

THE AGES DIGITAL LIBRARY
COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY ON THE
NEW TESTAMENT, VOL 4
2 CORINTHIANS
PAUL, THE CHAMPION THEOLOGIAN
By Rev. W. B. Godbey, A. M.,

Books For The Ages
AGES Software • Albany, OR USA
Version 1.0 © 1997

SECOND CORINTHIANS

PROLOGUE

After Paul had sailed from Asia, perhaps in June, landing in Macedonia and spending the summer and the most of the fall peregrinating the country and preaching not only in the cities of Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea, but doubtless innumerable other rural towns and villages throughout Northern Greece, somewhere up in that country and during that period he wrote this letter. Your postscript dates it at Philippi, as the first epistle. I believe this to be another mistake. Instead of both of them being written at Philippi, I know the first one was written at Ephesus, for the letter says so, and the second was written somewhere up there in Macedonia, and I know most probably from Berea, from the fact that Paul would be apt, after an absence of three years, first to go around among the churches throughout the whole country, and then avail himself of the rest while he dictates the letter to an amanuensis. As Philippi was the first city he reached, it is hardly probable he stopped there to write. As Berea is the last prominent city in his south-bound journey, it is more probable that he halted there and wrote the letter, some time in August or September, sending it on before him in time for its perusal and appreciation before his arrival in December. What was the end in view of which he wrote this epistle? It is really a continuation of the castigatory, admonitory and advisory themes communicated in the first epistle, having already been encouraged by the report of Timothy, whom he had sent to preach to them and prevail on them to receive and obey his first letter. Still not satisfied with the extent of their information, and determined, if possible, to correct all the irregularities, heresies, abuses and departures from the precepts he had inculcated while with them, he writes again in order to perfect all these reformations and reclamations which they had already begun under the influence of the first letter, the preaching of Timothy and others. In this second letter he gives especial prominence to the contributions for the relief of the Jerusalem saints. While the close analogy between the two will enable us to make more rapid progress in the exegesis, this letter is replete with beautiful and bright sun-bursts along the line of spiritual truth, revelatory of Christian experience in the twofold aspect of regeneration for the sinner and sanctification for the believer; meanwhile the deeper doctrines of glorification receive some touches unsurpassed elsewhere in the Pauline epistles.

CHAPTER 1

1. *“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and brother Timothy, to the church of God being at Corinth, with all the saints who are in Achaia.”* Corinth was the great commercial, literary and idolatrous metropolis of Southern Greece, called Achaia. Its semi-tropical climate enriched not only the continent, but the innumerable islands all around with a vast variety of delicious and valuable fruits; meanwhile the agricultural resources were immense, and the mercantile facilities really put Corinth at the very front of the world, as the city stood on the isthmus between the Aegean Sea on the east, commanding the commerce of Asia, and the Ionian Sea on the west, commanding the commerce of Rome.
2. This is the salutation found in nearly all the apostolical letters, full of love and inspiration.

HE COMFORTS THEM

3-7. This paragraph is replete with the grandest hyperbole, in which he derives comfort from everything, adversity, prosperity, indiscriminately. “Knowing that as you are the participants of the sufferings, so also of the consolation,” *i.e.*, there is a blessing incident to every state of adversity which more than compensates the suffering, sorrow and loss.

HIS VERDICT IN FAVOR OF DEATH

Verses 8-11.

8. *“For we do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning our affliction which occurred in Asia, that we were burthened above our power, so that we despaired even of life.”*
9. *“But we had the answer of death in ourselves, in order that we may not have confidence in ourselves, but in God, who delivered us from so great a death and will deliver.”* Exegetes are much at sea in reference to what this affliction was, as it is not specified. The presumption is that it was an exceedingly severe spell of sickness, which utterly prostrated and brought him to the very verge of death, when the last vestige of hope took its flight and God said to him, “Will you die or will you live?” He decided, “I will die,” thus taking it as his choice to depart from labor to rest. The English does not clearly bring out this fact, which is the great, salient point in the matter. It is believed that this is the terrible ordeal alluded to (1 Cor. 15:32), where he says that he fought with the wild beasts at Ephesus, symbolizing the awful disease that preyed on him by the figure of

a wild beast, as the law did not allow them to cast a Roman citizen to a wild beast.

PAUL'S PROFESSION OF SANCTIFICATION

Verses 12-14.

12. *“For our boasting is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and purity of God, not in carnal wisdom, but in the grace of God, were we in the world, and especially toward you.*

13. *“For I write not other things, but those things which you read and acknowledge: and I hope that you will acknowledge them to the end, because ye are our boasting as we are yours in the day of our Lord Jesus.”*

This paragraph, like so many others, is grand and conclusive on both entire sanctification and the Coming of the Lord, the two grand hemispheres of the Pauline gospel, which roll before us through his writings in a constant glowing flame of inspired verity and beauty. It is to be regretted that the E.V., in v. 12, signally fails to bring out this clear and bold profession of the personal experience of entire sanctification by the apostle. The Greek word which I translated “holiness” is the very same word we find in ~~820~~ Hebrews 12:10, where he says that we are partakers of His holiness, *i. e.*, the holiness of God. It is simply a form of the same word translated sanctification throughout the New Testament. Hence there is no evasion of the issue. Paul makes the profession there clear and straight in that word. Where the E.V. has “godly sincerity,” I translated it “the purity of God,” which is literal; the Greek is *eilikrinia* from *eilee*, “a sun-beam” and *krinoo*, “judge.” It is a word whose force is too strong for any word in the English language to translate it. We can only reach it by circumlocution. It is taken from the ancient custom to hold up a substance before the sun for his rays to interpenetrate, in order to reveal impurities in it. Hence the import in the Scripture is that God proposes to make your heart so clean that when illuminated by the infallible Sun of Righteousness the Omniscient Eye will discover no impurities in it. Hence Paul made the boldest profession of entire sanctification I ever heard. The English word “sincerity” here occurring is much stronger than generally apprehended. It is from *sine*, “without,” and *cera*, “wax.” Hence it means “strained honey.” You get plenty of honey when born from above, but you have to pick it out from among the wax, dead bees and trash. Sanctification strains out everything else and leaves the pure, unadulterated deliciously sweet honey, which the Lord’s bees love so well, but the devil’s hornets do not appreciate. This passage is exceedingly valuable as a confirmation of Paul’s bold profession of entire sanctification.

THE SECOND BLESSING

1. *“And with the same confidence I wished to come unto you hitherto, in order that you may have a second grace.”* (See R. V.) This word *charis* occurs one hundred and twenty times in the New Testament, and only in this one instance is translated “benefit,” for which there is simply no apology, unless we conceive on the part of the translators an effort to defend their own unsanctified experiences. You must remember that John Wesley preached in that same church ten years before he was converted. It is hardly probable the translators were all clear in the experience of justification, while there is no probability that any of them enjoyed sanctification. Hence they have signally, in many instances, as you here see, failed to bring out in their translation the second work of grace, which in the original is clear as the meridian sun. This is obvious from the fact that we do not see clearly in the Bible experiences which we do not enjoy in our hearts, though we may have some vague apprehensions of them. There is a world within and a world without, corresponding either with other. I have heard many men possessing fine intelligence and scholarship preach powerfully against spiritual regeneration, laboring to convince the people that there was no such thing. They do the same in reference to sanctification, when personally ignorant of the experience. The doctrine of holiness so literally floods the Bible from beginning to end that it is impossible to translate it out or explain it away. Hence it is the great fundamental and overwhelming truth in every translation. But I find the Bible doctrine of holiness one hundred per cent. stronger in the version of the Holy Ghost Himself than in any human translation. We are assured that many of these Corinthians had gloriously entered Beulah land by a blessed second work of grace, before Paul bade them adieu for his Asiatic tour three years previously, yet in that great church of Jews and Gentiles there were dozens, scores, and perhaps hundreds, destitute of this experience and imperatively needing it. Hence he states to hem his anxiety to come unto them that they may receive a “second grace,” *i. e.*, the second work of grace.

YEA AND NAY, AND YEA

Verses 16-24.

16. He traveled from Asia across the sea to Northern Greece, and then through Macedonia down into Achaia, spending the winter of A. D. 57-58 at Corinth, and writing the epistle to the Romans, leaving early in the spring for Jerusalem again, to visit the dear saints and bear to them the benefactions of the Gentile churches.

17. *“Then wishing this, whether then did I use lightness a purpose or whatsoever things I wish, whether do I wish according to the flesh, in order that it may be with me yea, yea, and nay, nay.”*

18. *“But God is faithful, because our word toward you is not yea and nay.*
19. *“For Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who is among you, having been preached by us, through me and Silas and Timothy, was not yea and nay, but in Him it was yea.*
20. *“For so many promises of God in Him are yea: therefore indeed through Him it is amen unto God for glory through us.*
21. *“He that strengthened us along with you, and anointeth us, is God,*
22. *“Who also having sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”* This paragraph is regarded as very obscure. I realize the light shining through it clear and cloudless, and feel that you will not only be enabled to receive it, but find a blessing in it. Paul’s original plan while over in Asia was to sail into Achaia first and then proceed on into Macedonia. This plan had been communicated to them by Timothy while Paul was still at Ephesus. He afterward changed his plan, in order to give them more time to repent, wheel into line, and straighten up all their irregularities before his arrival, lest he find it necessary severely to administer the disciplinary rod. This change of plan on the part of Paul should be profitable to you and me, illustrating the difference between the human and the Divine leadership. Paul had been preaching in Asia three years, finally getting around to Europe again. I have appointments out now for the next three years. That is a human program, which is innocent within itself, but final in no case, because it is liable to be changed anywhere and everywhere by the Divine leadership, which is not anticipatory at long range like human plans, but is in the present tense. Hence, responding to calls in all parts of the continent, and giving dates far out in the future, I constantly insert “*D. V.*,” which means “God willing,” giving me all needed latitude and longitude to go anywhere in this world or up to Heaven, instead of fulfilling the list of appointments. Some of the people at Corinth were charging Paul with instability because he changed his program and went to Macedonia first. Of course, God knew all the time that He was going to lead him into Macedonia first and from there down into Achaia; but we see that Paul, like the rest of us, had a human program which was every day and hour liable to be interrupted by the Divine leadership, bringing to him no disappointment whatever, because his will was lost in God, and, while we do not feel free to ignore the adumbrations of our future pilgrimage, yet we recognize the perpetual Divine leadership in the present tense, Jesus walking by my side and leading me with His hand. Here Paul castigates the Corinthians for imputing to him human motives involving personal instability. Hence he assures them that it is not with him “yea and nay,” like the worldly people who talk about “luck” and “failure,” and “good luck” and “bad luck.” That is the language of the card-table and the horserace. So he corrects it by referring to our Savior, with whom it was not “yea and nay,” but in Him all things are “yea.” What is the meaning of that? Worldly

people are tossed amid ambiguities, and have haphazardous adventures all the time. Everything with them is a matter of “luck” and “failure,” “success” and “disappointment.” With God’s holy people, who are lost in His will, there is no such a thing as “bad luck,” “failure” or “disappointment”. Because

“all things work together for good to them who love God, who are the elect according to His purpose” (~~4~~¹⁹Romans 8:29).

Since “my will is the will of my God,” and if I am true to Him I know that His will is carried out in my behalf all the time, therefore there is no such a thing as disappointment, because the Lord’s will is constantly verified if I am true and obedient. Hence everything is “good luck” to me. It is all “yea,” and there is no “nay” about it. My whole life is made up of positives and no negatives; victories and no defeats. The blessed indwelling Holy Spirit is to us the Earnest, *i. e.*, the prelibation, of Heaven.

23. *“I call God to witness to my soul that sparing you I came not into Corinth.”* If he had come at the time they were looking for him, he would have been under the necessity of enforcing severe discipline and turning a lot of them out of the church. As it was he had judiciously delayed, at the same time sending to them these powerful letters in which all the heresies, abuses, disorders and irregularities were corrected, and sending to them first Timothy and then Silas to preach to them and lead them into repentance necessary to satisfy the demands of God’s Word. The whole scheme worked out in perfect harmony, so that when he came they had nothing to do but meet him with a shout, and sit down and enjoy his powerful preaching.

24. *“Not that we domineer over your faith, but we are fellow-partakers of your joy: for by faith you stand.”* Paul was far from the attitude of an ecclesiastical autocrat, demanding of them loyalty and obedience to a lot of ecclesiastical institutions. There was nothing of that kind. All he asked of them was to be true to God, taking His precious Word as their only authority, and he was ready to shout with them. Faith is the great fundamental grace underlying all others, and holding up the superstructure of Christian character. Yet faith must have standing ground, which is in case of the sinner a radical and complete repentance and in case of the Christian a thorough and unequivocal consecration.

CHAPTER 2

HE RESOLVES NOT TO COME TO THEM IN SORROW

Verses 1-13.

Paul most sagaciously and successfully maneuvers this whole matter. It would have been a terrible ordeal to him, who had spent eighteen months with them and seen them all born from above, and rejoiced exultantly with his spiritual children, to come among them with the castigatory rod, holding church trials and turning out a big lot of them. So he determines from the start, and arriving at Ephesus from his great Eastern tour, and there bearing all about these irregularities, heresies and disorders, he decides that he will wheel them into line by firing on them at long range.

4. *“For out of much grief and anguish of heart I wrote unto you through many tears, not that you may be grieved, but that you may know the Divine love I have toward you exceedingly.”* While he had met every issue fairly and squarely, withholding not an iota or flickering, he had baptized his letters with his tears. Timothy and Titus, his noble preachers, had been signally blessed of God in their work among them, corroborating the Pauline epistles by their preaching and bringing about a genuine repentance and radical reform.

5. *“But if anyone has grieved you all in part, he did not grieve me but in part, that I may not burthen you.”*

6. *“This punishment from the many is sufficient for such an one.”*

7. *“So, on the contrary, you should rather bless and exhort him, lest he may be swallowed up with excessive grief.”*

8. *“Therefore, I exhort you to stir up your Divine love toward him.”* This is that notorious incestuous man who had his father’s wife (the old man still living, ch. ¹⁹17:12), though Paul had assured them that this man should be turned over to Satan, *i. e.*, expelled from the church, in case that he did not take heed. But, to the infinite gratitude of Paul, he had not only reformed and made everything right as far as possible, but he was about to grieve himself to death, and the whole church was down in mourning with him and praying for him, not a single one vindicating him, but condemning him, and crying to God to have mercy on him and them. When Titus arrives and tells Paul about the genuine, radical and excessive repentance, and the man even about to grieve himself to death, Paul tells them here that it is enough, and exhorts them to turn the tide and labor to comfort him, all stirring up their Divine love in his behalf, exhorting and blessing him, lest he die of grief.

9. *“For unto this indeed I wrote, in order that I may know your approval, if you are obedient in all things.”* He had the blessed consolation of realizing that they were obedient in all things. Instead of dividing up into factions, as is customary in case of church discipline, they unanimously accepted the situation and came down in sackcloth and ashes, those who had sinned crying for mercy, and the balance crying along with them that the sin had occurred among them.

10-11. *“But in whatsoever you rejoice as to anything, I do also, for indeed I have rejoiced in this, if I have rejoiced in anything, for your sakes in the face of Christ, in order that we may not be gobbled up by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his devices.”* If they had broken into divisions over the Pauline discipline, Satan would have made great capital out of it. But as it was, he was utterly defeated and the victory was complete.

12-13. *“Having come into Troas unto the gospel of Christ, indeed a door being opened to me in the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit because I did not find Titus my brother, but bidding them adieu I departed into Macedonia.”* Troas is over in Asia, the capital of Mysia, the successor of old Troy of Homeric notoriety. Titus was to meet Paul there, and give him the news from Corinth, whither Paul had sent him to preach and to do his utmost to obey his epistles and make everything right. On arrival, he does not find him. Such is his anxiety to hear from Corinth that he does not delay, but hastens away over the sea to Macedonia, where he meets Titus bringing the glorious news of his great revival at Corinth, so ravishing to the longing heart of their spiritual father.

THE GOSPEL OMINOUS OF DOOM

14. *“Thanks be unto God, who causeth us to triumph in Christ, manifesting the odor of the knowledge of Himself through us in every place.”* The apostles are everywhere the heralds of victory in Christ, who causes them to triumph over all of their spiritual foes, their message of truth, testimony of personal Salvation, songs of joy and shouts of victory filling the very atmosphere with the fragrant odors of the knowledge of Christ; *i.e.*, everything they say and do is constantly revelatory of the knowledge of Christ.

15. *“Because we are a sweet savor to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.”* So long as we are in this world we are not saved in a final sense, but only being saved, *i.e.*, in process of salvation, ripening for Heaven, justification being primary salvation, sanctification full salvation and glorification final salvation. Meanwhile the wicked are not yet damned, but only condemned, with an opportunity to have the condemnatory sentence rescinded. There is no final issue in either case till we pass out of this probation. The true ministers are a sweet savor to God, because they so proclaim the whole counsel of God as to turn the

full responsibility over to the hearers, thus vindicating the Divine justice and magnifying sovereign mercy, whether in the case of salvation or perdition.

16. *“To the latter an odor from death unto death, and to the former an odor of life unto life. Who is sufficient for these things?”* In the case of the wicked, we are an odor from the spiritual death which now locks them tight unto the eternal death which awaits them. In the case of the righteous, we are an odor from the glorious spiritual life they now enjoy, to the ineffable joys of the eternal life to which they fast hasten, the present state in either case being significantly ominous of the momentous future. No wonder he indulges in the interjection, *“Who is equal to these things?”* Tremendous are the issues and immeasurable the responsibilities.

17. *“For we are not as many, who are in the habit of adulterating the Word of God.”* What an awful responsibility! and yet how many are guilty of bending the Word to suit the creed or the congregation. God’s Word is His voice, replete with His awful majesty. In the first place, it is an awful pity a creed was ever made. This is the reason why they corrupt the Word to suit the creed. No one should assume the awful responsibility of handling God’s Word till he is dead to creeds, opinions, and everything but God. *“But as from purity, but as from God, we speak before God in Christ.”* The “sincerity” in E.V. is *eilikrineias*, from *eilee*, a “sunbeam,” and *krinoo*, judge. Hence it means “judged in a sunbeam, *i.e.*, God proposes to make your heart so pure that when illuminated by the infallible Sun of Righteousness, His own omniscient eye can see no impurity in it. We are to preach in the constant realization that we are standing in the presence of God.

CHAPTER 3

ALL CHRISTIANS ARE GOD'S LETTERS

1-3. This wicked world will never read the Bible. When they read it, they never can understand it, unless they become penitent and pray till the Holy Spirit opens their understanding and reveals it to them. Hence none of the books constituting the Bible are addressed to sinners. Jesus says: "Ye are the light of the world." Here Paul tells us that we are "letters written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God." Hence the silly folly of those heretics who deny the contact of the Holy Spirit with the human spirit. Pursuant to this illustration they would have to write a letter with ink and never permit it to come in contact with the paper, as the contact of Spirit with spirit is as real as that of the paper and ink when you write the letter. Paul recognizes the fact that they also had a copy of their converts in their hearts. These letters are the hope of the world, as the wicked will read us, though they will not read the Bible. What a grand conception! Every saint is the letter of Christ for all the world to read. O, how Satan has strewn the world with counterfeit letters, which the people read and believe and go down to Hell by millions.

THE LETTER KILLETH AND THE SPIRIT MAKETH ALIVE

- 5.** "*We are not able to think anything from ourselves, as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.*" Unless the Holy Spirit sanctify and illuminate the intellect we are incompetent to even think God-like thoughts. No wonder the Savior forbade his own apostles to go out preaching till they were filled with the Holy Ghost, who is really the only preacher in all the world, others only being competent to preach through His immediate agency and presence.
- 6.** "*Who also empowered us ministers of the new covenant.*" Christ is Mediator of the new covenant and Moses of the old, the latter being rudimentary and the former Christian perfection. Hence the people who remain in spiritual infancy, *i.e.*, stop with justification, are spindled and dwarfed in the dispensation of Moses, three thousand years behind the age. "Not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit maketh alive." The man who depends on the simple Word for salvation without the Spirit, is like the murderer who employs a lawyer to search the statute-book to find his pardon. Nothing will be found there but his condemnation. The Bible says: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Sad to say, the multitude of preachers in Christendom this day are ministers of the Word without the Spirit, and simply augmenting the condemnation and expediting the damnation of their people, unless they receive the Spirit,

which is not very probable unless the preachers lead the way. The people swept through the churches down to Hell meet a more awful doom than the heathens, because they sin against light and knowledge. This dead-letter ministry has girdled the globe with the form without the power, from which God says, "Turn away." No man can be a "minister of the Spirit" unless he has the Spirit. All he can do is to condemn you, sending mourning to the Spirit. Good Lord, help us to be ministers of the Spirit, and not simply of the letter. Satan knows that the Word without the Spirit will only expedite and augment damnation. Hence he sends out so many to preach who are strangers to the Holy Ghost. If we would be the ministers of the Spirit, we must receive Him into our hearts and let Him fill us and use us. We must recognize Him as the Leader of our meetings. This will knock out all human form and ceremony, and turn over the singing, praying, preaching and testifying to the Holy Ghost. Besides all this, we must be consciously possessed by the Holy Ghost. Will you be a minister of the Holy Ghost? They are scarce, and at a high premium in Heaven. We live amid awful issues. Every preacher nowadays is forced to decide between human authority and influence and the Holy Ghost. I am glad I passed this ordeal thirty years ago. Many are dying hard at that point now. Will you be a minister of the dead letter or the Holy Ghost?

THE VAIL OF MOSES

Verses 7-16.

Moses was the mediator of the old covenant of works, and hence a representative of Christ, who had not yet come in the flesh, and though on earth from the beginning of the mediatorial kingdom, yet never visible to human senses till after He was born in Bethlehem. However, He was real and manifest to human spirits in the days of the patriarchs, just as the children of Israel realized the personal presence of Moses when he covered his face with a vail, though they could not see his face. The vail was pertinent for the mediator while excarnate, and as Moses represented Christ before incarnation, when yet invisible, he must also be invisible, covering his face with a vail as his body was covered with his mantle, so that his entire person was in a sense invisible. And yet how exceedingly real to all Israel was the personal presence of Moses, even though covered from the contact of their senses. Hence we must not conclude that Jehovah (for this was the Old Testament name of Christ) was not manifested to the patriarchs. He was intensely real to them, as Moses was to Israel, even though he had a vail upon his face. This symbolism vividly represents the justified and sanctified experiences contrastively, while in both we realize the presence of our blessed Mediator. In the former, which is normal to the Mosaic dispensation, we are delighted with His presence, but conscious that there is an intervening vail somewhere, like the worshiper in the outer court of the temple separated from the effulgent glory of the Shekinah by the intervening vail. Yet he is assured that Jehovah in His glory is very

nigh. He is no pagan, groping amid the mummeries of heathen priests, talking to dead gods who never give them an intelligent answer. While he is delighted with the privilege of worshipping Jehovah in his sanctuary, he longs to pass beyond that veil, and stand amid the clear effulgence of the glorious Shekinah, and meet Jehovah face to face. In the new dispensation the priesthood is transferred to the membership (1 Peter 2), the justified experience constituting you a priest and permitting you to offer sacrifices in the sanctuary; while sanctification rends the veil from top to bottom, so you have nothing to do but push it aside by the hand of faith, walk in, enjoy the worship of the cherubim, and abide amid the unutterable splendors of the Shekinah, flooded with the delectable realization of Jehovah's presence. Hence, in this beautiful symbolism of Moses with a veil on his face, so that the children of Israel can not immediately behold his person and see him face to face, yet they are indubitably conscious of his presence. Now, do not forget that Moses, in his mediatorship, does not represent himself, but Christ; hence we see that the justified experience reveals Jesus to the senses beyond the possibility of doubt, yet there is a veil intervening. But this veil is taken away in sanctification, which is normal to the new dispensation.

7. *“And if the ministry of death, having been engraven in writing in the stones, was in glory, so that the sons of Israel were not able to look upon the face of Moses on account of the glory of his countenance, which is transitory,*
8. *“How much more shall the ministry of the Spirit be in glory?”* Why is the ministry of the old covenant, *i. e.*, justification, called the “ministry of death”? Because it means the death of the sinner, *i. e.*, old Adam, who in justification is arrested and bound as a prisoner awaiting execution. Here Paul calls this ministry of death “transitory.” Why? Because it does not take long to kill a man. This ministry arrests the man of sin, and holds him for execution at the hands of the man of grace. Hence this ministry of death is superseded by the ministry of the Spirit. Why? Because the Holy Ghost slays Adam the first, thus putting an end to the ministry of death.
9. *“For if the ministry in condemnation was in glory, how much more shall the ministry of right abound in glory.*
10. *“For that which was glorious became not glorious in this respect on account of the surpassing glory.*
11. *“For if the transitory is through glory, how much more is that which abides in glory?”* The mediatorship of Moses was in its very nature transitory, as he was destined to be superseded by Christ, who is to abide forever. Yet you must not lose sight of the Antitype in the contemplation of any of these types, as that is the point where idolatry comes in and they proceed to the worship of types and symbols; but you must bear in mind that Christ was as real in the Old Testament as in the New, otherwise none

could have been saved, for Moses had no more power to save a soul than I have, and God out of Christ is a consuming fire. John the Baptist said,

“I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make His paths straight” (~~1000~~ Matthew 3:3).

John here means Christ, and if you will read his quotation from Isaiah, you will find he says “Jehovah.” Hence the Christ of John is the “Jehovah” of Isaiah. Paul says,

“Some of them tempted Christ and were destroyed by serpents” (~~1001~~ 1 Corinthians 10:19).

Hence you see the Christ of Paul is the Jehovah of Moses. By these two unimpeachable witnesses you see I prove the identity of Christ and Jehovah. Therefore, throughout the Old Testament, Jehovah means none other than the excarnate Christ. So they all had Christ with them, omnipotent to save from the days of Abel till the last trumpet sounds. Now you see in these Scriptures Paul calls this the ministry of condemnation, which is true throughout the gospel of justification, normal to the ministry of Moses, because justification condemns old Adam to die. The sheriff has a writ of prosecution against your house. You have the murderer on hand, taking care of him and feeding him. The only way you can save your own neck is to turn over that murderer to the sheriff for execution under the law, which says, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” Hence you are never justified till you actually assign old Adam’s death warrant. As here it says that the Mosaic dispensation was transitory, so your justification is really a transitory state, destined soon to wind up with the execution of Adam the first. These Scriptures clearly refute the possible conception of settlement and permanency in the justified experience, which in its very nature is transitory. Now Paul says that this ministry of condemnation (*i. e.*, the condemnation of the sin-principle to execution) is glorious, but that glory is in its very nature transitory, and destined to wind up with the ministry of the Spirit, who supersedes Moses, the law-giver, and hence the representative of the law. But you must remember that the law can do nothing but define the offense and condemn the criminal. The law is a light revealing sin. A dozen rattlesnakes may be in this room unseen by the inmates because there is no light. When the light comes it reveals the venomous monsters, but has no power to kill a single one of them. So Moses the law-giver has no power to slay Adam the first. There is glory in his ministry of condemnation, because, pursuant to truth and righteousness, it condemns the man of sin to die. This ministry in its very nature is transitory, because it is verified and passes away when the criminal is executed. Hence the glory of justification consists in arresting the man of sin and holding him a prisoner for execution and turning him over into the hands of the Executive, who is none other than the Holy Ghost, the Omnipotent Spirit of Christ. Now when Adam the first is turned over to the

Holy Ghost for execution, we pass triumphantly into the ministry of the Spirit. Why do I say triumphantly? Because the vexed problem is now gone out of our hands. The Omnipotent Spirit takes charge of our old enemy, who has given us all the trouble we ever had. Truly our victory has come. We need not trouble ourselves about what He has done with him. We know that He will never let him trouble us any more. As the law under Moses has already condemned him to die, and the Holy Ghost, the Executive of the law, has taken him into hand, of course there is nothing left for us to do but to reckon him dead (Romans 6:11), and raise the shout of triumph. Since this is no transitory affair, victory has come, and come to stay. Well does Paul here say that the transcendent glory normal to the ministry of the Spirit, which comes to abide, actually eclipses all the glory normal to the ministry of condemnation, which was destined to be transitory, passing away with the execution of Adam the first and superseded by the transcendent glory normal to the ministry of the Spirit, who not only executes Adam the first (Romans 6:6), but abides forever, filling the soul and life with glory ineffable. Hence we see the egregious folly on the part of anyone to abide in the justified state. He is committing the awful blunder of the Jews who held on to Moses, refusing to let him go into eclipse when Christ came. Moses was all right in his dispensation, but utterly effete and unsatisfactory after the expiration of his dispensation. The present Holiness Movement is destined to play a conspicuous part in the Judgment Day. When the Jews rejected Christ they plunged headlong into darkness, and have been sinking deeper into infidelity and atheism ever since. The same was true when the Roman Catholic Church rejected the light of the Lutheran Reformation. Before that day there were many bright lights and celebrated saints adorning her ranks, such as Augustine, Bernard, and a host of others. God raised up Luther and his compeers to lead them into brighter light and better experiences. They rejected them with contempt, and have been sinking into blacker darkness, deeper debauchery and were terrible diabolism ever since. The same is true of the Episcopal Church ever since she rejected the light God gave her in the Wesleyan Holiness Movement. The present movement is not local, like that of Luther in Germany, Knox in Scotland and Wesley in England, but it is moving with the tread of a giant through every nation under Heaven, as her fire-baptized missionaries are now penetrating the hitherto unexplored regions of Hoonan, Thibet, in Eastern Asia, and the Soudan and Congo regions of Central Africa, as well as South America, the islands of the sea and all other nations, girdling the globe with salvation and holiness to the Lord. The saddest scene on which the angels look down is the rejection of the Holiness gospel by the Protestant churches, thus marking a notable epoch in their history, destined to astonish millions when we all stand before the great white throne. They have no idea of giving up their justification, yet they are everywhere doing this very thing, from the simple fact that it is utterly impossible to hold it after they reject sanctification. You have turned over the man of sin to the civil authorities for execution. You still have him on hand, a prisoner on

your premises. The day of hanging has arrived and the sheriff comes after him. If you do not surrender him up to execution your loyalty is at once suspected, impeached, and ere long forfeited. You are like the Jews who held on to Moses after Christ came. God is as real in the church of the world today as when He flamed in the bush before Moses in the wilderness. I most obviously and unmistakably see to my sorrow the sad retreat of all the Protestant churches back into darkness and condemnation. It is because they reject sanctification.

13. *“And not as Moses put a vail on his face, so that the sons of Israel could not see to the end of the transitory.”* While in the justified experience this vail is on our face, so we do not see the glorious end of this transitory experience, when the man of sin is executed and we are sanctified wholly.

14. *“But their minds were darkened.”* The Jews could not clearly apprehend Christ till He came incarnate; hitherto their conceptions were more or less shadowy and vague. “For unto this day this same vail remains in the reading of the Old Testament, not taken away because it is done away in Christ.” We have this day thousands of witnesses to this fact. I preached fifteen years in the dispensation of Moses with that vail on my face, while reading my Bible so that I enjoyed no distinct vision, but a vague panorama like the fugitive scenes of a magic lantern moved before my eyes. Thirty years ago, when the Holy Ghost revealed Jesus to my spirit sitting on the throne of my heart, crowned and sceptered, King of kings and Lord of lords, ruling within and without and making my life a constant sunshine, what a light and a glory rolled over the inspired pages! Before that day I had never given a Bible reading, was utterly incompetent to do it. Oh, how wonderfully the blessed Holy Spirit has revealed to my happy soul His precious Word! The reason you find none but the Holiness people making any progress in Bible study is here solved, as they alone behold the living Word in clear and cloudless light, all justified people reading it with a vail over their faces, and the wicked neglecting it altogether.

15. *“But unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart, but when he may turn to the Lord the vail is taken away —*

17. *“But the Lord is a Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.”* “Lord” here means “Christ,” the Second Person of the Trinity, and “the Spirit of the Lord” means “the Holy Ghost.” And since the Holy Ghost has been sent into the world as a Revelation of the spiritual Christ — who is none other than the Hero of Mt. Calvary; who has conquered sin, death and Hell, and “brought life and immortality to light,” gloriously delivering His people from all of their enemies and crowning them with the diadem of perfect freedom — the Holy Ghost is here among us to conduct all of our meetings, His constant work being the revelation and the glorification of Christ. The poorest beggar becomes a millionaire when it is all given to him by a rich friend. Then he has perfect liberty in financial and temporal

matters. How sad to see the spiritual bondage in the churches, the preacher afraid of his members and official board, and they all afraid of one another and the preacher, and afraid of other churches, and afraid of the worldly people; so there is no liberty, they are all in bondage. What a pity they will not all let the Holy Ghost come in and introduce King Jesus, who breaks every chain, sunder every fetter, and makes them all free as angels!

SPIRITUAL PROGRESS

18. *“But we all with unveiled face, beholding in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transfigured into the same image from glory unto glory, as by the Lord the Spirit.”* This is a beautiful, vivid and glorious description of the experience enjoyed by people after they have been truly sanctified. This verse is inapplicable to unsanctified Christians, from the fact that their faces are already unveiled, which is not peculiar to the justified experience normal to Moses, who had the veil on his face. Again, we see that the transfiguration here mentioned is not from carnality to the glory of holiness, as in the case of people entering the sanctified experience, but from “glory to glory,” *i. e.*, from the glory of holiness to the glory of transfiguration. The theme of discourse is the reading of God’s Word, under the Mosaic dispensation with a veil over your face, but now that the veil is taken away in Christ, we read the same Word with face unveiled. Hence the Bible is God’s looking-glass, in which we see ourselves mirrored and reflected back. The reason why the wicked hate the Bible is because it shows them their own faces polluted by devils and coiled about with rattlesnakes. The reason why unsanctified Christians do not take much interest in the Bible is because it reveals to them their own faces awfully dirty, ugly and filthy, and it is murderous to all their pride to behold the sight, while sanctified people are unutterably surprised and delighted to see their faces so bright, clean and beautiful that they never get tired looking at them. But beauty hath a charm insatiable, and, while astounded beyond measure as we contemplate the beauty of holiness reflected in our own features from the looking-glass of God’s Word, though we see all the wounds and lacerations of leprosy and small-pox are gloriously healed, odoriferous with Heavenly fragrance and beautiful as the roses of Sharon, yet the old scars are still there, and we long for their final obliteration. Where the E.V. has “transformed” the better reading is “transfigured.” While sanctification is the perfection of grace, the transfiguration is the perfection of glory, the grand ultimatum in the restitutionary economy, actually conferring homogeneity to the Heavenly state, our destination, whither we are bound and to which we are running night and day, like the Grecian racers in the Olympic stadium. Now, remember that the transfiguration glory is really the constant and supreme desideratum of every truly sanctified soul; and as sanctification, though suddenly entered, is gradually approximated, so glorification, though instantaneously wrought upon the soul by the Holy Ghost the very moment of its translation out of the body, yet it is gradually approached during the

entire period of the sanctified life. We all desire supremely a part in the rapture of the saints when the Lord comes after His Bride. As we are constantly on the lookout for His appearing, of course we are not expecting to die, but to see our coming King and meet Him in the clouds. In that case, we must be transfigured, body, mind and spirit. Hence there is a prominent sense in which that transfiguration is going on. John Wesley taught a gradual sanctification, antecedent to the instantaneous experience and a necessary preparation for its reception. In a similar manner there is a gradual transfiguration, in which we are weaned from earth and ripened for Heaven. In this gradual transfiguration, great physical changes, as well as intellectual and spiritual, transpire, making us less physical, gross and earthly, and more spiritual, intellectual, ethereal and Heavenly in our constitution and habitude, thus, in a mysterious and undefinable way, preparing us for the wonderful change out of materiality into pure spirituality, when these bodies shall cease to be the tenement of the animal life and intellect, but become the glorified house for our glorified spirit to occupy forever. While looking into this mirror, *i.e.*, God's wonderful Word, we see our own being reflected back as you see your person when you stand before the looking-glass. What a significant fact! the Heaven bound pilgrim, as the years go by, actually sees himself as he reads his Bible, clearly showing up changes, revolutions and transfigurations, effecting obvious elimination's of the earthy, and taking on discernible accessions of the Heavenly, and thus more and more approximating the beauty, purity and glory of our blessed Paragon, till the moment of final victory arrives, and, responsive to the call of the Heavenly Bridegroom, this mortal will put on immortality, and fly away to meet Him in the skies. Again, in case that He shall call me to evacuate this tenement to go and meet Him, it is equally pertinent that I should be ripe for translation, so that I will enjoy a part in the first resurrection and a place in the glorified Bridehood of my Lord. I find that this is all done by "the Lord the Spirit," a better translation than "the Spirit of the Lord," as in E.V.; setting forth the fact that the Holy Ghost, who is identical with the Lord Himself, *i.e.*, the spiritual Christ to whom we are wedded in sanctification, and who abides here (⁴⁸³Matthew 28:20) to the end of the age, *i.e.*, the present age, which will end when the millennium is ushered in. Meanwhile He here abides, is wedded to us in sanctification, and prepares us — soul, body and mind — in the fullness of our redeemed humanity to be wedded to Him in the fullness of His glorified humanity, when we shall gather in the marriage supper of the Lamb. Hence the Holy Ghost, who is none other than the Spirit of our Savior, is the Omnipotent Agent here with us, felicitously transfiguring us through His Word, and getting us ready for glorification, whether through translation or resurrection.

CHAPTER 4

LEVITICAL VERSUS HOLY GHOST MINISTRY

1. *“Therefore, having this ministry,” i.e., the wonderful and responsible ministry of the Holy Ghost, in contradistinction to the Levitical ministry under Moses, “as we obtained mercy, we faint not,*
2. *“But we lay aside the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the Word of God deceitfully, but through the manifestation of the truth presenting ourselves to every conscience of men before God.”* As Christ had not come and Moses was only a type, it was pertinent that the Mosaic ministry should preach the gospel through types and symbols. Hence the bloody sacrifices symbolizing the work of Christ, and the watery catharisms representing the work of the Holy Ghost, constant and exceedingly operose during the Mosaic dispensation. The gospel ministry under the Holy Ghost dispensation is entirely different, being a pure spirituality, whose end is the revelation of Christ to the human spirit, *i.e.*, to the sinner as a Savior and to the Christian as a Sanctifier. This is done by faithfully preaching the Word, and not handling it deceitfully in craftiness. Priestcraft is one of the devil’s most successful inventions. It is the quintessence of handling the Word deceitfully, *i.e.*, bending it about to suit the creed, the congregation, the times and circumstances. The devil’s preachers are wonderfully shrewd and accommodating. They will twist the Scripture around to suit everybody and everything except holiness to the Lord. It is so deplorable to see the religious world today groping along in the dispensation of Moses, wasting the Lord’s money in building costly church edifices, pouring out thousands for mere show, and even ruining the acoustic facilities of the building. Then the services are all about as rigidly ritualized as in the days of the Levitical priesthood. I do believe that in many instances the worship in the Jewish synagogue was more simple and spiritual than in the metropolitan churches of the present day, where it is ritualized to death. It is so alarming to see the millions of Christendom today groping along in the dispensation of Moses, reading the Bible with the veil over their faces, pulled and hauled about by the devices of priestcraft, often “handling the Word of the Lord deceitfully,” making the Bible the mere tool of their caprices. It is a *sine qua non* of the Holy Ghost ministry to let the blessed Spirit have His way in everything; read and preach the Word just as it is, fearlessly of men and devils, and recognize the Holy Ghost in His personal presence, not only preaching to them His own Word, but conducting the service in song, prayer, testimony, exhortation and sermon.
3. *“If our gospel is hidden, it is hidden among those who are being lost.”* All the wicked are now in a perishing condition, going every moment down

to Hell, opportunities and privileges incessantly taking their flight into the vast eternity. All this is because the gospel is being hidden to them, and they are living as if they had no Savior.

4. *“In whom the god of this age has blinded the minds of those that believe not, that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ may not shine on them.”* Here we find the problem solved, and the reason why people are going into Hell by millions is because they do not see Hell open and coming to meet them, and black devils dragging them into the burning pit. The reason why they see none of these things is because the devil has blinded them through unbelief. Faith is the medium through which all light enters the mind. One of the darkest omens of the age is the rapid rush of all religious denominations into the infidelity of No-Hellism. This subtle demon has already put a padlock on the mouths of about ninety-nine preachers out of every hundred. If you would keep people out of Hell, you must convince them there is one, and that they are going to it. You can not convince them without telling them so. This part of the gospel constitutes the grand break-water against the wild rush of people into Hell. So soon as they wake up to the fact that the Bible Hell is an awful reality, and they are rushing into it at race-horse speed, they will begin to cry out: “What must I do to be saved?” Then the time comes to preach the gospel of grace, get them saved and sanctified, and put them in the school of Christ to feed on His precious Word and glorify Him in the salvation of others. This explains the reason why the fear of God is not in the popular churches. People go there with the pomp and hilarity of the theater. The true readiness “the god of this age,” not as E.V., “this world.” When Satan captured Eden, the ages of his dark and gloomy reign set in.

“One day with God is a thousand years” (~~GRB~~ 2 Peter 3:8).

The sixth one-thousand year days of Satan’s dreary week of darkness, toil, bloodshed and damnation are almost at an end, when he is to be arrested like a common criminal and taken out of the world (~~REV~~ Revelation 20) and locked up in Hell. So, while he is the god of this age, ruling kings, princes, potentates and ecclesiastical hierarchies, it is a happy reflection that he is not the god of this world, but that Jesus has redeemed it by His blood and is going to utterly rescue it from Satan’s black tread, glorify it and add it back to Heaven, where it first swung out from the creative fiat amid the shouts of angels and archangels. During the present age of darkness, sin and misery, as we see here, the devil is god on the earth, ruling its rulers in State and Church, and tumbling all into Hell as fast as possible. The word for “church” in the Scriptures, *ecclesia*, from *ek*, “out,” and *kaleo*, “call,” simply means the people who have come out of this wicked world, responsive to the call of the Holy Ghost. In every case in all by-gone ages, when the good ones go to Heaven, the devil has supplied their places with his counterfeits from the world, thus maneuvering soon to capture the church and fill it up with the world. Hence we have this day the whole

world crowded with the devil's churches, eight hundred millions being pagans, two hundred millions Mohammedans, two hundred and fifty millions Roman Catholics, a hundred millions Greek Catholics, and among the hundred millions of Protestants he certainly has the lion's portion. God, in His great mercy, ever and anon calls His people to come out of the world. If He did not call them out of the worldly churches, the devil would get them. The very fact that a church is worldly is demonstrative proof that the devil has it; because he is the god of this age, *i. e.*, the god who rules the world during the present age of darkness and sin. So fast as the devil can keep the people from believing the Bible, he blinds them through their own unbelief, thus utterly disqualifying them to see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

5. *“For we preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ the Lord, and ourselves the servants for Jesus' sake.”* The true gospel preacher has but one theme, and that is Christ the Lord. Christ means God's Anointed One, who redeemed the world by His blood, and is the name of our Savior in His mediatorial capacity. Lord means a ruler of this world, and has always been applied to the temporal rulers of the earth. Hence in its application to our Savior, it signifies His regal office and character. Jesus is His birth-name and means “Savior”; Christ, Redeemer; and Lord, “King.” Hence we are to preach all of these great cardinal truths appertaining to the Christhood everywhere we go. The whole Bible is but the biography of Christ; the Old Testament that of Christ concealed, the New Testament that of Christ revealed. We are to preach faithfully the historic Christ in His first advent, bleeding and dying to redeem the world, and actually perfecting the universal, vicarious atonement. We are also to preach the experimental Christhood, enforcing with all our might the great fact that all of His followers must be like Him. At the manger, where He was born in utter obscurity, we must follow Him and be born of the Spirit from above. We must also follow Him to the cross, be nailed to it, bleed and die to this world, rise again to walk in newness of life. We must also follow Him in the transfiguration if we would ascend with Him to glory. It is an awful insult to the gospel calling to preach anything but Christ. Hence we have no right to preach our opinions, creeds nor dogmatisms of any kind.

6. *“Because God is the one saying, ‘Out of darkness the light will shine which shone in our hearts in order to the knowledge of the glory of God in Christ.’”* This is still contrastive with the case of Moses, who had a veil over his face, whereas Christ has none. This Scripture is fulfilled in all human experience wrought by the Holy Ghost. In regeneration, lie reveals Christ to the sinner, shining on him, his heart yet much encompassed with the darkness of his sinful nature, in which he was born. In sanctification, lie reveals Christ sitting on the throne of the heart shining in cloudless splendor, reigning without a rival.

THE HUMILIATION OF THE GOSPEL

Verses 7-15.

7. *“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, in order that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”* All the splendor, pomp, pageantry, gold, silver and adornment appertaining to the priesthood, tabernacle and temple of the former dispensation has been entirely eliminated, not a vestige surviving. Hence the folly and impertinency of filling the world with it during the gospel ages. It was all symbolic in its day and passed away with all the types and shadows superseded by the glorious Antitype. Hence the gospel ministry is all in the valley of humiliation. Human power, pomp and splendor all totally eclipsed by the supernatural glory of the Christ we represent. Whenever we bring in human power, learning, wealth and influence we thereby put a veil over the popular mind, disqualifying them to see the Invisible One. Therefore our Savior selected the most humble, impotent and uninfluential to preach the gospel, even “unlearned and ignorant men.” In every subsequent age, when human power, wealth and culture come to the front we see the Holy Spirit retreat away, leaving them to run their own machinery, and, pursuant to first principles, picking up others, poor, weak and uninfluential, from the low places of the earth, and sending them out, the custodians of this invaluable Heavenly treasure. God is not going to change His gospel economy to suit any of us, giving His glory to another. The humiliation of the gospel is here exemplified by the apostles themselves, down at the very bottom of society, the contempt of the world’s elite.

8. *“In everything troubled but not inextricably crushed, in perplexity but not in despair.*

9. *“Persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed,*

10. *“Always bearing about in our body the dying of Jesus, in order that truly the life of Jesus may be made manifest in our body.”* They were constantly exposed to martyrdom; not many years after this writing till Paul laid down his neck at Nero’s block, and the universal tempest of imperial persecution broke out against them, deluging Christendom in blood. Most of the apostles lived like the poorest sanctified pilgrims you ever saw, homeless, money-less and friendless so far as the world was concerned. Nowadays they would universally be recognized, enunciated, calumniated and despised as the poorest tramps. The brightest lights and the grandest examples of Christian purity and heroism in every age have lived and died down in the bottom of the valley of humiliation. It is dangerous to climb, lest we fall and break our necks. Whenever we get to where the people will account for our efficiency by our own resources, we are on dangerous ground and fearfully liable to the abandonment of the Holy Ghost, leaving us to paddle our own canoe, because He dare not compromise the glory of

Christ in human instrumentality. We must keep in such position that “the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.”

11. *“For we who are alive are all the time being delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake,”* i. e., in constant perils and persecutions and liable to be killed for Jesus’ sake. It is equally true to-day, if you are constantly loyal to God, your life hangs upon a thread and you are in constant jeopardy. So many people will hate you, that in ways you never dreamed they will seek to take your life. I have been mobbed a number of times, and repeatedly threatened with immediate death, firearms drawn on me, and on one occasion all possible effort made to shoot me, the gun refusing to go off, only snapping. Of course, current civilization is much in our favor, for which we are to be thankful to God; but still this Scripture is true. Fisher, a godly Baptist preacher, was murdered in Louisville, Ky.; Haddock, a Methodist preacher in Sioux City, IA., and others not a few, swell the martyr roll of the present day. “In order that the life of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh.” The grand end in view is the exemplification, both in soul and body.

12. *“So death worketh in us, and life in you.”* This is an antithetical statement meaning physical death in us and spiritual life in you.

THE OUTER AND INNER MAN

16. *“Therefore we faint not, but if indeed our outer man is perishing, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.”* Paul uses the term “man” in quite a diversity of figurative senses; e. g., “the outer man” simply means your body, and has no spiritual signification whatever. “The inner man,” as well as the “hidden man of the heart” (Eph. 3:10), and “the new man” so frequently mentioned, are all synonymous, meaning the new creature, created in the heart by the Holy Ghost in regeneration; while “the old man” and “the man of sin” means Adam the first, human depravity, original sin. Hence we see from this verse that while the body is constantly wearing out, and really may be regarded as beginning to die when it begins to live, the spiritual man under the reign of grace is diametrically opposite, all the time growing larger and stronger. It is a significant fact that the very operations of vitality involve a series of nutrient and absorbent agencies by which the entire physical body is eliminated away and a new one given every seven years. Hence, if you have truly been saved seven years, you will not only have a new spirit, but your body has been entirely renovated, so that you have not a single atom which you had when you were a servant of the devil. This accounts for the radical revolution in the physical personalities of people all around us; evolving complete and total changes either for good or evil. If a person goes into dark and diabolical sins, the time will soon come when he will no longer resemble his former self; while the same is true in the kingdom of God, a few revolving years working out transformations, not only intrinsic, but extrinsic, completely revolutionizing the physical

character, putting on you an unearthly luster, rendering you literally unlike your former self. While these physical revolutions are moving on so wonderfully, it is still infinitely more preeminently true that internal and spiritual revolutions are all the while transpiring in a most marvelous manner, the renovating powers of the Omnipotent Spirit day by day working miracles of grace in the deep interior of our immortal being. “For the present light burden of our affliction worketh out for us an eternal weight of glory, according to hyperbole unto hyperbole.” This beautiful verse was the last text used by our beloved Bishop Kavanaugh. When he arose in the pulpit in Mississippi announcing the first clause, in reference to the insignificance of temporal afflictions when contrasted with Heavenly glories, he dropped dead by sudden paralysis. When Bishop McTyeire preached his funeral from this same text, he said that the glorified bishop whose remains were lying in the coffin passed on up to Heaven, announcing the second clause of his text, so vividly descriptive of celestial glory, and preached from it there. This is certainly a very beautiful conception, and not at all improbable. The legitimate conclusion from this verse is that God makes all of our temporal afflictions grand sources of blessing to our immortal spirits. While all sickness originated from Satan in the Fall, you must remember that “where sin did abound, there did grace much more abound” (Romans 5:20). Consequently our wonderful Deliverer has made all the sickness, trouble, sorrow and persecution, which He permits us to encounter in this world, rich in spiritual blessing if we are only true to Him, receiving it gladly, not as from the devil, but from God, whose permissive Providence suffers it to come, and whose triumphant grace makes it a medium of blessings untold. There is a Divine philosophy at the bottom of this truth. When we consider the irrepressible conflict between the material and the spiritual in this life, and the fearful ability that the former may drag down and subordinate the latter, rendering us demonized brutes, we can see very clearly how the good Providence of God may sanctify our temporal afflictions to wean us from earth and ripen us for Heaven. Paul is exceedingly bold, recognizing all the temporal afflictions that can overtake us here as a “light burden,” while at the same time they work out for us “an eternal weight of glory.” *Baros*, translated “weight” in E. V., I here render “burden.” Hence we have Paul assuring us that these temporal afflictions will actually burden us with glory in the world to come. Oh, how unutterably delectable to be literally burdened with glory! Then, you must remember it is an “eternal burden of glory”! Not only is it “an eternal burden of glory,” but this “eternal burden of glory” is to be according to “hyperbole unto hyperbole”! This Greek word “hyperbole” is used in rhetoric to express the very highest figure of speech conceivable or utterable. Not only does Paul use it to describe the “eternal burden of glory” that shall prove the happy lot of the saint who has been the recipient of much sorrow, trouble and suffering in this life, but he intensifies the figure of speech by this wonderful combination of rhetorical superlatives, assuring us that it will be according to “hyperbole unto

hyperbole.” This paradoxical figure of speech actually carries the mind not only to the highest and grandest and most ultimate conception, but triumphantly sweeps away, into the illimitable, the indescribable and the incommunicable realities and fruitions of glory and immortality, fledged and pinioned for grander and loftier flights through the cycles of never-ending eternity. Then, who wants to sail to Heaven on flowery beds of ease, only to squeeze through the pearly gate by the skin of his teeth, and go crownless through all eternity? Nay, verily! But give me the hottest of the battle and the thickest of the fight!

18. *“We are not looking at things which are seen, but at things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporary”* (not “temporal,” as E.V., but fleeting and transitory), “but things which are not seen are eternal.” With these facts before us, how strange to see not only all the worldly people running after the fleeting things of time and giving no attention to the things of the Spirit, which abide forever, but we see that religious people are almost as proclivitous in their grasp after the transitory baubles of this fleeting life to the depreciation of the eternal realities of the Spirit, as the outside world. Take the ministry, for example. Where can you find a preacher who does not want the appointment which stands at the head of the list in temporal affairs? The most dangerous temptations I ever incurred in my life were with Methodist preachers, godly men and my true personal friends, who loved me dearly and sought what they regarded as my chief good. The sanctification the Lord gave me thirty years ago disharmonized me with the proud, popular churches which paid the big money. Twenty-seven years ago I was hauled from off my circuit by my proud, worldly church officers, who had concluded I was a crazy man because I told them the truth. They actually gave me a free ride to the presiding elder’s office, rejecting me as their pastor and turning me over to the proper authority. The temptation above mentioned was when the presiding elders would tell me that they could send me to a magnificent, rich appointment, where I could get lots of money, if I would only leave off my peculiarities, which meant to let the devil slow me out of my sanctification. I am so glad God gave me grace in that awful emergency, the most perilous temptation I can now recognize as I retrospect my whole past life. I said to the presiding elders: “Go tell the bishop and his cabinet that W. B. Godbey is a candidate for the poorest, roughest and hardest work in the Kentucky Conference.” The old bishop straightens up and asks a repetition of that report, which is given, the elders certifying: “That is so, bishop. And he means that very thing.” Tears were seen in the eyes of the good bishop, who responds: “Well, brethren, it becomes our duty to take care of that man, as we see he will not take care of himself.” The result was, they never did send me to an appointment that did not give me an ample support, feeding and clothing me and mine like a family of kings. It is a fond trick of the devil to keep preachers out of sanctification by the starvation scarecrow. It is all a lie, for “the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof.” If the

preachers would lose sight of the temporal in the constant and enthusiastic appreciation of the eternal, they would have power with God to shake Heaven, earth and Hell, bring on the Millennium, and bring back the King of Glory. If all the Christians in the world would adopt this maxim, the apocalyptic angel would begin at once to get his chain ready to put round the devil's neck.

CHAPTER 5

GLORIFICATION

Verses 1-9.

1. *“For we know that if our earthly house of the tabernacle be taken down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.”* The building here which is liable any time and destined very soon to be taken down, is this tenement of mortal clay. Paul triumphantly assures us that we have another house in Heaven that will never be taken down. It does not mean a mansion in Heaven. Those mansions are worlds innumerable which our Lord is fixing up for the eternal occupancy of His saints in glory. This earth is one of them, destined ere long to be redeemed, sanctified, renovated, celestialized and added back to the glorious retinue of unfallen celestial worlds where it sped its flight in first emanation from the omnific fiat. Paul means here none other than the glorified body which we will occupy and enjoy through all eternity.
2. *“For in this we groan, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from Heaven.”* In these mortal bodies we suffer constant humiliation, aches, pains, wounds, bruises, colds, fevers and a thousand ills incident to mortal probation. Besides, the very weight of the body holds us down here on the earth and keeps us out of Heaven. Again, much attention that we have to give the body is servile and humiliating. Hence we groan in anticipation of coming emancipation.
3. *“If indeed truly being clothed, we shall not be found naked.”* Here we have another idea. While in these mortal bodies we groan and sigh and long for redemption, at the same time sweeping over the chasm of the disembodied state, we contemplate our house in Heaven, *i. e.*, the glorified body, invested in which we will not be found naked.
4. *“For truly being in the tabernacle we groan, being burdened, not in that we wished to be unclothed, but clothed upon, in order that mortality may be swallowed up of life.”* Here we see that Paul’s climacteric aspiration was not simply to get out of this body, which would be a glorious victory, but he had his eye on a vastly grander and more glorious enterprise, *i. e.*, “that mortality may be swallowed up of life,” *i. e.*, that he may be transfigured without ever seeing death. Hence we see in this passage, so vividly portrayed, the uniform Pauline aspiration, *i. e.*, that the Lord may come and translate him to Heaven, so that he may never see death.
5. *“But He that wrought out us unto this same thing is God, who hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.”* The wonderful spiritual work already enjoyed by Paul was a prelibation of coming glorification. So the

blessed work of entire sanctification in the heart is an advanced payment on the illustrious glorification that awaits us. The same is true of the healing of the body, a blessed privilege in this life. As the perfect and final healing of the body will utterly and eternally take away mortality, of course we can never get it till the body is glorified. Hence all the bodily healing we receive is an earnest of coming glorification.

6. *“Therefore being always confident, and knowing that being present in the body we are absent from the Lord:*

7. *“For we walk by faith, not by sight:*

8. *“But we are confident and anxious rather to be absent from the body and be present with the Lord.*

9. *“Therefore indeed we strive, whether being present or absent, to be well-pleasing unto Him.”* Here we see the complexity of this attitude. His first choice and grandest aspiration is not to be “unclothed,” but to be “clothed upon” with the body which is from Heaven,” that mortality may be swallowed up of life.” Hence we see that the chief desideratum is that the Lord shall return, take up His saints and translate him. In that case he will never be unclothed, *i. e.*, never evacuate his body, but remain in it and rise in his glorified body to meet the Lord in the air and ever be with Him. While that was his first choice (as well as yours and mine), he now expresses a second choice, *i. e.*, to evacuate the body and go “unclothed” to the glorified presence. This he abundantly evinces in the statement that “to be present in the body is to be absent from the Lord.” Therefore, though he does not want to leave the body if he can take it with him, yet he prefers even to evacuate the body in order to go and be present with the Lord. This is his second choice. Then there is but one other alternative, and that is to remain in the body and be absent from the Lord. This is his last choice, and of course he is perfectly acquiescent in the will of God; *e. g.*, first choice, to be translated and soul and body go together to the presence of God; secondly, to evacuate the body, go and leave it; and last of all, to abide in the body and still labor and suffer for the glory of God. So long as we remain in the body we “walk by faith and not by sight,” from the simple fact that we are still on probation and in this dark world, where we can not see God with the natural eye.

FINAL JUDGMENT

10. *“For it behooveth us all to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, in order that each one may receive according to those things which he did in the body, whether good or bad.”* Here is an allusion to the final Judgment, the grand appellate court of the universe, where every one will receive according to the things done in the body, whether good or bad. The final Judgment will not be determinative of human destiny so far as Heaven and

Hell are concerned, for that is settled when you leave this world; but it will be vindicatory of the Divine administration and elucidatory of the infinitesimal degrees of reward on the part of the righteous and retribution appertaining to the wicked, the latter only being judged for the evil they have done as they lived and died in the devil's kingdom, where it was impossible to do anything for God; and the former for the good they have done, their sins all being covered with the blood and not mentioned. Hence the judgment of the righteous will be exclusively on the grace side and that of the wicked altogether on the sin side, rewards and retributions being then and there settled for all eternity.

11. *“Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men, and have been made manifest unto God: and we hope also to be made manifest in your consciences.”* The apostles claim here to be living in the light and approval of God, and having His holy reverence in their hearts and desiring that others may have the same.

12. Here is another castigatory allusion to his enemies, whom he charges with spiritual pride.

13. *“For whether we are beside ourselves, it is unto God: whether we are in our right minds, it is for you.”* His enemies in that day, as in all ages, accused him of insanity. When I was sanctified thirty years ago, all professing the experience were pronounced crazy. Lord, help us to appreciate the Pauline concession. If I am crazy, it is for the Lord.

14. *“For the Divine love of Christ constraineth us, judging this, that one died for all. Then were all dead.”* This is an unanswerable statement, forever settling the problem of universal total depravity. When God says “dead,” depend on it there is no life left. Here He says “all dead.” Hence there is no possible evasion of the conclusion of universal total depravity. The heredity also follows as an irresistible logical sequence, from the simple fact that it is impossible to transmit what we do not possess. Adam had no posterity during the period of spiritual life. Hence all the human race are the offspring of dead Adam. Christ never died for the living. It was not necessary.

15. *“And He died for all, in order that the living may no longer live unto themselves, but for Him who died in their stead, and arose again.”* These passages gloriously cover the ground of the vicarious atonement. These great truths, *i. e.*, hereditary total depravity and the complete vicarious atonement, are fundamental in the revealed Word. If you are deficient there, your foundation is insecure. The sand will give way, and your superstructure will fall, sooner or later. We live in an age flooded with heresies. Solid gospel truth is much at a premium, because very scarce.

16. This verse does not prove that Paul had met Christ before His crucifixion, as he had finished his education at Jerusalem and gone back to

Cilicia before our Lord entered upon His ministry, and returned no more to Jerusalem till after Pentecost, but he saw Him on the Damascus road and three years afterward in the temple at Jerusalem, when He gave him his commission to the Gentiles, calling him to the apostleship.

17. *“If any one is in Christ, he is a new creature: old things have passed away; behold, they have become new.”* “All things” (E. V.) in this passage is an interpolation, hence Zinzendorfan argument founded on it falls to the ground. It does not in the least favor the dogma of getting full salvation in regeneration. It simply says when you become a new creature, “old things have passed away; behold, they have become new”; *i. e.*, your old habits, ways and works have passed away, and you have a new life in every respect. This does not imply the complete and radical renewal of your nature, nor argue that you may not profit by a second work of grace.

RECONCILIATION

18-20. *“All things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.*

19. *“As that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their transgressions to them, and having placed in us the word of reconciliation.”* Christ is both God and man, hence perfectly qualified for the mediatorial office between the two. God is already fully reconciled to all the world through the vicarious atonement of Christ. So fully and completely is He reconciled that there is not the slightest legal necessity for the death of any sinner in all the world. Hence the work of the ministry is all on the human side, *i. e.*, to get man reconciled to God.

20. *“Therefore we are ambassadors for Christ, as God entreating you through us: we pray you in behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God.”* Hence you see the Christian ministry are sent into all the world as ambassadors from Christ to prevail over the people to be reconciled to God. It is an old maxim, *“Facit qua per alium, quis facit per se”* — What one does through another he does through himself. Hence we are sent into the world to do the very work of Christ Himself, *i. e.*, to reconcile this wicked, lost world to God. It is a deplorable pity to see multiplied millions rushing into Hell, lost to all eternity as heir gratuity. This appalling reflection on themselves methinks will prove the hottest fire-brand with which infuriated devils will lash the lost soul through all eternity. “I might as well have gone up to Heaven as down to Hell. God sent His only beloved Son to die in my place to keep me out of this awful doom. He prepared for me a sweet home in Heaven, but I would not have it. Verily, I die as the fool dieth, without a solitary reason to palliate my awful fate.” All we have to do is to get the people to be reconciled to God, as He is already reconciled to them.

SUBSTITUTIONARY ATONEMENT

21. *“He made Him heir who knew no sin, in our behalf, that we may become the righteousness of God in Him.”* This verse is wonderful and paradoxical in the extreme. Translators generally soften it by inserting “sin offering,” which is not in the original and will not do, because it breaks up the antithesis with righteousness. This settles the question of absolute substitution beyond the possibility of cavil, affirming that God made him sin (*i.e.*, the noun sin), not in an active sense, which would be shocking, but in a passive sense, in our behalf, so that He actually punished all of the sin of the ages in His own beloved Son. This accounts for His turning His face away when the dying Savior hung on the cross. That was the crucial moment when He laid the sin of the whole world on Him and “made Him sin” (noun), instead of us. We tread lightly on ground so awful. We must give it to you as it is. It is too awful for anything like criticism to be indulged. This is the irrefutable climax of the substitutionary atonement, involving the unequivocal conclusion that He not only took the sin of the whole world on Himself, but that He became the personal substitute for every human being involved in the Fall. Hence we have nothing to do but become the “righteousness of God in Him.” Here is imputed righteousness. When the sinner by simple faith casts himself on the mercy of God in Christ, He invariably imputes to him His own righteousness in Christ. This is the only hope of a guilty world. Human efforts are in vain. If we could be justified by obedience to law, the Son of God might have stayed in Heaven. This was the very reason He came and died in our room and stead, because there was no other hope. Do you believe in imputed righteousness? I do. If righteousness were not imputed to the sinner there would be no hope for him, as the Holy Spirit is not obtained to regenerate him till the law is satisfied and he is justified. This must be done through a mediator. Hence while the sinner is under the law and condemned to death eternal, God imputes to him the righteousness of Christ, justifying Him freely for Christ’s sake alone, when in the utter abandonment of all sin he casts himself on the mercy of God in Christ. Does not Christ retain His own righteousness? He has a righteousness peculiar to His divinity and essential to it which He does not give to another, but eternally retains. He has also a second righteousness peculiar to His humanity and essential to it, which he does not impart to another, but eternally retains. He has also a third righteousness arising from His perfect obedience to the Divine law, actively keeping it for us during His earthly life and passively dying to pay its penalty in the room and stead of every guilty soul in all the world. This third righteousness of Christ is neither essential to His perfect humanity nor His perfect divinity nor his perfect mediatorship. Hence He procured it for every sinner in every age of this probationary world. This is the righteousness which the Father freely imparts to every truly penitent believing sinner, when He counts him righteous for the sake of Christ alone. When the violated law is thus satisfied, the Holy Spirit, who has

already convicted him and enabled him to repent and believe, immediately regenerates him, thus quickening his dead soul into Divine life. Do you believe in imputed holiness? I do not. Righteousness is synonymous with justification. It takes place in Heaven when God cancels your sins from Heaven's chancery, blotting them all out and counting you righteous for the sake of the work which Christ has done for you when He died as your substitute. Sanctification is a work wrought in you, of which you are a conscious participant, in contradistinction to justification, which is a work done for you. Hence while imputation is homogeneous to righteousness, impartation is normal to holiness. In this controversy, like many others, we find the truth intermediate between two extremes. Some preach imputed righteousness and imputed holiness, which is an error. Others preach imparted righteousness and imparted holiness, which is also erroneous, the truth obtaining in the interim, where we preach imputed righteousness for the sinner and imparted holiness for the Christian.

CHAPTER 6

GOD'S TIME NOW

1. *“And indeed co-operating with you, we entreat you that you receive not the grace of God in vain.*
2. *“For He says, At a set time I heard thee, and in the day of salvation I succored thee. Behold, now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation.]”* Satan is wonderful on procrastination, never letting the sinner get ready to repent, always clamoring, “Wait till tomorrow”; while the devil’s tomorrow never has come, and never will. “God is nigh in the valley of decision.” The will can only act in the present tense. Faith is actually circumscribed to the present tense, having neither past nor future, and, as we get everything from God by faith, we must receive it in the present tense. It is actually now or never.
3. *“Giving no hindrance in anything, in order that the ministry may not be blamed.*
4. *“But in everything commending ourselves as the ministers of God, in all patience, in tribulations, in pressures, in difficulties,*
5. *“In stripes.”* When did Paul go to a place without receiving a broken head or a bleeding back, the wounds not convalescing till superseded by others, and the scars prominent till he laid down his head on the executioner’s block. “In prisons,” *e.g.*, the Philippian jail and innumerable other imprisonment’s unmentioned. “In tumults.” He always raised a row everywhere he went, mobs and uproars rising on all sides. This wicked world is no more congenial to the truth of God now than then. Though civil administration has made progress for which we glorify God, yet it is an undeniable fact that the truth faithfully preached never fails to stir the devil and raise a fuss. I am an old revivalist, and a witness to this fact the last thirty years. Our work always stirred the devil and raised a hubbub. Satan has more sense than any man. He does not waste his ammunition on dead beats. When he does not stir and roar, rest assured you are doing no good; you had better lie prostrate before God, and cry till He gives you power to stir the devil. “In labors.” Paul was a most indefatigable worker, having Asia and Europe in his field of labor, other apostles going to Africa; *e.g.*, Matthew preached and suffered martyrdom in Ethiopia, Mark in Egypt, and Matthias in Abyssinia. Paul traveled over many countries in Asia and Macedonia and Achaia in Europe, nearly always going on foot. He must have been a wonderful pedestrian. Having preached all night at Troas, he enjoyed a morning walk of thirty miles to Assos, where he embarked on the ship with his comrades, having traveled thither by sea. “In vigils,” *i.e.*,

watchings, *i. e.*, often spending sleepless nights of toil and privation, because they had no lodgings or by reason of the perils, conflicts and toils in which they were encompassed. “In fastings.” Frequently, doubtless, these fasts were perpetuated to a paradoxical prolixity from sheer financial inability to procure food, or while traveling across deserts and through uninhabited regions. “In purity.” The word means bodily chastity and blameless unselfishness, in which they excelled, having the complete victory over all their animal propensities and living in a state of pre-eminent communion with God. “In knowledge.” This is the word denoting the spiritual gift of knowledge, which is insight into Divine truth, which they enjoyed in a most pre-eminent degree. Paul had spent his early life in constant study, and, having a good memory, wonderfully retained the Holy Scriptures at his command in every emergency; meanwhile he and his comrades were superlatively illuminated and enriched by the Holy Spirit with the apprehension and perspicacity required to give them clear and lucid understanding and interpretation of God’s precious Word. “In long-suffering.” This is one of the nine graces of the Holy Spirit which you find in the catalogue in ⁽⁴⁰⁰⁾Galatians 5:22. It is most beautiful, amiable and charming in its intrinsic character, keeping you constantly low down at the feet of Jesus, and indefatigable in every ramification of patient suffering for Christ’s sake. “In kindness,” *i. e.*, a kind and considerate demeanor reaching out a helping hand to every suffering creature, whether human or animal; always abounding in profound sympathy with bereavement, distress, ignorance, degradation and misery, and doing their utmost to rescue the perishing, condole the broken-hearted, and raise up the fallen. “In the Holy Ghost,” as the Power and the Agent by whom all of these graces and enduements in this long catalogue are administered and subordinated to happy participation. He was the grand secret of their wonderful and paradoxical endurance and perseverance amid a world of adversity, hostility and constant antagonism. “In Divine love free from hypocrisy.” We receive this Divine love, poured out into our hearts by the Holy Ghost, in regeneration. But so long as Adam the first is on hand, we are never free from the fundamental elements of insincerity, dissimulation and a diversity of strategy which constitute the very essence of hypocrisy. hence the man of sin must be slain; holy Samuel must arise with the sword of the Spirit, and hew down the old Gag who walks out with the stealthy tread of hypocrisy. Oh, that we may all, like Paul. and his comrades, enjoy the experience of Divine love free from hypocrisy!

7. “*In the Word of truth.*” They were wonderfully enriched and impregably fortified by the precious Word of truth. We have *logos* here, which means “God’s word,” in contradistinction to *reema*, “man’s word.” This *logos* has a peculiar force, because it is one of the words occurring in the Scriptures to designate the incarnate person of our Lord (⁽⁴⁰⁰⁾John 1). This is pertinent from the fact that “word” means “revelation,” and the incarnation of Christ, rendering Him apprehensible by our material senses,

is really the grand summary of all Divine revelation. This glorified, incarnate Christ had appeared to Paul in person on his way to Damascus, and three years afterward in the temple in Jerusalem. These manifestations of the incarnate, glorified Savior to Paul are significantly adumbratory of His glorious appearing in His second advent, as His visit to Abraham at Mamre was anticipatory of His first advent. The wonderful proximity and fellowship which Paul enjoyed with the glorified Savior are problems too deep for our solution. "In the power of God," the Greek is "dynamite." They were thoroughly endued and equipped with this Divine dynamite, which was more than a match for all their enemies, visible and invisible. When we consider the wonderful potency of dynamite as a mechanical power, and then recognize the Omnipotence in this case identified with it, we need not wonder at the mighty paroxysms of the earthquake which liberated them from the Philippian jail. "Through the arms of righteousness on the right and on the left." Ephesians 6 describes this invincible panoply, *i. e.*, the helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the gospel shoes and the sword of the Spirit. In the Tower of London I saw many of the mediaeval warriors clothed in shining steel from the crowns of their heads to the soles of their feet, so as to render them actually invulnerable to all their foes on the battlefield. While looking at them I thought of the Christian warrior, thus impregnably panoplied against every possible assault of the diabolical foe.

8. "*Through glory and dishonor.*" The Christian life is a perpetual enigma and an irreconcilable contradiction, of glory within and opprobrium without. Carnal eyes can see nothing but dishonor, indecorum, disappointment and failure in the deep humility, self-abnegation and worldly depreciation incident to the true Christian life; meanwhile from the standpoint of angels and glorified saints, it is all honor, victory and triumph. "*Through evil report and good.*" We must be like the apostles, utterly dead to the *ipse dixit* of the world, whether good or bad, absolutely indifferent to praise or blame, there simply being no difference between them; *e. g.*, at Lystra, one hour they actually worshipped them as gods and the next hour were stoning them to death. Hence we must get to where we are literally dead to praise or blame, and equally unmoved by both, as they are liable to alternate any moment. "*As deceivers and true.*" Hosts of people actually believed the apostles to be hypocrites and scoundrels, going about to deceive the people for selfish and mercenary motives. Hence when people look upon you in that capacity you must not be astonished, think hard of them, or suffer yourself to be jostled or affected in any way by their utter misunderstanding of all your motives, enterprises and character. They misunderstood Jesus and actually killed Him, believing Him to be a bad man. If the Jews had really believed that He was their own Christ of prophecy they would have fallen in adoring congratulation all around Him. If the Romans had known who He was they would have died in their tracks before they would have laid a violent hand on Him. The martyrs were all

killed by religious people whose sincerity we have no right to call in question. But they misunderstood them, believing them to be corrupt, deceitful and heretical. So you may expect the people to look upon you as a deceiver, while at the same time it is enough for you to have the blessed assurance that you are true and right.

9. "*A unknown and well known.*" Paul was an indefatigable traveler, going to the ends of the earth, and always among strangers, who knew him not. Hence pertinently it is said that they were "unknown." So it will be with you. God will lead you as He did Abraham, away from home and kindred to sojourn among strangers. There is also another sense in which they were "unknown," even by the people who daily recognized their physical person and identified them, yet strangers to them spiritually. How pertinently are they said to be "well known"! No people get so intimately acquainted either with other as the saints of God. I am now well known personally, having many intimate and much-esteemed friends and acquaintances, spanning the continent all the way from the Atlantic to the Pacific; besides, I feel that I am well known by a great host who dwell above the stars. "*As dying, and behold, we live!*" This wicked world with its fallen churches has slain their Leader and sworn vengeance against all of His followers. Hence they live constantly exposed to martyrdom, and thus in the attitude of perpetual dying. What a beautiful emphasis in the exclamation: "Behold, we live!" Not only do we now live, but the life we enjoy will sweep through the flight of ages! "As being chastised and not put to death." With the whole world against them, and daily persecutions on all sides, they are the constant subjects of Divine chastisement, conducive to their good, alienating them from earth and sweetening them for Heaven. Meanwhile profitable spiritual castigation, in the blessed providence of God, is the very ultimatum of the hostility from their enemies, as God's saints are immortal till their work is done, as Death is no chastisement but a blessing, felicitously releasing us from our prisons of clay and opening to our happy ingress the gates of glory.

10. "*As sorrowing, and always rejoicing.*" The Christian life is a perpetual antithesis of sympathetic and external sorrow in contemplation of millions perishing on all sides; and an artesian well of internal joy incessantly flowing in the heart, gladdening the whole spirit, making life a triumph and actually participating a Heavenly prelibation. "*As poor, and making many rich.*" The beautiful antithesis between the temporal and the spiritual is here perpetuated. Though actually penniless in temporal things, they were constantly enriching the people with Heavenly treasures. Earthly possessions are unprofitable encumbrances to the Heaven-bound traveler. It is really important that he be unencumbered, and light as a bird of paradise. "*As having nothing, and possessing all things.*" True saintship can not afford to deflect an iota from the apostolic precedent of actually possessing nothing in the way of temporal estate. Under the false intuition of fallen churchism, the idea now prevails that the Lord's people need temporal

resources in order to their efficiency as soul-savers. The Scriptures reveal the diametrically opposite of this hypothesis. When Barnabas, a Cyprian farmer, went as a delegate to Jerusalem to attend the Pentecostal festival, receive the fiery baptism and the call to preach, among his preparations for a life-work in the vineyard of the Lord he sold out his Cyprian farm and laid every cent at the apostle's feet, going penniless into the work that, unencumbered, he might enjoy his utmost availability as a preacher of the gospel. When thus utterly destitute, if true to God, we really "possess all things," having a cheque on Heaven's bank for everything we need in time and eternity.

11. "*Our mouth is open unto you, O Corinthians, our heart has become enlarged.*" This was the greatest church of the Pauline ministry, numerically, and we hear of no others so wonderfully enriched with the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit. Now, after an absence of three years and six months, traveling throughout Asia and Macedonia, he is on his way to visit them again, and survey the old battlefield on which he stood eighteen months courageously fighting the powers of darkness, beginning with nothing and witnessing the conversions of hundreds and, I know, thousands of Jews and Gentiles in that European metropolis. His long absence was a necessity, that he might visit hundreds of other churches, and establish them in holiness. With no facilities for public conveyance, and traveling generally on foot overland, he has found this long absence inevitable. The time is at hand for him to go down and see them. again look into their beautiful faces, take them by the hand, and congratulate them, forty months nearer Heaven than ever before. He feels full of gospel truth ready to pour out of his mouth, meanwhile his heart has broadened out in their behalf, and he feels impatient to take them all in his arms and again enjoy their Christian fellowship and the exquisite privilege of again preaching to them the living Word. No wonder he feels an enlargement of the heart contrastively with the time when first he found them groveling in the superstitions of polytheistic idolatry, and wasting away in the low debaucheries of sin and misery. His preaching now will be on a vastly different line. They have already been converted out of heathenism and dead Judaism, many of them wonderfully sanctified and not a few actually flooded with the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, qualifying them for pre-eminent usefulness as soul-savers.

12. "*Ye are not straitened in us.*" Among the innumerable preachers who had been with them during his long absence, some had impeached his apostolical authority, and in other ways spoken among them to his depreciation. He now assures them that he perfectly understands the situation, has victory complete in his own heart and life, and everything auspicious from his own standpoint. Consequently they may rest easy so far as he is concerned. "*But ye are straitened in your own hearts.*" As in the former letter, he is still moving judiciously and boldly on his castigatory line, chastising them for the irregularities and the inconsistencies of which

he has heard through others during his absence, and especially from Timothy and Titus, whom he had sent to preach to them, after his arrival on the coast, before leaving Asia. This letter, in co-operation with the former, has for its object the correction of all those errors and the radical reformation which he had been working up through his epistolary preaching and the corroboration of the same by Timothy and Titus, favorite preachers of his and much like himself, whom he had sent at different times to prevail upon them to receive appreciatively all he had written to them.

13. *“Grant unto me this reward, as I speak to children, be ye also enlarged.”* The reward here mentioned is their own enlargement of heart toward him in filial reciprocation of his enlargement of parental affection toward them, that the expansion of their love either for other, as parent to children and children to their spiritual father, may be mutual and reciprocal when he arrives among them.

ALLIANCES WITH THE WICKED FORBIDDEN

14. *“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.”* This not only covers the ground of matrimonial alliances with the wicked, so prominently forbidden in the Word of God, and so recreantly and recklessly violated by the professors of religion at the present day, even the preachers winking at it, but it also interdicts all sorts of business complications and partnerships with the ungodly. *“For what participation to righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship to light unto darkness?”* The answer to these questions is a positive and uncompromising negative.

15. *“And what sympathy of Christ unto Belial? Or what part to a faithful man with an infidel?”* Precisely as there is no conceivable reconciliation and co-operation of Christ and Belial, it is equally true that there is no possible harmony between a believer and an infidel. Hence it is foolish and wicked on the part of God’s people to enter into alliance of any sort with infidels. We should have nothing to do with them, except to make an honest effort for their salvation.

16. *“What agreement unto the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God, as God said, That I will dwell among them and will walk among them, and I will be their God and they shall be my people.”* This verse is a scathing and uncompromising abnegation to all idolatry in every form and phase. This is very pertinent with them, because the most of them had been converted out of Gentile idolatry, and the Jews among them needed this admonition, as they had so largely retrogressed into — not the paganistic, but yet practice — idolatry. Oh! how exceedingly these strictures are needed in the churches of the present day, already largely filled with idols and daily multiplying them with an alarming rapidity! The Apostolic churches owned no houses, but worshipped wherever it suited their convenience. We find them in Troas using a room in

a third story. What a pity the church didn't remain in this itinerant, belligerent attitude, free and unencumbered to go to the ends of the earth, waging everywhere an exterminating war against the devil! While needless ornamentation was justifiable in Solomon's temple, the wilderness tabernacle and the high-priest's regalia, as they lived in the symbolic dispensation, and all of those valuables taught important lessons appertaining to the gracious economy, we must remember that the types and shadows have all been verified in the great Antitype, and have no longer any pertinency in the Church of God; but now, as they are utterly useless, and even forbidden, they become idols and rivals of the glorious Antitype, who should to us be all things and in all. Here we are assured that God dwells among us in the sanctuaries we erect in His name and that He walks among us. Consequently there should be no idols in the form of needless expenditure of the Lord's money, nor gratifications of human pride and vanity, as even church pride is an abomination unto God. We should have nothing in our houses of worship calculated to divert the attention of the awful presence of the Almighty, who can not look upon sin with the least degree of allowance. How sad it is to see a modern church running after a vast diversity of idols, worshipping water-gods, day-gods, creed-gods, festival-gods, money-gods and gods of wood and stone in the form of fine church edifices!

REGENERATION AND SANCTIFICATION

17. *“Therefore come out from the midst of them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing: and I will receive you.*

18. *“And I will be unto you for a Father, and you shall be unto me for sons and daughters, saith the Lord mighty.”* This is clear, grand and glorious on regeneration, a splendid text from which to preach this precious grace to lost sinners. Here the Almighty condescends to call them from the deep abysses of slumdom and filthy cess-pools of iniquity, kindly and lovingly entreating them to leave the devil and his filth, outright and forever, bidding adieu to their old companions in vice and immorality, with a distinct understanding that they are never to return. How lovingly and importunately He here pleads with them, *“Touch not the unclean thing”*; *i. e.*, when they leave the devil, their wicked companions and sins, they are never again to touch them. Millions are now in Hell he undertook gradually to break off from sinful habits. In that case the gradualism generally runs the wrong way. No drunkard ever reforms gradually; he can not do it. With him it is sudden and eternal abandonment and dissolution of all partnership with the whisky devil, or damnation world without end. There is no successful reform without adhesion to the Divine mandate, *“Touch not the unclean thing.”* When the sinner does his part, leaves the devil and all sin never to go back, then he has nothing to do but come to God by simple faith in His promise here given, *“I will receive you, I will be unto you a Father,*

and you shall be unto me sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”

God's word never can fail. If it did, His throne would crumble and His kingdom fall. Hence the vilest sinner has nothing to do but take God at His word, leave all and leave forever, coming to God with the full assurance of faith — “Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.” How strange the guilty, debauched millions of earth do not heed this call of loving mercy and fly at once to the embrace of a sympathizing Heavenly Father, thus passing triumphantly out of darkness into light, out of bondage in freedom, out of pollution into purity, out of death into life, out of Hell into Heaven.

CHAPTER 7

1. *“Having, therefore, these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all the pollution of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”* This is one of the many instances in which the uninspired chapter-makers committed an egregious blunder, by cutting the paragraph in two in the middle, illustrating the fact that they did not know much about the meaning of the Scripture. So this verse belongs to the preceding subject of regeneration, confirmatory not only of the two separate and distinct works of grace in the plan of salvation, but their intimate proximity either to other. It only took Israel eleven days to travel from Mt. Sinai, on the bank of the Red Sea, to Kadesh-Barnea, which means “holy delight” and lies right on the order of Canaan. God’s an was for them to enter the land of corn and wine at that early date instead of retreating away and wandering forty years in the waste, howling wilderness. This verse, so clear and explicit on entire sanctification as a second work of grace, follows immediately after the preceding verses expository of regeneration, showing that young converts should not delay till they grieve away the Spirit, but hasten with all expedition into entire sanctification. The promises here mentioned are given in the preceding verses, where God most unequivocally promises the sinner regeneration and adoption when he comes to Him by simple faith, having abandoned the devil and all of his sins, leaving his kingdom forever. We find two distinct departments appertaining to this glorious second work of grace, *i. e.*, the flesh and the spirit. What is the *“filthiness of the flesh”*? Tobacco in all of its forms and phases is terribly filthy, really intolerably nasty, so much so that a decent sinner such as your humble servant once was, though brought up in the worst tobacco State in the world, never could use it. While all my friends not only used it, but tried to get me to do the same, my sense of decency revolted against it, even in my childhood. It is a rank narcotic poison, productive of paralysis, dyspepsia, heart disease, Bright’s disease, and a vast catalogue of terrible physical maladies. A sinner ought to quit it for the sake of common decency; a Christian, for Jesus’ sake; but if you get truly sanctified, it will do its own quitting, as you will get so near God you will be afraid He will smell your filthy tobacco breath when you pray. Opium is also a terrible filthiness of your flesh which none but Jesus with His sanctifying blood can eradicate out of the craving system. Intoxicating drinks must all go forever in this dark catalogue. There is to be no compromise whatever along this line. Gluttony must go, too. The physical can no longer predominate over the spiritual if you are going to be holy to the Lord. The hog must go down and the angel come up. Jewelry and all needless ornamentation and gaudy display pollute your body, and disqualify it to become the honored and beautiful temple of the Holy Ghost. If you get sanctified, you no longer need artistic beauty in any of its forms and phases, as you have the beauty of holiness, which so

eclipses all others as to bury them away in eternal oblivion. In the motley group designated “filthiness of the Spirit,” we find evil tempers, passions, incentives and predilections generally, such as anger, wrath, malice, revenge, envy, jealousy, pride, vanity, lust, egotism, sectarianism, and the malevolent affections indiscriminately. All these are the works of the devil, which Jesus came to destroy (1 John 3:8). You have nothing to do but turn them over to Him and leave them with Him. He will exterminate them world without end. To this glorious reality the Holiness Movement furnishes witnesses by wholesale who were once the slaves of the whisky devil, besotted drunkards; and the lust devil, debauched libertines, down at the bottom of slumdom. They are now standing in front of the battle waving the blood-stained banner, shouting the war-cry, and ranked among the most efficient preachers of the age. You need not think that anything is hard for Omnipotent Grace. You have nothing to do but give Him a chance.

“Perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” This clause is expository of the preceding commandment to *“cleanse ourselves from all the filthiness of the flesh and the spirit.”* Whenever we get rid of all our unholiness, then our holiness is perfect, *i. e.*, complete, has the field without a rival. This follows as a logical sequence from the simple fact that all of our unholiness either appertains to body or soul. Hence, when we get rid of these two classes of pollution, which is the antithesis of holiness, then we have what the Scripture calls perfect or complete holiness. Remember this is a statement of quality rather than quantity. A small garden may be as clean as a large field, yet there is a great difference in magnitude. When you get saved from all the “filthiness of the flesh and spirit,” your holiness is complete, though you may be but a spiritual infant contemplating growth into manhood. Yet we must not follow natural analogies too far, lest these metaphors break down and become incorrect, as we have a rule in rhetoric that we are not to press a metaphor too far, as it is only legitimate for exegesis within its sphere. In the spiritual realm, while sanctification gives us purity and subsequent growth in grace maturity, yet we must bear in mind that in spiritualities there is no getting old in the sense of incurring infirmity, as in the case of the body. But while we grow into maturity, we continue to grow more rapidly than ever, never reaching the terminus and never getting old, but blooming in immortal youth forever, growing on till we leave this world, and then growing in Heaven more rapidly than ever we did on earth, because Heaven is much more congenial to growth and prosperity than this world, this spiritual growth and development continuing through all eternity.

PAUL’S SOLICITUDE IN BEHALF OF THE CORINTHIANS

2. *“Receive us,” i. e.*, when we come; “have no hesitancy, though you have heard much disparaging against us during our absence. We have injured no one, we have ruined no one,” *i. e.*, by false doctrine or in any other way,

“we cheated no one.” This is a protestation of their purity and innocence, which we all should be prepared to make.

3. “*I do not speak to your condemnation; for I have before said that you are in our hearts to live along with you and die along with you.*” He is now speedily coming to them, and he is preparing for his reception by the most affectionate declarations of his paternal affection in their behalf.

5. “*For we coming into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest; fightings without and fears within.*” Some have misconstrued this statement about “fightings without and fears within” as out of harmony with the conclusion that he and his ministerial comrades at that time enjoyed entire sanctification. Such criticism is utterly untenable, as we see from the following verse the entire scope of those fightings without and fears within. It was simply because of his ardent love and importunate solicitude in behalf of the Corinthians. He had sent Titus on before him to preach to them and expound his first epistle to them, and do his utmost to bring about the desired reformation and readjustments. When Titus arrived bringing the good news, all of these “*fightings without and fears within*” were at an end. To give them any sort of carnal construction is utterly irreconcilable with the context.

6. “*But God, who comforteth the humble, comforted us by the coming of Titus.*” Here we find the end of all the “fightings without and fears within” mentioned in the preceding verse.

7. “*Not only by his coming, but also by the consolation with which he was comforted by you, proclaiming to us your earnest desire,*” i. e., to see him, and to fulfill his wishes, “*your steadfastness, as Titus had been so encouraged to see you standing true to the faith, like heroes on the battle-field, your zeal in my behalf, so that I rejoice the more.*” He postponed writing this letter until after the arrival of Titus, whose ministry had been signally blessed at Corinth with a grand and glorious reclamation of all who had backslid, and renunciation of all the errors designated and condemned in the first epistle, and a reaffirmation of their faith on all lines of revealed truth, and really a general, sweeping revival had crowned the labors of Titus and his comrades. So when he came up into Macedonia and brought all this good news, it turned a sun-burst of joy on the apostle, inundating him with exultation and gratitude because of the wonderfully good news from his spiritual children.

REPENTANCE

8. “*Because if indeed I grieved you with a letter,*” i. e., this was the first epistle in which he had designated their errors, irregularities and apostasies, and castigated very severely for the same. “*I do not regret it, if indeed I did reject it: for I see that if indeed that epistle did grieve you for a time.*”

9. “Now I rejoice, not because ye were grieved, but because ye were grieved unto repentance: for ye sorrowed according to God in order that you might in nothing be damaged by us.

10. “For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation not to be regretted, but the sorrow of the world worketh out death.” While the sorrow of the world which breaks the hearts of millions (for this world is really flooded with sorrow) actually works out physical death, frequently causing immediate suicide, and in countless instances shortening life and expediting physical death, bringing down myriad’s in sorrow to a premature grave, as the Scripture says, “The wicked shall not live out half their days”; yet it is an indisputable fact that the sorrow of the world is constantly working out the spiritual death of worldly people. How is this? Why, this awful, heart-crushing, worldly sorrow, for which there is no condolence with the wicked, is really a prelude of Hell torment, coming on Satan’s poor victims of death and damnation, and actually working out in them spiritual and eternal death. You will observe “repentance” occurring three times in this passage in the E.V., where I translate it “regret.” This is one of several instances in the E.V. where *metamelomai* is translated “repent.” All this is incorrect and illusory to the English reader, as *metanoëoo*, from *meta*, “to change,” and *nous*, “the mind,” is the only word used in the Greek Testament to denote “repentance.” The same mistake occurs in E.V. in case of Judas Iscariot, stating that he repented, which is not correct. The reason I so explicitly make this explanation and expose that error in the E.V., is not only because it is true, but because it is necessary to defend the Bible doctrine of repentance from a very egregious misunderstanding. Repentance is not only a grand and momentous reality in the gracious economy, but actually constitutes the foundation of a true Christian experience (⁸⁰⁰⁰Hebrews 1:6). It is a grandly significant fact that repentance is invariably the antecedent of justification, always putting the sinner on believing ground, where the exercise of faith is easy, salvation coming as certainly as the tide flows down the river. God never fails. John the Baptist preached, “Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand,” showing plainly that repentance qualifies everybody to walk right into the kingdom of God. To be sure, faith is the open door into the kingdom; yet repentance puts you on the threshold, where you have nothing to do but walk right in through the open door. If Judas had repented he would have been gloriously reclaimed, gone on and received the fiery baptism on the day of Pentecost, and then gone out with his apostolical comrades to preach the everlasting gospel. This word *metamelomai*, in the case of Judas and three instances in the passage now under discussion, means keen and pungent “regret,” and frequently, as in the case of Judas, intensifying into intolerable remorse, precipitating its hopeless victim into suicide. *Metanoëoo*, properly translated “repent,” has a meaning entirely different from *metamelomai*. It is from *meta*, “change,” and *nous*, “the mind,” and consequently simply means a change of mind. While the metaphysical

meaning ‘of this word is rather weak, involving simply a change of purpose or plan, the spiritual meaning which is proper, pertinent and general in the Scriptures, is very deep, strong and comprehensive. When God created man in His own image and likeness, He invested him with the Divine mind. Satan maneuvered in the Fall to divest him of his Heavenly endowment, substituting in its place his own filthy, paltry mind, so enfeebling and beclouding man’s native intellect that it immediately became subordinated to his animal body, thus developing the carnal mind, which is actual enmity against God (Romans 8:7), “not subject to His law, neither indeed can be.” Hence the only remedy for it is utter extermination, all efforts to refine and subordinate it to the Divine will proving utter and hopeless failures, only ultimating in ruin and damnation. Hence the true meaning of repentance is the removal of the carnal mind out of humanity and the restoration of the Divine mind, the latter subordinated to God and the former to the physical body. Hence the complete work of repentance is only reached in a perfect and final consecration; the word in its ordinary use simply indicating the initial work, characteristic of every penitent sinner when he leaves Satan and all of his sins and comes to God. Hence John Wesley taught the repentance of believers, legitimately using the word in its higher Bible sense of entire consecration. The repentance and consecration are, therefore, generically identical, though specifically different; their identity consisting in a total abandonment, the sinner giving up all his bad things to the devil, to whom they belong, and leaving Satan and everything he possesses never to return, while in consecration the Christian gives up all his good things to God to be used for His glory forever. The common apprehension of repentance is that of godly sorrow, which is not correct. While godly sorrow is a normal and most potent antecedent to repentance, yet it is a different thing altogether. As you see above, “*a godly sorrow worketh repentance not to be regretted.*” This “*godly sorrow*” is the normal fruit of a true spiritual conviction, and the intermediate link connecting conviction and repentance. As all conviction, even the most potent, may be stifled and survived, and the sinner go right on his Hellward bound way, so of godly sorrow. It may be so awful as to drive away sleep and appetite for days together, and still the person not repent, as I have actually witnessed in many instances. Repentance simply means a change in mind, *i. e.*, from the carnal mind to the mind of Christ. The experimental phase of it is simply for the sinner to turn on his heel, bid adieu to the devil and all of his sins, leaving Satan’s kingdom at once and forever. He may do that crying or laughing, at his own option. The salient fact is simply for him to do it. In that case God always forgives and saves.

11. “*For, behold how great earnestness this same godly sorrow hath wrought unto you!*” He means the grand and general rally down at the altar, unanimously and importunately seeking before God the reclamations and reformations and all the corrections specified in Paul’s first letter. “Apology.” They had vindicated themselves to Titus, giving satisfactory

explanations and apologies for the matters of which Paul had accused them, and effecting with Titus a satisfactory reconciliation. "*Clearing up.*" This they had done with Titus, satisfying him of their innocence, loyalty and conservatism to the Pauline doctrine and experience, and everything involved in his letter. "Reverence." They had shown to Titus a true reverence for Paul as their spiritual father unto God, notwithstanding the strenuous efforts made by certain preachers who had come from Judaea, denouncing Paul as an innovator and an interloper because he was not one of the original Twelve. They abundantly satisfied Titus that they had a true and sincere filial reverence for Paul as their spiritual father, fully accepting, endorsing and appreciating all the doctrines he had preached to them. "Longing." This means a longing to see him again, and hear him preach, after an absence of three and a half years, assuring Titus that they had rather see him than anybody, and not only bid him a joyous welcome, but are actually longing to see him. "Zeal." Titus certified to Paul that their zeal to punish the incestuous man, and to regulate all the irregularities and disorders among them, was really intense; that they were in perfect sympathy with everything Paul had written, and willing and anxious to enforce New Testament law in every particular. "Vindication." This means that they unanimously approbated the vindication of law and order among them, and that there was a universal approval of all Paul had written or preached to them on these different subjects. "In everything ye have commended yourselves to be pure in the matter;" *i.e.*, they had satisfied Titus fully that in the flagrant case of the adulterous man they were a unit with Paul in the enforcement of discipline.

12. "*Then if indeed I wrote to you, it was not on account of him that did the wrong, nor on account of him that suffered the wrong; but in order that your zeal which is in our behalf towards you before God may be made manifest.*" This verse shows that the father of the man who had his second wife was still living, which made the case so flagrant. Now that they have so nobly and unanimously received Paul's castigatory letter, and, instead of dividing up, some taking sides with the offending member and others with Paul against him, they had without a dissenting voice responded a hearty amen to Paul's condemnation and castigation in the matter. Besides, the whole church had come down in deep sorrow and wept before God over that dark blot which Satan had cast on the fair escutcheon of their church. Meanwhile the guilty man had done everything in his power to rescind and readjust the irregularity, being so penitent and broken-hearted over it that it seemed he would die of grief. Now that the matter has taken this happy turn, the original parties being all satisfied, he very adroitly changes the point of controversy and recognizes the value of his communication to them in reference to the aggravated case of immorality that it has resulted in the satisfactory manifestation of their mutual zeal in his behalf and his parental love toward them.

13-14. *“Therefore we have been comforted. But, in addition to our consolation, we rejoice the more abundantly over the joy of Titus because his spirit has been refreshed by you all.”* The truth of the matter was, Titus had not only succeeded in the mission on which he had been sent, *i. e.*, to effect their unanimous acceptance and appreciation of Paul’s first epistle, but under his labors a glorious revival had broken out and swept along, which had also flooded him with a double consolation. Hence, when Titus brings the news to him up in Macedonia, Paul receives a double blessing, the one that of the good news from Corinth that they had received joyfully all the doctrines and disciplinary corrections in the letter he had sent to them, and the other was to see Titus himself so wonderfully revived up and inundated with the victory the Lord had given him in his ministry at Corinth. *“Because if I have rejoiced in anything with him in your behalf, I was not ashamed, but as I spoke all things in truth to you, so also your rejoicing over Titus was true.”*

15. *“And his heart is the more abundantly toward you remembering the obedience of you all how you received him with fear and trembling.”*

16. *“I rejoice, because in everything I am assured by you.”* At this point the letter becomes exceedingly complimentary and even eulogistic; so that it certifies that in everything he is fully assured among them. A couple of months after this writing he arrived among them, and doubtless enjoyed an exceedingly happy reception, and though we have no record of his ministry among them the ensuing three months, where he spent the winter preparatory to his last journey to Jerusalem the following spring, there is no doubt but it was a time memorable and glorious for the victories of truth and righteousness. During that time he wrote the letter to the Romans.

CHAPTER 8

THE CONTRIBUTION TO THE POOR SAINTS OR JERUSALEM

Having been exceedingly encouraged by the ministry of Timothy at Corinth at an earlier date, the report of Titus now in reference to the glorious success of his first letter, and the wonderful revival which had taken place under his ministry, transporting him with joy unutterable, he winds up the portion of the letter appertaining to those irregularities being satisfied with the reformations reported by Titus. And now he devotes a considerable space to the interest of the contributions they were raising throughout the entire churches for the relief of the poor saints at Jerusalem, who had found it necessary to sell out their estates to support that great Pentecostal revival, and consequently needed financial help.

1. *“But we make known to you, brethren, the grace of God which was given in the churches of Macedonia, that amid a great trial of persecution the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.”* Paul was a wonderfully deep thinker on everything to which he gave his attention, showing up the nicest and most delicate distinctions and revealing occult facts which grosser minds would pass without recognition.
3. *“Because I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, they are willing.”*
4. *“With much entreaty praying of us the grace and fellowship of the ministry toward the saints.”* Here we see an astounding manifestation of Christian liberality in the fact that these Thessalonian Christians did not have to be solicited, but were actually running after Paul and his preaching comrades, and begging them to let them make contributions to the poor saints at Jerusalem.
5. *“And not as we hoped, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and to us through the will of God, that we should exhort Titus, in order that as he previously began it, so also he may complete this benefaction even among you.”* Paul here is stirring them up by telling them of the wonderful zeal in Macedonia, where they are not only anxious to give according to their ability, but even going ahead of their ability and entreating them to give them a chance to take part in this benefaction, but they are now exhorting Titus that as he has given attention of this enterprise among you, *i. e.*, Corinthians, we must have him go ahead and complete it.
7. *“But as you abound in everything, in faith.”* This is the fundamental grace in the plan of salvation, underlying every other like the great strata of

the earth underlying and holding up the oceans, continents and mountain ranges. “And in word.” That is the grand, rich treasure which God gives to His people, the precious Word of life and salvation, which is bread, meat, milk, honey, wine, the fatted calf and all the delicious fruits of Canaan, and at the same time the sword of the Spirit with which we are to fight our way through the battlefields of earth till we stand on the mount of celestial triumph. “And knowledge.” That is one of the inestimable gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:8) which shed light on the revealed Word, and qualify us to understand its deep spiritual meaning. Those Corinthians were wonderfully enriched with faith, word and knowledge, most invaluable gifts and graces. “And all zeal.” This was a necessary concomitant to their faith, word and knowledge. They are all on fire, studying the Word and proclaiming it to others, rolling the tide of salvation on all sides. “And the Divine love which is from you among us,” *i. e.*, love which God has poured into your hearts and now running out toward us. The glowing report of Titus had flooded them with consolation in reference to the abounding love of the Corinthians in his behalf. “*In order that you also may abound in this grace,*” *i. e.*, the grace of this philanthropy in behalf of the Jerusalem saints. He now stimulates them, by the consideration that they abound in everything else, that they may also add this beautiful star to the constellation of Christian graces, already large, bright and increasing into, the adornment of their Christian character.

8. “*I do not speak according to commandment, but through the zeal of others also proving the sincerity of your love.*” He disclaims every disposition to make this duty mandatory, leaving it purely optionary and hortatory. From this we should learn a profitable lesson. All the castigations we find in the apostolical letters simply appertain to spiritualities, temporalities all being left optionary. Among the sad indices of ecclesiastical apostasy we find an undue emphasis laid on material interest, and a corresponding laxity on the spiritual. Here the whole church is stirred over one case of fornication. We learn from this that finances are always to be purely optionary, otherwise they forfeit all the grace of God. The current assessment systems are much out of harmony with the pure and disinterested Christian liberality taught in God’s Word. They are rendered entirely too imperative, thus forfeiting the sweet influences of the blessed Holy Spirit.

9. (“*For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that He being rich, for your sakes became poor, that you through His poverty might be made rich.*”) This verse is a beautiful allusion to the example of our Savior, who left the boundless riches of Heaven to be born in a stable, and live and die so poor that He had not a ace to lay His head. Here we see the only incentive that Paul gives them to inspire their liberality and secure a contribution. He simply refers them to the example of the Savior.

10. *“And I give my opinion in this.”* The emphasis in this verse is in opinion in contradistinction to commandment in ver. 8. So he disclaims the mandatory attitude in the matter altogether and modestly gives it as his opinion that they should make a contribution to the poor saints. Lord, help us all to follow Paul’s example, and when we want to raise money, instead of commanding the people, merely give them our modest opinion that they ought to do this, and refer them to the example of our Savior, who gave His Heavenly inheritance that we might be redeemed from the bankruptcy of sin.

11. *“And now indeed complete the enterprise in order that as there is first a promptitude of willingness, so also to finish it according to that which you have.”*

12. *“For if there is first a willing mind it is accepted according to that which he may have, and not according to that he may not have.”* He reminds here that they had begun this enterprise a year ago, and now exhorts them to consummate it according to their resources, assuring them that God takes the will for the deed, and accepts the contribution, not according to what we have not, but simply that which we have. Hence all Christian giving is easy and delightful, no burden about it, but all glad and joyous privilege. Unless there is first a willing mind in the case God does not want a contribution, because He is not poor and does not need it, and if there is not first a willing mind it would not prove a blessing to the contributor. Hence the willing mind is the necessary antecedent to all contributions. Then the contribution is accepted, not according to what we have not, but simply according to what we have. Hence in case of financial inability, God always takes the will for the deed. A vast amount of the backsliding in popular churches results from the financial yokes laid on the people. It is all out of harmony with God’s Word and grievous to the Holy Spirit. It actually scandalizes God, advertising Him to the wicked as very poor and needy, which is utterly false, and abominable in the sight of God. He is not only infinitely rich, but infinitely good. So He is certain to take care of His own cause. He will feed’ the poor and support the gospel without any of your stingy contributions. He does not want them. They are an insult to His majesty.

13. *“For not that there is relief to others and burden to you, but that it may be according to equality, at the present your abundance corresponding to their deficiency,”* i.e., your abundance of temporal things corresponding to the deficiency of the poor saints at Jerusalem.

14. *“In order that their abundance may correspond to your deficiency, in order that there may be equality.”* The Corinthians had already become partakers of the abundant grace which God on the day of Pentecost had conferred on His saints at Jerusalem. It has rolled out a salvation wave over

the Gentile world. Hence the pertinency that they may partake of the temporal abundance enjoyed by the Gentiles.

15. *“As has been written, He that abounded had no surplus, and he that gathered little lacked nothing.”* A beautiful allusion to the gathering of manna in the wilderness, when they all had just what they needed, whether they gathered much or little. Hence a recognition of the community of God’s great family, all having an abundant supply regardless of their conditions in life, because our Heavenly Father is good, feeding all of His children like He feeds the birds.

16. *“Thanks be unto God, who giveth this zeal in your behalf in the heart of Titus.”* See how beautifully Paul imputes all of their amiable philanthropy to God.

17. *“Because he received the exhortation, and, being more zealous, he came unto you of his own accord.”* The preaching of Titus among them had gloriously toned them up on all lines, and literally enthused them in behalf of Paul and all of his enterprises.

18. *“We sent also along with him, whose praise in the gospel is in all the churches.”* We do not know what brother this is so highly commended by Paul. Doubtless the verdict is in favor of Gains, Aristarchus or Trophimus, all prominent traveling companions of Paul, and his associate evangelists, and famous among all of the churches for their piety and godly zeal.

19. *“Not only so, but, having been elected by the churches our companion in this philanthropy ministered by us unto the glory of the Lord and our promotion.”* Aristarchus accompanied Paul to Jerusalem when he carried those contributions, remained with him during his two years’ imprisonment at Caesarea, and sailed with him to Rome, passing through the shipwreck, and wintering on Mileta. Most probably he is the man here alluded to. Do not forget that Luke was all this time with Paul, serving as his amanuensis, but too modest to give us a hint with reference to himself. He accompanies Paul down to Corinth, and there, responsive to his dictations, wrote the letter to the Romans during the three months Paul spent there during the winter of A.D. 57-58, and journeyed with him to Jerusalem. Here Paul says this benefaction to the poor saints conduced to the glory of God and their advancement in the Divine life. Observe the word Paul uses throughout these writings to designate that contribution; that word is “grace”; the regular world *charis*, used one hundred and twenty times in the New Testament, where we have “grace.” Hence it involves the fact that they considered it “grace.” Such it was, both to donors and recipients.

20. *“Avoiding this that any one may blame us in this philanthropy which is ministered by us.”* How important it is that we all deal carefully in church finances, diligently keeping clear of all censure. I have seen many preachers ruined by tinkering with money raised for public benefactions. You can not

be too careful in those matters. An ounce of prevention is worth more than a pound of cure.

21. *“We not only provide things beautiful before the Lord, but in presence of men.”* The Greek word here describing the public transactions of Paul and comrades means having the beauty of holiness. Lord, help us to be sure that all of our transactions are characterized by the beauty of holiness.

22. Here we are utterly at sea again with reference to the brother who accompanied Titus. Several would well answer the description, but there is no direct clue to any certain one. It illustrates how exceedingly spiritual the history of the New Testament churches. The Bible is a book of doctrines and facts rather than biography.

23. *“Whether concerning Titus, he is my companion and fellow-worker unto you. Whether our brethren, the apostles of the churches, they are the glory of Christ.”*

24. *“Showing unto them the proof of your Divine love and of our boasting in you in the face of the churches.”* The original meaning of “apostle” is one sent out into a new field, *i. e.*, the pioneer. Paul certainly here uses the word in that broad sense, including his comrades, such as Apollos, Barnabas, Timothy, Titus. “Apostles of the churches” evidently means their founders.

CHAPTER 9

1. *“But concerning the ministry to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you.”* In view of the glorious encouragement Titus gave him, he feels very bold to approach them on all subjects. So he takes strong hold on them in behalf of the poor saints.
2. *“For I know your promptitude, which I am in the habit of boasting to the Macedonians, that Achaia was ready from last year. Oh, your zeal has aroused many.”*
3. *“I also sent the brethren in that our boasting in your behalf in this region may not be empty.”* He had sent unto them Timothy and Titus, and their evangelistic comrades, so there would be no delinquency on this line nor any other. *“In order that as I said, ye may be prepared.”*
4. *“Lest perhaps, if the Macedonians may come along with me and should find you unprepared, we (in order that we may not say you) may be put to shame in this confidence.”* Certainly he would be in a serious dilemma if, after boasting of the Achaians to the Macedonians, some of the latter should accompany him (as they did) and find Achaia unprepared. Hence the pertinency of sending on the brethren and working the matter in anticipation. Preachers need common sense as well as other people.
5. *“Therefore I considered it necessary to exhort the brethren [i.e., Titus and his two helpers] that they come to you beforehand and previously prepare you? long-announced benefaction, that the same may be ready as a beneficence and not as a stingy offering.”* We see here that Paul was very particular about that contribution. He was not satisfied simply to raise the amount, but he was determined that it should be a blessing to the donor. He constantly uses the word *eulogia*, which means a spiritual blessing, and *charis*, which is the regular word for the grace of God. God help us all to heed the Pauline example and remember that we have no right to take contribution for the cause of God unless it comes in such a way as to be a positive spiritual blessing. Oh, how this knocks up all of your church festivals and various devices to raise money just any way you can get it. How shameful these devices, when as a rule the money is not needed except to sacrifice to church pride and enjoy the honor of paying the full assessments, which are frequently several times more than necessary; *e.g.*, raise ten thousand dollars to run the church when it would actually be better to run it on two thousand. Here Paul refuses to accept, even for God’s poor, a stingy contribution. Would it not do the poor saints just as well as if it had been given cheerfully? So did not Paul make a mistake? Oh, no! God has charge of His poor, and it is an insult to Him to take a stingy contribution. Church benefactions are all taken up in the name of the great God, who is infinite. Hence it is grievous to Him to resort to the claptrap

policy of church frolics, festivals and fandangos. No wonder the church is dead and the people going to Hell in platoons, when the hue and cry is money, and all sorts of questionable strategy laid under contribution to get it, and behind the whole compoodle enormous and utterly unnecessary assessments laid on the people in order to raise a big lot of money that the pastor's family may live like kings in pomp and splendor, thus exposed to the most terrible temptation to lead a proud, wicked life, and turn out wicked and worldly, for which they are actually proverbial, lead many to ruin and make their bed in Hell.

6. *“But I say this, He that soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly, and he that soweth unto blessings shall also reap unto blessings.”* Here we see Paul settles the matter that all financial contributions to the Lord shall be given in such a way as to be a spiritual blessing to the donor at the time he takes the contribution. Hence our collections should be religious services, as spiritual and profitable in the way of spiritual edification and inspiring as our praying. Others likewise will forfeit the final blessing resulting from the benefaction. How can this be? Will not the contribution prove a blessing in the end, even if I give it grudgingly or actuated by pride? The answer is in the negative. It is the same as if you cast it into the sea, for unless you give it unto “blessings,” you shall not receive reward “unto blessings.” Why, Paul, will not a stingy contribution help the saints at Jerusalem? The answer is in the negative. Why? The saints are not dependent on human liberality. God's ravens are not all dead. He can take care of His poor and His missionaries as well without you as with you. Let us not be caught in the devil's delusion to think we are important. If we should die, we would not be missed. N. B. — God can run His machinery without us. God is better than any board of stewards or finance committee.

7. *“As each one hath determined in his heart, not from reluctance or from necessity.”* The Holy Ghost here actually uses a pleonasm and tautology, two grammatical errors in the estimation of modern critics, in order to enforce the grand fact that He does not want the contributions which are not made cheerfully, willingly, gladly and adoringly, in such a way as to be a spiritual blessing to the contributor at the time. Hence we are to pray over this part of the service like we do our preaching and altar work, and everything connected with the worship of God. I believe that it is a great mistake to refrain from singing while taking up a contribution, because a really good spiritual song would prove the vehicle of the Holy Ghost to pour blessings on the congregation during the contribution. I love Revelation John Norberry's methods. He passes no contribution boxes, but exhorts the people to give with an eye single to the glory of God or withhold their contribution, all standing and coming forward and laying their money on a table while the doxology and other good songs of a most spiritual character are being sung by the whole congregation, the pastor and many others leading the way to the Lord's table, laying down their contributions and then falling on their knees in adoration and supplication,

meanwhile all the congregation enjoy the privilege to come or send their gifts to the treasury of the Lord. We have in this sentence the preposition both before *lupee*, “reluctance,” and *anangkee*, “necessity,” a grammatical pleonasm and tautology, in order to enforce with burning emphasis God’s prohibition of that blasphemous religious farce which so frequently derogates and pollutes His house. This salient fact should be emphasized before every congregation and efforts made to keep people from thus recklessly and blasphemously grieving the Holy Ghost by giving from reluctance, *i. e.*, when it does not come freely from the heart as an offering to the Lord, enjoyed and appreciated as a precious privilege and a means of grace. Again, we are not to give from necessity, *i. e.*, with a feeling that I have to do it or the Lord’s preachers and the poor saints will starve. That is a downright insult to God in His own house, who says, “The earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof. If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the cattle on a thousand hills are mine.” The popular churches are everywhere blaspheming the name of God and disgracing Him before the infidels by this constant, indiscriminate and unscrupulous effort to get money. The result is they actually run into idolatry, ceasing to worship the God of the universe, who is infinitely rich, and disgusted and blasphemed by their stingy and reluctant contributions. But millions are actually worshipping a poor little god who is in an awful financial embarrassment and no akin to the omnipotent Jehovah, who sits upon the circle of the Heavens and turns the seasons round, with millions of ravens ready to fly and carry bread to every missionary girdling the globe and every suffering saint beneath the skies. When the Lord sanctified me thirty years ago He gave me light on this subject. Since that time I have been circuit rider, presiding elder, and occupied a diversity of ministerial relations. But I have stuck close to the Word of the Lord on finances. Twenty-eight years ago my Conference sent me to an old, dead, run-down circuit. My stewards met me and all wanted to resign, giving as a reason that none of the members were willing to pay the preacher, and they just had to wring from them their stingy and reluctant contributions amid rebellion, denunciation, and even abuse, because they asked them for ministerial support. I said to them, “I have but one charge to make you with reference to your duty to collect money for me, and that is that you be sure that you never receive anything that is not given with a free and cheerful heart. If I find out to the contrary I will send back everything that is reluctantly contributed.” “Well,” they said, “you will starve sure, for with all our efforts we have never been able to raise the pastor’s salary in full, and you will just about get nothing.” I not only thus charged my stewards, but I told the people from the pulpit what they had said to me about finances, and my order to them, then repeating it to the people: “I am glad to tell you that I serve a God who owns millions of immortal worlds and mountains of gold and silver. Be sure that you make no contribution to me this year unless you do it with an eye single to the glory of God, as a means of grace and blessing to your own souls.” The year passed away. The people gave me more than I knew what to do with,

actually more than double the amount in former years assessed for the support of my predecessors, which, by all their financial strategy, they had never been able to collect in full. The stewards told me that the people ran after them from all directions with their contributions, begging them to receive them. Of course God was with us that year, gloriously converting four hundred people within the boundary of my little circuit, so that I went up to Conference with three times as many members as I had at the beginning of the year, meanwhile giving the Baptists ninety and the Presbyterians thirty who have been gloriously converted at our altars. For many years I have traveled five to twenty-five thousand miles per annum with no person on the globe in any way being responsible for a penny, God Himself being my support, temporal as well as spiritual. Obedience to these commandments would actually bring a revival wave over the dead churches of Christendom, rolling from ocean to ocean like a sea of glory. Oh! that we could all wake up and take God in our finances and everything else. I am now preaching on the Atlantic Coast, responsive to calls which I received in California, four thousand miles distant. My response to the question, "What must we pay you to come to New England?" was the simple statement in brackets on a postal card: "No charge." I travel constantly throughout the continent, making no charge and recognizing no financial obligation anywhere. God is better than all the banks in America. Do not fear. If you are doing His work, His ravens are already on the wing. "For God loves a laughing giver." The Greek is *hilaros*, i. e., "hilarious," the same word used in English, slightly modified in the spelling pursuant to the idiom of the English language. Look in your dictionary for hilarious. You will find it means "laughing uproariously." Remember this giving is an act of devotion to God, which He blesses like He does your prayers, testimonies, songs, sermons and exhortations. The idea here is that you are to be so glad of the opportunity to co-operate with God in the salvation of the world that you will accompany your contribution with a glorious, uproarious, religious laugh, a regular hallelujah *gaudeamus*. This is the way the colored people in the South have astonished the world by building up church edifices and school-houses all over the country since they were emancipated in abject poverty. They walk up with shining faces and hilarious shouts and lay it down on the table. If the preachers and deacons would everywhere not only proclaim but enforce this rule, their finances would not only prove a paradoxical success, but instead of chilling the spiritual ardor would prove the vehicle of fiery baptisms poured on the congregation, and actual incentives to revival power.

8. "*But God is able to cause all grace to abound unto you in order that always in everything, having all sufficiency, you may abound in every good work.*" God help us to believe this truth, and make our contributions with a free will and a glad heart, hailing the glorious privilege and appreciating the means of grace, utterly saved from the diabolical lie that would make us feel that our poor benefaction is in any way a necessity to

the cause of God. Oh, that we may constantly recognize in our God “all sufficiency,” temporal as well as spiritual! Such are His infinite resources that He can do without any of us and not know the difference. Here is the great culminating fact revealed. Our God has “all sufficiency,” temporal and spiritual, so that He does not need us nor anything we can do; meanwhile it is a privilege so glorious to be permitted to co-operate with God in His glorious philanthropy for the salvation and amelioration of the world that we should leap with joy and laugh uproariously, with the very ebullition of holy gratitude at the very thought of being permitted to bear some humble part in the glorious work of our wonderful Savior in redeeming this poor lost world from in, death and Hell.

9. *“As has been written, He has scattered abroad, He hath given to the poor, His righteousness endureth forever.”* What a wonderful promise! If you scatter your benefactions to the ends of the earth for the glory of God, helping the missionaries in all lands, and gladdening the hearts of the poor, your righteousness will endure forever. Here is a perfect guarantee against all backsliding.

10. *“He that ministers seed to the sower and bread for eating shall supply and multiply your seed, and increase the fruits of your loving Heavenly Father. In ten thousand mysterious ways He will, to your own unutterable astonishment, multiply the seed which you are sowing in all the earth and increase the fruits of your righteousness.”* How glorious it will be when the guardian angels in Heaven shall introduce to you many a soul saved through your instrumentality! Your little contributions crossed the great ocean, traveled half around the world, and carried the gospel to souls perishing for “the Bread of Life.” The guardian angels know you and know them. Happy will be your introduction in Heaven to the souls saved through your humble benefaction while toiling in earthly poverty.

11. *“In everything being enriched unto all liberality, which worketh out through us thanksgiving unto God.”* Here you see Paul prays that the Corinthian saints may be enriched unto all liberality, *i.e.*, liberality in every respect and in the superlative degree. This liberality, which makes every little contribution a laughing blessing, is really a spiritual grace, the beautiful and delicious fruit of the blessed Holy Spirit Himself. And it works out in us gratitude to God. Oh, how infinitely alien from every conception of reluctance, burden or necessity! The idea here is that it works in us adoring thanksgiving to God for the blessed privilege.

12. *“Because the ministry of this offering is not only supplying the deficiencies of the saints, but also abounding through much thanksgiving unto God.”* Here you see the double inducement to participate in this philanthropy; *i.e.*, because they are not only supplying the deficiencies for the saints, which is a glorious privilege and to them a great blessing, but it is reacting in showers of blessing on both the donors and the beneficiaries

in the way of adoring gratitude to God, which of itself is a grand and amiable spiritual grace.

13. *“Through the proof of this ministration glorifying God for the subjection of your confession unto the gospel of Christ and the liberality of your contribution as regards them and as regards all men.”* How elaborately here Paul enlarges upon the gracious aspect of this contribution! exhibiting before the world the rich spiritual endowment of Christian liberality.

14. *“Through their prayer in your behalf longing after you with Christian affection on account of the grace of God which superabounds unto you.”* How beautiful this incentive: The Jerusalem saints will not only pray for you incessantly, but will actually long to see you and enjoy your saintly fellowship, drawn toward you with holy admiration on account of the sweet grace of God which actually superabounds in you.

15. *“Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift;”* i. e., His own Son to come down, suffer and die to redeem us all from sin, death and Hell; in consideration of which momentous reality how glad should we be to cast in our little mite and bear some humble part in the glorious enterprise for which God gave His only Son to die. This is the climax of all incentives to Christian liberality.

CHAPTER 10

DEFENSE OF HIS APOSTLESHIP.

We now enter upon another field, in which the apostle finds it necessary to defend his claims to the apostolic office from the assaults of his adversaries, at the same time announcing his purpose to deal with them in a summary way when he arrives. During his long absence many preachers had come from Juda, and not only propagated heresies among them, but had done their utmost to sow dissension, especially by impeaching his apostolic authority, advocating the position which many do this day, that there were no apostles but the original Twelve which our Savior called out early in His ministry (Matthew 10). That hypothesis would exclude James and Jude, the brothers of our Lord, and authors of epistles that bear their names, as well as Paul, Barnabas and Apollos. Were these preachers from Juda Christians? They claimed so to be, and probably some of them were in reality, while others were Satan's counterfeits, though doubtless thinking that they were all right. Much help you will find in your efforts to understand especially the historic phases of revealed truth, if you will remember that humanity, grace, sin, Satan and God are uniform in all ages. Church license had never yet been given to the preachers, being a post-apostolic invention. Therefore it was optionally with men to assume the ministerial office at will, and go forth on their own responsibilities. Though license was instituted purposely to fortify against ministerial counterfeits, like everything else it has long ago been usurped and manipulated by the enemy to the detriment of the cause. Corinth was the great metropolis of all Southern Greece, and one of those innumerable, beautiful and fruitful islands constituting the Grecian archipelago. It was the greatest commercial emporium in the world, situated on the Aegean Sea, giving it the commerce of Asia, the Ionian, and that of Rome. Hence it was an attractive center, into which everything, bad as well as good, focalized. Therefore, during his absence of three and a half years, peregrinating (to travel or journey) through Asiatic Christendom, and visiting the churches of Northern Greece, while the Corinthians had enjoyed the glorious gospel of Peter, Apollos, and many other true heralds and exemplars of the genuine article, they had been terribly preyed upon by a diversity of preachers from Juda, and other countries in infantile Christendom, who had not only propagated many errors, but had actually undertaken to supplant the apostolic authority of Paul altogether; of course, in hopes of capturing them for their own aggrandizement. The same state of things is now going on throughout Christendom. This laid upon Paul the unpleasant duty of defending his own claims to the apostolic office, as well as his ministerial character. This duty was not only obligatory on him for the sake of the cause in all ages, but it

was especially incumbent on him to protect the faith of his spiritual children, which was being shaken by these heretical inroads.

1. *“But I myself, Paul, exhort you through the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in personal appearance am indeed mean among you, but being absent I am bold toward you.”* Paul was not only a little, ugly man, quite unimpressive in his personal appearance, but dressing in the very cheapest and plainest style, impressing a stranger like a poor old tramp; while, of course, many of his adversaries were tidy and magnanimous in their physique and manner. Yet the fullness of the Holy Ghost and the majesty of Heaven’s commission made him bold as a lion.

2. *“But I pray that being present I may not be bold towards you with that confidence with which I consider that I am bold towards some that reckon us as walking according to the flesh.”* Carnal people always judge others by themselves, imputing carnal motives to God’s true people, and thus utterly misunderstanding them. That is the reason why they killed the Son of God and two hundred millions of His faithful followers. They misunderstood them, explaining their deportment from a carnal standpoint. See what a time Paul had with these big, cultured, fine looking preachers, who hounded him everywhere, upsetting his converts, playing sad havoc with his churches and doing their best to undermine not only his ministerial influence but even supplant his apostolic office, to which the glorified Savior in person had called him, both on his way to Damascus and in the temple at Jerusalem.

4. *“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty unto God for the pulling down of strongholds.”* Only a short time before Paul’s day, Mithridates had conquered and expelled the pirates from the very country where he was born and reared, reducing a hundred and twenty strongholds and capturing more than ten thousand prisoners. Hence it is believed that he had his mind on these notable events when he dictated this verse, so vividly describing the omnipotence of grace in capturing the citadels of sin and Satan.

5. *“Casting down reasoning and every edifice which is being raised against the knowledge of God, and leading captive every intent into the subjection of Christ.”* Here we see the felicitous, gracious possibility of complete subordination of spirit, mind, body and life to the perfect and holy will of our glorious King. This great work is to be diligently, vigilantly, sedulously and indefatigably sought after, and we receive the experience of entire sanctification, which simply turns over the heart unreservedly to the Holy Ghost, who thoroughly purifies and occupies it contemporaneously with complete consecration. The spirit or the heart is the man properly so called, the mind and body being his servitors. Hence it is incumbent on the sanctified soul to constantly and appreciatively utilize God’s Word, providence and Spirit to bring about this complete subordination of all our

mental faculties and corporeal organs to the will of God. Primarily in the Divine administration is the Holy Ghost Himself, sanctifying and dwelling in the heart during the experience of entire sanctification, completely illuminating, subduing, perfecting and occupying the human spirit, *i. e.*, the king of the human organism. Then through the human spirit, His happy and willing ally, He reaches the mind, quickening the memory, illuminating the intellect, fortifying the judgment and purifying the sensibilities, thus bringing into meek and beautiful subordination “*every intent into subjection to Christ.*” This is a grand achievement, gradually wrought by the Holy Spirit through the co-operation of the human spirit after the latter has been sanctified and become permanently occupied by the Former. Now the mind having been captured and all of its faculties subordinated to the reign of Christ, *i. e.*, every stronghold now in the possession of the King of kings, then this grand conquest reaches the body, literally capturing every member and bringing all into sweet and harmonious conservatism to the will of God.

6. “*And being ready to avenge every disobedience when your obedience shall have been completed.*” *i. e.*, when the Divine obedience shall have reached not only your spirit in entire sanctification, but passed on into the great dominion of mentality, bringing all your intellectual faculties, judgment, memory and sensibility into beautiful, harmonious conservatism with the Divine administration established in the domain of spirituality and the empire of mentality, then, reaching down, literally capturing your animal body and interpenetrating the one thousand nerves and five hundred muscles and all the members, so tuning up this harp of a thousand strings that none but Jesus can play on it, thus forever spoiling it for the world and the devil; then, instead of listening to the siren song of the tempter, you simply walk out a gigantic warrior, armed with full panoply and ready to attack and smash the very conception of disobedience on the faintest presentation of the enemy.

7. “*Whether do you look at things according to appearance?*” In that case those big, fine looking preachers would floor poor, little, old, weak-eyed Paul every time. The same is true to-day. The world is cheated and gulled by good looks. Did you ever see a fine-looking preacher who amounted to a picayune? I have preached from ocean to ocean, from the Gulf to the Lakes, and found this principle everywhere verified. As a rule, it is the shabby-looking men and women that put the devil to rout, while it is our great work to fight him off from the good-looking people. “If any one has confidence to himself that he belongs to Christ, let him reckon this again from himself, that as he is of Christ, so are we.” Most important is this constant recognition that God’s people are a unit, and hence the folly and inconsistency of adverse criticism. Diversity is the glory of God’s kingdom. He has made no two things alike. If some of His saints are to you most repellent in speech and manner, remember that God has a great work for them to do for which they would be utterly incompetent if they were like

you. Hence you ought to rejoice in this infinitesimal dissimilitude. In the Holiness Movement we have all denominations, all theologies, all races, colors and nationalities. This is a glorious adaptation to the work of God's holy people in all lands. We ought to rejoice over it and give God the glory, and not waste time and opportunity in criticism. So rest assured that will be attended to without you, for it is the devil's job, and he never neglects his business. Then please rest easy about all of the Lord's oddities, for He has use for them.

8. *“For if we were to boast somewhat more abundantly concerning our power which the Lord gave us for edification, and not for your destruction, I shall not be put to shame.”* The grand end in view throughout the Bible is edification, *i. e.*, the building up of God's kingdom. Hence we should always pray with that grand end in view. This is an argument for entire sanctification, without which preachers and people in all ages have enthusiastically rushed forth to the literal destruction of God's Church in their glowing enthusiasm to build it up, such is the fond hallucination of Satan.

9. *“In order that I may not seem as it were to terrify you by my letters.”* While his writings were exceedingly bold and utterly uncompromising on all lines of truth and righteousness, he wants them to know that the grand end is not destruction, but edification.

10. *“Because they say, Truly his letters are weighty and powerful, but the presence of his body is weak and his speech contemptible,”* *i. e.*, they charged him with writing, when at a distance and the great sea intervening, like a mighty man with tremendous authority, but when he came among them they were surprised to see a little, ugly, untidy, meanly dressed, shabby-looking man. Then his speech, so plain, straight, hard, rough and uncompromising, contrasted vividly with the studied oratory and beautiful and flowery rhetoric of his adversaries, it put them in quite a dilemma. While no photographs or statues of our Savior or any of His apostles have come down to us, in case of Paul and Barnabas we actually have an exception. When they concluded they were gods at Lystra and proceeded to worship them, they called Barnabas, Jupiter, and Paul, Mercury. This gives us a clear testimony as to the physique of these two noted apostles. When I was at Athens I saw the marble statues of many Grecian gods, having survived the wreck of two thousand years. I saw the marble temples of Jupiter and others still standing. Besides, we have been looking at the pictures of the statues of these Grecian gods all our lives. Jupiter to them was the supreme god of Heaven and earth, enthroned upon the highest pinnacle of Olympus, giving law to the universe. Hence his statue and all of his pictures represent him as a large, fine-looking man. Consequently we may rest assured that Barnabas was a big preacher in more ways than one, and possessing a commanding physique. Now, what do we know about Paul? I am happy to say that we have here very clear information qualifying

us to answer this question. The very fact that they thought Paul was Mercury is demonstrative proof that he was like him in speech, manner and appearance. Mercury was the Grecian god of eloquence, who inspired all the orators and gave the poets their immortal songs. His statue represents him as a little, ugly, hump-shouldered man with a head twice as large as the proportion of his body, a sharp, prominent face, anything but handsome. Hence we have from this incidental historic notice positive information corroborating this verse, which certainly speaks for itself. As my books have gone before me into many lands, I now meet no strangers, but am hailed everywhere by people who feel that they are acquainted with me by reading my writings, yet I find them on all hands on meeting me expressing general surprise, and observing, "Why, we expected to see a large, fine-looking man, with a bald head and snowy white beard," thus ever reminding me of the criticism on the physique of the world's greatest apostle. [Pardon the apparent comparison, as I am certainly unworthy to black his shoes. I ran into it inadvertently, simply pursuing matters of fact. God grant me at least a participation in the enviable humility of our hero.]

11. *"Let such an one consider this, that such as we are through our letters, being absent, such also are we in work, being present."* Paul here makes no reply to their scathing criticism on his person and speech, but assures them that they may depend on it that he will carry out the severity of his doctrine and discipline to the letter. That is a matter in which there can be no flicker.

CHRIST OUR ONLY PARAGON

12-16. In these verses the apostle gives us a beautiful, clear and positive disquisition exposing the folly and inconsistency of those who compare themselves to one another, and follow human exemplars, which, of course, was true of his critics, otherwise there would be simply no force in their criticism; while Christ Himself is the only paragon for us all to emulate, the folly of following a fallible example arises from the ostensible fact that when your paragon breaks down, if you follow on you will fall too, and the devil get you. While descending Kentucky River on a steamboat, I suddenly recognize that we are all standing still. I look around, and see that we are in a dam and have run into the lock, where we must wait till the water passes out of the dam, letting us down to the level of the river below. While we actually sank down perpendicularly twenty feet, no one was conscious of it, because the boat and everything we saw around us sank with us. I use that as an illustration of the apostasy so common and fatal in our churches. They are utterly unconscious of it, because they all go down together and they are looking at one another. Responsive to the pastoral call, I went to a country church to make a revival effort. Pursuant to the clear illumination shed on the people through that gift of the Holy Ghost denominated discernment of spirits, very copiously conferred on me in that important crisis, I soon saw that Satan had locked them all, pastor and

people, in carnal security, and was easing them down to Hell. Having no saint on the ground to whom I could say a word, I remarked to my boy preacher, who by this time had clear light on the situation: "Joe, you see the devil has this whole affair in his dark grip; our only hope is in fasting and prayer." "That's so, Brother Godbey; and we ill go at it." So, leaving off eating altogether, we would spend a night with some of the members, go away to the church without breakfast, and stay all day, spending the intervals of service in writing and reading the Word of the Lord, and agonizing constantly. Two or three days have thus come and gone, meanwhile we are fighting the devil like a dog in a hornet's nest.

Responsive to an appointment to get wood, a lot of the brethren arrive in the afternoon about two hours by the sun, and find us in the house. They inquire, "We want to know where you preachers are eating?" A brother observes, "You stayed at my house last night, but didn't eat anything;" and another, "You stayed at my house night before last, and didn't eat anything, and we can't hear where you've eaten anything in the last three days." [Out in the country where there was no market.] Then I divulged the secret: "We find the de, all went down together, unconscious of the change because they were all looking at one another. Many a time you think the car is running when it is standing still, but you see another train running by which you think is standing still. You see people all around you going to Hell so much faster than you are that the contrast makes you think that you are going to Heaven, while the matter of fact is, you are going to Hell too, but with a little slower speed. I know quite a number of great preachers who for years stood at the front of the church in a back-slidden state, finally sinking into a state of debauchery, giving notoriety to what they had been many years preceding, and some of us reading them like books. Millions of people are sweeping into Hell following human exemplars. One of the greatest arguments in favor of entire sanctification is the glorious fact that it saves us from human leadership, which is always fraught with eminent peril, liable to ruin us world without end, as has been proven in millions of cases. There is no apology for following a fallible man, and, as Paul here says, "comparing themselves to themselves, and measuring themselves by themselves, they are not wise." The infallible Christ is our only Paragon. The whole Bible is His biography. Hence we are left without excuse. With the help of the infallible Holy Spirit, lighting up the blessed Bible, our infallible way-bill from earth to Heaven, we are all left without excuse. If you are not sanctified wholly, your eye is looking around for a human leader. Beware! follow no human being, but Jesus only. In that case, look out! You will have conflict with human authorities who are determined that we shall follow. When they are in harmony with God and His Word, of course there is no room for disharmony, since we all go along together hand in hand, with our eye on Jesus and His hand on us. But the world is filled with carnal ecclesiastical leaders who fight sanctification with desertion from the simple fact that it takes the people out of their hands. This is the reason why fallen ecclesiasticisms have done their best in all

ages to kill all the people who will not obey them. This is the reason why they brutally murdered Jesus and multiplied millions of His followers. If they had it in their power, they would exterminate from the earth the religious people who refuse to follow them. For this reason the irrepressible conflict between carnality and spirituality is bound to continue till Satan is taken out of the world, as it is simply his usurpation of the Lord's right to rule His people. He is the god of this age (ch. 4:4), and determined that Jesus shall have nothing. Hence, when we get to where we can no longer be subjugated by his ecclesiastical autocrats, his plan has always been our extermination, as he has determined that none shall live in this world who do not submit to his reign.

17. *“He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*

18. *“For he that commendeth himself is not a proved, but whom the Lord commendeth.”* Hence we see the folly of following human leaders simply because they commend us as they commend themselves; but all this commendation amounts to nothing. If you can not bear the test of God's Word, Spirit and Providence, human commendation is of no avail. Indeed, all these great human authorities who are so grandiloquent in your commendation because you please them, can never help you an iota in the Judgment Day. Then they will have more than they can do to help themselves, and will leave you to paddle your own canoe. Therefore you had better attend to this matter now while you have opportunity, and throw away the folly of comparing yourselves to one another, and see whether you are like Jesus, in your character, life, words and ways.

CHAPTER 11

THE BRIDE-HOOD OF CHRIST

1. *“Would that you would bear with me a little in my folly, but indeed you do bear with me.”* He here assumes quite an apologetic attitude, by which he excuses himself for saying so much to human observation in self-defense, from the simple fact that their own spiritual interest is deeply involved, and he fears lest they may backslide. Of course, it is folly for a man to brag on himself, as no one but a fool will do it. Still, he is necessarily involved in this very dilemma in order to tell them the mighty works of God through his humble instrumentality, that they may receive help thereby. For the same reason sanctified people are everywhere criticized and calumniated with charges of egotism because we are always telling the mighty works of God in our behalf and through our humble instrumentality, which to carnal people looks like egotism, and we can not help it. Our consecration takes in our resignation to be misunderstood, misjudged and persecuted for the simple discharge of our duty to God, this being inevitable because it is utterly impossible for the carnal to discern the spiritual; meanwhile the spiritual look through the carnal and read them like I read this Greek (⁴⁰¹⁴ 1 Corinthians 2:14, 15).

2. *“For I am zealous over you with a zeal of God.”* Justified people have a zeal for God, but sanctified people the very zeal of God, *i.e.*, the zeal of Christ Himself, who is enthroned and reigning in our hearts, thus imparting to us His own zeal. The word here is better translated “jealousy,” because it is used in connection with the matrimonial relation of Christ and His Bride, representing Him as uncompromisingly jealous of all other lovers. Hence, if you would be His Bride, you must forever discard all earthly lovers, because He is jealous with the very jealousy of God. *“For I betrothed you to one husband, to present you to Christ a chaste virgin.”* The betrothal takes place in conversion, when you solemnly vow to let all others go and to become the property of the Heavenly Bridegroom alone. In sanctification the Holy Ghost reveals the glorified spiritual Christ to your spirit, and officiates in the celebration of your matrimonial alliance, forever taking you out of the hands of all earthly lovers. Like Ulysses, who, after an absence of twenty years, returned to his palatial home in the kingdom of Ithaca, and slew in a hand-to-hand combat all the suitors who had been the torment of his beautiful, chaste and virtuous queen during his long absence, so in ‘sanctification the Omnipotent Bridegroom slays all the lovers who have lingered about and tormented you during the intervals of His absence peculiar to the regenerated experience, then entering into holy wedlock with you. This is a purely spiritual transaction, and the happy prelude of the still more glorious ovation when you respond to the archangel’s trump, rise in

the first resurrection to meet your descending Lord, or, if happily He shall come before you evacuate this tenement, then you will be

“changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye”
(~~1~~ 1 Corinthians 15:52),

and

“caught up to meet the Lord in the air,
and thus to be forever with the Lord”
(~~5~~ 1 Thessalonians 4:16).

At that time this glorious presentation will take place when, soul and body reunited, transfigured and glorified, you shall be presented by the Holy Ghost to your descending Bridegroom, to whom you have been faithful and true during His long absence. And in the festal halls of the New Jerusalem, in the presence of multiplied millions of unfallen intelligence's from millions of immortal worlds, the grand and final solemnization of your sanctified nuptials will take place in the presence of your Heavenly Father.

3. *“But I fear, lest perhaps, as the serpent beguiled Eve with his versatility, your thoughts may be corrupted from the purity and chastity which are toward Christ.”* Satan is always on hand, as in the case of the original temptation, doing his utmost to corrupt the pure heart and alienate it from the simplicity, purity and chastity characteristic of our relation to Christ as our only Husband, Lord and King, invested with the sole right to our affections, sensibilities, intellect, mind, heart, will and spirit.

4. *“For indeed if one coming preach another Jesus, whom you did not preach, or you receive another spirit, which you did not receive, or another gospel, which you did not receive, well do you bear with me.”* In that case they would better bear with him, because they are already reduced and up-tripped by the devil, dragging down to a backslider's Hell. Hence in that case they would do well to bear with him, as they are in imminent peril of eternal ruin. We see here the appalling danger of all novelties in religion. God's salvation was the same in the days of Abel, and never can change. Hence everything new in religion is false. It is all new to you ill you get it; yet it has been a matter of fact and of revelation from the beginning. So, beware of all novelties. They are tricks of the devil to lasso your soul and drag you into Hell. In every case be sure that it is in the plain and unmistakable Word of God.

5. *“For I reckon that in no respect do I fall short of the greatest apostles;”* i.e., Peter, James and John are perhaps all of the original Twelve in contradistinction to the apostles who had been called since the ascension of our Lord. Peter, the venerable senior of the original Twelve, had been there and preached. Consequently they were exposed to the temptation presented by Paul's enemies who repudiated his apostolic authority, thus minifying

and, depreciating his work simply because he was not one of the original Twelve. Of course, Peter, who was always in perfect harmony with Paul, had never done this.

6. *“If indeed rude in speech, but not in knowledge; but in everything we making manifest unto you among all.”* We see here, using the plural participle, he includes with it Timothy, Titus, and other comrades in the gospel. It would seem contradictory for Paul to say that he was rude in speech, when he actually had more learning than all the balance *en masse*. While this was true — as you know — he prudentially discarded all the restrictions of literature, science and rhetoric, that he might enjoy the perfect freedom of the Holy Ghost and come down to the comprehension of those uncouth, illiterate people. While his writings are the most profound in the annals of the world, we are fully assured that in his preaching he made it a specialty to come down to the comprehension of the most ignorant, illiterate and uncouth. Hence his preaching was pre-eminently characteristic of plainness and simplicity. A liberal education qualifies a person to be plainer, more simple and more easily understood than any one else. In the Providence of God I received a classical education, which was a great impediment in the way of the ministerial efficiency till the Lord baptized me with the Holy Ghost and fire, burning up all my grandiloquent, studied sermons, which, while they pleased the people, overshot them till they got almost nothing out of them. I studied with diligence, and thought I was reaching just right, the people complimenting me with great congregations and extravagant eulogies. Sanctification made me a flaming revivalist. I had great revivals everywhere I went, even going out frequently into destitute places, where I had not a member to hold up my hands. The rough, ignorant and uncouth, attracted by novelty and curiosity, poured out to my meetings, invariably getting struck with an awful conviction, followed by a powerful conversion. I met the clamor on all sides that they never had heard a preacher so easily understood. It was because I laid all my education under contribution to simplify my message to the ignorant, coming down where the illiterate and uncouth, and even the idiotic, could not keep from understanding me. This was the secret of Paul’s wonderful success. He laid his vast learning on God’s altar, utilizing it in the way of simplicity and perspicuity; so plain that the most ignorant were bound to understand it, and at the same time so charged with Holy Ghost dynamite that it actually blew up everybody. When learning is not sanctified by the Holy Ghost, as a rule it is impedimental to gospel efficiency; but when well sanctified, it becomes a powerful auxiliary, as in Paul’s case, qualifying us to so simplify Divine truth that the most idiotic can not fail to understand us. Paul here says that he was rude in speech (and really the original is “an idiot in speech,” because an idiot has no more sense than just to say what is in his mind, precisely as it is). Hence he, regardless of human etiquette or any conceivable embargo, just opened his mouth and knocked center out every time. But while he spoke in this plain, straight and uncouth style letting

himself down to the comprehension of the darkest rabble in all slumdom, he notifies us that he was all right in “knowledge,” that wonderful gift of; the Holy Ghost, shedding glorious illumination on the precious Word, and thus adding to the awful intensity of his plain, rough, straight, convincing, knock-down exhortations to the unconverted.

7, 8. He now proceeds to remind them of his self-support by tent-making while preaching to them, and certifies that he was burdensome to none of them, because the brethren came from his old churches up in Macedonia and brought him supplies.

10, 11. He proceeds to certify that no one can divest him of the glory accruing to him because he preached the gospel to them gratuitously when he had a right to their support, recognizing that he deserved no credit for preaching the gospel, since God had laid it on him as a duty which he dare not ignore without forfeiting his own salvation. But as God did not require him to support himself meanwhile, he certainly deserves credit for his own temporal support while he preached to them.

12. *“But that which I do, I will also continue to do, in order that I may cut off occasion from those who wish occasion in order that whatsoever they boast they may be even as we.”* By preaching the gospel to them gratuitously as he had done, of course he cut off the possibility of an allegation which his enemies might have brought against him, *i. e.*, that he labored for temporal emolument. This, perhaps, some of them ignorantly had done, but, of course, were unable to sustain the allegation.

THE DEVIL’S PREACHERS

13. *“For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.”* This verse confirms the conclusion that the apostolic office was not confined to the Twelve, because not only were James the Third, Jude, Barnabas, Paul, Apollos and Matthias *bona fide* apostles besides the original Twelve, but the very fact that we see here a lot of counterfeits claiming to be the apostles of Christ, is confirmatory proof that others besides the original Twelve were recognized as apostles; because it is impossible for us to conclude that Paul here makes allusion to any of the original Twelve, or of the others above mentioned, who had preached at Corinth with his full approval and appreciation. The conclusion is inevitable that a lot of counterfeits were actually claiming to be the apostles of Christ, whose claim could have received no popular plausibility if it had been understood that the number was restricted to twelve. History is still repeating itself. All ages have been cursed with counterfeit apostles, especially in the capacity of party leaders which really verify the definition of apostle, *i. e.*, “one that enters a new field, or makes a new departure.” These parties seeking the fleece instead of the flock have figured

conspicuously in all the bygone ages, and to this day, leading the blind awfully to the confusion of the unspiritual.

14. *“For it is no wonder, for Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.”* The devil was the great archangel Lucifer in Heaven before he fell (^{2SAU2}Isaiah 14:12). As the god of this world, he is this day doing wonderful execution in the capacity of an angel of light, thus passing himself for God, deceiving preachers and people in every land. As he long lived an angel in Heaven, he well understands how to play the angel. Those he can not devour as a roaring lion through the vulgar vices, he captures in the capacity of an angel of light, deceiving them with the delusion that he is God, or a glorified angel, thus leading them on through the worldly churches till he can dump them into Hell.

15. *“Then no wonder if indeed his ministers transform themselves as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works.”* God calls and sends His own ministers. We have multitudes of preachers standing high in metropolitan pulpits who even deny that there is any such a thing as a Divine call, and, of course, do not claim to have any themselves. You see it follows as a logical sequence, if God does not call and send them, they must call and send themselves, *i.e.*, thus *“transforming themselves as the ministers of righteousness,”* while they are really wolves in sheep’s clothing, Satan’s preachers sent forth by him for the delusion and damnation of souls. From the simple fact that they are personally ignorant of God’s saving grace, judging others by themselves, they think they are a true sample of Christianity. They are deceived by the devil, so that they think they are right, and in all probability will never know the difference till the devils come after them to take them to Hell, while they are looking for the angels to come and take them to Heaven. William Bramwell, a bright and loving contemporary of John Wesley, had become enamored of one of these sleek, nice, high-toned doctors of divinity occupying a city pulpit, and so carried away that in the honesty of his heart he was asking the Lord to make him such a preacher as this man whom he had taken for his paragon while studying for the ministry in the Episcopal Church. One bright summer day, having eaten dinner, he is lying in a hammock under a green tree, reading a good book. Falling asleep, he is awakened by the frightful visage and awful scream of that favorite preacher, exclaiming: “I am in Hell.” Awakened by the vision, he leaps from the hammock, and, facing the sidewalk, sees a man passing by, who exclaims: “Oh! Dr. dropped dead in his study a few minutes ago.” Bramwell took alarm, went to hear the Methodists, got converted and wonderfully sanctified, and became a hero in the Wesleyan Holiness Movement. These Scriptures are terrifically ominous of the awful doom awaiting Satan’s preachers, whose name is legion, and they are beneath every sky. Reader, pray for them, and be sure that they do not catch you.

PAUL'S WONDERFUL ADVENTURES

17. "*What I say I do not say according to the Lord, but as folly in this confidence of boasting.*" As none but fools brag on themselves and in the ears of the carnal, this sounds just that way; consequently, in harmony with the *ipse dixit* of the world, he pronounces it folly. Rest assured he infinitely got away with all of his inimical critics, as none of them can hold a light to him on this line, and I trow he has never had an equal.

18. "*Since many boast according to the flesh, I will boast so.*"

19. "*For cheerfully do you, being wise, bear with fools: [He is burning them with awful irony.]*"

20. "*For you bear with him if any one brings you into slavery.*" In that day human slavery was exceedingly common, and they could not help themselves, hence in that case they must bear with the kidnaper. "*If any one devours you,*" *i.e.*, financially, reputationally and otherwise, as there are many cases inevitable along this line. "*If any one catches you,*" as with a lasso thrown over you unawares, which is common now on the Mexican border. "If any one uplifts himself against you." Of course, in that case you can not help yourself, and you have to bear it the best you can. "*If any one smites you on the face.*" This was the climax of insult, and common in their treatment of the Christians in the apostolic age. Hence there is a liability that you as Christians may have to bear all these things.

21. "*I speak by way of disparagement, as that we were weak.*" In that age of terrible misrule and persecution, there was a liability of all these things under circumstances when they were actually inevitable. "*But in whatsoever any one is bold (I speak in folly), I am bold also.*" Truly he is prepared to compete with his adversaries and critics on all lines indiscriminately.

22. "*Are they Hebrews? I am also. Are they Israelites? I am also. Are they the seed of Abraham? I am also.*" These were all grand commendations in the apostolic age, the Jews from time immemorial being recognized as the elect of God and the Gentiles reprobated. His competitors were Jewish preachers claiming to be converted to Christianity, and, like thousands in all ages, having nothing but the outward form, destitute of the experimental reality.

23. "*Are they the ministers of Christ?*" They certainly claim to be such, though, like their successors, their claim was spurious. "*(I speak as a madman.) I am more.*" As the ministry of Christ is the very climax of human achievement, the next step to Heaven, he recognizes the fact that the person claiming to be more is beside himself. Yet there is an important sense in which he is more than the normal ministry. He goes on now briefly to give experiences which are unquestionably abnormal even to the work of the ministry, *i.e.*, in every way extraordinary and superlatively beyond the

requirements of a *bona fide* gospel ministry. “*In labors more abundantly.*” Well could he sustain this claim. He took Asia and Europe for his field of labor in that day when they had no public conveyances, and every country was infested with robbers and all sorts of difficulties. “*In prisons more abundantly.*” No man could meet him at Corinth who had endured so many imprisonment’s. We have as yet (for this was before his arrest at Jerusalem) only the one case recorded, *i. e.*, at Philippi, illustrating what a meager and fragmentary sketch we have of his thrilling adventures in the gospel of Christ. Of course, in that age of universal and barbarous hostility, imprisonment was an exceedingly frequent occurrence. “In stripes more exceedingly, in deaths often.” He narrowly escaped death at Damascus (⁴⁴²³Acts 19:23); at Antioch in Pisidia (⁴⁴³¹13:50); at Iconium (⁴⁴⁴⁵14:5, 6); at Lystra (ver. 19); at Philippi (16); at Thessalonica (⁴⁴⁷⁵17:5); at Berea (ver. 13), and doubtless many others of which we know not. Hence well it may be said that he was in deaths often. After this testimony (A.D. 57) came his wonderful and perilous adventures at Jerusalem and Cesarea, and in the awful shipwreck which followed; then his perils at Rome and the wonderful ordeals through which he passed, moving with the tread of a conqueror and the triumph of a hero till he laid down his head on Nero’s block.

24. “*Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.*” We have no account of the Jews whipping him. This illustrates how scant and fragmentary is the inspired biography of Paul. The reason why they administered only thirty-nine lashes was because the law said forty, and the Rabbis taught them that it was awfully criminal to hit even a stroke which the victim did not deserve, and involved them in a very grave responsibility. Hence, to make sure, they made it a rule to go on with the flagellation till they counted thirty-nine, and stop minus one for good count, leaving the doubt in the victim’s favor. As Paul was going around, these five instances of cruel floggings by the Jews take place without counting the matter worthy of description.

25. “*Three times was I beaten with rods.*” This was the Roman punishment, of which we have but one mention, 1:; at Philippi (⁴⁴⁰¹Acts 16). That was an awful punishment, where the Roman lectors mercilessly beat the victim with great cruel hickories, cutting to the bone, and making the blood flow. “*Once was I stoned;*” at Lystra (⁴⁴⁴⁹Acts 14:19). “*Thrice was I shipwrecked, a day and a night I spent in the deep,*” floating about on a wreck. We have no account of any of these wrecks, as the notable case at Melita had not yet occurred.

26. “*In journeyings often.*” This was his third trip to Europe, whereas he had repeatedly taken great peregrinations throughout Asia, and was just now in from a tour of three years through Palestine, Syria and many other countries. “*In perils of rivers,*” which occurred in crossing or fording, which, in that day, was very perilous; and what is even now more fraught with danger than crossing swift, flooded, quicksand, mountain torrents?

“In perils of robbers.” Many of the countries through which they traveled were at that time awfully infested with robbers. It is believed the robbers in Pamphylia scared off John Mark when he left Paul and Barnabas in their first evangelistic tour and returned to Jerusalem. When I was in that country I had to hire an armed escort along some of the roads which Paul traveled, to keep the robbers off of me. Of course, Paul had not much for them to get, but the great trouble is, they actually take everything you have and probably kill you. *“In perils from my kindred,”* they not always being the direct agents, but in countless instances stirring up the rabble to mob them. *“In perils from the Gentiles,”* e.g., at Damascus. As a rule, the Gentiles were more friendly than the Jews, but sometimes they persecuted him directly and frequently when instigated by the Jews. *“In perils in the city,”* e.g., Damascus, Philippi and Corinth. *“In perils in the desert.”* This word includes uninhabited regions generally. Doubtless they passed many awful dangers in the lonely wilderness. *“In perils by sea.”* In the absence of the steam-engine and mariner compass, most of their sailing was near the shore, which is always fraught with imminent danger of wreckage. *“In perils among false brethren.”* When William Bramwell was preaching in an English city, a band of desperadoes plotted to kill him, putting one of their number in a bed to play sick. Two others go and ask Bramwell to come to pray for the sick, passing themselves for Christian brethren. On arrival they lock the door, notifying him that his time has come; that they are going to kill him. “Well,” says the preacher, “will you not let me pray once before you kill me?” To this they consent. So he falls on his face, and prays: “O God, if my work is done, I am ready to go; if it is not done, put thy hand on these men and save my life till I can finish my work.” A groan is heard in the bed. They go to it and find the possum dead. The balance are seized with affright and gladly escort him back where they got him.

27. *“In labor and weariness and watchings often.”* Having no place to lodge, he had to stay up all night. *“In hunger and thirst, and by fastings frequently.”* In his long and perilous journeys frequently there was nothing accessible, and doubtless much more frequently no money to pay for it. Hence they suffered ever and anon. *“In cold and in nakedness.”* They had no factories, hence clothing was very scarce and costly. Besides, many times the cruel mobs, who thrashed him so frequently, took his clothes off and left him to freeze. Doubtless his suffering from the want of sufficient clothing was frequent and immense.

28. *“And besides these things, that which devolves on me daily, the care of all the churches.”* Hundreds of churches (as a rule, little Holiness bands) had sprung up throughout Syria, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Cilicia, Mysia, Phoenicia, and other Asiatic countries, and Macedonia and Achaia in Europe, under his leadership. Though he had many efficient and true helpers, yet the paternity, as in the case of Corinth, devolved on him.

29. “*Who is weak, and I am not weak?*” Oh, how he sympathizes with all of his spiritual children. If he can only squeeze these poor, weak ones through the pearly gates, they will be all right. “*Who is stumbled, and I not burn?*” On the one side was the Jewish Church, plunging headlong into hopeless apostasy by rejecting their own Christ, and doing their utmost to drag all of his Jewish converts with them. On the other hand were the Gentile idolatry, gross sensuality, low debauchery and the allurements of the Greek philosophy appealing to the cultured class, and all combined doing their utmost to drag away every Gentile convert; alluring on the one side and persecuting them on the other, thus combining the powers of earth and Hell to pull all of his churches to pieces and ruin them world without end. Besides all this, Satan had already raised up an army of counterfeit Christians who went on his track and did their utmost to propagate dangerous and damnable heresies, even going so far as to impeach his apostolic authority and impugn his motives, thus leading off convert after them.

PAUL’S INFIRMITIES

Justification saves us from guilt, sanctification from depravity, and glorification from infirmities. These infirmities are the collateral effects of the Fall, reaching the soul through the media of the mind and body, which are not entirely restored till this mortal puts on immortality. As Wesley says: “While in these bodies, we can only think, speak and act through organs of clay.” These infirmities are sins of ignorance, which troop after us so long as we remain in this probation, involving us in the constant liability of doing wrong, aiming to do right, *i. e.*, through failures of memory, errors of judgment, slowness of apprehension, feebleness of vision and general failure of bodily organs. The cities of refuge in the old dispensation beautifully emblemize the necessity of the atonement in the expiation of these infirmities, as well as other sins. Here is the person killing another accidentally. Of course, he is not guilty of murder in any sense, neither is he at all responsible, as he could not help the accident from happening. Yet he was unfortunately instrumental in killing the man and, if he does not fly quickly and with all his might to the city of refuge, the avenger of blood will overtake and kill him. It was a matter of fact that the avenger of blood ran after and did his best to overtake him. This avenger of blood is the law, which says: “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” The City of Refuge is Christ, and the man who commits an accidental or unknown sin is the fugitive. Hence these infirmities, or accidental, unknown sins, are utterly incompetent to endure the severities of God’s judgments. Without the vicarious atonement, they would send us to Hell. So we must constantly fly to Christ for them, and as they are liable to occur ever and anon when we know not (hence they are truly sins of ignorance), therefore his absolutely necessary for us all to move at once into the City of Refuge and live there. The law specified that the fugitive should fly to the city of refuge and live

there till the death of the high priest. As our Great High Priest never dies, therefore we are to fly quickly lest the avenger of blood overtakes us, and not only take refuge in the City, but live there forever, as our High Priest lives forever. But the man was still liable to commit sins of ignorance while living in the city of refuge, but that case insured from trouble, as the avenger of blood was not allowed to come in at the gate. So, after we are in Christ, secure, and sanctified wholly, and living in Him as the fugitive safe from the bloody avenger in the city of refuge, we are never again disturbed and chased by the avenger of blood, as we know he can not come in. So we shout night and day, amid all of our mistakes and blunders. Methinks my Lord in signal mercy keeps His hand over the dark group of infirmities hiding them from my spiritual insight ever and anon lest I might retrospect too much and give way to melancholy. Bright, elastic and buoyant, I am more efficient in His service. Now remember that our infirmities are included in the “all things” which “work together for good to them that love God.” We can have no adequate apprehension of the glory which God in His mysterious Providence brings out of our infirmities.

30. *“If it behooveth me to boast, I will boast of those things appertaining to my infirmity.*

31. *“The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forevermore, knows that I lie not.”* He makes this positive and strong affirmation doubtless because of the popular incredibility of the wonderful events he is going to write.

32. *“In Damascus, Areta”* (the governor of the king, *i. e.*, who was stationed there by the Arabian king to rule the city as his subordinate) “was keeping the city of the Damascenes, wishing to arrest me.

33. *“And through a window in a basket I was let down through the walls, and escaped from his hands.”* (⁴¹²⁵Acts 9:25.) This was doubtless a rope basket prepared for the emergency, as we see about ships. This occurred after his return from Arabia, where he was sanctified, and was certainly a miraculous deliverance, as the whole city was under guard about all the gates around the wall purposely to secure his capture.

CHAPTER 12

PAUL'S VISIONS AND REVELATIONS

1. *“Indeed it is not profitable to me to boast.”* He indulges in it because constrained by his adversaries to defend his claims to the apostleship, and thus vindicate the Divine authenticity of his ministry. “I will come to Visions and revelations of the Lord.
2. *“I knew a man in Christ fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I know not; or out of the body, I know not, God knoweth): such an one having been caught up to the third Heaven.”* In Oriental phraseology the atmosphere enveloping the globe is the first heaven; the astronomical worlds — sun, moon and stars — the second, and the home of the glorified saints and angels, the third. Hence we see that this man was caught up to Heaven proper, as understood in common parlance.
4. *“He was caught up into Paradise, and heard unutterable words, which it is impossible for a man to speak.”* *i. e.*, those words were unutterable by mortals, consequently he was incompetent to repeat them, and as the Greek says, *“it was impossible for a man to speak them.”* The case is very clear that Paul himself was the man caught up to the third Heaven, and the time of its occurrence was evidently when they stoned him at Lystra in Pisidia, during his first great evangelistic tour with Barnabas. As the writing was A.D. 57, fourteen years would drop back to A.D. 43, which would just about suit the chronology, as he was converted about 35, and spent three years in Arabia and at Damascus, equal to 38. Then, returning to Jerusalem, he proceeded to preach in the Hellenistic synagogues, where Stephen had preached until he and others had persecuted him unto death. Hence, very appropriately going back on his old track, he was endeavoring with all his might to undo all the bad work of his mistaken ministerial life before he was converted. We know not how long he preached at Jerusalem till the opposition which had martyred Stephen four years previously became so rife against him that the brethren found it necessary to rescue him from their hands, leading him to Cesarea, and sending him off home to Tarsus, this occurring about A.D. 39 or 40. There the historic curtain falls, and we hear no more of him till Barnabas went after him and brought him to Antioch to Help in their work in that great Syrian metropolis. After a year they go off on that missionary tour to the Island of Cyprus, the home of Barnabas; returning back to the Continent, and evangelizing Pamphylia, they proceed into Bithynia, where he was stoned at Lystra. As the time he spent at Tarsus, when they sent him home, is unknown, and the location of this wonderful vision at Lystra only gives him two or three years to constitute that unknown period at Tarsus (which he doubtless used diligently to the glory of God, evangelizing Cilicia, Phrygia and Galatia, and doubtless at

that time founding churches in those countries), we may quite safely settle down on the Lystrian martyrdom as the epoch of this wonderful Heavenly vision. The solution becomes very simple. of course, it is more than probable that the cruel stoning actually killed him, his disembodied spirit going up to Heaven and there abiding, seeing scenes and hearing words indescribable in mortal phraseology. “Unlawful” in the KJV. is incorrect, “impossible” being the true rendering. There was no law forbidding him to tell on earth the things he saw and the utterances he heard in Heaven; but we must remember that all earthly languages are superlatively materialistic. This is the reason why the Bible abounds in material imagery, constituting a vast series of vehicles by which the unutterable realities of Heavenly truth are in a measure transmitted to us. Divest the Bible of this imagery, *i. e.*, types, symbols, emblems and illustrations, and we could not understand it. Heaven is a world of pure spirituality, utterly unencumbered with material organism of any kind. Hence the pure spiritual realities of Heavenly existence are incommunicable in the materialistic phraseology used in this mortal world. Therefore when we go to Heaven we will receive a new language, dropping the vast and cumbrous vocabulary of materialistic utterances which we have used in this life and adopting the pure and unadulterated spiritual phraseology of the angels and glorified saints.

5. *“In behalf of such an one I will boast, but I will not boast in behalf of myself, except in my infirmities.”* This sentence does not abnegate the identity of Paul with this man that went up to the third Heaven and there heard and saw those wonderful things, because he was sent back to reanimate his body and go on and finish his work. Hence there is a great difference between incarnate Paul and his disembodied spirit. You also see in these passages Paradise and the third Heaven used synonymously. This is in harmony with the uniform teaching of inspiration. Our Savior told the dying thief that he should meet Him in Paradise on the day of the crucifixion (⁴²³⁴Luke 23:43). He told the two Marys and Martha, on the resurrection morn, that He had not yet ascended up to His Father. Hence the Paradise of the thief was not Heaven properly so called, but that intermediate Elysium of the Old Testament saints designated “Abraham’s bosom” (⁴¹²⁷Luke 16:22). When our Savior expired on the cross, His human soul descended into Hades (⁴¹⁸⁹1 Peter 3:19; ⁴⁰⁴⁸Ephesians 4:8; ⁴⁴²³Acts 2:31); proclaimed His victory to the inmates of the Pandemonium; crossed that chasm, impassable to finite beings, intervening between the Hell of Dives and the Heaven of Lazarus; entered that intermediate Paradise, *i. e.*, “Abraham’s bosom”; met the thief true to His promise; enjoyed a glorious ovation through the oncoming Sabbath; abolished that intermediate Paradise, leading them all up with Him (⁴⁰⁴⁸Ephesians 4:10); received His body from the sepulcher on the third morning, all these inmates of the Old Testament Paradise accompanying Him the forty days, invisible because not having their bodies, and ascending with Him from Mt. Olivet up to Heaven (⁴³⁴¹Psalms 24). Hence the identity of Paradise and Heaven in Paul’s day. We

see in this last verse that Paul certifies that he will only glory in his infirmities, which have already been described.

6. *“For if I shall wish to boast, I will not be a fool: for I shall speak the truth.”* We can not properly denounce a man as a fool when he speaks the truth. The Greek word here translated “fool” is not *moros*, “a natural fool,” but *aphroon*, “a spiritual fool,” *i.e.*, one rejecting the light of the Holy Spirit, and consequently a fool, not simply in the estimation of mortals, but of the Heavenly intelligence’s. *“But I abstain lest some one may reckon unto me above what he sees me or hears from me.”* He does not want to be misapprehended nor overestimated. Lord, help us to do likewise, and see that we are not estimated above what we really are.

7. *“And in order that I may not be exalted by the abundant excess of revelations, a thorn in my flesh was given unto me, the messenger of Satan that it may buffet me, in order that I may not be exalted.”*

8. *“For this three times I called on the Lord, that it may depart from me.”*

9. *“And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee, for power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore I will most gladly rather boast in my infirmities, in order that the power of Christ may have its residence in me.”* It is flagrantly out of harmony with the context to conclude that this unrevealed and unknown trouble designated “the thorn in the flesh” was sin in any form or manifestation whatever.

(a) The thorn was not in his spirit, but in his flesh, *i.e.*, his mortal body, here used not antithetical to the Holy Spirit, but to his human spirit. Hence the thorn in the flesh was a bodily ailment of some sort.

(b) He here positively and unequivocally identifies it with his infirmities, which are neither actual nor original sin, but the weaknesses and failures and shortcomings appertaining to this life resultant from the effects of the Fall, reaching our spiritual being through the media of the body and mind, on whose organs we are dependent for our communication with this world. Hence all bodily and mental disabilities and failures properly come in here. I am satisfied that this thorn in the flesh was ocular feebleness, which was the most prominent infirmity in his life.

“For I testify unto you that, if possible, plucking out your eyes, you would have given them unto me” (Galatians 4:15)

If his eyes had been all right, they never would have thought of relieving him by giving him one of theirs. He was a double graduate, having graduated in the Greek colleges of Tarsus and the Hebrew universities of Jerusalem, thus having prematurely worn out his eyes. Besides, the wonderful glory radiating from the transfigured Jesus, who appeared to him on his way to Damascus, utterly eclipsed his mortal vision, wrapping

him in rayless midnight. God makes no mistakes. Paul had the self-will of a rhinoceros, fortified by the greatest intellectual power, educational achievement and official promotion. He thought he not only saw everything, but saw it just right. Consequently it was necessary to take from him every ray of his former light, grandeur and glory, dropping him down to the bottom of self-abasement and preparing him for his deep Arabian plunge into egotistical annihilation, thus sweeping away every vestige of the old carnal selfhood that had made him a champion of Satan's host. Though he became the recipient of Divine healing in the restoration of his eyesight through the ministry of Ananias, yet we have abundant reason to believe that ocular feebleness became his great physical disability till relieved at Nero's block. Of course, he asked God to take it away, and continued to ask until the negative verdict came, bearing the happy assurance, "My grace is sufficient for you." I am satisfied that God made this serious physical infirmity a great blessing to Paul, as you see he became, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, the revelator of more Scripture than any other man in the history of revealed truth. I became a good reader when six years old, on through my childhood and youth devouring books with enthusiasm, ploughing all day and reading by a brush light until midnight, spending the next day digesting and assimilating what I had read, as I walked behind the plough, and then going to our rural polemic society on Saturday night and astonishing the people by an off-hand speech of a solid hour, all wondering where I ever found out what I was telling them. A student twenty-one years in school ever and anon, I studied so assiduously that I went away from all my comrades. The result of thus excessively using my eyes, which seemed to me as strong as an eagle's, was that failure began at the age of twenty. During the six years following I studied through the entire collegiate course, with great difficulty and suffering. I then learned how to make my memory — naturally excellent — a substitute for eye power, which resulted in a wonderful development of that most invaluable faculty. Reading my lesson but once, I so committed it to memory that I could repeat it like a declamation, while my comrades, who had read it over a dozen times, were blundering over it. I had to commit it to memory because I could not give it much attention with my eyes. Aided by spectacles, I read much in several different languages, till ten years ago my eyes signally failed, not visually, but potentially. Oculists all told me they were worn out, and no remedy. Consequently I gave up all reading but the Greek Scriptures, the New Testament being more important than the Old, whose Hebrew I was very reluctant to surrender. To my unutterable surprise, God has put me to writing (not much with my own hand, as my eyes are too feeble, but dictating to an amanuensis). I see now the glory of God in the whole matter. I was such an inveterate reader that I would actually have spent my life devouring books if I had enjoyed continuously the eagle-eye power peculiar to my childhood. No one was ever so surprised as myself when I became a book-writer. As I could not read, I had opportunity to think and dictate to others. Homer, the

greatest poet the world has ever seen, the author of the twenty-four poetic books constituting the Iliad and twenty-four more in the Odyssey, which have charmed the world three thousand years, was blind. So was Milton, the brightest and the best of the English bards. God needed Paul to think, preach and dictate the truth to an amanuensis. If his eyes had qualified him to read, he would have expended much brain and nerve power in that way which he needed in the production of that profound original thought, illuminated and inspired by the Holy Ghost, which has eclipsed all the tall sons of Zion, bringing them low down at the feet of Jesus and Paul to study the profound and unsearchable truth of God revealed by the Holy Ghost. Hence I can see a good reason for withholding complete convalescence and invigoration of ocular power from Paul. When God answered him, "My grace is sufficient for thee," He gives as a reason, "For dynamite is made perfect in weakness," or, as the Greek says, "in the absence of strength." That is a patent fact. If you want real power to be illustrated, revealed and magnified, we are to have nothing in its way, but clear the field and give it full play. A giant who is stout enough to whip all the adversaries that can crowd into the ring does not want a lot of feeble folks in his way, even though they propose to help him. He wants the arena clear of all obstruction. Then he bids defiance to every foe who dares to enter. So human power is liable to get in the way of the Divine dynamite. "*Then most gladly will I rather boast in my infirmities, in order that the dynamite of Christ may have its residence in me.*" He is going out to fight the world, the flesh and the devil; so he wants the field perfectly clear, every obstruction removed so that the Omnipotent dynamite of Christ may just move in and have its abode in him.

10. "*Therefore I delight in infirmities.*" The word for infirmities here means utter destitution of strength so as to clear the way for the incoming of Divine power. "In insults." How many of us can say that we delight in insults? It was because Paul had perfect faith in God to make all of those insults and infirmities a means of grace to him and a blessing to others. Do you not know that you will get blessings in insults, rebuffs and abuses heaped on you by Satan's people which you could never receive without? Darkness shows us worlds of light we never saw by day. From the bottom of a deep well you can see the stars at noon-day. If you never receive an insult you will never have the happiness to know that your religion is competent to shout your way through the abuses, lies, calumny's, slanders and contumelies piled on you by the devil's people. John Wesley said: "The insults, rebuffs, abuses and disappointments we meet in this life are the greatest helps to a sanctified experience." "In necessities," *i. e.*, in destitution of the necessaries of life, requiring him to suffer in many ways for Christ's sake. The Stoic philosophers of ancient Greece taught that the true philosophy of a happy life consists in the greatest possible independence of the material world. Hence Diogenes, their celebrated leader, made it his chief aspiration to dispense with everything appertaining

to the material world which he could get along without, teaching his pupils that the more we are disencumbered the freer we are, the more independent and the happier. Hence, refusing to live in a house, he used a tub for his residence, which he rolled on wheels to the place in the city of Athens where he preferred to abide for the time. He had succeeded in reducing down his furniture to a plate to eat out of and a cup to use in drinking. On one occasion, when he saw a boy eating his vegetables out of a hollow bread crust, he threw away his plate, saying: "Boy, I thank you for teaching me a lesson in economy." On another occasion, when he saw a boy drinking water out of his hands, he cast away his cup, thanking him for another lesson in economy. When Alexander the Great, his school-mate, having visited him in his tub, said: "Now, my old friend Diogenes, I have conquered all the world and I am dispensing kingdoms in many different countries to my friends; what shall I give you?" The response was, Alexander, I can not think of any favor you can do me unless it will be just to stand aside and let the sun shine into my tub." Then when the great philosopher told the world's great conqueror that there were many other worlds besides this, it is said that the latter broke down in tears to think that he never could have but this one world. Oh, what a contrast the craving of the modern church after worldly things, with the great apostle, who said he delighted "in necessities," *i.e.*, destitution, in simply having nothing. "In persecutions." Reader, can you say that! you actually delight in persecutions? Multiplied thousands in the martyr ages by-gone, actually prayed for a martyr's crown, decidedly preferring to go out of the world in that way. I fear there are not many nowadays who can truly and candidly say: "I delight in persecutions." Lord, help us all into a radical Pauline experience, where all the antagonism of the world, the flesh and the devil will only be a source of delight to us. "In distresses." The Greek word, *stenochooria*, is from *stenos*, "narrow, tight," and *choora*, "place." Hence it means all sorts of tight places, troubles, trials, conflicts, in every conceivable way, difficulties indiscriminately. If the preachers were like Paul every one would want the poorest circuit or the work most encompassed and involved in difficulty, really the hardest fields of labor. That is really the true conception. If we are here for ease and comfort, "Ichabod" is already written on our escutcheon and life is a failure. The greater the difficulties, the grander the opportunities and the more illimitable the field for real efficiency, and the more auspicious the omens that you will wear a starry crown in the good time coming. From the time the Lord sanctified me thirty years ago, as the old brethren still surviving will certify you, I kept the constant petition before Conference for the hardest and most difficult fields of labor. Afterward I located, simply that I might take the world for my parish, as John Wesley said. "On behalf of Christ." So this is the reason why Paul delighted in infirmities, insults, necessities, persecutions and diseases, not that any sensible man would seek them for their own sake, but he rejoiced in them for Christ's sake. Lord, help us to do likewise. "For when I am with out strength then am I dynamite."

Evidently this was the secret of Paul's wonderful power and efficiency. He succeeded in learning how to keep self and the world out of the arena and sink away into God. I am an old revivalist. We always had to have a repetition of Gethsemane and Calvary before we could reach the triumphant resurrection and the glorious ascension. On arrival, finding all elated over the new evangelist and shouting over the revival already in sight, I knew that we had to get rid of great car-loads of human lumber and trash before we could see the glory of God. Soon my plain, hard, rough preaching and earnest crying to God would disgust them, so all their hopes would evanesce, and giving up all expectation of a revival, they would be very sorry they had called me, feeling it was a mistake of their lives. Then came the salient point in the campaign. Frequently at that epoch they would run me off, of course defeating the enterprise outright. When they bore with me in utter desperation, all blue as indigo, feeling that it was infinitely worse than a failure, they all got out of the way and I was out of the way, because they were all disgusted with me. When we reached that significant crisis, a shout always began in the deep interior of my heart, because I knew victory was at hand and we would all see the glory of God as no one had ever seen nor anticipated before. I never knew a failure; when all human resources and hope evanesced away and we reached the place of nothing but insults, destitution's, weakness, persecutions and tight places for Christ's sake, then the dynamite came and blew down the walls of Jericho, busted up the devil's kingdom, revealing the glory of God and the victories of Christ on all sides to the unutterable surprise of everybody, bearing all opposition before it and inundating the whole country with the glory of God. In many cases, where they all so fell out with me, I had no home, but stood for days and weeks alone with Jesus, preaching the truth fearlessly of men and devils, unearthing all the hidden things of darkness, exposing all Satan's refuges of lies, cutting every cable with the sword of the Spirit, after the power came and the tide swept over everything, they almost pulled me to pieces to take me to their homes, and I actually became the most popular man ever known in that country. To give you the simple history of the literal verifications of this Pauline scripture I have witnessed in my own ministry would fill a great volume. Depend upon it and adopt it as a maxim, never letting it slip: "When I am without strength then am I dynamite." Our resources, power and hope must evacuate the field before omnipotent grace can glorify God. Poor humanity must get out of the way before the power and glory of God can be revealed. The reason why we don't have revivals everywhere after the Pentecostal style is because we have too much power, too many resources and too much encouragement. You will never see the glory of God till all this gets out of the way.

11. *"I am become a fool; you compelled me."* His enemies, minifying his ministry, and even impeaching his apostolic authority, and thus seeking to destroy his ministerial influence, had compelled him thus to vindicate himself by giving this paradoxical testimony to the wonderful power of

God through his humble instrumentality. “*For I ought to have been commended by you.*” The emphasis here is on “you,” *i.e.*, that you should have done this commendation instead of me. “For I was not inferior to the very chief of the apostles, if indeed I am nothing.” Evidently the reference is here to the entire original Twelve, whose apostleship had never been called in question.

12. “*The signs of an apostle were wrought out among you in all patience, signs and wonders and mighty works.*” During the eighteen months he had preached among them, when God used him to found their church, great and mighty works were wrought; not only Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, but even Sosthenes, his successor and leader of the opposition, and many other Jews, had been gloriously converted; besides, great numbers of Gentiles, even Erastus, the chamberlain of the city, and quite a multitude, especially from the dismal hell-dens of debauchery and sensuality which cursed that emporium of idolatry and adultery, had been wonderfully saved and many of them powerfully sanctified. Finally the crowning glory of the mighty works wrought among them culminated in the mighty baptisms of the Holy Ghost, and His glorious endowment of many with the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, qualifying them to prophesy, speak with tongues, discern spirits and work miracles. As they were all young in their Christian experiences, the gospel being new and fresh among them and three years having rolled away since those wonderful meetings where God had miraculously blessed the labors of Paul, and now many other preachers having come and found a place in their minds and hearts, of course the trend of things was somewhat to blur and obliterate the memories of the olden times.

13. “*For what is that in which you are inferior to other churches but that I did not burden you? Grant unto me this injustice.*” Again he reminds them of his noble self-sacrifice in preaching unto them the gospel gratuitously.

14. “*Behold! this third time I am ready to come unto you, and I will not burden you.*” We have no account of his second visit to them. The presumption is it was very transient, probably occurring soon after his departure and before he got away from Europe and crossed the sea into Asia. “*For I do not seek yours, but you.*” This animadvert (critical remarks) severely on his adversaries, who in many cases had doubtless labored among them for the fleece more than for the flock. There is so little of this purely disinterested ministry in the church that preachers are not all discounted by the bold emphasis they lay on temporal support. It seems that they are past all shame on this subject. It is astounding to hear a preacher in the pulpit publicly speak of his salary, and boldly adopt measures to work it up. I could not stand anything of the kind. When the Lord ceases to feed me I will starve gladly for Christ’s sake. How many preachers now can candidly say to the people, “*I seek not yours, but you*”? Surely every one called and sent of God does feel and talk like Paul. My temporal life, since

the Lord sanctified me especially, has been by faith, like my spiritual. If a preacher can not trust God fully and unequivocally for his temporal support, how can he preach to his people the truth of God appertaining to personal faith so that they will all “walk by faith and not by sight,” and live by faith alone? “*For the children ought not to lay up treasures for the parents, but the parents for the children.*” The deep and penetrating thought of Paul is constantly illustrating spiritual truth from temporal affairs patent to perpetual observation. In this statement he beautifully reminds them of his spiritual paternity with them all.

15-16. “*But most delightfully will I spend and be spent in behalf of your souls, even though the more loving you, I may the less be loved.*” Lord, help us all to emulate our apostolic example in that deep self-abnegation and annihilation which will enable us to spend and be spent for the people of God, getting the Bride ready for her coming Lord without the slightest reference to temporal emolument. When shall the Church be delivered from the awful scourge of a hireling ministry, so out rightly condemned by our Savior? How infinitely alien are the utterances of Paul and Jesus from anything favoring temporal support, except simply the good Providence of God! When we let temporalities come in the way of spirituality’s, we had better hang our trumpet on the wall and blow it no more, till down in the straw we receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost, consuming selfishness world without end. “*But be it so, I did not burden you. But being crafty, I caught you with guile.*” If he had come to Corinth seeking temporal support and remuneration for his preaching, those Jews and heathens would have seen at once that he was actuated by a personal interest, this fact becoming an insuperable barrier against all the efforts he possibly could have made to win them for his Christ. The craftiness here and the “guile” with which he caught them was simply the policy he adopted, *i. e.*, making his own living by manual labor, and preaching to them night and day with sympathetic tears flowing demonstrative of his tender love for them, while they could see no human motive actuating in this noble philanthropy; meanwhile, the Holy Spirit, through the truth sanctified with tears, sent arrows of conviction into their hearts, revealing an open Hell, death and doom on the one side; salvation, Heaven and a glorious immortality on the other. The result was that scores and hundreds fell under the triumphant power of God and were swept triumphantly into grace. Now do not forget that the guile and craft of Paul consisted in preaching the gospel without saying one word about temporal support. When Holiness people depart from this precept and cease to go and work without a word spoken or an assurance given relative to finances, they had better go back and hunt a place in the fallen churches whence they came. We must verify in precept and practice the literal truth of the New Testament. If you will adopt the Pauline craft and “guile,” like him you will catch men. But you can not do it without leaving finances *sub rosa in toto*. Of course this does not mean that you receive no temporal support. Rest assured God will attend to it. It does not mean that Paul received none

at Corinth because he recognizes Gaius, one of the very few wealthy members in that church, as his host, and that of the whole church, we are thus assured that he enjoyed the kind hospitality and the home of Gains, and it does not follow that others did not co-operate in his temporal support. Of course this was not so in the beginning, as they had to rise from the dead before they could embark in living enterprises. Lord, help us all to use the same craft and “guile” which enabled Paul to catch multiplied thousands and save us from the egregious mistake made by the popular clergy in rendering temporal support so prominent as to impress the people that they are following Jesus for the loaves and fishes, thus disgusting and alienating them.

17. *“By which one of those whom I sent unto you did I fleece you?”* The answer is in the negative. He had first sent to them Timothy with his cohort, and afterward Titus with his comrades, both of whom had spent their lives with Paul and so imbibed his spirit that he could fully vouch for them in finances and everything else. Like Paul, we should be careful to send out none who would permit temporal interest to get in the way of spiritual. Well does Paul remind them of the decisive contrast between himself and the preachers he sent and the mercenary evangelists who had been among them.

18. *“I called Titus, and sent along with him the brother.”* We know not the name of this brother whom Paul sent along with Titus. Doubtless he was Aristarchus, Gains or Philemon, alluded to in chapter ~~408~~8:18-22.

“Whether did Titus fleece you in any respect? Did we not walk in the same spirit? Did we not in the same footsteps?”

Paul here fully endorses Titus and the brother who helped him, feeling fully assured that neither of them said a word or gave an insinuation or the remotest intimation in the favor of personal support. Oh, what mistakes are made along that line! Surely we can go like Paul, as he was the greatest traveler in his day. The great trouble is, as we see from this teaching, that we can not give any attention to our temporal support without imperiling the salvation of souls. Why can we not have faith in on Heavenly Father to feed us like He feeds the birds, and, if we go without a few days, feel it a blessed privilege to enjoy a fast for the glory of God and the good of our souls, and only shout the louder?

19. *“For a long time you think that we are apologizing to you.”* This, of course, would become ere-long, a natural conclusion. But you see he utterly disclaims an apologetic attitude. The man of God is no apologist. He is Heaven’s messenger commissioned from the throne. Hence he needs no excuse, and should make no apology under any circumstances. If you are in any way out of kilter, do not tell the people. God can take a worm and thrash a mountain. *“We speak in the presence of God in Christ: and all things, beloved, for your edification.”* Hence we see that the ministers of

God are all in Christ, not in the world nor sin. If you are not in Christ, and a new creature, you can not possibly be a minister of God. Not only are we in Christ, but we speak in the very presence of God. Good Lord, help us to realize and never to say or do anything that would not be appropriate if the splendors of the great white throne were flashing all around us. Besides, we find that I things are to be conducive to edification — not intellectual, but spiritual. Hence the metaphysical, literary and dogmatic discourses so common in the pit are utterly out of order because, while they may entertain the people intellectually, they do not really edify them spiritually. Edify means “to build up an edifice,” *i.e.*, to instruct, sanctify and establish the people in God.

20. *“For I fear lest perchance having come, I shall not find you as I wish, and I shall not be found unto you such as you wish.”* He is still determined by his letters and the preachers sent to them to get them all in as good fix as possible for his reception, thus preferring to settle controversies, refute heresies, correct irregularities, reform abuses and bring all the people into beautiful harmony with God and His Word while at a distance, so when among them he will have nothing to do but as in the first place, when God so wonderfully blessed his labors: preach to them the living Word in spite of men and devils. *“Lest perhaps there shall be contentions, envy, animosities, self-seekings.”* These four words comprehend the dark, malevolent affections constituting the dismal virus of inbred sin, which only the wonderful efficacy of the cleansing blood and the fire of the Holy Ghost can exterminate.

CALUMNIATIONS, SECRET MALIGNINGS

How frequently these things so prevail in a church as to bring about alienation’s, conflicts and terrible apostasies! The one of these words means open slander, which is so pestilential and ruinous among the members of a church, and the other means private gossip creeping round among the people, undermining and utterly ruining spirituality. I have known churches divided up into factions and filled with parties mutually recriminating each other, until they all become a pandemonium. “Inflation’s,” *i.e.*, people puffed up with pride, vanity, egotism, self-importance, which are flagrantly incompatible with the humility, meekness and lowliness indispensable in Christian character. “Out-fallings.” How few large church organizations can we find without cases of this kind? Members partaking the same sacrament and refusing to speak to each other, and of course eating and drinking damnation to their souls. The Corinthian church was very large, mainly Gentiles, but many Jews in it; thus consisting of heterogeneous elements, easily kindled by Satan into a Hellish conflagration if once they only forfeit the equilibrium of sustaining grace and sanctifying power.

21. *“And I again coming, God shall not humble me before you, and I will weep over many of those who had sinned and not repented over their*

uncleanness, fornication and lasciviousness which they had practiced.” The verb is in the aorist tense, indicating an action complete, recognizing the fact that they had been guilty of these things, but that they were all taken away. Here we have three words indicating different phases of that same dark iniquity which was so prevalent in Corinth, the emporium of prostitution, which was popularized by the worship of Venus, the goddess of love, or more properly sensuality, which was so prominent there that more than a thousand priestesses were connected with her worship and living dissolute lives, thus apologizing for debauchery by the plausibility of religion. This awful state of things, and the fact that evidently very many of his converts were saved from low debauchery and gross sensuality, accounts for the wonderful emphasis laid on this phase of immorality throughout both the epistles.

CHAPTER 13

1. *“This third time I come unto you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.”* This has reference to the statements which follow. He had sent Timothy in the first place, who had labored faithfully to correct all of those troubles. Afterward he had sent Titus, who had done the same; both of them having held protracted meetings of reasonable prolixity, making all due and faithful effort to accomplish the end in view. Of course now when he goes down, he himself will be the third witness on the stand in favor of the prosecution of the guilty.

2. *“I have forewarned you, and I now forewarn you as being present a second time; even now absent, to those who have sinned hitherto, and to all the rest, that if I come unto you again I will not spare.”* He has done his utmost to save them all, and now he is going to enforce the law of the New Testament and excommunicate all offending parties.

3. *“Since you seek the approval of Christ who speaketh in me, who unto you is not weak, but mighty among you. For indeed He was crucified from weakness, but He liveth by the power of God, who raised from the dead. For indeed we are weak in him.”* i.e., we are weak physically and influential because in Him we have surrendered all temporal power, resources and availability, and hence in respect to these things we are weak and destined so to be. *“But we shall live along with Him by the power of God with respect to you.”* Though we have forfeited all temporal power by our identity with Christ, who Himself permitted the world-powers to overcome Him and take His life, yet because we live in Him we participate the very power of God, so far as they are concerned. Hence, he wants them to understand that the disciplinary power he is going to bring into availability is none other than the power of God in Christ. We should all learn a valuable lesson here:

(a) Temporal power in church discipline is a misnomer, and of the devil. Hence, in this way the by-gone ages were deluged with martyrs' blood.

(b) In the second place, we must make the fact that all disciplinary power in the Church of God is purely spiritual pursuant to the revealed Word, the only code of rules and regulations really authoritative in any matter of ecclesiastical discipline. here we see while he utterly disclaims all temporal power, he assures them that the discipline shall be summary and decisive in every case.

5. *“Examine yourselves if you are in the faith; prove yourselves; know you not yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you unless you are reprobates?”* This verse is clear and unmistakable in the great problem of experimental

Christianity, setting forth the fact that all are reprobates, *i. e.*, mere counterfeits and pretenders, who have not Jesus Christ in them. While the Christ life is imparted in regeneration, the personal enthronement of Christ in the heart only takes place in entire sanctification. Paul in the highway saw Jesus without, shining into him, when he was converted. Down in Arabia in his second experience (⁸⁰¹⁵Galatians 1:15), God revealed His Son in Him, *i. e.*, sitting upon the throne of his heart. The great work of the Holy Ghost is to reveal and honor Christ hence, when you receive the personal Holy Ghost as an indwelling Sanctifier and Comforter, He invariably reveals the glorified Savior and enthrones him in the heart. Hence, we see from this clear admonition that the only alternative is Christ within or reprobate.

6. *“I hope that you will know that we are not reprobates.”* The better translation of *adokimoi* in this verse is “disapproved”; arising from the different attitudes occupied by the Corinthians and the apostles. In case of the former, disapproval or reprobate meant ejection from Christ and the forfeiture of salvation, because their attitude was simply that of Christians. The case is quite different with the apostles, their Christianity not being in controversy, but simply their apostleship. Hence disapproval from the apostolic attitude still left them *bona fide* citizens of the kingdom, while disapproval from the attitude of saintship means ejection from the kingdom of Christ and forfeiture of all hope.

7. *“But we pray unto God that you may do no evil; not that we may appear approved, but in order that you may do good and that we may appear as it were disapproved.”* His chief desideratum is that the Corinthian saints may turn out all right, showing up and sustaining an irreproachable Christian character in the clear light of God’s Word, even though it may turn out that they *“may be as it were disapproved.”* Of course, he knows that he is all right with God spiritually and apostolically. Hence he is resting perfectly easy with reference to himself. All his solicitude focalizes in the interest of the Corinthians.

8. *“We are not able to do anything against the truth, but in behalf of the truth.”* Here is a grand case of church trial, clearly elucidatory of every problem and final in the settlement of every difficulty along that line. Shall we not profit by it? God help us. You see here the truth, *i. e.*, the Word of God revealed in the New Testament is the only umpire in the case. Hence you see the solution of every question that has vexed the church through the ages. Every possible issue is here brought to a focus. The New Testament is a plain book, easily understood. It is plainer, more simple and perspicuous than any of the creeds, rules or regulations. Hence we have nothing to do but bring everything to the law of the Lord as we read it in His precious Word. Away with all human authority. It is all Divine, human agency simply recognizing and enforcing it. What a pity that church courts are not content to walk in the footprints of Paul, try their members according to God’s Word alone, making it the ineffaceable finale in every

case. It would play sad havoc with the frolicking, worldly churches of the present day, turning out about nine out of every ten. But the angels would come down from Heaven to supply their places.

9. *“For we rejoice when we may be weak and you may be strong: truly we pray for this, your perfection.”* You see Paul and his comrades were all a unit in Christian perfection, praying and working for it incessantly. This was the grand ultimatum in all the apostolic ministry. How any person can read the Bible and not see Christian perfection flashing and glowing from Alpha to Omega, radiating out in the prayers, and flaming in the sermons, and flashing in the exhortations and testimonies, we can not comprehend.

10. *“Therefore, being absent, I write the same things, in order that, being present, I may not use the severity which God gave me for edification, and not for destruction.”* All true preachers of the gospel are successors to the apostles, so far as proclaiming the living Word and enforcing church discipline are concerned. Hence it is our imperative duty to declare all the counsel of God and to enforce New Testament law and discipline to the letter, fearlessly of men and devils. We are no better than Paul, and he here declares that he will use severity and not spare the guilty. Alas for the woeful delinquency in the discharge of duty, and the appalling maladministration in the churches at the present day! Where can you find a membership verifying the New Testament standard of Christian morality? Why do not the preachers dare to walk in the footprints of Paul in this matter? While the Word is plain and unmistakable, and we see millions flagrantly violating it, therefore disciplinary duty involving excommunication becomes the inalienable obligation of every pastor, yet we see from this Scripture that this power is given to us for *“edification, and not for destruction.”* Therefore we should learn wisdom from the prudential procedure of Paul, firing on them at long range and doing his utmost to wheel them all into line before his arrival. In this he gloriously succeeded. I used to come to my circuit responsive to the appointment of my Conference, and find the majority of my members living beyond the deadline, where it became my painful duty to excommunicate them. I always made it a rule to run a protracted meeting from the hour my feet rested on my territory till the expiration of the Conference year, by the help of God rolling the revival flame from shore to shore. The result was my unworthy members would get convicted and converted and go for holiness, and great hosts of outsiders would be gloriously converted. And, instead of reducing my membership by expulsion, I would go back to Conference with three times as many as I began with, seldom ever turning any one out of the church. Why? Because I turned on them the Pauline maneuver, doing everything in my power to get them saved before I proceeded to enforce the law in their excommunication. God wonderfully came to my relief in every case. But, mark it down, if they had not repented and got religion, I would have made a clean sweep like Paul said he would at Corinth. But, after all of these protracted meetings held by Timothy and Titus, and these powerful

letters written, and the awful warnings given, we have no reason to believe that a single one became the victim of the preannounced severity; from the simple fact that they all heeded the warning, repented and got right before his arrival. So he came on late in the fall of 57, staying with them three months and writing that wonderful Book of Romans, and we have not an intimation of a single one expelled. On the contrary, they had a glorious hallelujah time and much edification.

11. “*Finally, brethren, rejoice.*” This is the literal meaning of the Greek *chairete*. “*Farewell*” (E.V.) is neither literal nor suitable here, as he was not bidding them adieu, but saluting them on his speedily anticipated arrival. The idea, of course, is all rejoice in the Lord, which is quite a hackneyed phrase in Pauline parlance. “*Be perfected.*” This verb is in the imperative mood, thus positively and explicitly commanding them all along the line of Christian perfection, the favorite theme of every apostle, and should be of every gospel minister. John Wesley exhorted his preachers: “*Preach Christian perfection constantly, urgently and explicitly.*” “Be comforted,” *i.e.*, be sure that you all receive the blessed Holy Comforter, that He may come into your heart and abide forever. “*Be of the same mind,*” literally, “mind the same thing.” All sinners have the carnal mind only. All wholly sanctified people have the mind of Christ only. The unsanctified are intermediate between these two classes and double-minded (⁵⁰⁰⁸James 1:4 and 4:8); *i.e.*, having the mind of Christ imparted by the Holy Ghost in regeneration, but still the carnal mind in a subjugated state dominated by the mind of Christ, but, like a prisoner in jail fearing the hangman’s rope, ready at any time to slay his keeper and make his escape. Hence this is simply another commandment on the same line on entire sanctification along with the preceding, thus adding more and more emphasis to the Divine requirement of Christian perfection. “*Live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you.*” Jesus is recognized throughout the Bible as the Prince of Peace, and at the same time portrayed by the inspired writers as a mighty warrior, fighting and conquering sin, death and Hell. In conversion we receive peace with God, but in sanctification, the peace of God which passeth all understanding, and is competent to keep our minds and hearts in harmony with our great Captain. Jesus is Prince of that peace which follows an exterminating war upon sin, without whose literal destruction there is no such thing as permanent and abiding peace.

12. “*Salute one another with a holy kiss.*” This commandment is so frequent in the apostolic letters, and so positive, that I do not wonder the Holiness people in some localities are giving it the prominence it enjoyed in the apostolic age. Let us not be wise above what is written, and be very careful lest we criticize the Word of the Lord. The Greek word, *phileema*, here used, not only means a kiss with the lips, but a love-token manifested in a diversity of ways. Yet we must give Scripture its full force and not depreciate its literal signification.

13. “*All the saints salute you.*” The facts favor the conclusion that this letter was written in Berea in Macedonia, where they enjoyed an exceedingly bright and beautiful Christianity, evinced by their ardent and enthusiastic appreciation of the Holy Scriptures. We do not wonder that they all send their loving salutations of Christian affection to the dear saints of Achaia.

14. “*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.*” While we find benedictions at the conclusion of every apostolic letter, some quite brief and unique, and others rather prolix, no one has ever attained the notoriety of the above, from the accidental fact of the prominence given it in the creeds of Christendom. The English language is rapidly spreading over the earth under the wonderful aggressive conquests of the British Empire, planting the national church of England in many heathen lands and opening the way for missionary enterprises generally. Consequently the Episcopalian ritual and formula have been extensively adopted by the Protestant churches generally in all the earth, carrying with them this soiled apostolic benediction, which multitudes recognize by that name, though it is no more apostolic than any of the balance. While we have no criticism for the free use of this benediction, to avoid monotony we would advise you to not use it constantly, but avail yourself of the variety furnished by all the apostolic officials. This is the great argument for the leadership of the Holy Ghost; He will never have you run in the same old rut till you lose the freshness and power, which is the objection to the constant use of the above benediction, or any other set and definite form in the worship of God. This is the great reason why the ordinary church services lose their power. Hence it is exceedingly unwise and grievous to the Holy Spirit to tie ourselves to any forms and routines, which will ere long assert their claims and actually become your idols, running you into the awful sin of idolatry before you are aware. The Holy Ghost is the founder, organizer, perpetuator and glorifier of the Church. Whenever you get away from His personal leadership you are already derailed and going fast into the devil’s mud, where you will stick and rot, while the New Jerusalem trains move by you at lightning speed. This benediction is a beautiful and significant exhibition, not only of the personal Trinity, but the reciprocal work of the Trinity in the gracious economy. The world is saved by the free grace of God in the Lord Jesus Christ, that grace superinduced by the matchless and unutterable love of the Father, all culminating in the fellowship of the Holy Ghost indicated by the Greek *koinoonai*, which really indicates the matrimonial alliance. The Holy Ghost becomes our constant Companion, waking and talking with us, our loving Companion in holy wedlock.

APOLOGUE

This epistle is notable for special illumination on a number of grand salient truths prominent in the gracious economy; *e. g.*, regeneration in its relation to sanctification is especially clear and lucid. Sanctification is exceedingly prominent and abundantly corroborated by Paul's personal testimony. Glorification is most clearly and beautifully elucidated. The transfiguration receives a very elegant exegesis. The duty and the privilege of Christian giving is more elaborately expounded than elsewhere in the New Testament, while elucidation of infirmities and revelations is transcendent.