

Sanctification

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"Sanctify them through Thy truth." (John 17:11)

Elisha Coles when proposing to write on the subject of election said that he found no bottom would bear the weight of that doctrine but divine sovereignty. In proposing to speak to you upon the important doctrine of sanctification I feel that there is no ground will bear the weight of so important a doctrine but the Person of Christ. True sanctification is not vamped-up goodness in the mind, it is no effort of human nature, it is not natural religiosity, it is not the effect of moral restraint or education or anything that belongs to human nature. It has its source and rise and bottom in the Person of Jesus Christ, and I would if helped, just a little strive to show this great truth.

Let us take for an analogy that which so readily comes to hand, namely our father Adam. Everything of human nature in its purity as Adam was created he possessed for his future race, the head and representative of all who should proceed from him, to the last man that shall be born in this world. He had, and was, the fullness of human life. If he had continued in created uprightness, he would have possessed the fullness of that uprightness. When he fell, then in him was the fullness of unrighteousness. Everything pertaining to our nature we derive from Adam, and the death that we die we derive from him: "As in Adam all die." (1 Cor. 15:22) The condemnation that came on the world came from him. "As by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin," (Rom. 5:12) so the whole of corruption we derive from Adam. We sin ourselves, but we derive a sinful nature from him. We wish for evil, but the evil disposition we are born with; so all that belongs to the new creation we have in the very Person of Jesus Christ. Is that new creation to be forever holy? It is in Him that all that holiness resides. Is that new creation to stand ever before God in holiness? He is the Head of that creation. Sanctification then is built on, resides in, and is derived from the Lord Jesus Christ, and every good feeling, every gracious disposition that the people of God ever have and exercise, they have from Him who is their living Head, in whom is abiding fullness of grace and eternal life; and if we could a little beat this out we should find it to be completely in accordance with the true experience of the Lord's people, in complete accordance with all true experience.

It is life that animates; the life of Christ animates the Lord's people, and that life is holy. "I give unto My sheep eternal life." (John 10:28) "This is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." (1 John 5:11) And if you are enabled to trace this out in your own experience you will find, I do not doubt, that every right exercise, every godly feeling, every divine motion Godward, all love for Him, for the Scriptures, for the throne of grace, all the feeling in your own heart that you would wish continually to pray, to believe, to hope, to fear God, you will find them all flowing from that blessed abiding life that is in Him, and that is

communicated to your souls by the holy Ghost. So sanctification, let me repeat it and try to keep it before you, sanctification, as to its source is in and from Christ. It is altogether, as a blessed doctrine in the Scripture, founded upon the very Person of the Lord Jesus. This, as received, works holy desires in all who receive it. What a mercy that there is this fullness in Him, and what an encouragement it is to the people of God to draw near when troubled by sin and sinful passions and spoiled and marred by the workings of evil, to go to Him who alone has this fullness, who alone is able by His good Spirit to work in us both to will and to do of God's good pleasure. O tried child of God, if sin is felt working in you, if at times you perceive it having the mastery, if again and again you realize what an evil and bitter thing sin is, and can honestly say with Hart, "I would be holy", here, and here alone, is a fullness of holiness in which you are to stand for ever, holiness which shall work in you both to will and to do of God's good pleasure. Faith will point out the road, faith will tell you where to go to. Faith will turn you out of your self unto Him. Faith will tell you that as emptiness is yours, fullness is Christ's; as wickedness belongs to you, holiness belongs to Him; even to Him who is the Man Christ Jesus.

Now having thus briefly laid this great, this immovable foundation for sanctification, which, if you are enabled to follow, will show you that sanctification in all its parts and all its blessedness you have to receive from Christ through the Holy Ghost, let me in the next place try to show what sanctification really is. It is so important, because it is an essential in godliness, an essential to the very being of the church of God, that we shall do well if helped to look very closely into this. Sanctification, what does it mean? It means this, a setting apart, a setting apart from a common to a peculiar use; this is its first and widest meaning. It includes everything else that the people of God have, a true, a divine, a sovereign setting apart of things and of people for God; and if this is so, and you cannot have read your Bibles and not have perceived that it is so, then we are brought at once to this great truth, that God did eternally - for He never begins to think or act in time in Himself - eternally set apart things for Himself, and we have types of this in the Scriptures. We have a type of it in the burning bush. That presence of God that was in the burning bush made the place where it was, that is where God was, holy ground. The Constituents of the ground were the same as they always had been, but God's coming and dwelling there, for the time set that apart from all other ground, so that while Moses was free to walk elsewhere with his shoes on, he must in that place take his shoes off: "Take off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." It is a great truth, not only that because the whole country was called holy by the Lord, was sanctified by Him, God calls Palestine His sanctuary, He sanctified it by His presence; and not only the whole country but particularly a part of it, namely where the temple, first the tabernacle and then the temple stood, every part of that was for God. The tabernacle was for His service. The holy of holies was peculiarly for the service of God. His glory dwelt there. He said it should be "sanctified by My glory". He would dwell there, and everything in the temple was holy, the snuffers, and the dishes, and the tongs, and all the utensils; the altar of burnt offering, the altar of incense, the layer, the shewbread-everything in it was holy because to no other use or purpose were these things allowed to be put. They were purely for God's use and service. And these types set forth the great truth that there is a church in which God will dwell and be glorified, and still further and deeper, there is a Person in whom the church shall be found, whose life, whose influence, whose righteousness whose power, whose wisdom, shalt be hers, and that Person is Jesus Christ. He is wholly for her and for God. "For their sakes", says He in this chapter. "I sanctify Myself". So the nature of sanctification is that God has set apart some persons for His peculiar service and His glory, to be

His guests. You do not ask everybody into your house; only those you wish to sit with you at your table you invite. And the Lord has a house, and He invites His own guests, and says to them: "O ye simple, turn in here!" What a great truth this is!

But in the next place sanctification is to be regarded as an infusion of a divine principle into the soul of a sinner, not to the exclusion of sin from his heart while he is here, not to the extermination of sin from his nature while he lives in this world, but a principle that shall affect his whole soul and his life, and this is called the sanctification of the Spirit. The setting apart of some people for God is called election, "sanctified by God the Father." (Jude 1) Sinners given to Christ the Saviour. The bride given to Him, who is her Husband. The sanctification of the Spirit follows from the atonement. The atonement is called sanctifying the people. "Jesus, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate." (Heb. 13:12) Yes, the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin, renders spotless all on whom it is sprinkled, for whom it was shed. The blood of Christ if it covers, will make you beautiful and without spot or anything blameworthy in the sight of God. That is sanctification. But then flowing from that is the work of the Holy Spirit, the infusion, or breathing, or implanting of divine life in the soul. Why do you feel sorrow for sin? Why do you wish you did not sin? Why are your faces sometimes wet with tears because you commit sin? The secret, the root of it is because you possess a holy nature. "What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies." No man can properly hate sin until he possesses grace, and no man can sin habitually and willingly who possesses grace. He feels to his grief and shame he has in him that that brings trouble to his mind, grief to his heart, pain to his spirit, guilt to his conscience, and shame to his face. He does not sin habitually, and willingly, and persistently. O he looks sometimes into some of the depths of his wicked nature and says: "Woe is me that I am born in sin and that I do commit sin! Woe is me that I have such a disposition against God and such an indisposition to all things that are godly! Woe is me that I am so averse to prayer and every good feeling and exercise! Woe is me that my eyes so continually turn away from that blessed One who is my hope, my only hope!" But here it is, the possession of grace is the answer to all the trouble, the secret of all the grief, and the sighs, and the tears of the Lord's living family. In our fallen nature there is a habit of sin. When we are not committing it, there is the habit of it; and in gracious people, though they may be very loath to acknowledge it because of the contrary feeling they often have, there is really a gracious habit. Just as much as there is a habit of walking, of thinking, of eating and drinking in our nature, even when we are not exercised in any of those things, so in a living soul there is that blessed life; and when it is in exercise there is motion toward God that is so desired, and so beautiful, and so blessed. This is sanctification, and He is it. It is wrapped in one word in the Epistle to the Corinthians, where the Spirit by Paul says of Christ, "He is made unto you sanctification." (1 Cor. 1:30) All your holy standing before God, all your gracious holy desires after God, Jesus Christ is the abiding fullness of the supply, because it comes from Him and none else.

Now then we may in the next place, as enabled, look a little at this gracious work. It is not a progressive work in the sense at all of making human nature better, of eradicating that vile principle of sin. It is not that. It is a conflict with that, it is a real conflict with that. And let me try to trace this out, as in the first place I judge that faith has a large part in this great matter. Now when you really have faith in exercise toward God, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, what does that do for you? "Purifying their hearts by faith," is the Scriptural answer to it. Real faith exercised

toward God always produces that godly feeling in your soul, and where Peter says that the Lord purified the heart of the Gentiles by faith, even as He did of the Jews, what does he mean but that He "cast down imaginations and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God, and brought into captivity every thought unto the obedience of Christ?" (2 Cor. 10:5) Can you run after an idol when faith is looking toward God? Can you carry a burden when faith is casting everything on Him? Can you worship free-will when you are worshipping the Almighty? Can you run after some vanity when that blessed One who says He has substance to give to His people is before the eye of your faith? No, faith is that wonderful principle created by the Holy Ghost; not the fruit of anything in nature you can exercise toward God.

Take the opposite, unbelief, that protagonist of faith, that inveterate enemy of God, unbelief. What does that do? It binds your mind, it hardens your heart, it departs from the living God, it limits the Holy One of Israel. Even that great believer Moses said to God: "All the cattle, and all the birds, and all the fishes in creation could not satisfy Israel for a month." As if he looked at nothing and at none but those creatures whom the Lord had created. When the Lord spoke to him, O He corrected that! He said, "Is there anything too hard for the Lord?" So unbelief just limits the Holy One, but faith looks to the blessed fullness, and this is by the Word of God strengthened from time to time. Said Christ to His disciples, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Said He again, "Be not faithless, but believing." And when the Spirit of God sends some word, perhaps a reproving word for your unbelief, or promising word for your weak soul, a full word for all your needs, what does faith do? It receives it, holds it for the time, and then you say, "Begone unbelief, my Saviour is near." Now this comes from Christ. He has the word, for God gave it to Him. As in this chapter, so important and blessed a chapter. He says to His Father, "The words which Thou gavest Me, I have given them." What words did the Father give to Christ? The words of grace and salvation. When did He give them to Him? In eternity. And Christ came to speak them, and when He speaks to you, a poor tried child of God, in some peculiar affliction or feeling of bitterness of sin in your nature, then it is a word that has a holy effect upon you. You know it is true. It has a holy effect upon you. It sets you apart for God again. It makes you feel once more, "O what a fool I am to look at creatures, to look at self as if I could ever find any good there, instead of looking to Him who says, Look unto Me, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and beside Me there is no Saviour!" (Isa. 45:22)

Faith is a wonderful grace and its conflict is with its opposite unbelief; its conflict is with sin ever clamoring for the mastery, sin clamoring for this and that in the world. Faith says: "God is everything, God is everything. All is in Christ." If the world is mine, it is because Christ is mine. If Paul, if Apollos, if Cephas, if providence, all belong to Him. It is because they are all in the hand and under the management and government of the Lord Jesus. "Sanctify them through Thy truth." Take the world, what an enemy this is to God, and if you are its friend you are an enemy to God. "If any man will be a friend of this world," says John, "he is an enemy to God." People try to bring the world and the church together as they now-a-days speak, but they are trying to do what they will never accomplish. For what God has separated man shall never join, and He has separated the world from the church in this chapter most solemnly: "I pray not for the world." Do you run to that which the Lord Jesus did not pray for? Are you friendly with that which has no place in His petition, in His intercession? Then you are in a solemn position. "Separate them, they are not of the world; separate them from it. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. They are in it. O keep them from the evil of it!" And if you follow this in your spirit

through faith, you will certainly follow it in your practice. Yes, however much the enemy may dangle things before your eyes to tempt you, you certainly will follow the Lord Jesus, as it is written: "Let us go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach." (Heb. 13:13) May it please the Holy Ghost to work in us this work of faith with power, for it never will move in you without purifying your heart in some particular. "Purifying their hearts by faith." Why, error will go away where faith lives and thrives Truth will thrive where faith is, because she lays hold of Him who is the truth. Faith is, so to speak, the very first grace and wherever it is there will be gracious exercises, and also because there are gracious exercises, there will be opposition, the opposition of sin. How much death you may feel! The question will be, not has a child of God any real life, but has he life enough to be in conflict with death? It is not, is a child of God so full of faith as to have no unbelief, but has he faith enough to be in conflict with unbelief? Do you feel this in your own souls? Are you really on the side of Christ? "For their sakes I sanctify Myself: now sanctify them." You will, if a truly sanctified person, be on the side of Christ, and if you are on the side of Christ, I will tell you one or two things you certainly will have some experience of.

First, you have got a nature, the power of which you will experience in pulling you away and trying to separate what God has joined. Sin in the members will ever be against union, the union of Christ with His people, and will always be seeking to effect a separation between Christ and the soul, and of this separation you will have some painful feelings and experience. As for instance, when the throne of grace is seldom visited, or for a time not visited at all, when a worldly spirit, a hard spirit, a careless spirit respecting God and a careful spirit respecting yourself will be prevailing, then you will find a distance, and that distance may intimate to you, with much fear, that there is such a thing as a solemn separation between God and man. Then you will fear lest that separation should be your lot throughout eternity. "Sanctify them, give them more faith," and then cry, each one, "Lord increase our faith."

Some of Christ's sayings do stumble people. "He is set for the falling of many souls and for the rising of many." Some of Christ's teachings greatly stumble human nature. He is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, and if you would see an example of that awful truth, turn to the Gospel of John and look up that chapter where Christ tells people that they must eat His flesh and drink His blood, or they have no life in them. What a stumblingblock that was to the bulk of His hearers. Then they were offended and walked no more with Him. They were mixed with sin and sin prevailed, prevailed over everything they listened to as from His sacred lips, and away they went. They were gathered by men.

Now look at the disciples. These were sanctified. The Word of truth sanctified them, and they said, "Lord, to whom shall we go?" They were sinful men and they felt it, as the words intimate. They heard the words of eternal life. "We have death, we are nothing but death. We can but sin in ourselves. Speak to us the words which Thou hast, the words of eternal life." It was this faith that separated them experimentally, it was this faith that kept them cleaving to their Lord, this faith that made them go to Him and ask Him to teach them, and speak to them. Do you know what this part of sanctification is? Is Christ the object of your faith? Is He the object that you would fain always be looking at, always be going to, from whose fullness you would always be drawing, drawing forgiveness and comfort and peace and strength and wisdom, for He has them all?

A sanctified person in the gospel sense is a separated person, in whose heart dwells the life of God, that is to say, in whom is a holy principle, for divine life is a holy principle; and that holy principle can never contentedly live away from its source and its end. Brethren, has this blessed sanctification been wrought in you, is it being carried on? Not as I said before, in a way of progressiveness, taking some bit out of nature today and a bit more tomorrow; but subduing the whole of nature, "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ". Do not expect to be better in yourself, but as God is with you, you will find He will be your King: "I will be your King." And that being the truth will bring to pass this: "O Lord, other lords have had dominion over us." (Isa. 26:13) And many a time you will say to yourself, "I wish that I could feel that sacred freedom: "They are dead, they shall not rise." How often I have wished I could say that quite freely: "They are dead, they shall not rise; they are extinct, they are quenched as tow!"

Bless God for a given sanctification. And this gift you will find wrought in your souls by the Word of God, where it says: "It is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure." (Phil. 2:13) What precedes it? "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Now I believe one word in this Gospel of John is written, deeply imprinted, on the heart of every child of God. I mean this word: "Without Me, ye can do nothing." (John 15:5) Yes, you cannot look upon your heart, you who fear God, and say, you see no trace of that. The writing is with the finger of God the Holy Ghost: "Without Me, ye can do nothing." But then that is not all. No, there is another part which He graciously brings His people to at times. Surely some of you have said with Paul now and again, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:13) I can believe notwithstanding impossibilities. I can believe God will bring me to heaven. Though hell should stand between me and heaven. I can believe that He will bless my soul, that He will give me Christ, that I have a little of Him now. I can believe that He will make temptation and affliction and evil work for my good. There is nothing too hard for Him. Well, when this faith is in exercise, what is the effect upon your spirit? Why, you hang on Him, and you can say honestly for the moment: "Let worldly minds the world pursue, it has no charms for me; once I desired its trifles too, but grace has set me free." And this is the answer to this prayer: "Sanctify them through Thy truth."

Now take a case of affliction, how the sanctification comes in. Take David for example, when he was driven his home and his throne by the rebellion of Absalom. He was a poor tried man, this David. No home now, no throne, a crafty Ahithophel plotting against him and apparently in union with Absalom. What does David do? Why he does this, he says, "If the Lord take pleasure in me, He will bring me again and I shall see both it," that is the ark, "and His habitation; but if he say, I have no pleasure in thee, behold here I am, let Him do what seemeth Him good." What would you call that? I would call that a holy feeling. I would call David, in that moment of his experience, a sanctified person, and the affliction he was then under was a deeply sanctified affliction. This prayer was answered in him; he was really then set apart for God. Respecting the ark he says: "Take that back. I am away from Israel, from my home, from my throne, but do not let the ark be out of its place." Was not that a good feeling? Could human nature ever work such compelling as that? Lose all, and then say, "Take this ark back, though its presence should protect me here. Take it back, and if the Lord take pleasure in me He will bring me again whence I am driven, and I shall see this ark and His, God's habitation." If you are afflicted and your

heart is brought down with much labor and sorrow, and you can then say, "Lord, I am in trouble but Thy will be done; guide me, leave me not nor forsake me, bless me with Thy presence, do me good by this trouble;" I would say that is a godly feeling, and that is the effect of the Spirit's grace, the effect of the operation of truth, and the effect of a blessed faith in God. What a wonderful thing it is then to have this true sanctification in your soul!

Now take one more word ere I close this morning. We must needs die. We, some of us, soon shall die; we shall launch into worlds unknown. There are things we do not know, cannot know here fully. Now unbelief may work and will work strongly some times on some things we have. For instance, you meditate on eternity sometimes. You think about what it will be to stand in the presence of God, what it will be to have no earthly covering, no services to help you; just to go and launch into eternity and bear your own burden, and you say, "I am not fit for it." And if one should say, "Why do you come to that conclusion?" you might say, "Look at my life; I look at it, a life of sin, not blessed by God before man or as to be condemned by man, but before God; a heart full of sin, a nature wholly depraved, that is unutterably conscious of guilt. I am not fit to die." Now this unbelief cuts you, wounds you, makes you feel a very poor helpless creature. If faith is drawn out by the word of Christ, who says in this Gospel, "Let not your heart be troubled; I know you will soon deny Me; all of you My disciples, you will deny Me; but let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in Me; in My Father's house are many mansions, if it were not so I would have told you, I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself;" (John 14:1-3) then if the Lord should say, "I am your righteousness, I am your sanctification, I am your redemption," what then? Why, faith will go out, leap up, so to speak, and go beyond all the sinking fears and troubles you have been suffering, and say, "O I shall get through!" On what ground is this blessed expression founded? Why, on the ground of Christ's Person and work, His abiding righteousness, His exhaustless fullness, His saving grace, His cleansing blood, His word of promise. This covers all, this covers my rebellions, this washes away my guilt and pollution, this clothes my naked soul, this brings me to a fitness that I could never attain to of myself, a confidence that has no relation whatever to any effort of my own, but altogether is the gift and the work of the eternal Spirit.

Sanctify them, purify their hearts by faith, cleanse them from their blindness, and their guiltiness, and their errors, and their mistakes, and bring them to this. Give them to perceive their separation from death, from Adam, from the world, and from themselves, and give them to perceive that all that they need for eternity when they are to enter it, need for time while they are in it, for affliction while it presses upon them, for temptation when it troubles them, for sin when it rises up in them - give them to perceive that all they need in these conditions and occasions they are to find in Me.

Will that do, my friends? What do your hearts say about it? Will it do, or would you fain drag in a bit of human nature and put it to it? Faith says, "No, let nature go down, let the foot of faith trample this lofty city, let it trample it down, and let grace, grace, grace alone reign, and let the topstone be brought forth with shouting, crying, grace, grace unto it." Whose then is the glory of this? God's. What is to be the end of this? That they all may be one, one in Christ, as Christ and His Father are one.

Well now, I hope that these observations may lead us to a good conclusion respecting where salvation is, in whom this wondrous doctrine is to be found, on whom it is bottomed, and that we may see the need of this sanctification, that as it does not come from self and cannot, it must and does come from God; and that as it wholly comes from Him, the glory must be His, and that it is very much more in the soul than the Holy Ghost giving and strengthening faith, and drawing it out from time to time. Well sinful men and women, what a doctrine this is! How suitable to me it is, how suitable to me! "Yes", says one, "then you can do as you like and live in sin." No; they used to say that in Paul's day, they slanderously reported the saints then and made it as if the saints should say, "Let us do evil that good may come; whose damnation is just." Nature speaks according to itself, cannot rise above itself. Grace says, "Lord, do not let me live in any sin." Grace said in David, "Let not any iniquity have dominion over me." Grace will say in this chapel in our hearts where it is, "Lord, do save us from living in sin, and while we possess sin, may we hate it and fight against it and be continually in conflict with it."

There are three things that go into our condemnation. First, a depraved nature we derive from a sinful parent and are therefore sinful in nature. Second, our personal sins and transgressions. We go astray speaking lies, as soon as we are born, so saith the Scripture. Sin is a sweet morsel to a sinful nature, sin is a natural thing to a naturally sinful person. It takes different forms. Happily in many cases, it does not take the form of immorality. May none of you, you young people, ever fall into any immoral practices. Avoid lying and swearing and all things that a natural conscience, not seared with a hot iron, condemns. Third, association with wicked people, called "the friendship of this world which is enmity with God. If any man will be a friend of this world he is an enemy of God." (James 4:4) If you choose the world for your companions then it is because you are the world. If the saints be your choice, your companions, the dear choice of your hearts, that is good. Now wherever these three things are and prevail and anyone dies in them, that person is under condemnation and will never escape it. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God." This is in the Scriptures. Young people, this is in the Scriptures. Remember that it won't matter what you think of yourselves. If you are contrary to the Scriptures you are condemned. If you have no faith in the Son of God you are condemned. Here are people then who in all respects are polluted - nature polluted, thought and conduct polluted, associations polluted. The third may be cut off. You may leave the world as to practices and associations and go into a profession and mingle with religious people. The second may be cut off. Immorality may be denied, forsaken, and a person who walked in sin may cease so to walk and walk in uprightness among men. And one forsaking both these may be deceived and think himself a Christian and fit for religious society, for church membership, and for eternity. But then you have got the first to deal with. What will you do with a polluted nature? You have not got rid of that. You may be rid of a lying tongue, but you have not got rid of a deceitful heart. You may be clean amongst men; you may have clean garments and a polluted bad heart. You may have a healthy kind of morality, but what of a heart that is altogether diseased, of which this figurative language may be used: "The whole head is sick and the whole heart faint; from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, wounds, bruises, and putrefying sores, that have not been bound up neither mollified with ointment." (Isa. 1:6) What of that? No true sanctification where this prevails. An unchanged nature will die and sink into perdition. Sanctification then must have this in it, a real deliverance from that evil thing sin. How is it to be? Who shall effect it? When Christ addressing God in the 40th Psalm said, "A body hast Thou prepared Me," when the angel of the Lord spoke to Mary and told her that she was to be the mother of the Lord Jesus,

he said to her, "That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be the Son of God;" and that nature united to the eternal Son of God has full and abiding provision for a pure standing before God, of one who in himself is polluted. This the Word teaches; and let me here say, by the Word we are to understand the blessed gospel of the grace of God, not the law. That can never purify, never sanctify. The law can approve of goodness, but it can never purge away badness. It can approve of righteousness and bless a righteous person, but it can never approve of a sinner. It must condemn a sinner. So that by the Word the gospel is to be understood, and by the gospel we are taught, that the Lord Jesus communicates of His purity to His people, and this is really that in which they are all to stand. He is their sanctification, "For their sakes I sanctify Myself. I suffered to sanctify them, I bled, I shed My blood to sanctify them, to purify them, and present them to myself a glorious church, having neither spot nor wrinkle nor any such thing." (Eph. 5:27)

I treated a little this morning of this great subject of sanctification, and spoke of the ground, the rock that alone can bear the weight of this doctrine; and then in opening a little of the nature of this doctrine, I spoke particularly of faith. Faith purifies the heart. It is God's order, it is God's ordination. "If ye believe not, ye shall die in your sins. He that believeth is passed from condemnation and shall not see death." What a blessed work is the work of faith! I mentioned it in a few particulars, to which I wish to add one or two more.

In the first place, this faith is in the incarnation of Jesus Christ, because there is everything that God provided in the beginning, everything is there, the very Person of Him who is the eternal Son of God, and the very pure, holy Son of Man. I mentioned His type this morning Adam. He was a type of Christ when he was unfallen. He stood, and all human nature was in him. Boston said that he was "human nature in compendium" Everything belonging to human nature in the purity of creation, Adam possessed. Then he fell. He had no sin unfallen. He fell and communicated the impurity of his nature, his estrangement from God to his children. Now the anti-type is this Jesus Christ stands, and in Him is the new nature of His children, the holiness of His children, the righteousness of His children. O what a Lord He is! Heaven's best and fairest and fullest, heaven's everything, to the church of Jesus Christ. And when one is born again and led of the Spirit, in the long run it comes to this with him, that he has no hope of acceptance with God, no hope of deliverance from the law, no hope of justification, no hope of sanctification, no hope of standing spotless in God's sight, but in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that is everything to him. And if you have this faith it will purify your heart from all other confidences, confidences which God rejects. It will purify your heart from all trusts and hopes and expectations but those which you can find are founded on the Person and work of Christ. Look then for this. When the gospel comes in power, this is what it reveals to a seeker, to a tried tempted soul. It says, "Turn away from these things, turn away from everything, turn to Me in whom is life and righteousness and holiness and sight and wisdom and heaven itself." And when faith turns to Him she finds in Him all that the gospel declares. The word has an effect, a blessed, sweet, powerful effect upon the heart and mind.

Now let me mention another thing, namely, the righteousness of Christ. Justification and sanctification are related doctrines, and they become related in experience. He who is justified wants to be holy. That righteousness that absolves from punishment loosens the power of sin. You can never be justified in your conscience without wishing to be sanctified in your affections.

Men may, if they are asked in a general way, say they wish to be right and would like to go to heaven; but to be holy they have no mind. It is parting with your right hand and your right foot and your right eye that will put you to a test and bring out that that God puts in. Justification is a great thing, and if you have faith in Christ and receive a manifestation of His righteousness you receive that which changes your character. Then if you are turned by the Holy Spirit to the blood of Christ, and that is sprinkled on your conscience and you find a powerful peace there, that will change your feelings. A character before God that is good is justified. A justified person, and a person whose character has this standing before God, becomes one who also has holy affections. This makes the blood of Christ everything. "That He might sanctify the people with His own blood," set them apart for Himself. And you will find always whenever God deals with your conscience and makes the atonement precious to you, then holiness follows. Holiness follows, the spirit of what Paul speaks of, is accomplished in measure. He said, "Put away filthiness of spirit as well as of the flesh;" and the filthiness of the spirit is put away when the blood of Christ purges the conscience, for as soon as the blood cleanses sin from your conscience it breaks its dominion in your affections; and what Amasai, one of the Israelite captains said to David, "Thine we are David, and on thy side thou son of Jesse," each sanctified soul says to Christ more or less comfortably and assuredly: "Thine am I, Lord Jesus, and on Thy side, Thou Son of God." And this brings to pass in experience that Scripture where Paul says, "Let us go forth unto Him without the camp bearing His reproach." This also brings that word, "Let My name be named upon them," and when the name of Christ is named on you in the Spirit of grace and power, then you find you are on the side of Christ; and how can you be wedded to sin if you are on the side of Christ in your experience? How can you follow the practice of sin if in your heart the Spirit of holiness reigns?

"Sanctify them through Thy truth." And in the next place, let me speak of sanctification as being in the spirit of prayer and the grace of supplication. You may go over and over again to the Lord with a feeling of being a vile person. Indeed, the more grace a person has the more he must go with that confession, and often (how often the Lord only knows) you may kneel before Him feeling unworthy to take His name on your lips or to approach His divine Majesty; and yet I will try to show you by the help of God that when a sinner makes an approach to the throne of grace through the assistance and leading of the eternal Spirit, that sinner is a sanctified person. Sanctification is no natural goodness. I believe a child of God dreads that goody, goody thing that men call religion. But there is a real holiness in the approach of a sinner to Almighty God. For in whose name does he go to the Lord? Not his own, that is a vile thing, his own name; but he goes in the name of Christ: "If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it." Who is the object of his worship when he goes before the Lord? The eternal God. Worship is a vital thing in true religion. Worship is an attitude of the soul Godward, the bowing down of the soul with all its affections before Almighty God. It is reverence, it is adoration, it is admiration. Worship is the soul's falling down flat before God and dropping a silent tear, the spirit weeping and the heart kneeling. Worship is the devotion of the heart and mind, the submission of the will and of the understanding, the subjugation of sin. Worship is casting your care on the Lord with a humble hope that He cares for you. It is following Christ, bearing His reproach. It is the negation of reason as to reason's working. It is the humbling of the soul and receiving revelation, revelation, revelation, it is not an acquired habit, it is a gracious disposition wrought by the Holy Ghost. It is not a vocal thing. There is more worship when there are no words than most people think, than even the Lord's people may sometimes think and feel. Many a sweet moment there

may be before God without any expression at all of the lip. Worship is a blessed thing. You may be worshipping when you are walking the streets. You may be worshipping when you are sitting at your table with your family. You may be worshipping in the night watches, O in any place, any position, and any condition, when the Holy Ghost comes the soul is drawn out to adoration and admiration; and I think too, I must add this - an awe on the spirit. For God is great and His Majesty is wonderful, and a sense of what He is will fill you with awe at times. Why, if you left this chapel this evening, you who are godly, worshipping, I will tell you what you would not do, what you would not wish to do. You would not stand outside to gossip with anybody; and if you are conscious of not having anything, you will want to get home quickly; and if you have got something you would be afraid of speaking lest you should be robbed of it. Worship, O it is wonderful! It is holiness. Now do you know what that means, when every care that you feel is cast on the Lord, and every sin you feel is confessed to Him with a desire to forsake it, and all your concerns are brought before Him with a desire to be under His rule and government? Do you know what it is for your whole heart and soul to bend in humble submission, and the things you cannot understand just to leave them with Him, to be brought off from the rebellion of your own will? Did any of you ever feel rebellious when you have read of the Fall of Adam? Did you ever wonder why God permitted it? Did you ever wonder why He allowed Eve to lend her ear to the devil, the serpent? Did you ever wonder and feel a rebellious feeling in your heart: "Why did the Lord who suffered Himself for sin and all the consequences of it, with the murders and wars and rumors of wars and evils and jealousies and troubles that would come and burden the very earth and pollute it; why, seeing all this, did He permit the sin that was the parent of the Fall? And if you have tried to understand, what have you felt? Confusion. You may even have felt your very brain reel when you have tried to understand it. What has delivered you? Not forgetting it, but submitting in your whole soul through the power of the Holy Ghost to the sovereignty of God. Here is the spirit of holiness.

"Sanctify them through Thy truth." When God has done something in providence that you have not understood, that has affected you a good deal, and afflicted you, have you ever been brought to this: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right," and have felt, "Now I am but a bit of clay in the hands of the divine Potter, and here I want to stop; here I would abide, have kept in me alive and strong this submission to the divine will?" This is holiness, this is pleasing to God. "To hearken is more than sacrifice, and to obey than the fat of rams." To hearken to God's will as He reveals it in some providence, is better than sacrifice, and to hearken to it and to obey it is more than the fat of rams." Rebellion is pollution. "Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft." Witchcraft today in the form of spiritualism is rebellion against God, nothing more; a good deal is in that. Witchcraft is an interference with God's prerogative to foretell events. Rebellion is fighting against the exercise of that prerogative, and if you have been saved from it and said, "Thy will be done," that was a spirit of holiness, of sanctification.

Look at hope, take hope now for a few moments, the grace of hope. It is a wonderful grace, but as I have often remarked it is emphatically a grace for the future: it has nothing to do with the present. If you have a thing, you cannot hope for it, you have it. Hope is for the future. Have you hope? What future tomorrow? Yea, even of our souls. What do you hope for? That God will keep you: "Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe." That He will teach you: "That which I see not teach Thou me." That He will guide you: "Guide me with Thine eye." That He will support you under every load: "Hold up my goings in Thy paths that my footsteps slip not." That He will give

you grace to persevere, that He won't let you deny the faith, that He won't let you as concerning faith and a good conscience make a shipwreck, that He will cause such supplies of grace to come, that He will pour such supplies of the Spirit of Christ into your soul, that He will open that abiding and exhaustless fullness of Christ to you so that you will be enabled to say: "Yea, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will abide in the house of the Lord for ever." That is hope's end. God is hope's Object. Hope as a grace moves the soul and says to it: "Hope in God, wait on God, He will come. He will fulfill His promise to you. He will open His goodness, He will make it pass before you in the way, and no harm shall reach you." Hope in God when He is silent, hope in Him when He is absent, hope in Him. Do not judge Him by present feeling. If present feeling be one of dismay, if you are ready to say, "The Comforter which should relieve my soul is far from me," still may you be enabled in hope to say to your soul: "I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." Hope looks to Christ, looks to His promise. Hope puts Him in mind of it, as He Himself directs it to do: "Put Me in remembrance." Hope says to Him, "Remember Thy holy promise," and again says, "Remember the covenant."

Now this hope has a wonderful effect upon the heart. Unbelief is polluting, it makes your hands hang down. It says God won't do a thing when He has promised it. It has the spirit of the serpent in it: "Hath God said?" This polluting spirit of unbelief branches out into dismay which locks you up, prevents prayer, makes you meditate alone and exclusively on the things which work it in your heart. Dismay looks at an empty barrel, at the failing cruse, at the weakened arm, at the cut-off supply, at a dried stream. Dismay looks at the creature, and the more you look there the more polluted your mind is. Now the word of the gospel comes in and says: "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:19) The gospel says, even Jesus Himself says it, "I will never leave thee, I will never forsake thee." Good Erskine in his Sonnets gives good advice. He says: "Say not, He is gone for ever, though His visits He adjourn." If He for a time goes, don't say He has gone for ever.

The gospel will cleanse you from dismay, cleanse you from rebellion, cleanse you from looking at creatures. We get bewitched very often. Every sinner whose eye is bewitched, for the time turns to something, to somebody, rather than God; and this is indeed a pollution in itself. "Hope thou in God."

Then feeling this, take confidence. The Scripture says, "Cast not away your confidence which has great recompense of reward." Confidence in God is a wonderful thing. It has Himself, as He reveals Himself, for its ground, its Object. He, Christ, shed His blood. Has that blood ever been made known to you? Then your confidence of a good standing, of acceptance and of a final entrance into glory, will be fixed there. "My treasure is Thy precious blood; Fix there my heart, and for the rest, Under Thy forming hand my God, Give me that frame which Thou think'st best." Confidence - if ever you have felt the love of Christ impressed upon your heart, that has wrought in you a gracious holy confidence. Now Jesus said to His Father, "Sanctify these poor men; they are in the world, not of it; sanctify them and enable them to hold fast, having to go forth and face a godless hard, and unfriendly world, a persecuting world; keep them. And when they shall feel for a time the silence of Thy Spirit, keep them and say to them: "Cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." While you are enduring a great fight of affliction, you will need this confidence. My brethren, you will need this confidence, and as it

works it will purify your thoughts and your minds, and when for a time it has lost its power as to its activity, you will find yourself polluted driven hither and thither. Yea, you will find what James condemns. He condemns a double-minded man. A double-minded man is an unstable man who foolishly tries to do the impossible. He tries to look at two objects at the same time, and he sees neither of them really. He is confused, he staggers, he stumbles. But when it pleases the Lord to strengthen confidence, confidence goes beyond creatures, beyond means, beyond man, beyond human wisdom and strength, and says; "My hope is fixed on Christ and Christ alone. My confidence is in Him and in Him alone. My looking to Him is by faith, and my confidence in Him is that, He will come to me and finally deliver me."

"Sanctify them through Thy truth". Sanctify them in their afflictions, sanctify their afflictions to them. This is separation, for as we noticed this morning, sanctification means separation. This separation really is from the world as from all other evil things. If a man will be a friend of this world, he is an enemy of God. How many friends has Christ here, and how many friends has the world? How many of you can appeal to God and say, there was at one time a necessity for the right eye to be plucked out, for the right hand to be cut off, for the right foot to be cut off, and grace accomplished it? My nature shrank, but grace did it; then you are cut off from the world. "It is better," says Christ, "to enter into life maimed, than having two hands and two feet to be cast into hell."

Now I would then speak just a little briefly upon the external part of sanctification. I have dealt thus far with the internal part. The external part will be to come away from error, error of doctrine. Whoever denies the Trinity, whoever denies the eternal Sonship of Jesus Christ, whoever denies the fundamentals of our holy religion, we must separate from. Not easy, not pleasing, but mortifying to pride, to become a member of "that sect which is everywhere spoken against," to walk in that way which is indeed an offence to pride, and that way which men condemn. To do this you will need Christ's prayer: "Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy word is truth." If you ever attentively read the Scriptures in the light of the Holy Ghost, this will be apparent to you, namely, that they do insist upon a separation from all error. "If a man come to you," says John, "and bring not this doctrine," that is the doctrine of Christ, "receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed; for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." (2 John 10,11) What a solemn thing! And this brings to pass that word: "Lo, the people shall dwell alone, they shall not be reckoned among the nations." (Num. 23:9) When Israel said to Samuel, "Make us a king that we may be like the nations round about us," what did Israel do? Said the Lord to Samuel, "They have not rejected you, they have rejected Me." And look for this if God is with you. It is very probable that some of you honored people who fear the Lord will find that it will become a matter of necessity for you to be very exclusive. And I am disposed to say this to you, that it is not unlikely that your attitude to the Scriptures, and the distinctive doctrines of the Scriptures, will become a very distinctive thing; and he whose attitude is wrought by the Holy Ghost will be one against whom the world, as far as it knows him and takes notice of him, will speak. Separation, separation, separation, this is a solemn word. What communion hath Christ with Belial, what union is there between light and darkness, what union and communion can there be between the children of this world and the children of the Most High God?

"Sanctify them through Thy truth". These disciples were distinctive men, and on the day of Pentecost when three thousand were quickened and converted, they became distinctive men. They followed the Lord Jesus, they came to His side in the power of the Holy Ghost, they crossed the line so to speak, they were baptized and entered into the church of the living God, they became distinctive men. And if God separates you from yourself and from a wicked world, there will be something distinctive about you, and the savor of Christ will be on your spirit. O His loveliness will draw you, His beauty will hold you, His grace will enchain you, His mercy will melt you! Christ, how fair He is! Christ, how wonderful He is! How admired He is in all them that believe! The church of old found this; she said, "He is as the apple tree among the trees of the wood, He is One who bears fruit: I admire Him, I delight in Him, and doing so I sat under His shadow with great delight and found His fruit sweet to my taste." (Songs 2:3) This will separate. Yea, it makes the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, to Him who is thus separated. A singular disposition may cause one man to cut himself off from friendships, but this is not this sanctification. This sanctification will make the most genial man come away from company that he loved, and bring him to bear the cross of Christ, the reproach of Christ. This loveliness in Christ will take hold of his heart and spirit, and he will say: "O there is no society like His, no person like Christ, no name like His name, no goodness so satisfying as His goodness, no sweetness so sweet as Christ, no savor so wonderful as Christ's savor;" and this will separate. If you find the doctrine of eternal election brought into your heart, and God saying to you that He has chosen you, that will make you cleave to that distinctive doctrine. If you receive a revelation of Christ, that will bring you out from every denial of Him and make you hate all denials. Whatever God reveals will separate you from the world, from error, error of doctrine. Error of doctrine can never beget true experience. Like begets like, and you will find that all error is confusing and barrenizing, and every child of God who has at any time received any error has been brought to give it up. All tables of that sort shall be unclean, because all that have eaten at such tables shalt, as the Lord says by Isaiah, "vomit up what they have taken."

Then what about your daily life and practice, what about your family life, is that right? It is a fearful thing to be a stumbling block in your house, for others with whom you are most intimate to have to say, "His religion does not do much for him." And what about your business transactions? If you are masters, how do you rule? Do you withhold any part of your hire of your servants? And if you be servants, how do you serve? Is the spirit of Job's hireling your spirit? It is an old practice of servants, as well as there is wickedness in masters. It is an old practice of servants. Job saith, "The hireling longeth for the shadow." He has not a watch, but he had a stick which he put up in a certain position so that when at a certain hour of the day it cast a shadow, he would say, "Now the day's work is over." He longed for it, looked for it all the day perhaps; his heart not in his work but on the shadow that was coming, and that was wrong. Every good master will deal justly with his servants, and every gracious servant will deal justly with his master. Outward separation must be where inward separation is effected by the Holy Ghost. Hence the apostle's exhortation: "Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness and longsuffering." He speaks, you know, of the fruits of the flesh, the works of the flesh. These are malice and enmity and bitterness and wrath and evil and all uncleanness. Then He speaks of the fruits of the Spirit; love, joy, peace, and so on; and if you have these latter, then you will certainly walk with the church of the living God.

Now may the Lord help us honestly to examine ourselves by this prayer. Has it ever in any measure been answered in us? Has God the Father separated us, has the blood of Christ separated us, has the Holy Spirit's work ever separated us? Did you ever leave proud self and go to the lowly Lord Jesus? Did we ever leave independent self and kneel before the throne of grace for mercy? Did we ever leave our own filthy rags and beg to be clothed in that righteousness of Christ which justifies from all things? Did we ever leave our own doings whereby we might have fancied we could cut the throat of some sin and cut off that excrescence, and go to the blessed God and beg of Him to cleanse our hearts from evil; that is, that evil thoughts might not continually lodge in us? It is great to be rightly separated, that is sanctified. Look then as narrowly as you can at this great matter, and may the Lord grant His own owning in our consciences, that we may know whose we are and whom we serve. Amen.