lay membership. She has built 4,974 churches, at an expense of over \$51,000,000.

Her increase alone in ten years is more than double the whole Congregational Church, nearly three times the membership of the Episcopal Church, and six times that of the Reformed Dutch Church, and about equal to the whole membership of the Presbyterian Church of this country.

We do not mention these facts boastfully, but in vindication of the practical efficiency of Christian holiness as the great unifying and evangelizing power of Methodism. And yet not half as much has been accomplished, as would have been, if the church more generally had put away her sins, come up to her privilege, and there had been less fault-finding with the measures and efforts put forth to promote Christian holiness.

The ministry of the Methodist Church cannot afford to ignore this doctrine to antagonize it, to tone it down, or emasculate it. The history of Methodism is a diary of Christian holiness, cutting its way through the icy walls of a nominal Christianity and he who would rob it of its clear and specific testimony on this subject, or hinder its best efforts for advancement, is an unworthy successor of the Wesleys.

#### *196. Is the work and experience of holiness making progress in the church?*

It is. One needs but an honest look, to be convinced of the interest and deepening conviction on this subject in the churches, both of this country and Protestant Europe. Coldness, formality, and spiritual death are seen to be inadequate to meet the encroachments of the world, and contend with the greed and fraud, intemperance, impurities, riots, sabbath desecration, and bold skepticism so fearfully prevalent. More attention is now given to the circulation of books and periodicals, devoted to its promotion, and the attention of the church is more generally directed to its claims and importance. The number of those in the ministry who enjoy it, and faithfully preach it, is increasing constantly, and the witnesses of perfect love in the membership are augmenting from year to year.

But it must be remembered there is much yet to be done, as vast multitudes of our people never read the excellent books and periodicals furnished by the church on this subject. Many of our preachers do not enjoy perfect love; some seldom preach it, and, painful as is the admission, some discard Mr. Wesley's views altogether. Many, very many, of our members are living without an experimental knowledge of its saving power and blessedness. Some, we fear, are content to remain so.

While, then, we rejoice, and give thanks to God for what has been, and for what is being done, we should be incited to pray and labor to secure a more extensive and general work of perfect love through our entire ministry and membership.

#### *197. What was the distinguishing characteristic of the great Wesleyan reformation?*

"The Wesleyan reformation was eminently a movement in favor of holiness. The true doctrine of Christian perfection was, perhaps, more clearly taught and powerfully enforced than at any former time since the days of primitive purity. And while the great mass of converts made it their aim, large numbers passed on to the actual experience and living demonstration of the power of Christ to cleanse from all sin. And mark the result: 'No weapon

formed against them could prevail.' From the feeblest beginnings, without wealth, without power, in the midst of the most violent persecutions, they have moved on in a career of usefulness unparalleled since the days of the apostles." -- Bishop Peck: Central Idea, p. 26.

### *136. Were the experience and profession of holiness common in the early days of Methodism?*

(from section 10)

They were. We have records of professions of perfect love in all the journals of the old Methodists. They all speak of witnesses of regeneration, and also of sanctification. Indeed the golden pot of Methodist biography is brimful of the manna of sanctified experience.

The pastoral address of the General Conference in 1832 says "Among primitive Methodists the experience of this high attainment in religion may justly be said to have been COMMON now a PROFESSION of it is rarely to be met with among us."

I will give you a few brief extracts from the journals of several of the early preachers and members: --

1. Mr. Wesley: "In London alone I found six hundred and fifty-two members of our society who were exceedingly clear in their experience, and whose testimony I could see no reason to doubt." -- Sermons, vol. ii. p. 223.

Many quotations might be given from Mr. Wesley's journal, showing that a multitude of persons professed sanctification under his labors, in all parts of England and Ireland.

2. Mrs. Hester Ann Rogers "After Mr. Fletcher [the saintly John Fletcher] ceased to speak, about thirty WITNESSED for Jesus that they, through grace, were dead indeed unto sin." -- "In the band thirty witnessed that they were 'dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ.'" -- Journal, pp. 138, 148.

3. William Bramwell: "The work continued almost in every meeting, and sixty persons in and about Dewsberry received sanctification, and walked in that liberty."

4. William Carvosso: "The testimonies borne to the reality and blessedness of the doctrine and experience of purity of heart exceeded every thing of the kind I had before witnessed." -- "In all my pilgrimage I have never known so many clear testimonies of the power of God to save from all sin, as I have of late." -- Memoir.

5. Bishop Asbury says: "I think we ought modestly to tell what we feel to the fullest. For two years past, amidst innumerable trials, I have enjoyed almost inexpressible sensations. Our Pentecost is come in some places for sanctification. I have good reason to believe that upon the eastern shore four thousand have been converted since the 1<sup>st</sup> of May last, and ONE THOUSAND SANCTIFIED." -- Journal.

6. Benjamin Abbott: "In the love feast the people spoke the clearest of justification and sanctification. In point of distinction between them, of any I have heard in these parts. About thirty had professed sanctification from the time I went on the circuit till then." -- Life of Abbott.

Rev. Henry Boehm gives an account of the work of God in the days of Asbury, -- in the following statements. Taken from his diary: "There were one hundred and forty-six converted and seventy-six sanctified during the day." ... "During the meeting there were reported thirteen hundred and twenty-one conversions and nine hundred and sixteen sanctifications." ... "At sunset they reported three hundred and thirty-nine conversions and one hundred and twenty-two sanctifications. There were eleven hundred conversions and nine hundred and sixteen sanctifications." Here we have the work of God plainly stated in the old Methodist way, by the venerable Father Boehm, the sainted centenarian of American Methodism, who was an eyewitness and participator in the meetings he reports. It is no wonder that Bishop Asbury wrote in his journal, "Our day of Pentecost has fully come."

From the diaries, journals, magazines, biographies, and histories of Methodism during a hundred years past, several thousand such quotations might be given.

---

### *112. What is the rest which the sanctified soul enjoys?*

(from Section 9)

The Saviour says, "My peace I give unto you." "The work of righteousness [holiness] shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever."

1. It is not a state in which we do not sympathize with the joys and sorrows of others.
2. It is not a state of exemption from physical or mental suffering. (eg. loss of a loved one- ES)
3. It is not a state of exemption from the Christian warfare, or a state of inglorious ease from labor and Christian duty.
4. It is a state of settled and complete satisfaction in God, He being "all in all" to the soul.
5. It is a state of rest from the former servitude to doubts, fears, and inbred sin.
6. It is a state of rest, in which the tumult of the heart has been hushed into calmness; and fear, and discord, and doubt have given place to quietness and assurance.
7. It is a state of deep and permanent quietude and assurance in respect to all our interests, temporal and eternal.
8. It is a state of sweet rest from all conflict between the will and the conscience. "The body of sin has been destroyed," and the soul has peace with itself in inward quietude. "It will feast your souls with such peace and joy in God (says Wesley) as will blot out the remembrance of everything that we called peace or joy before."

"Now rest, my long-divided heart;  
Fixed on this blissful center, rest;  
Nor ever from thy Lord depart  
With Him of every good possessed."

### *113. What are the natural and necessary indications of a pure heart?*

A pure heart differs vitally from an impure one in the fact that its expressions of goodness are natural and spontaneous, the fruit of a gracious nature, and not unnatural and forced.

The Saviour says, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." The streams partake of the nature of the fountain. The heart gives character to the life by a law of necessity. It breathes itself through all our activities, and a pure heart will be indicated,

1. By pure and holy conversation. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." If the heart is right, the conversation will be sweet, truthful, humble, heavenly, and holy.
2. By opposition to all impurity. A pure heart loathes sin, and has no affinity for it. It shrinks from it instinctively as a worm would from a fire.
3. By watchfulness. The love of purity begets watchfulness against impurity. The pure heart is watchful instinctively.
4. By reluctance to mingle with the gay, the vain, and the worldly. It has no moral affinity for such society, and no taste for such associations. The charm of the world has been broken. [The pure heart has tastes, motives, communings, and enjoyments totally dissimilar to the worldling.](#)

This perfect love is a foretaste of the bliss of heaven. Thomas Moore refers to it:

Go, wing thy flight from star to star,  
From world to luminous world,  
As far as the universe spreads its flaming wall,  
Take all the pleasures of all the spheres,

And multiply each through endless years,  
One minute of Heaven is worth them all!

---

*This article was sourced from the Wesleyan Heritage Library CD and is to be distributed free of charge.*

*Edited and published by Earnest Seeker 2005. We hope this selection has built your faith to  
enter His own Rest...*

*For further information or purchase details for the complete CD see <http://www.EnterHisRest.org>*

---