

# Holiness the Harmonizing Experience

By Lewis T. Corlett

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# **Holiness The Harmonizing Experience**

**By Lewis T. Corlett**

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I am indebted, too, to my secretary, Miss Aletha Bonner, and to Professor Marian Washburn, for their help in preparing the manuscript. Also, many have indirectly given suggestions and direction in the formation of these lectures during the past few years. Especially am I indebted to the Holy Spirit for His special illumination of truth in some hours of trial and darkness in the hours of suffering and nervous collapse.

The Author

# Holiness the Harmonizing Experience

By Lewis T. Corlett

## Foreword

It is a pleasure to commend this volume to the attention of all who are interested in the problems which center in the living of the sanctified life. The dominant emphasis throughout these lectures is on the practical aspects of holy living. The author has attacked problems which have not often come to the focus of discussion, and has placed us all in his debt by the candor and sanity with which he has met them. The enthusiasm and verve which characterized the original delivery of the lectures gave them the quality of unction. Reduced to the printed page, that quality is difficult to retain. Yet the author has succeeded in retaining it to a commendable degree. The result is a book so broad in its sympathies and understanding as to speak in some degree to the condition of everyone who reads it. The author is one who knows his subject, who understands the hearts of men, and (what is most important) who knows God. It is my earnest prayer that his book will be a means of grace and blessing to all into whose hands it may chance to come.

J. Glenn Gould

# Holiness the Harmonizing Experience

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## Introduction

The messages in this book were delivered as lectures in the annual Gould Lecture Series at Eastern Nazarene College. Previously much of the material was used in lectures given at Pasadena College, Cascade College, and in our own chapel at Northwest Nazarene College. In response to the requests of Dr. J. Glenn Gould, the sponsor of the Gould Lectures, and many others the messages are presented in printed form.

It was a great blessing to associate with the leaders and groups on the various campuses. I claim no credit for originality but have tried in these messages to pass on to others some of the truths learned by reading, observation, and in experiences in the various aspects of life. It is my sincere hope that the publication of these messages will make a contribution to the literature of the cause of holiness and help many believers to become more firmly established in the faith.

Lewis T. Corlett Nampa, Idaho Nov. 1, 1950

# Holiness the Harmonizing Experience

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## Chapter 1

### HARMONY OF LIFE POSSIBLE

Life is action. Action does not always imply or include harmony. The world has far too much strife and discord. With the individual this discord is both internal and external. The tensions and pressures of this present generation have increased the conflicts in and about man. There is a way whereby man can be freed from the internal motive tension and be confronted only with the battle from without. This provision is God's method of developing character and personality. He always works in harmony, never in discord. As God's harmony is the natural result of His perfection, then man can find inner soul harmony only by the contemplation of God's ideal of perfection.

God's plan is superior to the best of man's development in each generation. Since this generation has gone further in understanding and measuring the immaterial part of man, and since time would forbid an extensive discussion of the many ages, this discussion will be limited to the present generation. It will show the superiority of God's program to the most advanced mental and spiritual healing of today.

Succeeding generations desire and demand a change in most things. This is the spirit which produces inventions and forces progress. In most fields it is a very desirable factor. Many have carried it over into the realm of moral values and have made mistakes. They have thought that they must adapt the old standards and remedies to new customs instead of interpreting present customs and conditions in the light of enduring qualities. This is a partial explanation of the new theories that arise in each age. Some have even gone so far as to question the authority and genuineness of the Bible. In fact, it was quite a fad for several years for pseudo-scientists to speak of theology and the Bible as being obsolete and antiquated.

But a number of liberal thinkers have had to change their viewpoint during recent years. They found that their standards of values would not meet the crises of the day. The depression, the strain and stress of economic problems, and the present world crisis all revealed a marked deficiency in their process of thinking. In these conditions the people and nations demanded something more than doubts and questions. Many of these liberal leaders sensed the situation and swung, in both their thinking and practice, to a more fundamental view of God and the Bible. Henry C. Link says: "In advising such people as a result of my studies of their problems, I found myself more and more frequently using some Biblical expression, or summing up certain recommendations in terms of an accepted religious doctrine. This growing tendency was forced upon me by the realization that my professional and scientific vocabulary was not always adequate. It was neither sufficiently clear nor sufficiently definite for the needs of many who came to me for advice."<sup>[1]</sup>

Link continues this thought: "My return to religion, as an individual, is not important; but the discoveries of scientific psychology which influenced me are. In spite of the great benefits which the physical sciences have bestowed on mankind -- a longer life, a more comfortable life, a life more free from physical pains, and a life filled with an infinite variety of interesting objects and educational experiences, there is no evidence that individuals are happier, that families are more united, that governments or political bodies are wiser, or that nations are less likely to go to war.

"Indeed, there is much evidence to the contrary. The net annual increase in mental patients in hospitals in the United States has risen to four and one-half per cent and the rate is still rising. In 1933 the total number of patient days in all hospitals in the United States for mental cases was 173,000,000 against 123,000,000 patient days for all other diseases. In New York State it has been authoritatively estimated that hereafter one in every twenty-two persons born in the state will go to an institution for mental illness. Such cases represent the extremes of individual failure, but we see their

intermediate symptoms in the feverish pursuit of panaceas for happiness which characterizes the whole fabric of our current national life." [2]

"The realization of this fact accounts, in large part, for my return to the church. I go to church, to repeat, because it has meant giving up things I like to do for things I did not like, at first, so well. I believe in God because I have found that without the belief in some one more important than themselves, people fail to achieve their own potential importance." [3]

These leaders were hunting for something they could stand on as well as a basis for a substantial message to give to their people. Holiness people did not find themselves in such a dilemma. They had kept their ears open, not only to the demand for change, but also to the will and word of God. They had held to the standard of values which was based on God and His revelation to man. They had built a ministry on faith in God and His Book and did not need to change their basic message. They found themselves on the Rock to which the liberal thinkers were turning in the time of storm. Instead of being outdated in their viewpoints and standards, holiness leaders discovered that they were ahead of these others, and now the liberals were catching up to what they had termed "old -- fashioned" and "old fogey" religion. Holiness is adaptable to the problems of every age and will meet the needs of this present one.

A speaker in a recent educational conference declared that the main problem of this age was that the young people were being educated without a proper scale of values. The conclusion was that this was brought about by the neglect of the proper training of the moral and spiritual part of the man. Liberal philosophy has tended to make every man an authority in himself. Quoting Henry C. Link again: "Liberalism, as I have seen it in so many cases, is the result of an indiscriminate releasing of a person from the traditions and restraints of the past without substituting an adequate set of restraints or ideals for the future. It manifests itself clinically among younger people, as follows: In the tendency to regard parents as old-fashioned and the older generation, at large, behind the times. In the tendency of students to be liberal with their parents' money, automobile, and other property without assuming any corresponding obligations or responsibilities. In the intellectual scorn which students often show for the religious, political, and moral creeds of their parents and of their own early childhood. In the repugnance which so many students from humble homes develop toward the occupations of their fathers, and toward the more manual types of vocations. In the frequent tendency to depreciate business as a career and to idealize an intellectual or more cultural type of occupation, regardless of fitness for such pursuits. Seldom do these young people realize that only the surplus of production and wealth makes education and intellectual occupations at all possible." [4] This has left the race without a definite objective and sense of ultimate authority. Dr. E. Stanley Jones says: "But it is just this devotion to a cause which I find youth in East and West to lack. The youth of America I found to be the finest generation of youth we have ever had: they were two inches taller on the average than the previous generation, they were better educated, more frank and honest, with greater instruments of power in their hands, they had everything except one thing -- A Cause. They were all dressed up and ready, but standing dead in their boots, because they had nothing to which to give themselves. They had no Cause. And without that, life was going to pieces on their hands." [5]

The natural result of this attitude has been that people have begun to cater to self-indulgence. The ideal of many has become, "Give me what I want when I want it." They have thrown self-discipline to the winds and some have added, "Give me what I want when I want it, or I will have a spell." In a few cases the spell has gone so far as to mean gun play and shooting down in cold blood those who tried to hinder them from obtaining what they wanted when they wanted it. Expediency became the basis of thought and action rather than principle. But "What is right?" But "What will be the easiest or bring me the greatest benefit or gain now?"

There has been a gradual decline in the value of the individual. Both the production line with its limited outline work for each person and the general idea of mass psychology tend to cause the individual person to be lost in the group. War, with its high pressures for production as well as the sacrifice of life on the battlefield, has increased this viewpoint of the individual as insignificant. The war psychology diverted attention from this, for the demands and desires to win the war unified the people in a strong emotion of desire to end the war.

Hazen G. Werner describes this condition: "We were caught in the interim between the decline of social codes and a morality yet to come. Young people can live as they choose; the fences are down. Laws and conventions have been swept away; moral irresponsibility is prevalent. But this is not the way out; it has no prize to offer except a broken ideal. We have been floundering about, victimized by the carelessness of our day. We must grow new moral guidances for life, new standards lifted out of the divine sense of right within us. This is the Christian way. That inner law is the voice of God." <sup>[6]</sup>

These and other conditions tend to produce an uneasiness and strain in the lives of people today. Men and women are unsettled and uneasy and cannot understand what is causing their discontent. The result is a great increase in physical and mental sickness. Some are breaking under this pressure and have had to be committed to state and private institutions. Quoting again from Mr. Link: "In the professional capacity of a psychologist, I have examined and advised, or assisted in advising, some four thousand individuals during the past fifteen years. These individuals were of all kinds, young and old, men and women, poor and rich. However, with few exceptions, they were normal people with normal problems such as most of us at some time or other have. They were dissatisfied with their present mode of living, had gotten into a rut, or wanted to change their vocations. Some were unhappy in their married life, or were considering a divorce. Some had difficulty in getting along with other people, were unable to make friends, suffered from an excess of timidity. Many had children whose education or discipline and habits presented difficulties. Some suffered from a conflict between their religious belief and practices, or from a conflict between their obligations to parents and to themselves. Some had undesirable habits which they were trying to correct. In short, their difficulties were those of normal people to be dealt with from the standpoint of normal psychology." <sup>[7]</sup> The majority of this type are laboring or wondering when and how they will be able to find relief and deliverance.

These conditions are baffling the medical profession to a great extent. They are having to doctor so many sick people who, upon examination, show no organic disorder or sickness. There are two general trends of remedies which have been proposed and in some measure have been accepted and adopted as possible solutions to these conditions.

The first of these is the type classified under "psychoanalysis." The basic principle of this type is that the pressure causing the uneasiness and mental sickness is produced by hidden fears or desires. The remedy is an endeavor on the part of a psychoanalyst to probe into the past life of the patient until these blocks can be uncovered and cleared up, thus removing the pressure. Some good has been accomplished by this process. Two grave problems arise to hinder it: First, it is a battle of the wit and knowledge of the patient to keep the analyst from discovering his secret; second, is the danger that some analysts may have the tendency to encourage the patient to give way to the satisfaction of appetites, passions, and desires in order to try to relieve the hidden pressures.

Henry C. Link describes this tendency in these words: "The fallacy underlying the progressive education movement is that it has not codified the forms of expression which are desirable and those which are not. It has assumed, too uncritically, that what a child wanted to express was worth encouraging. It has made a god of the principle of expression at the expense of the manner of self-expression. Consequently it has often confused self-expression with self-indulgence, dawdling, and a set of adult notions about the framework -- art, dramatics, pageants, etc. -- in which children should self-express themselves. It has failed to recognize sufficiently that mature self-expression and creativeness rest on the acquisition of the basic techniques of self-expression, much as the mastery of a piece of music rests on the mastery of the scales." <sup>[8]</sup>

The second type of remedy is that offered by and through psychiatry. This is a more scientific method of mental healing and has helped many to find the proper balance of life. The armed services are employing prominent psychiatrists to assist soldiers who came back from the battle front in an unbalanced mental condition. Some marvelous healings have been accomplished in this field. The psychiatrists have discovered that the more a man lives within himself the more easily he is subject to this mental pressure. Also they have learned that if man centers his thoughts and emotions on himself he soon becomes sick of himself. Man must have an objective outside of himself which requires him to forget

himself before he can enjoy health and be useful to society. In endeavoring to guide patients to look outside themselves psychiatrists have found a limitation which handicapped them or completely baffled them: the attempt to discover an objective great and powerful enough for their patients to lose themselves in it.

Leading pastors of the United States are recognizing that it takes more than a knowledge of psychiatry to pull a personality together. They see that some of the prominent psychiatrists and counselors are lacking in the integration of their own personalities. It takes an inner stability deeper than the mind to give poise, peace, and happiness. For this reason many psychiatrists have unconsciously found themselves directing their patients to religion and the Church to find the highest and best objectives to aid in rehabilitation. Link emphasized this: "From a psychological as well as from a commonsense point of view, the greatest source of help is religion. The religious belief in God, the Ten Commandments, and the teachings of Jesus, gives parents a certainty and an authority with their children which they otherwise lack. Those parents who wondered how, in the absence of the religious influences which had molded them, they could mold the moral habits of their children, were facing an unanswerable problem. There is no rational substitute for the supernatural power which the unquestioned belief in a Divine Being and a Divine moral order confers." <sup>[9]</sup>

Dale Carnegie says: "I can remember the days when people talked about the conflict between science and religion. But no more. The newest of all sciences -- psychiatry -- is teaching what Jesus taught. Why? Because psychiatrists realize that prayer and a strong religious faith will banish the worries and anxieties, the strains and the fears, that cause more than half of all our ills

"I have gone back -- or I should say forward -- to a new concept of religion. I no longer have the faintest interest in the differences in creeds that divide the churches. But I am tremendously interested in what religion does for me, just as I am interested in what electricity and good food and water do for me. They help me to lead a richer, fuller, happier life.

"But religion does far more than that. It brings me spiritual values. It gives me, as William James put it, 'a new zest for life . . . more life, a larger, richer, more satisfying life.' It gives me faith, hope, and courage. It banishes tensions, anxieties, fears, and worries. It gives purpose and

direction to my life. It gives me abounding health. It helps me to create for myself "an oasis of peace amidst the whirling sands of time." <sup>[10]</sup>

Dr. Carl Jung, distinguished psychiatrist, says in his book, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*: "During the past thirty years people from all civilized countries of the earth have consulted me. I have treated many hundreds of patients. Among all my patients in the second half of life -- that is to say, over thirty-five -- there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers, and none of them have been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook." <sup>[11]</sup>

God's standard of Christian perfection, which is heart holiness, meets the present problems of mankind better than either one of these remedies. Both psycho-analysts and psychiatrists have helped many; yet they find themselves limited either in reaching the depths of man's being to uncover the pressure or in urging man to forget himself sufficiently to fasten his attention and interests on some external objective. The self-knowledge gained through the analysis of man's personality is helpful to the individual, but it cannot redeem man. Knowledge must go beyond the self and include the knowledge of God to find the proper objective. Redemption from sin comes only through Christ the Saviour. Through His death on the cross the plan of salvation was provided for man's redemption. When man puts the risen Lord as the true objective of life, self-knowledge bows in obedience to divine knowledge and divine redemption.

Holiness offers and provides man with the highest, the greatest, and the best objective in the world, God himself. Holiness is the name applied to the moral character of God; so from the beginning the person's thoughts and purposes are

directed to God as being above and over all. He is the most worthy objective an individual could have; for God is not only outside of man, but He is also so great and mighty in His being as to challenge man to forget self and be lost in the contemplation and enjoyment of His immensity. "What does the Christian experience propose to do about this need? It provides from out of its resources a certain unique center or ideal. It proposes reintegration around that spiritual center which is Christ. You can call the consequent experience the Christian way of life, remembering that He said, 'I am the real and living way.' When Christ is at the center, your life becomes a directed life. You live and you act in relationships on the basis not of your desire but of His... We can come into the experiences of reality only through the presence of a real center. It will take the Christ to bring us to a place where we live completely, unifiedly. 'In Him all things cohere.' Anyone who will try living vividly and realistically out of that constant reference to Christ as a center will find life vastly different. From that center issues poise for trouble and pain, courage that enables one to meet life. This center yields an overcoming strength. 'I live; and yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.' What a relief to be able to get through with acting as though one had the most precious thing at the heart of life all the while one has only been pretending to have it! From this center, which is Christ, comes the genius of success in living and the Christian life. The reintegration around this new and higher center is conversion."<sup>[12]</sup> So, from the first step, God's plan does meet the need of man and in a better way than these other remedies. Instead of being out of date, holiness is ahead; and the closer modern leaders come to a solution of man's problems, the more nearly they come to the harmony of holiness and God's standard of perfection.

Holiness reveals a worth of the individual which is necessary for the basis of man's redemption. Again quoting Werner, he says: "The modern man must be redeemed from the experience of a meaningless existence, and that can be done only when he has been challenged to accept a divine purpose that will restore his sense of worth. Here is precisely the task of the gospel. All of that inner urge for meaning and accomplishment must be given expression in a spiritual and moral adventure. Something must come into a man's life to give him release, something that will take him by the hand and lead him to the realm of his kingship and tell him that he matters."<sup>[13]</sup> Holiness requires that a man face himself, confess his sins, straighten up his back, and purpose to live righteously if he would enjoy the favor and aid of God. This is better than the method of the psychoanalyst in that the person has the aid of the Holy Spirit, who is far more thorough in the uncovering of hidden sin than any mortal possibly could be. He is faithful and uncovers everything of wrongdoing in the past life; and, being all-wise, He directs the seeker in the correct way to find deliverance. This has been called "conviction" by the Church of all ages. It is what the psychoanalysts have been groping to discover and in a measure have discovered. Practically all the work of psychoanalysis is related to isolated instances in the individual life, not with the selfish direction or criterion by which all of his choices are made. Holiness through the Spirit makes this latter emphasis, which is fundamental. Holiness demands that the person follow the direction of the Spirit in this process. Consequently a more thorough job is done, and God's program is ahead again and the others are struggling to catch up.

One of the big problems of the psychiatrist is to find the proper motivation to aid his patient in taking an objective outside himself. Werner describes this and points to the Christian method when he says: "Having accepted the fact that in the experience of successful reintegration Christ is the perfect center, we yet face the question of what empowers the individual to that reintegration. Here again the Christian method goes far beyond the humanistic or merely psychological. In the latter, the one seeking must rely upon self-realization, that is, on a person's understanding of what in his inner life brought about the maladjustment and what must take place in that inner life if he is to be reintegrated. Applied psychology without religion depends wholly on the power of self-knowledge.

But in the Christian conception knowledge is not enough. Self-realization, while an essential part of the whole process of reintegration, is not sufficient for empowerment to that reintegration."<sup>[14]</sup>

Holiness does this in the best possible manner; for if a person co-operates with the Holy Spirit in repentance he not only has his past cleared up in forgiveness and restitution, but also he receives new life from above. He becomes a "partaker of the divine nature."<sup>[15]</sup> He is made a "new creature in Christ Jesus" with strong desires and emotions to do what God requires and go the way He directs. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts [his heart] by the Holy Ghost," and the believer enjoys doing what he is supposed to do because it is a life of love. Thus, holiness leads the way both in

transformation of character and in providing a proper dynamic motivation.

Holiness meets the need of the individual in a more complete sense than psychiatry ever can. Psychiatry says a person must forget himself to have good health. God's standard demands that the believer, after he has received divine life, face himself and the disposition and bent to selfishness in his nature, that he die out to self with all of its claims and yield all his ransomed powers to God. This is not merely a passive attitude but rather an active operation of placing all in the hands of the Lord. It is complete devotement to God for sacrifice or service at His guidance and direction. The believer acknowledges his need for a stronger, purer, and more unified motivation and declares his purpose to attain to it. This is the goal of the psychiatrist and, while he is partially successful in a number of cases, he cannot succeed fully without bringing God in as the objective. God is the only objective great and large enough in which man can lose himself and be satisfied in his state. Man finds such a limitless boundary in God that it is comparatively easy to forget self-interests and die to self and be lost in Christ in God. Again holiness is in the lead and pointing the true way of deliverance to the modern theorists.

Holiness is a living relation between the believer and his God. To be enjoyed it must be cultivated and sustained. This calls for a continual, progressive walk as God directs. This stimulates and strengthens faith. Faith is both an action and a reaction. It grows spontaneously out of confidence in God. It thrives best in the cultivation of the love life of the believer and his God. Faith produces assurance; assurance gives joy and satisfaction; these in turn produce zeal and enthusiasm; and all together produce a character capable of facing and meeting the problems of the day. In this challenge for a progressive walk holiness meets the basic need of man for progressive development and service.

The desire of the average person today is to have an experience which will create a thrill, to help him forget his problems and cares. This is not evil in itself but may involve evil and sin in the way it is met or carried out. People of all walks of life desire a release from the pressure of the problem at hand. The smoker finds it in the good feeling while smoking a cigarette. The drinker loses himself in the stupefying touch on his faculties which makes him forget the disagreeable and brings a sense of temporary release. A person goes to the theater to laugh and feel with the actors and lose himself for a time in empathic response to the actions of others. The dope user starts this habit with a desire to be stimulated to forget the dreariness and weariness of the present. All of these things do give a temporary thrill but at the same time put an unnatural pressure on the emotions involved. Thus the smoker, under pressure and tension, smokes almost continuously; the drinker goes beyond his powers of control and becomes drunk; the dope user finds his whole being crying out for more, and he finds himself bound in the clutches of a destructive habit. The regular attendant at the movies calls for more thrilling scenes, either in reckless daring, physical adventure, or in more immoral suggestions by word or act. He wants to be freed from reality. The thrill of the moment is followed by weakened powers. An insatiate craving for greater and stronger stimuli arouses the emotions to a more exciting thrill.

In this phase of the problem of humanity God's ideal of perfection can meet the need better than any thrill of the world. God in His plan of salvation works with and in the emotions. It calls for more than the emotions, yet it proves to be a stabilizer for emotional cravings. In the beginning of the process of salvation the pressure of unconfessed sin is removed and the emotion of fear is replaced by that of faith and joy. The love of God implanted in the heart by the Holy Spirit brings ecstasy in the surprising discovery of the power of a new emotion. This emotional reaction is not caused by some external force or relationship but by the indwelling Personality of the Holy Spirit. In His operations He does not lift the believer to an abnormal place of temporary pleasant reactions which weaken and destroy. Rather He transforms the inner life by the impartation of divine love. This gives the recipient a new sense and standard of values and at the same time stabilizes his emotional cravings. A personal Christian experience is more than emotion, yet it works in and through the emotions. The reactions of the new life do occasionally give momentary pleasant ecstasy. The glory of this is that it is constructive instead of debilitating. The believer is left with a greater sense of the constancy of joy in the inner life; he is more conscious of both God's interest and His presence; and he looks at life with a greater conviction of the value of the enduring and eternal. He responds empathetically to the sense of God's presence and walks in deeper devotion and more intimate fellowship. He is not conscious of losing or missing anything in his separation from the world, for he has "found a deeper treasure, one which fadeth not away." Duty becomes a pleasure; worship, delightful communion with His Saviour; attendance at church, a stimulating association with people of like faith. God is love; the basic nature of His

relation to man in Christian experience is His "love . . . shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." <sup>[16]</sup> Love is more than an emotion; it is a combination of nature, sentiment, and emotion. The nature and sentiment are constant and abiding, while the emotional state may vary in reaction according to either the mental and physical state of man or the external situation. Thus after the ecstasy of the momentary emotional reaction passes, the believer finds himself in a deeper river of love instead of in the grip of an empty craving left by a sensual thrill. Love as a human element, centered in self, calls for the exhausting thrills of the world; but anchored in God, it finds both its satisfaction and enjoyment in devotion to the One who is the source of love. Thus God's program has a stabilizing power and effect upon each and every part of man's nature; his motive life is unified, his emotional life is centered in the abiding and enduring, his mental viewpoints are set on things above, and his physical powers are regulated in normal functions.

The benefits are not only personal. Others profit, for coupled with this other-world mindedness is a deep desire for service to mankind. His desires, thoughts, and ambitions are centered in helping others and advancing the kingdom of God. His life is integrated in God and focalized in doing His will while continuing as a citizen of earth. Holiness provides the best remedy for man's ailments today; and the closer modern man comes to solving man's problems, the nearer he comes to the standards and experience of second blessing holiness. God's ideal for man is a personality integrated in Him as the ideal of perfection. The closer the individual comes to this ideal, the more he finds himself in harmony with himself and the eternal laws of the universe both physically and morally. God's program is superior to the best remedies for man's personality ailments given today, and at the same time it really satisfies the basic needs of each person.

1 Link, H. C., Return to Religion, Printed Book Copyright 1936, Macmillan Co., p. 5

2 Ibid., pp. 14, 15

3 Ibid., p. 34

4 Ibid., pp. 16, 161

5 Jones, E. Stanley, Is the Kingdom of God Realism? Printed Book Copyright 1940 by Whitmore & Stone. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press

6 Werner, Hazen G., And We Are Whole Again, Printed Book Copyright 1945 by Whitmore & Stone, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, p. 29

7 Link, H. C., Return to Religion, pp. 4, 5

8 Ibid., p. 107

9 Ibid., p. 104

10 Carnegie, Dale, Your Life (Magazine), Feb., 1948, p. 18

11 Jung, C. G., Modern Man in Search of a Soul, p. 264

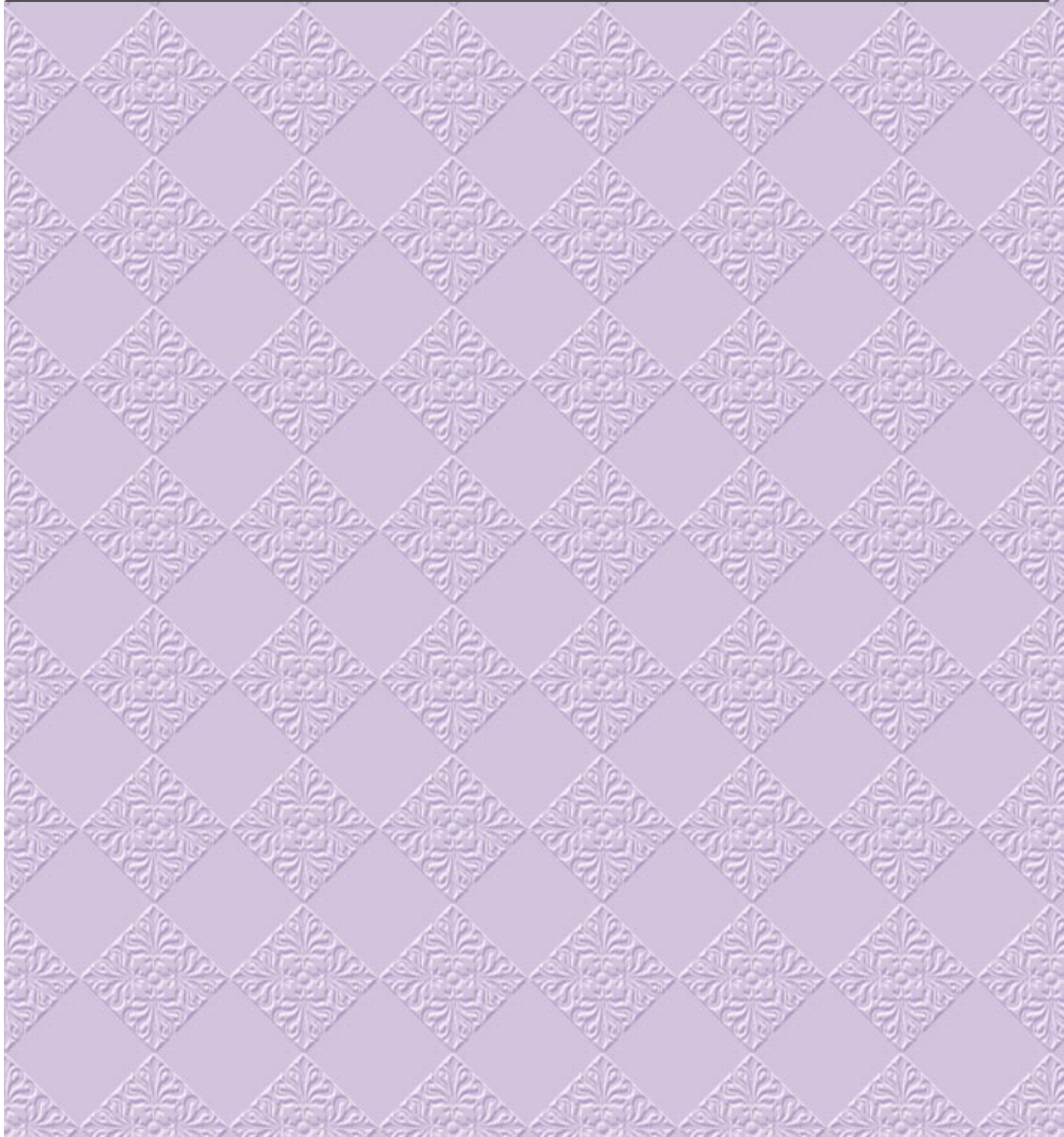
12 Werner, op. cit., pp. 141, 142

13 Ibid., p. 28

14 Ibid., p. 145

15 II Peter 1:4

16 Romans 5:5



# Holiness the Harmonizing Experience

By Lewis T. Corlett

## Chapter 2

### SOURCE AND MEANS OF HARMONIZING LIFE

Man is a powerful personality. It is not possible to forecast the heights to which he can attain. Likewise a prediction cannot be made accurately of the depths to which he may plunge. Man can live in harmony and peace or he can exist in misery and woe. He is so created that his success, welfare, happiness, and usefulness are bound up inseparably with the ideal of perfection. His attitude and concept of this will decide his present nature, his future prospects, and his final destiny. Man cannot live near the reach of his possibilities unless he has a definite idea of perfection and an ideal of perfection toward which he is striving.

Yet in the light of this, man tries to evade his responsibility to the ideal of perfection and then wonders why society, politics, and civilization the world over, and he himself, are staggering and tottering on the brink of despair. People, especially in ecclesiastical circles, have scoffed and ridiculed the idea of "perfectionism" and allowed man to choose lower ideals which have led to the present despair. George F. Thomas said: "The ideal of perfection has been discredited in the eyes of many, not only by the sentimental optimism and the self-righteousness of some of its defenders, but also by the legalistic conception of it as literal obedience to the 'commandments' of God in the Old Testament and the 'precepts' of Christ in the New. Puritanism was at times guilty of this legalistic view of goodness and Protestant groups have been influenced by it in their insistence upon abstinence from many acts. The answer to this misconception is that Christian perfection should be defined in terms of a religious rather than a legalistic; morality. It is rooted in the religious experience of communion with God in faith and love. This religious experience gives rise spontaneously to an outgoing love of neighbor. Thus, the essence of Christian perfection is not literal obedience to revealed commandments in external conduct, but pure and unselfish love manifesting itself in ways suitable to the ever-new and ever-changing situations of human life.

"The need for a recovery of this ideal of personality is shown by even a cursory survey of the moral and cultural standards of contemporary life. The loss of the ideal of Christian perfection as the crown of a Spirit-possessed life is symbolized by the virtual disappearance of the term 'saint' from our vocabulary. The result has been a serious weakening of the spiritual life in all its phases. The dominant ideal of character in recent generations has been that of the congenial, sociable, adjusted person who pleases everybody but lacks moral principles and spiritual depth. In a similar fashion, the loss of the passion for perfection has much to do with the shallowness of our culture. A deep love of philosophic wisdom and of beauty (as distinguished from mere sensuous charm) is almost as rare as a deep love of God and love of goodness. As a result, the vital energies of our people are far too largely spent upon sexual excitement, economic acquisition, and meaningless activities. The degradation of personality can be overcome only by the process we have just described: reconciliation with God through faith, regeneration of the self by His in-dwelling Spirit, and unremitting effort to approximate more nearly the goal of perfect goodness in love." <sup>[1]</sup>

Mr. Flew states a similar truth showing the necessity of a high standard for man. "There is a spiritual law, discernible in the supreme creative achievements of art or literature, that nothing enduring is brought forth save by one whose aim is illimitable and whose standard is perfection." <sup>[2]</sup>

This is described clearly by Joseph H. Smith: "Man's mind is so constituted as to demand perfection, and this is most emphatically so in things of which he believes God is the author.

"Yes, even in arts and sciences, of his own he has a perfect mark by which, for instance, he grades students up to 100 per cent. He rates commercial products according to certain fixed standards of purity, weight, and measure; and awards premiums at the fairs and expositions accordingly. And most particularly is this true as to man's (and woman's) mind with regard to social and domestic relations of life. Here nothing short of a complete devotion and a perfect fidelity will satisfy the requirements of expectation. And in ethics it is the same; for not approximate but absolute truthfulness and honesty are the standard by which men judge their fellows and decry all graft and deception in public and business life.

"Men's hearts need and cry for a perfect solace and satisfaction. And when these hearts turn to Christ, is it not true that we all, either from instinct or intuition or a measure of inspiration, expect to find such a perfect satisfaction and salvation in Him?

"We think this is universally so. The hearts of all true believers in Christ are born to long for and look for just what we shall trace in Paul as perfection. Anything less than a perfect alignment with God's will does not meet our expectation in Christ, nor satisfy what we feel is Christ's expectation of us." <sup>[3]</sup>

Man is dangerous to himself from two aspects unless he has a standard of perfection continually held before him. First, he faces the handicap of limited knowledge and power. He is conscious that he cannot know all things or accomplish everything; so there is within him a tendency to take the path of least resistance and be satisfied with less than his potential development. Also with this he is beset with a tendency within himself to center all things in himself and to endeavor to satisfy the cravings of a carnal self. This carnality, which is a corruption of the basic powers and urges of the self life, causes man to be content to live on a low level of life and cater to destructive elements. The only way man can successfully be delivered from and have victory over these tendencies is to have a standard and requirement of perfection held before him that will both condemn him for his lack of conformity and show him the way whereby he can be delivered from these evils.

Thus the command of God, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," <sup>[4]</sup> was not an arbitrary statement of a tyrannical ruler. Rather it was the expression of the infinite wisdom of a Heavenly Father stating an absolute necessity for the human part of His creation. This command denotes the standard demanded and the character of the standard. Man was made by God, and He knew both his limitations and his possibilities. He knew that man as a personality could only be challenged to his highest possibilities by another personality, greater and better than himself. So because there was no one higher, or greater, or holier than himself God gave himself as the standard. Peter expresses a similar truth under divine inspiration when he wrote: "As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." <sup>[5]</sup> Here is given to man the special moral quality absolutely essential to useful perfection. Man was made to be holy, to show forth the glory of God. Isaiah states, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." <sup>[6]</sup> Thus God brings man face to face with the absolute purity of the holiness of an Almighty Being. The highest standard given to encourage and enable man to progress toward his possible best is grounded in the character of God. God is the essence of peace and harmony. All the characteristics of His standard point and lead the individual to a pathway which directs him to the personal possession of joy and peace.

It will be well at this point of the discussion to give some definitions of what is meant and included in Christian perfection. Mr. Wesley said: "Christian perfection, therefore, does not imply (as some men have imagined) an exemption either from ignorance, or mistake, or infirmities, or temptations. Indeed, it is only another term for holiness. They are two names for the same thing. Thus everyone that is holy is, in the Scriptural sense, perfect. Yet we may observe that neither in this respect is there any absolute perfection on earth. There is no perfection of degrees, as it is termed, none which does not admit of continual increase. So that how much soever any man has attained, or in what degree soever he is perfect, he hath still need to grow in grace, and daily to advance in the knowledge and love of God his Saviour." He summarizes the meaning with: "By perfection I mean the humble, gentle, patient love of God and our neighbor, ruling our tempers, words, and actions." <sup>[7]</sup>

Dr. D. S. Corlett gives the following definition and explanation of the term perfect as used in the Scripture: "The word 'perfect' is used in the Scriptures with at least three different meanings. First, there is the perfection of the moral or spiritual relationship with God, or perfect love (Matt. 5:48; I John 4:17, 18). Second, there is the perfection of maturity -- come to age or full grown: 'we speak wisdom among them that are perfect' (I Cor. 2:6); and 'Till we all come . . . unto a perfect man' (Eph. 4:13). Third, there is a resurrection or eternal perfection: 'If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect' (Phil. 3:11, 12). It is to be noted that, while Paul was pressing toward this resurrection perfection and said he was not perfect in that sense, he testified that he and others of these Philippian Christians were enjoying a perfection of some kind. 'Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded' (Phil. 3:15). He was not perfect in the resurrection or eternal sense, but he was perfect in his spiritual relation to God.

"The third meaning of perfection -- resurrection or eternal perfection -- is the eternal goal of the Christian; the first meaning or perfect love is now the gracious privilege of the Christian in the experience of entire sanctification by faith in Christ; and the second meaning or maturity in grace is the goal of progress for the Christian as he continues in the life of holiness.

"This spiritual wholeness or perfection brings a stability to life which contributes greatly to development in the life of holiness. The Apostle Paul prayed for the Thessalonian Christians: 'To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God' (I Thess. 3:13). The Roman Christians were exhorted to enter into a grace by faith 'wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God' (Rom. 5:2).

"This life of perfection and progress is not 'a flawless life' but, as someone has suggested, 'It is an adequate life.' Everything is there that is essential to stability and progress. It is, moreover, a blameless life. God has so set us free from indwelling sin in our hearts that we may have a heart perfect in love toward God and man and we can be preserved 'blameless' (I Thess. 5:23). But we shall never be 'faultless' before God until we stand in glory before His throne 'with exceeding joy' (Jude 24). (Henry Brockett in Scriptural Freedom from Sin, page 42.) It is not absolute or infallible perfection. Absolute perfection I never contended for. A sinless perfection, such as enables a person to fulfill the whole law, and so needs not the merits of Christ; I acknowledge no such perfection; I do now, and always did, protest against it' (John Wesley). It is the perfection of the moral or spiritual relationship with God, a spiritual wholeness or perfection of love." [8]

Joseph H. Smith explains this meaning in a further quotation: "The Bible does unmistakably present such a perfection. Observe, we say such a perfection. And let us keep in mind that in any of the other lines of perfection to which we have alluded there is a distinct limit as to what it is that is perfect; and there is also a margin allowing for many other imperfections outside that limit. Thus, for instance, the boy who makes one hundred per cent, or a perfect mark in his mathematics, may still be a physical cripple, unable to walk. The wife whose perfection of love to her one and only husband is never questioned and can be proved in twenty different ways may nevertheless be an altogether unskilled seamstress or an inexperienced and an imperfect housekeeper. Christian perfection is like hers in that it is a perfection of the heart, though making no claim to perfection of physical or mental state, nor of temporal circumstances or conditions, but rather a perfect acceptance of an adaptation to the probation that is involved in the imperfections of our lot. Thus, in a word, Christian perfection is limited to a perfection of that which Christianity contemplates for man while on earth and in the body." [9]

Christian perfection can be briefly stated as that state of the heart in which the child of God can and does love God with a whole heart fervently and his neighbor as himself. The terms "Christian perfection," "holiness," and "sanctification" will be used interchangeably in these discussions, as they are synonyms describing the same work of grace.

The setting up of a standard does not always generate hope. Personally, for someone to set up a high standard of performance in music and then state that I must measure up to it would leave me in despair and hopelessness. For when

musical talents were distributed I seem to have been overlooked. Likewise to give a standard of perfection as a requirement to members of a fallen race would only serve to produce greater despair unless three things were provided: first, an unlimited, unrestricted source of power for every man who desires to reach the standard of perfection; second, an accessible source of power to a sinless, hopeless, helpless people; third, specific directions for each person that he may know how to locate the source of power, how to partake of its healing balm, and how to live according to the requirements of the standard. God did not change His standard just in order to take care of a man who was unable to meet it; but He made a flawless provision whereby all these things could be included, and at the same time revealed the harmony of His operations as related to the perfection of His own being and the requirement of perfection in the human race.

First, consider the necessity of the provision of the unlimited, unrestricted source of power to reach the standard of perfection. Hope must not be generated only to be thwarted. As the light of hope arises in the heart of man, he must see that there is an abundant source of all that he needs to meet the requirements of the standard. "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." <sup>[10]</sup> As stated before, the central objective of the standard is the Personality of an unlimited, almighty God; so the boundaries and extent of the supply to meet the standard are as limitless as the character of the omniscient, almighty God. There is a fathomless source of supply within the character of God which encourages each person to come boldly to the throne of grace and there find mercy and help in every time of need. God does not require anything of man that is either impossible or inconsistent with His intrinsic character and revealed plan. The source of supply to meet the standard of perfection is unlimited, immeasurable, and unrestricted. God himself is the source and supply. He has the unlimited provision for man to reach the standard that He requires.

Second, to be consistent with His own character and with His standard this source of power must be made accessible to a helpless and hopeless people. God made man to live in the atmosphere of holiness. Man was not satisfied to live in this atmosphere but chose to please his own self-indulgent cravings rather than to obey God. Thus he became not only deprived of the presence of God as the source of power that would keep him holy, but he also became depraved in every part of his being. Not one faculty, or power, or organ of man's whole constitution was unaffected by this deprivation of the presence of the almighty Spirit of God. Thus man was bound by sin -- the results of his own choice, the effects of his own decision -- and he was unable to approach God. God's standard of perfection not only shows the way and the means and the power to deliver man from sin, but also in its power of cleanliness and purity raises a barrier that holds back those who are unclean. The only way that sin can be seen in its heinousness is as compared with the holiness and perfection of God. The reason that this generation has such a vague conception of the power of God is that it has such a meager concept of God's character, holiness, and perfection. But God in His mercy was not willing that man should be left in the bondage of sin, even though he had plunged himself there by his own choice. God knew that He had within Him the power that would deliver man, but He could not do it arbitrarily but had to do it in harmony and in consistency with His character and standard. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just; and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." <sup>[11]</sup>

So, knowing that man could not lift himself to the position where he could change his character to conform to the standard He had made, God made a plan whereby this source of power could be made accessible to the sinful, captive people. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (for until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto

many. " <sup>[12]</sup>

God could not ignore the sin and rebellion of His creation; neither could He treat it lightly and forgive arbitrarily the disobedience of His law. God in His mercy yearned to help fallen man. Man's character made him uncomfortable in God's presence and he tried to hide following the first sin, and he is still trying to conceal his acts from an all-seeing God. God's law gave the penalty of death; it was the separation and condemnation by God to a disobedient and rebellious people. Man could not draw near, so God must bridge the chasm between a righteous God and an offending race. But He must do this in a manner consistent with His character and with His law. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" <sup>[13]</sup> He gave His own Son. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." <sup>[14]</sup> Also, the Scriptures state that "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." <sup>[15]</sup>

Calvary was God's method of meeting the situation. Truly it is a dark, repulsive picture, but it was a necessity if God were to help man. He could not violate His law, so He provided a sacrifice which would meet the penalty of the law. He could not excuse mankind, but He condemned him in a greater manner by revealing sin in the light of divine perfection. He could not condone sin, but He condemned it in the anguish of the Cross. God poured out His love in His Son; and, as He died upon the cross of Calvary, Jesus Christ came to give His life a ransom for many. Jesus died that man's sin might be atoned for, that a broken law might be met in divine justice, and that mercy could be provided for every one of Adam's race who would desire to have deliverance from sin. Jesus Christ not only died but also rose from the dead to break the power of man's worst enemy, but He did it in entire conformity to the Father's standard of perfection.

There was not one time in the process of provision for atonement in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ but that the full standard of God's requirement of perfection concerning the operation of His law was upheld and met in order for man to be delivered. Thus God has provided the way through His Son whereby each individual can draw near to God and find a ready access unto the throne of grace. It is the privilege of each person to have the atoning blood of Jesus Christ applied to the heart, so that the personality may be delivered from the power and the captivity of sin.

God not only sent His Son to provide the means and the way whereby man could have an approach to God, but He also sent His Spirit into the world to make individuals conscious of the provision of this accessibility. This is God's method of making truth specific and personal, and includes a twofold revelation whereby man is left without excuse at the tribunal of God. He has coupled this twofold revelation with His standard of perfection. First, it is the Spirit dealing with the individual consciousness; and, second, there are the specific directions in the written Word of the Holy Scriptures. The Spirit patiently works with an individual to aid in bringing a consciousness of God to his mind. It is not the wrath and judgment of God that lead men to repentance; rather, it is the goodness of God. The Spirit of God comes to remind men of their condition; for He convicts, He draws, He enlightens, and He reveals Calvary to each unregenerate soul. "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." <sup>[16]</sup>

Then in response to repentance He makes the individual a new creature. He clears the path, He regenerates, He justifies. God, personally, in the Spirit, reminds men that the source of power is available and accessible; but it is always done in the light of the standard of perfection. When the Spirit deals with a heart in convicting power, there is a complete revelation of everything that is wrong in the past life. It is a perfect conviction. When He comes to ask man to face that past life, He commands a complete repentance, a perfect repentance. When He comes to the matter of regeneration, it is not a partial forgiveness; it is a complete forgiveness. It is a matter of a full touch of God upon the individual life.

The possible source of power and the method of making the source available are not sufficient to leave man with an

excuse before the requirements of God's perfection unless man is made conscious of these things. Specific directions must be given whereby each person may have the details of knowledge necessary to obey. The Bible, the written or revealed Word, is not definite in every realm of knowledge; it is not complete for each phase of life. But it is full, complete, and unanswerable regarding directions for turning from sin and accepting Jesus Christ as personal Saviour and Redeemer. Many books have been written on the plan of redemption and the way of salvation; yet the full detail is given in one verse: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."<sup>[17]</sup> Truly this is as simple as could be made and is so easily understood that "wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." The same simplicity accompanies each step of God's requirement for meeting His standard of perfection. When He says, "Be ye holy; for I am holy,"<sup>[18]</sup> He also states: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."<sup>[19]</sup> Lest some would be confused regarding this, He prompted Paul to write: "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification,"<sup>[20]</sup> and, "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate."<sup>[21]</sup> Also, He gives the method to follow: "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."<sup>[22]</sup> No matter how meager may be the knowledge of other things in God's written Word, these are so simple, clear, and definite that it is possible for each and every person hungering for the fullness of God to follow these directions and be made perfect in love in entire sanctification.

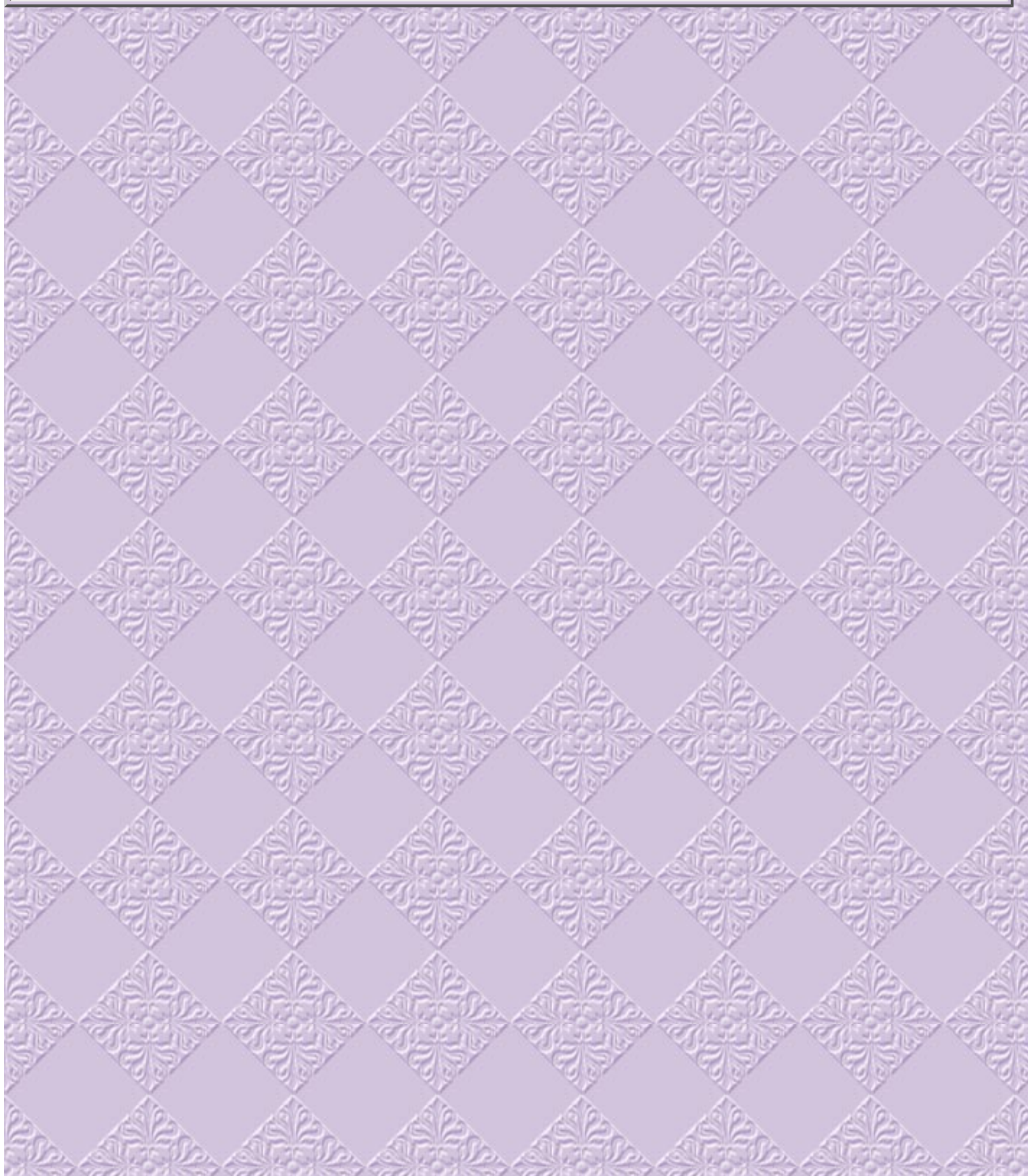
The same is true in the directions for Christian living in a walk of faith in fellowship with God after being saved and sanctified. This truth will be discussed fully in a later chapter. The revealed Word of God is complete and perfect, and is so simple and dynamic that the message can be translated into every language without losing its power of guidance.

Another vital factor in man's constituent make-up is his potential faculties that can be aroused in anticipation of better things. To be complete and also in accordance with His own perfection, God's plan must include a better hope for man. This He did in the revelation of a heaven as the home and final resting place for His children. Man longs for something better than he now sees in this sinful world. God meets this desire in the promise of an abundant entrance into heaven to be with Him forever. But this promise of hope and certainty of heaven are bound up with His standard of perfection. The description of heaven given in the Bible tells of a place where sin, sorrow, suffering, and death will never enter. It is a place of light, joy, purity, holiness, and perfection. To encourage man in this expectation the Bible is definite that Christ is coming for His own. "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; that where I am, there ye may be also."<sup>[23]</sup>

God's requirement is that man must be holy and perfect in love toward Him and toward man. This is not all for which God has made provision in His challenge to mankind. He knew that His children would be restless and that they would be uncertain unless there was a definite objective for them to follow. Man likes to do something, especially for those whom he loves. He likes to follow directions to useful accomplishments; so God, in organizing His Church and in arranging the plan of salvation for man, has arranged that man must work in order to do that which would be pleasing to Him. So as God commissioned the believers to go out unto all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, He also commissioned them to do it in the light of the standard of God's perfection. Man, as God's messenger, cannot preach just anything; he must follow the harmony of God's operation in His perfect planning. Throughout history as the Church has emphasized and magnified God's plan in requiring perfection of His followers, that Church has prospered. In the eras in which that message has been minimized, sin has been excused, and holiness has not been demanded or required, the Church has fallen to low levels that bring dark spots in history. God's standard of perfection is His program for His people.

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- 3 Smith, Joseph H., *Pauline Perfection*, Printed Book Copyright 1913, Christian Witness Co.
- 4 Matthew 5:48
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- 6 Isaiah 43:21
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- 8 Corlett, D. S., *The Meaning of Holiness*, Printed Book Copyright 1944, Beacon Hill Press
- 9 Smith, op. cit.
- 10 Isaiah 40:28-31
- 11 Romans 3:23-26
- 12 Romans 5: 12-15
- 13 Romans 8:32
- 14 John 3:16
- 15 Ephesians 5:25-27
- 16 John 16:8-11
- 17 I John 1:9
- 18 I Peter 1:16
- 19 Romans 12:1, 2
- 20 I Thessalonians 4:3
- 21 Hebrews 13:12
- 22 I John 1:7

23 John 14:1-3



# Holiness the Harmonizing Experience

By Lewis T. Corlett

## Chapter 3

### ACHIEVING HARMONY OF LIFE

In the first chapter we discussed the matter of the adaptability of God's program in its harmony as related to Christian perfection. In the second, the subject was presented from the background of its source, accessibility, and anticipation for man. Now we wish to discuss the harmony of Christian perfection in the individual steps in Christian experience and some psychological reactions in the requirements for man in his obedience to the will of God.

Man's greatest problem, as well as his worst enemy, is himself. Likewise, the self is the greatest benefit the individual has. If he did not have his ego, he would have neither a problem nor an opportunity. More is known today about the operations of the inner nature of man than ever before. The science and field of psychology has opened, to a great degree, man's interior faculties for objective observation. As stated in a former chapter, great benefits have come to humanity because of this research, and the end is not in sight. More and better methods will be found to measure the intelligence, aptitudes, reactions, and inclinations of the individual. During the last war, tests for almost every phase of man's immaterial life were developed. Scholars in research are working on the improvement of these tests as well as the development of others to try to reach a clearer norm in each group to help classify each person. As they progress in these studies they become more conscious of a realm beyond what they are measuring which has not yet been touched. Also many scientists are disturbed because this greater knowledge of man's inner life is not producing an improvement in man individually and a stabilization of society and civilization in general. It seems as if the more detailed the knowledge, the greater the chaos and confusion.

Psychology is seemingly at a loss to explain why it is that as rapidly as man discovers new inventions, beneficial and constructive for the race, there is something in the individual and the race which takes this potentially beneficial invention and turns it into an instrument to hasten the destruction of the race. Also coupled with this is the startling fact that, at his highest point of understanding himself, man concedes the point that he has not found in psychological measurements that which would meet his basic problems and satisfy his deepest longings. The reason these have failed is that the ideal of perfection in God has been scoffed at, ridiculed, and ruled out as impossible, or not considered. God made man, and He placed more in the self life than mere man will ever be able to understand and measure. If he will endeavor to operate in harmony with God's character and His irrevocable laws, he will come nearer to understanding himself. D. Elton Trueblood says: "It is important to make it abundantly clear at this point that the crucial problem is the spiritual problem, and we here mean by spiritual that area which is the object of attention in philosophy and theology as against that area in which the object of attention is mechanical contrivance. The fact that our life is so gravely threatened in the brightest day of technical achievement is not a criticism of the engineers qua engineers, but it is a criticism of all of us as men. The paradox of failure at the moment of success is by no means a condemnation of technical progress, for such progress is morally neutral. It gives the surgeon's knife, and it gives the gangster's weapon. Our predicament is a commentary, not on instruments and instrument makers, but on the human inability to employ both scientific knowledge and technical achievement to bring about the good life and the good society. Man is an animal who is peculiarly in need of something to buttress and to guide his spiritual life. Without this, the very capacities that make him a little lower than the angels lead to his destruction. The beasts do not need a philosophy or a religion, but man does." <sup>[1]</sup>

It is rather difficult to give a clear definition of the self-life. Various psychologists use one terminology or another, and we will not take time to discuss the different definitions. By the self-life in this discussion we will include the immaterial or spiritual part of man -- that which man received when God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." <sup>[2]</sup> Just what were the full powers of the self-life at that moment is a matter of some speculation, as

today it must be viewed in its depraved state and the effects of the depravity of the race through the centuries. But whether the full capacities can be comprehended or not, it is very evident that this ego is the center of the conflict between the Lord and the devil. God endowed man with this self-life which, in the state of original holiness, enabled man to have congenial fellowship with his Creator. Satan came and made his assault on Eve at the core of this self-life, and the conflict for the loyalty of sovereignty has been continued in each generation and in every individual.

This ego, or self-life, was not evil in its origin but contained in its intrinsic nature powers of assertion or urges which were seeking avenues and objects of expression. Personality is so constituted that an individual can be both the subject and the object himself. God is absolute in personality and so great that in becoming the subject and object of himself it does not affect His basic nature. Man, being a relative, finite, dependent personality, cannot make himself the goal or end in the contemplation of himself, as object with himself as the subject, without bringing serious injury to his basic nature. Yet man has the privilege of choosing to center himself in the contemplation of himself. In fact, the realm of man's choices, either as sinner or saint, is never between good or evil directly, but where these powers of personality shall be centered. They cannot be centered specifically in material things but must be directed through personality to material things. Thus man's choices always lie within the realm of personalities, and all his basic choices are centered in one or the other of two personalities -- God or himself. This is true not only of man but also of all of God's creatures who were endowed with volition. It is in this area that the origin of sin will be found. Created angels, being relative and limited in faculties and dependent upon God for the sustained moral quality of holiness, could not, by nature, become the object of their own choice in self-indulgence without depriving themselves of the life line of the Personality who gave holiness. Thus they became depraved, and this explains the origin of Satan and demons. Man fell by committing the similar type of error-centering himself in himself as the object of his choices -- and by so doing deprived himself of the sustaining Personality who made finite beings holy. He could have done this without an external tempter, as he did not choose Satan. Satan chose to satisfy his own urges for his own desire rather than to keep them centered in God. He thus became depraved and plunged the race into the quagmire of inherited sin. Yet in this state man's choices still are in the alternative of God or self. Satan works on and through the cravings of the self-life to plunge man to greater despair and captivity. The manifestation and variety of these choices will vary as much as one individual differs from another.

The real problem of each person is to find that which will do two things. First, he must seek until he discovers that which will deliver him from the bondage of his past and at the same time satisfy his deep-seated craving for some power beyond material things. Second, he must get that which will fill the aching void of the ego, and in this filling provide the motivation and guidance necessary to keep him from becoming the object of his own thoughts.

Man has tried various ways to meet these two basic requirements of his own nature, but all human efforts come short. Increase of knowledge has brought only greater confusion to many lives. Suggestion after suggestion has been followed with the hope of finding peace, satisfaction, and happiness. Instead the person found more internal strife, more fear of making decisions, and more uncertainty regarding the whole meaning of life. There seems to be more of a sense of lostness in the world than when man knew less. Man has learned in bitter experience that general progress does not always carry with it religious progress. Man has tried to satisfy these basic demands on what is termed power culture, but came short. D. Elton Trueblood says: "It is convenient to refer to this alternative proposal for the human race as power culture. The essential notion of power culture is the effort to organize human life independent of mural inhibitions. It is the non-ethical creed. It is the supposition, which Mussolini and his pupils have acted on thoroughly, while the rest of us have acted on it amateurishly, that civilization consists primarily in scientific, technical, and artistic achievements and that it can reach its goal without ethical consideration... The first item in this creed is the accent on sheer power." <sup>[3]</sup>

Can an answer be found to these demands except in the realm of religion? Henry C. Link says: "There can be no solution of life's deeper problems, no increased happiness for the individual, through the development of greater scientific knowledge alone. More science only adds more confusion. Unless the sciences are integrated and subordinated to the homely facts of everyday living, they will destroy rather than liberate the minds which created them. This integration must come from without the sciences themselves, it is not inherent in them and it is not a subject for scientific proof. It must come from a faith, a belief in certain values of life which is fundamental and which no logic can displace." <sup>[4]</sup>

Freud, in his book on Psychoanalysis, states that man must look at these basic requirements from a religious viewpoint to find security. "If one wishes to form a true estimate of the full grandeur of religion, one must keep in mind what it undertakes to do for men. It gives them information about the source and origin of the universe, it assures them of protection and final happiness amid the changing vicissitudes of life, and it guides their thoughts and actions by means of precepts which are backed by the whole force of its authority. It fulfills, therefore, three functions. In the first place, it satisfies man's desire for knowledge; it is here doing the same thing that science attempts to accomplish by its own methods, and here, therefore, enters into rivalry with it. It is to the second function that it performs, that religion no doubt owes the greater part of its influence. Insofar as religion brushes away men's fear of the dangers and vicissitudes of life, insofar as it assures them of a happy ending, and comforts them in their misfortunes, science cannot compete with it. Science it is true teaches how one can avoid certain dangers and how one can combat many sufferings with success; it would be quite untrue to deny that science is a powerful aid to human beings, but in many cases it has to leave them to their suffering and can only advise them to submit to the inevitable. In the performance of its third function, the provision of precepts, prohibitions, and restrictions, religion is furthest removed from science. For science is content with discovering and stating the facts. It is true that from the applications of science, rules and recommendations for behaviour may be deduced. In certain circumstances they may be the same as those which are laid down by religion, but even so the reasons for them will be different." [5]

Hazen G. Werner comes directly to the point when he says: "With so many of us it's a matter of an incorrect center. We are votaries of the wrong gods, obviously because they are easier on us. Things are wrong at the circumference because the center isn't right. 'The sense that men make out of life,' says Dean Wicks, 'is determined by what claims their deepest attention.' The center, to be effective, must be one that can stir the imagination with a conception of an elevated life, where well-being and happiness, founded upon inner unity, yield constantly the feeling, This is what I have really wanted. Each one of us must learn to make his instincts and ideals work together for ends that will make for lasting self-harmony. Satisfaction can never come while there is conflict within. The whole man must be brought into oneness and that on the highest plane that can be reached. The physical and psychological forces were meant to rise above their level, guided by a higher center. 'The first underlying cause of all sickness, weakness, or depression,' says one of the witnesses quoted by William James, 'is the human sense of separateness from that Divine Energy which we call God. The soul which can feel and affirm in serene but jubilant confidence, as did the Nazarene: 'I and my Father are one,' has no further need of healer or of healing.' If this is true, certainly the new ideal must be found in other than the self and on higher than the material, physical, or even human level." [6]

Many other quotations could be found, but these are sufficient to direct our present thinking. With these general statements man must always remember that true religion is the expression of a perfect God, and that His entire plan for the solution of man's problems is the expression of His perfection and can only be understood in that light. God's program of salvation guiding to holiness of heart and perfect love is the only means whereby man may meet these two basic problems.

God's operations are planned to meet fully every phase both of man's nature and his problems. Also, as stated in the first chapter, He always operates according to psychological laws but is always superior in His method to the best in each generation. Man's chief source of fear is unconfessed sin. God's program for meeting and solving that is definite and certain -- the Holy Spirit awakens man's mind to a memory of sin and brings the past into the present light of God's purity. This is the only satisfactory means by which the mind of man can reach a true decision regarding the nature and effects of sin. This is a basic method of modern psychology, but too often the psychologist is helpless beyond that point. The Spirit of God solves man's helplessness at this point by directing his attention to the means and power of deliverance, and insists that the solution can be instantaneously received at that moment. But notice how fully the ideal of perfection is held before the person, for all of these steps in the plan of salvation are harmonized with God's standard of perfection. The Spirit requires a perfect penitent spirit. The convicted person must fully acknowledge his wrong and his need and in that need make a definite decision to obey the Holy Spirit fully, completely, perfectly in each detail of repentance. God will not operate on a partial spirit of repentance. He demands a perfect repentance. He may not make all details of the

repentance clear at that moment, but the seeker has so reached the attitude of complete penitence that from that time on forever he plans to maintain a perfect repentance toward wrong.

Before God can perform a work of righteousness in a seeker, the person must take a penitent attitude not only toward the past but also toward the present and future. He must purpose to react toward all acts and attitudes both of himself and others with the willingness to confess his personal faults and forgive and adjust those related to others. This is what Paul meant when he wrote: "Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter." [7]

Also the Spirit requires a complete reversal of direction, a full turning about in purpose and the swearing of a full, perfect allegiance to God. God will not be satisfied with a partial shifting; it must be a full conversion. The perfection of His nature will not permit Him to accept any less. When a seeker reaches this point, a complete faith for salvation will accept God's provision for his personal deliverance. It is well to repeat what was stated in the first chapter: The steps necessary for man to prepare himself for God to perform a work of righteousness in his heart will take him beyond the best that psychology in psychoanalysis can give him.

The same completeness of operation is true regarding the work of the Spirit in regenerating and justifying the penitent seeker as he exercises faith. The scriptural promise is: "If we confess our sins, he... [will] forgive us our sins." [8] Does He forgive only part or does He forgive all? His nature of perfection demands that He do a complete work; so He forgives all, every one, and goes a step further and remembers them against us no more forever. Also in making the seeker a child of His, a member of the family of God, His son, it is not a partial admittance. He makes the individual a full son, and an heir with Christ. One time I heard Dr. E. E. Angell emphasize the fact that when God saved a person in any age He did it as thoroughly and completely as He did it for the Apostle Paul. There is no respect of persons with Him. His nature will not permit Him to do less than a complete work of grace in initial Christian experience. The same can be said of the assurance through the witness of the Spirit.

In these steps of the process it must be kept in mind that there are no other means to take care of the problems of man's self-life except through the clear light and power of the Spirit of God. He always gives joy, peace, and certainty to the one who will follow Him wholeheartedly, completely in the steps of His process. There are so much uncertainty and chaos in man's nature today because he is evading God's program. Man's mind must be made at ease with his past in order for him to be positive about the present and courageous about the future. God's way is the only sure remedy.

Another psychological problem is the necessity of man facing his self-life to find a way or means which will keep him from centering his thoughts in himself. The process is commenced in regeneration when man's attention, purpose, and loyalty are centered in God. Also the motivation of "the love of God . . . shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" [9] provides the necessary motivation to follow the guidance of the Spirit. But one of the baffling problems to psychologists is the presence of antagonistic motives in man which counteract his purpose and plan to live on the highest level of his levels. It is also as much a puzzling problem to many believers. It is difficult to find a name for this opposing nature in psychology, as most psychologists refuse to recognize it in the self. One called it a "false ego." The Bible and theology have called it "the nature of sin," "carnal mind," etc. Paul states that "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." [10]

This is the inherent corruption of the self-life which each person received through being a member of a fallen race. Its tendency is to make a person self-centered and rebellious to higher authority. In regeneration man's motive life is not unified; rather, it is made unsettled in that the believer has what James termed a double mind. [11] A new nature is

implanted in the motive or moral nature, and at times the old nature asserts itself in demands for the sovereignty over the loyalties of the new purpose life and plays upon the self-interests of the individual to make himself in his indulgences the object of his choices. The battle of loyalty to God with the urges to self-will and self-indulgence is on. The balance of personality is at stake. "Personality must be integrated to be stable" are the words of psychology. God makes a similar statement when He says that the believer must "set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth"; <sup>[12]</sup> and that the believer must renounce self and be "hid with Christ in God." <sup>[13]</sup> There is only one way that this can be accomplished. The person must face himself in the light of all the possibilities of his faculties and powers, and volitionally sever all claims of himself to himself and center the control and direction of those faculties and powers in some object outside of himself. There is no other way to secure stable personality. Most of the time psychiatrists and others find themselves helpless in getting patients to do this because they cannot locate a proper objective. Paul was inspired to give God's method: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." <sup>[14]</sup> This is what the holiness preachers of the ages have called the "death to self" or "full consecration." This death to self is not only a necessity to unify or integrate man's personality. Man must sever all claims, good as well as evil, of the self-life and center himself, as the subject, in an objective outside himself to keep himself from becoming the object of his own considerations. There is no way, manner, or means for man's inner life to be unified except by that death to the self-claims.

All of this is done under the leadership and guidance of the Holy Spirit as the divine Agent of the Godhead and is carried out in harmony with the perfection of God. The Spirit demands a complete severance of the claims of self to itself; not one tie can remain. It must be entire and perfect dedication and abandonment to God. Also the believer must present every good faculty, power, and possession as a sacrifice to God for Him to use and direct according to His wisdom. He requires a complete sacrifice, a full consecration. He always operates on the basis of His nature in the harmony of perfection. When this stage in the process is reached, the child of God is so hungering and thirsting for the fullness of God that a complete faith takes hold of the promise and provides God with a clear channel through which He may operate. And when He performs the divine operation He does it according to His nature of perfection. He cleanses from all sin. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." <sup>[15]</sup> He perfects in love. "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" <sup>[16]</sup> He takes complete possession and sanctifies man through and through. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." <sup>[17]</sup> He witnesses just as definitely to this work of grace as to justification. "Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before." <sup>[18]</sup> All these steps are complete; there is not one imperfection in His operation. He could not do otherwise. His nature operates always on the basis of perfection.

All of these steps in the divine program lead to the integration of the individual personality and also the establishment of a more settled society and civilization. God's program works according to His ideal of perfection and leads mankind to a firm basis for both divine and human fellowship. The only foundation for agreeable fellowship must be one which renders null and void principles and elements which divide or bring discrimination. The only power in the human race which will do this is love. This is clearly seen in the equality which true love brings in marriage. So God, knowing the constitutional make-up of personality, arranged His plan in and on love. The plan of salvation arises in the love of His essential character, implants divine love in the heart in regeneration, and perfects the heart of the believer in love of God from which spontaneously flows a quality and stream of love and fellowship rather than a class or race distinction or classification. Here is God's solution for the race hatred, class or national strife, and discord of this, as well as any, generation. God's program is "charity out of a pure heart" and meets the need of the hour and

the age. "He also knew that the free spirit 'in his image' could only exist in its best estate in harmony with the law of love: for 'God is love.' . . . The same rank -- or a higher one -- in the creative mind is claimed for the law of love as for any mathematical principle: this law must be in force whenever a world of free intelligent spirits is called into being. This is the inner law between a free agent and its maker.

"Further the existence of a free spirit in relation to other similar spirits gives rise to this law: these beings must love or hate each other; indifference is only a mild form of hate and is likely to descend into veritable hatred at any time. They must take attitudes for or against each other; hence the absolute inescapableness of the moral law. Conduct not in harmony with the law of love, failures to keep it, are sin on an absolute standard." <sup>[19]</sup>

### Psychological Dangers Incident to Second Blessing Holiness

It is not surprising that there are potential psychological problems involved in holding such a high standard of grace for man. The individual, being limited in knowledge and warped in judgment, even when sanctified and walking in all the light the Spirit gives, will sometimes reach wrong conclusions. The tempter and enemy of man, the devil, works upon these limited faculties to bring confusion and error into the life of a good person. Two possibilities will be mentioned as examples of the dangers involved.

First, there is the possible psychological misunderstanding of the term "perfect" or "complete." Some reach the conclusion that these imply or include the sense of having arrived at the desired destination. The altar may be so emphasized that it becomes the end instead of a material part of the means. God forbid that the day should ever come in holiness churches when the altar will be removed. There is great value in a seeker's coming forward for prayer. Yet some ministers have so preached that people have thought, when they went to the altar and testified to receiving the experience of Christian perfection, that now they were sealed for heaven and it was not necessary for them to do anything else about it. They have a feeling of completed living growing out of a misconstrued idea of perfection. This may be the explanation for the apparent lifelessness and inactivity of professing sanctified people who take their religion so lightly. In accepting the experience of Christian perfection they took an attitude of security and unconsciously practice eternal security. The emphasis must always be that the experience of Christian perfection, received either at a public altar or elsewhere, is simply a step in God's onward leadership toward ideal perfection. The basic idea of Christian perfection is not the sense of "having arrived" but rather the consciousness of having the inner motive life purified from the sin nature, so that the believer can make better progress in spiritual things than before. The means of doing this will be discussed in the last chapter.

The other psychological danger is one which comes through the subtle suggestion of the tempter and may unconsciously make the believer self-centered again. It is the tendency that some sanctified people have of expressing their public testimony in terms of self-exaltation such as, "Thank God, I am sanctified"; "Thank God, the old man is dead"; "I am dead to self"; "I have the blessing"; "I know I am free from sin"; "I came in under the old constitution"; etc. Most of the time the individual is unconscious of what is happening. These statements may be spoken honestly and sincerely for a time; but in this method there is the danger of exalting the ego so much that, if the child of God is not careful, his testimony will breed the germ of religious pride. Holy pride is the manifestation of self-indulgence as much as any other outbreaking of carnality. The way to avoid this subtle psychological danger is to exalt God and keep Him uppermost in thought and expression. "God sanctified"; "The Holy Spirit purifies"; etc. This will glorify Him and bring better blessings to the believer and greater honor to Him and His cause. The self will continue to be sublimated to God, and the Blood will continue to cleanse the heart from all sin. The Spirit will lead the sanctified person in a maturing process of "perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

1 Trueblood, D. Elton, *The Predicament of Modern Man*, Printed Book Copyright 1944, Harper & Bros., pp. 16, 17

2 Genesis 2:7

3 Trueblood, op. cit., p. 31

4 Link, op. cit., p. 62

5 Reprinted from *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, by Sigmund Freud, by permission of W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., Printed Book Copyright, Sigmund Freud.

6 Werner, op. cit., pp. 140, 141

7 II Corinthians 7:9-11

8 I John 1:9

9 Romans 5:5

10 Romans 8:7

11 James 1:8

12 Colossians 3:2

13 Colossians 3:3

14 Galatians 2:20

15 I John 1:7

16 I John 4:16-20

17 I Thessalonians 5:23, 24

18 Hebrews 10:15

19 Curtis, Charles Newman, *An Epoch in the Spiritual Life*, Printed Book Copyright 1908, Jennings & Graham

# Holiness the Harmonizing Experience

By Lewis T. Corlett

## Chapter 4

### HARMONY AMID HUMAN FRAILTIES

Probably the greatest battle over perfectionism lies in the field of blunders, errors, faults, and mistakes. People cannot harmonize the idea of perfection and completion with the glaring imperfections of ethics and practice. They look for absolute perfection, which is not claimed by sensible, thinking people who believe in and advocate Christian perfection. This same group judges the proponents of Christian perfection according to its definition of sin, which is: "Sin is a deviation or lack of conformity to the perfect law of God." The Wesleyan definition of sin is "a voluntary transgression of God's law," and it is this basis or interpretation of sin upon which all the doctrine of Christian perfection is developed. Many believers of second-blessing holiness have questions in their minds as to how far they can trust God to help them in their limitations and blunders. Some have even gone so far as to cast away their confidence, for they expected God to do more than He had promised. A clear understanding of the extent of God's operations and the measure of personal responsibility for human frailties will enable the believer to live a more victorious life in the experience of Christian perfection.

God's standard is holiness of heart and life. In the experience of regeneration, He clears up the past by forgiving the penitent of past sins, and gives proper motivation by imparting divine love to the heart of the seeker. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." <sup>[1]</sup> In sanctification, God, through the Holy Spirit, cleanses the heart from inbred sin, and fills to the full or perfects in His love. These are separate, distinct experiences wrought in an instant of time. Right motives and high principles are implanted but they must be worked out, in, and by the believer. Holiness of life is a process whereby the love of God in the heart is brought to bear upon all attitudes, actions, and relations. The ideal for the Christian is to increase in the nurture and knowledge of God with the view of one day reaching heaven and entering into the ideal perfection of glorification. Paul states this very clearly in the third chapter of Philippians. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." <sup>[2]</sup>

While living in the enjoyment of the experience of Christian perfection, the believer is also living in a world of imperfection. This has been caused, first, by the fact that God created man a finite being. God did not intend that the man should know all things. If he could, then he would be absolute in knowledge. He is finite-restricted in his knowledge, and limited in judgment because of this limitation. This is true also of power. God made man a relative sovereign. He is limited in his ability and reserve. Thus man is restricted in his possibilities of achievement. Otherwise, he would be omnipotent, as God is. This definitely has a bearing on his performance of duties and acts.

Also man's world of imperfection has been brought about by the fall of man and the sin of the race. All parts of God's creation have been affected by the entrance of sin. Nature has felt the effects of sin. In the beginning there were no storms, cyclones, and earthquakes; neither were there destructive insects and blights. All of these are caused by sin and contribute to the imperfections that man must battle with. So man's own make-up shows forth the effects of both finiteness and sin. God made man both relative and finite, limited in both ability and knowledge. God alone is unlimited and all-wise. Man thus has partial knowledge, limited insight and physical powers. Also, man's powers are affected and circumscribed by the effects of sin on his nature and organisms. This causes man to have faulty memory and warped judgment, which at times produce hasty decisions on many things. Many mistakes are made because of these conditions in man's constitution.

Man is also living in a world of variety. This is seen in the marvelous and almost endless colors and designs in nature, and other parts of creation. Man enjoys these, but it is the variety of personality that is to be considered primarily in this discussion. No two persons are exactly alike. While at first glance there may be a great similarity, yet on closer inspection the dissimilarities are more prominent. Personality is definitely affected by racial, climatic, and economic backgrounds. Different races have different traits which are outstanding in the majority of the members of the race. There are characteristics of nationalities which are outstanding in some personalities. Within the race and nation there is also an endless variety of manifestation of peculiarities of disposition and nature. Persons living in certain climates have personality reactions which are different from those in others. Those living in the warmer climates naturally move and act more slowly than those in cooler atmosphere. People living in the cyclone area react differently to a storm cloud from those in sections where such storms have not occurred.

Character reactions also differ due to the economic background and surroundings. Thus, as a general rule, people who have been reared in industrial areas are usually more systematic and punctual than those who have lived in the rural areas, where the work is more seasonal. There may be exceptions, but as a rule personality is affected by the habits and activities developed from all of these backgrounds.

Personality also differs in reaction according to the individuality of the person. No two children of any family are exactly alike. Their viewpoints differ, their abilities to grasp situations differ, their appetites and tastes vary until many parents are at a loss to know how to handle all under one roof. Some identical twins seem to react as one individual, but on a closer continued observation differences are noticed. People react differently under the same circumstances and produce an endless variety of conclusions and situations. This may at times be trying on account of the eccentricities of some, yet on the whole this glorious variety is refreshing.

Man also differs because he is living in a sphere of progressive knowledge. The baby is born without any factual knowledge. The child learns gradually. Some advance in knowledge more rapidly than others; some travel more widely and have a greater variety of contacts than others. All activities, concepts, and ideals will vary according to the degree of knowledge possessed by the individual. So people will differ in conclusions reached on the same matter; diversified interpretations will be made from the same incident or event, and a variety of ideals will be raised according to the individual viewpoint and knowledge.

Man is living in a world of suffering. Both the bodies and minds have been affected by the fall, and most people have had some type of sickness or disease. Many times this has affected the mental and spiritual reactions. The more prolonged the illness, the stronger the reaction will be on the individual in all phases of thought and activity.

Man was placed in the world by God, and there was one federal head of the race, Adam. From generation to generation man has developed into a multitude of persons having different habits, characteristics, and viewpoints. These have been influenced by their racial, economic, and climatic backgrounds, augmented by the traits of personalities inherited and the degree of knowledge possessed. Also there is a variety according to the depths of suffering which they have come through. And in all of these man has been limited by the fact that he is finite and strongly influenced by the depravity that he has inherited through the fall.

Can heart holiness operate in the midst of these conditions and limitations? Can man enjoy Christian perfection while battling these frailties and human restrictions?

By experience and observation it has been proved over and over that man can enjoy the fullest blessing of a second work of grace while handicapped and buffeted by all that has been mentioned. God works primarily and chiefly on and in the heart, the moral nature of mankind. In the first work of grace, God forgives, blots out all transgressions, and makes the person a new creature in Christ Jesus. In the second work of grace, He cleanses from carnality and perfects the spirit or heart life in divine love. The standard of life is raised, and right motives are given to enable the believer to carry out this standard of righteousness.

The practice of these principles and ideals by the professor of Christian perfection will often be faulty, yet the person will be blameless. Wrong decisions and conclusions will be made because of partial knowledge. Past training, poor memory, prejudice, and warped judgments will all affect the outward life and the inner attitudes of the one enjoying a heart experience of perfect love. The manner and method of life will be regulated by the degree of knowledge possessed, or according to the amount of light the individual has at the moment. Thus the outward life of all professing the experience of Christian perfection will not be the same. The activities and attitudes of the individual will vary according to the increase of knowledge or light. Blunders, errors in judgment, and wrong conclusions will be reached; yet the sanctified person will be blameless since the motive was clean and pure but operated through limited, handicapped powers and viewpoints. Mistakes will be made, but they will not be culpable; blunders will come, but the believer will be blameless. The zealous service will be imperfect and faulty and may, at times, demand a confession and apology; yet the heart remains pure and holy before God.

The reactions to God's operations will also vary according to the peculiarities and traits of the individual. The racial traits may predominate; peculiar characteristics of past training may govern the reaction because holiness does not change the individuality. It will refine and polish it, but not make it basically different from what it was. There will be a refreshing variety in service and viewpoint because each one is free in his service to God. All will not shout, but some will; all will not weep, but some will manifest their emotional reaction in this manner; some will say "Amen," while others give assent by the silent nod of the head to a heart reception of God's message. Christians will not act in the same manner, but each in his own way will react to the leadership and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Many good Christians have been brought into bondage along these lines. Some sanctified persons have insisted that everyone had to act in a certain way or style to prove he had the blessing. Generally it was a demand of one individual upon another for the same type of demonstration that came natural to him. God has not so limited man, but rather prefers to see man express his appreciation and joy through the characteristics of his own individuality. Uniformity hinders the Spirit, but unity magnifies the power and character of God.

### Holiness and Physical Ailments

Paul, writing to the Corinthians, stated that "we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."<sup>[3]</sup> A sick body does not prevent a person from becoming holy in heart. Some in the various ages of world history have taught that all sickness was caused by the personal sin of the one afflicted. This is not true. All sickness is the result of the effect of sin on the race, but it does not in any wise indicate that the sick person is a sinner. The Book of Job is the outstanding book of the Bible to prove that sickness, affliction, and adversity are all perfectly compatible with the best blessing of God. The disciples asked Jesus concerning a blind man, "Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."<sup>[4]</sup> Paul had his experience with the thorn in the flesh and prayed for God to remove it, but God did not see best to do so. "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."<sup>[5]</sup> Christians of all ages have verified this manner of operation by God. Some of the most saintly have been afflicted most of their lives. An experience of Christian perfection can be lived successfully by persons who are sick and afflicted.

### Holiness and Nerves

The strain and stress of this age are creating many new problems. Many good people are the victims of depressive moods. Sanctified persons are perplexed because God does not seem to deliver them from the problems they have. Many good Christians go to the altar, only to get in greater confusion, because they have not broken with God. The answer to many of these types of problems lies in the physical and mental rather than in the spiritual. "For we have this treasure in earthen vessels."<sup>[6]</sup>

This is a nervous generation. The tension, strain, and uncertainty have overtaxed the nervous systems of many. People are sick and do not know what their trouble is. Medical doctors have more and more cases where the patient is sick, yet has nothing wrong organically. They respond to harmless medicine sometimes, for it relieves the mind. These people are sick nervously and mentally. One characteristic of extreme nervousness is periodic moods of depression. This naturally creates a sensitive attitude and reaction. People who are not nervous cannot understand this peculiar trend of a nervous person. At times, individuals who have been sanctified for years, and have had a devoted walk with the Lord, will speak and act as if they were controlled and motivated by carnality. They will speak sharply and act impatiently and then feel hurt if reminded of what was said or done. Some even go so far as to deny ever saying what they are accused of, and wonder why loved ones so misunderstand as to accuse them falsely. This condition, so similar to that of one possessed of carnality, is caused by an abnormal physical reaction from a highly nervous condition. Extreme nervousness puts an individual in such a tense, high-strung condition that it is impossible to react normally. The mental status is closely akin to that of one mentally unbalanced. The mind is so tense that often what is said and done does not register in the memory and consequently cannot be recalled. The writer has experienced this personally in times of nervous prostration and also has observed it in others; yet he knew that both he and the ones observed had not sinned nor broken with God.

When this sensitive condition is accompanied by a depressive mood, the Christian is liable to take the attitude that God is displeased with him. Some have even gone so far as to believe that they have committed the unpardonable sin, and are only waiting death to go to eternal damnation. Friends and pastors are puzzled and baffled to know how to counsel and what to do with such a person. Some unwisely have concluded that personal sin has caused this condition and insist on the individual's going to an altar to pray through. When this is done, altar workers find themselves puzzled; for the seeker cannot locate any specific act of disobedience or attitude or rebellion against God. Repeated trips to the altar have only added to the distress of the seeker. Sometimes a person goes so far as to necessitate confinement in an institution as a neurotic or psychopathic case. This is not an indication that the individual is insane, but rather that he needs special treatment for nervous mental disorders. Doctors and psychiatrists treated hundreds of returning soldier boys in similar mental condition and restored them to a normal mental state.

One example is the case of a returned missionary who had a serious nervous collapse. In her moods of depression and self-condemnation she came to the conclusion that God had left her and she stated so publicly. She believed that she had crossed the dead line and that there was no hope for her. She was under the doctor's care and receiving medical treatment. In time her system was built up, the nervous tension was relieved, and then, without having to pray for herself, or having anyone else pray for her, she found herself in the same spiritual victory she had had before the nervous collapse.

Why cannot God help one in this distress? Is it because He is not interested or because of the attitude and condition of the person? The reactions toward Him on the part of the sick person are quite similar to that manifested toward the fellow man. The tenseness caused by nervousness makes it very difficult for the person to hear the voice of God and respond to what He tries to do. The nervous person is quick to condemn himself and to feel uneasy about his spiritual condition. Also if the believer has judged spiritual health by emotional ecstasies, the depression of mind makes him believe that God has left him and cares no more for him. God is still interested and trying to help, but the person is unconsciously blocking the help God tries to give.

What can be done about it?

First, people should think of God as a tender Heavenly Father who cares for those who try to please Him. An earthly parent would not leave a sick child to its distress and woe. God, with greater tenderness and love, will not forsake His children who become sick physically or mentally. The writer has inquired in various parts of the country and has yet to find a case of a believer who was faithful to God while in health who backslid while sick and unable to perform the regular duties of Christian life. On the other hand, many cases have been found where God tenderly sustained during the hours of helplessness. Cases where the person has gone so far as to believe that the dead line has been crossed have been found to be in good spiritual condition when normal physical or mental health was restored. God will not forsake His children in the hour of their need, regardless of what their feelings may be. His nature of perfection requires that He will

exert every effort He can to aid them, even when they do not recognize His operations.

Second, people should be as kind and sympathetic as possible to the sick person. If there is no organic trouble, doctors work on four propositions to help the individual involved. They examine for possible organic cause; they try to improve the appetite, so the patient will take nourishment; they give medicine to help the person to sleep; and then attempt to find something to assist the patient in reorganizing his thinking toward an objective outside of himself. It takes time for the patient to react properly to these because of the tenseness of the nervous and mental state. As physical strength increases, more normal health results, which assists the individual in relaxing to the point where he can react favorably to the doctor's treatment. A sympathetic attitude by those close to the sick one will be of great benefit in hastening the process.

Third, the believer who is in this nervous state should endeavor to develop an optimistic viewpoint in life. The prophet Isaiah exhorted the people of his day to do this when he said: "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." <sup>[7]</sup> The child of God should magnify the Lord and His blessings rather than his troubles and feelings. Paul admonished the people of God to give thanks in all things and to rejoice evermore. The promises of God are just as certain for the disabled Christian as for the one who is physically able to trust. The prophet wrote: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." <sup>[8]</sup> Paul wrote: "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." <sup>[9]</sup> The Christian is not promised a life free from disappointment, sorrows, depressions, and seeming defeats; but he is promised grace and the abiding presence of the Spirit to be with him at all times. Observation and investigation have caused me to reach the conclusion that the child of God who is doing his reasonable best in obedience and service to God before he becomes an invalid does not backslide during the time of illness or nervous collapse. Earthly parents do not cast off a child from the family because it is ill, but rather they give the suffering one more attention than before. Will not God, as a wise Heavenly Father, do more to help His suffering children? He will. God will most certainly take care of His disabled children.

### Holiness And Moods

Many good people have suffered because they thought that a person professing Christian perfection would be in a joyful mood all the time. They were disappointed when they experienced heaviness or depressive moods. It will be helpful to consider a few facts about moods as related to Christian perfection or holiness. All people are subject to moods. No person is in the same mood all the time. The Scripture plainly states: "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." <sup>[10]</sup> This clearly teaches that God allows events and incidents to come into the believer's life which will cause various moods. Sickness, temptations, and attitudes all have a tendency to change the mood of the individual. No Christian is in the same mood all the time. It is not human to expect this. Some people are more in bondage to moods than others. There will be a tendency for such individuals to go into the slough of despondency or mount to the height of ecstasy according to whether their experience is agreeable or disagreeable. Others are more balanced in reaction to their moods and do not swing to extremes so easily. Sanctification does not materially change the moods of man. They are regulated more by the attitudes of the individual than by the motive of the heart. Man can learn to discipline his moods so that he will not be torn between the extremes. God commands His children to do this. "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." <sup>[11]</sup> Thus the pure in heart are exhorted to discipline the mental processes and moods and bring them into harmony and unity with heart

motives, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord, and to build mental processes so that the mind will be less subject to moods of heaviness and depression and more under the control of faith and optimism. If this discipline is exercised, constructive habits will be formed and will serve as a balance to personality in times of extreme nervousness or collapse.

### Man'S Responsibility In The Midst Of Limitations And Frailties

There is a discipline of man's human abilities and powers which is necessary for the believer to carry out. Too many professing to be sanctified have expected God to make all the changes in life and nature. There is a definite responsibility each child of God must exercise. God cleanses the heart, but He commands the believer thus: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." <sup>[12]</sup> God will purify man's motives, but man is under obligation to keep the motive pure and holy. Jude admonishes the saints to "keep yourselves in the love of God." The believer through his purposes and plans can and must keep himself in the place and disposition where the blood of Christ can keep his heart free from sinful tendencies and propensities.

Suppressing normal appetites so they will not become abnormal in their cravings will help the believer offset the frailties of his nature. Appetites and passions allowed to become abnormal open the way for indulgences and gratifications in an irregular and uncertain manner. This breaks down resistance and will make the child of God more vulnerable in the time of temptation. This makes it easier for the individual to indulge in excesses which lead to outbroken sin. Christians should discipline themselves so as to make all of their actions and attitudes adorn the doctrine of God. This is true in regard to appetites for religious things as well as the physical. Some Christians look for certain things in a service to manifest the presence of God, and if they do not find them they think the service is devoid of spiritual blessing. Others wait for the declaration of emphasis on some nonessential by the preacher before they will accept him as God's messenger. These have allowed their spiritual appetites to become abnormal and unconsciously have blocked the way for God to bestow His truths and blessings except in their narrow channels. They need to discipline themselves so as to be receptive to God's truth regardless of how or when it comes. This applies also to mental habits and attitudes. The believer must not allow himself to fall into any rut which will make it difficult to see God's working in a broader way.

Another means of overcoming the frailties and limitations of the human side of life is to keep submissive and susceptible to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Each child of God has the glorious privilege of being guided by the Spirit. In fact, He goes far beyond what would be expected in His endeavor to help each believer in his problems and battles. He wants to guide into all truth. He is faithful and will check and rebuke the believer if he is becoming careless and neglectful in the performance of duty. He will direct the Christian sometimes to rectify some of the blunders and mistakes made through human limitations and frailties. Sometimes He will prompt one to make confessions to those who were wronged. He will lead at all times to greater knowledge, for Christian experience is not compatible with voluntary ignorance. The child of God, out of a pure heart, desires to gain greater knowledge, so that he can avoid carelessly making errors and mistakes. The believer can escape many dangers and find great comfort and security by maintaining a sensitive attitude to the guidance of the Spirit.

Many, if not most, of the problems of the sanctified have to do with other good people who are also professors of the experience of heart holiness. They expect so much of one another that it is difficult to be charitable when one seems to come short. A great help in overcoming this tendency is to develop a strong charitable spirit toward others. Do not expect others to do exactly as you do. Allow the Spirit of God to guide them as He has directed you. Give others the benefit of the doubt, and make allowance for the possibility that their hearts may be pure but handicapped in manifestation and outworkings by limitations unknown to other people. This brings the believer into the place where he can come under the blessing of the beatitude, "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." <sup>[13]</sup> The rich reward of a charitable attitude to others is that there is a deeper appreciation for God and others developed in the heart and life of the believer.

Christians need to remind themselves constantly of the need of keeping their minds and hearts centered on Christ. This often requires an act and walk of faith in the midst of spiritual darkness, uncertainty, and perplexing circumstances. God

is always the same; His promises are always true; so the Christian should never have to question the reality of God. Many in these circumstances do question whether He is present to help or not. The Holy Spirit takes up His abode in the believer's heart when he becomes a child of God, and will remain there as long as the contract between God and the person is maintained. There will be times when His presence is not evidenced by any striking operation. In hours like that the believer must remember that heart holiness is a living relationship and partnership with the divine, and that there must be an attitude of confidence between both members of the partnership. This is exercising faith. As the believer does this, the consciousness of the Divine Presence becomes more real and constant. It becomes easier to rest on the promise of God and abide the divine time for things to clear up. God longs for His children to be constant in their confidence in Him, regardless of what seems to be. "For if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."<sup>[14]</sup> Regardless of personal feeling or outward darkness, the child of God should continue on the path he saw God going the last time He manifested himself, and soon the conscious fellowship will be enjoyed once more.

An experience of Christian perfection can operate successfully in relation to all frailties and limitations of humanity. A person can be perfect in heart while biased in mind, warped in judgment, harassed by nerves, and handicapped by physical suffering. Revelation, experience, and observation prove that God is consistent with His nature of perfection in permitting His children to experience these changes. He will keep the heart perfect in love if the believer will hold on and walk by faith. He will and does provide strength and grace to give victory to each one in spite of trials, troubles, temptations, nerves, moods, and devils.

1 Romans 5:5

2 Philippians 3:12, 15

3 II Corinthians 4:7

4 John 9:2, 3

5 II Corinthians 12:9

6 II Corinthians 4:7

7 Isaiah 50:10

8 Isaiah 43:2

9 II Corinthians 4:7-10

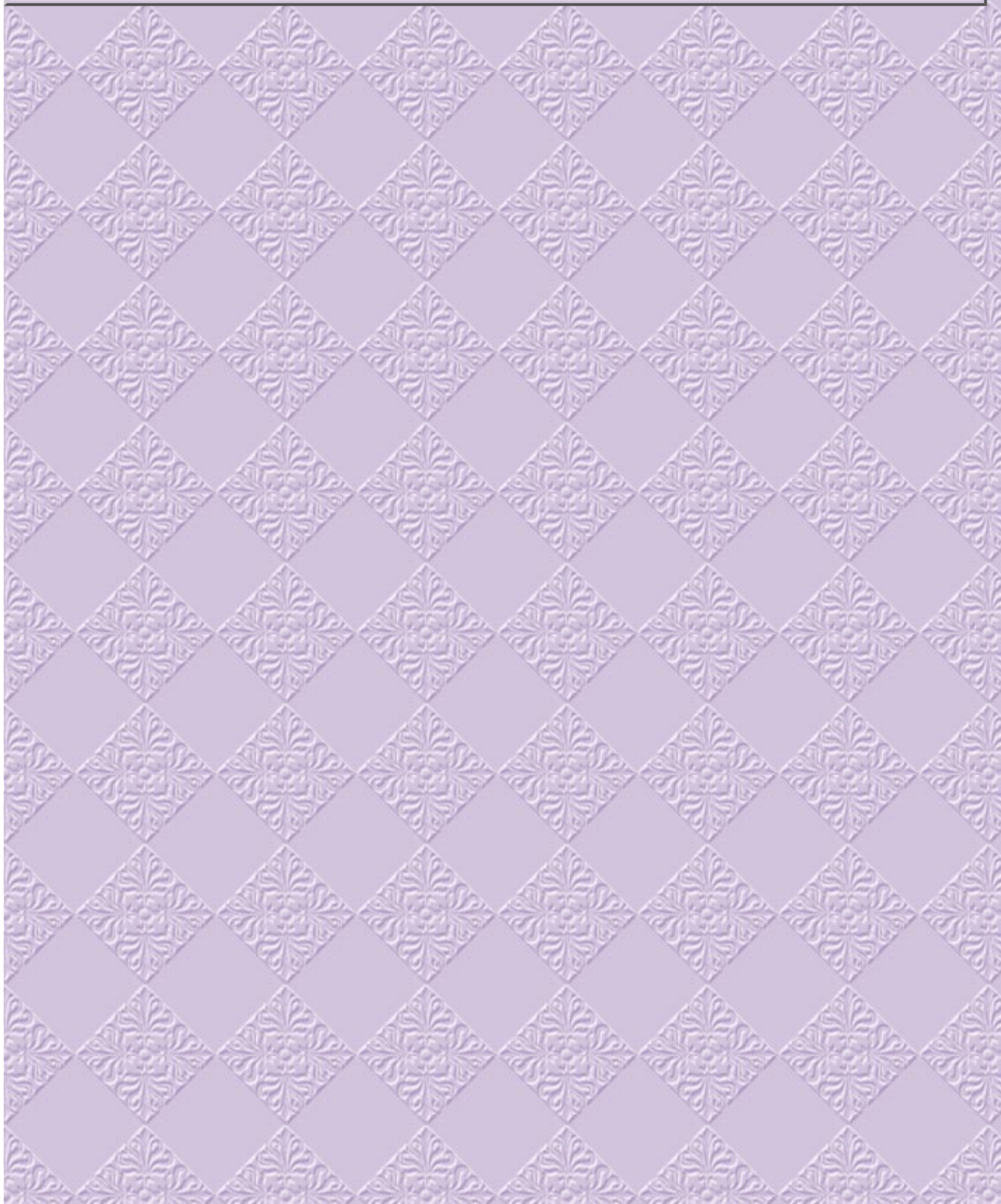
10 I Peter 1:6, 7

11 II Corinthians 10:3-5

12 II Corinthians 7:1

13 Matthew 5:7

14 II Peter 1:10, 11



# Holiness the Harmonizing Experience

By Lewis T. Corlett

## Chapter 5

### HARMONY IS PROGRESSIVE

No discussion of God's operations can exhaust the subject. Because of His absoluteness in perfection in all things there can be no end of explanation by finite man. Yet regardless of what may be seen, explained, or described, one thing remains certain and definite. All of God's operations are based on His ideal of perfection and are in harmony one with another as related to this ideal. In this ideal the harmony of God's operations in the plan of salvation requires a progressive development in the life of the believer professing the experience of Christian perfection. Also God's ideal of perfection gives an unlimited challenge to each of His children and is the only satisfaction for man's urges, desires, and the yearnings of his inner, restless spirit.

Man's goodness is a derived, dependent quality. God made man thus in the beginning. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." <sup>[1]</sup> In this breath of life was included the moral quality necessary for man's holiness and goodness. But it was dependent upon man's choice of loyalty to his Maker. When he chose to indulge the urges of his self-life, for a personal selfish end, he took himself out of the state and position where the Holy Spirit could sustain his quality of goodness. Being thus deprived of the Holy Spirit, the source of goodness and holiness, man became depraved in all of his being. Not that he became as wicked and evil as he might have become, but every part of his constitution was so affected that he could not, even if he desired, lift himself out his depraved condition. Also, since man possessed no intrinsic good, in and of himself, he could not claim goodness by any merit of his own. The history of the race in general, as far as moral values and example are concerned, is nothing to be admired or bragged about. Man has nothing of merit before God, the source of goodness. Man was helplessly incapable of ever developing a means of regaining his lost heritage. Such a deprived and depraved condition aggravated the unrest and longings of man's inner urges and drives. This produced an internal friction which has given an ever-increasing confusion and chaos of family, local, national, and international conditions.

Any goodness or holiness man enjoys today is the result of a gift from outside himself. It comes alone from God, the source of holiness and perfection. He has the power and nature needed by man, and He made this accessible through the gift and sacrifice of His Son on Calvary. The provision of atonement and redemption is universal, but its personal application and benefits are conditional. Thus, being dependent upon the choice of a finite being for its personal application, a relative state of holiness and perfection is produced. That is, the state of perfection the individual has is dependent upon the individual's loyalty and obedience; it is conditioned upon the individual's attitude, so cannot be either static or permanent. Man, being finite, and suffering the effects of his own wickedness as well as the depravity of the race, must keep in contact with the source of holiness and perfection to sustain the state of perfection in his moral nature. So Christian perfection is a moment-by-moment experience based on maintaining an individual contact with God. "If we walk in the light. . . we have.." <sup>[2]</sup> Being a moment-by-moment experience, it must be progressive to be continued. Thus man keeps the moral quality of holiness and perfection in his nature only by maintaining his relative position with God, the Giver of all perfection and holiness.

God is vitally interested that each one of His children possess an integrated personality. By "integration" we mean the natural form of activity. E. M. Ligon defines it thus: "Integration is the condition of personality in which all the emotional attitudes are harmonious and mutually helpful, thus permitting all of our natural energy to be directed to one end." <sup>[3]</sup> As previously pointed out, man must have a worthy objective outside himself to do this; and when he keeps his relation to God as this end or goal, he is able to keep integrated and to develop a poised personality.

God's ideal of perfection is the only satisfying challenge to man's inner longings and tendencies. Man cannot be static. Mentally, as well as otherwise, he is always on the move. He is either reaching out for more or is relinquishing what he has. He is progressing toward a higher goal or he is retreating from present attainment. Man cannot retain interest in that which he fully comprehends. This is easily illustrated by the attitude people take to books which can be understood in one reading. They are not classified as the best or ones which should be read again. This is more certain in man's relation to things of material worth. The physical objects which enrapture today lose their drawing power tomorrow. Even financial gain loses its attractiveness as the person matures in life. Man must have something out and beyond himself, which he can neither understand nor comprehend fully, to serve as a drawing force to lead his inner nature to the greatest possible development. This is true of Christians as well as non-Christians. This is the basic reason why God holds His standard of perfection always before man. The individual will contemplate and consider something; so God, in His absolute perfection, encourages man in his relative perfection to meditate and think of the deeper and greater potentialities of the believer who is "hid with Christ in God." <sup>[4]</sup> While God can never be fully comprehended, yet the more His children think of Him, the better they appreciate Him and the greater are their desires for the fullest development in devotion and service to Him. Jesus recognized this when He gave the beatitude, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." <sup>[5]</sup> This includes both the idea of being "filled with all the fulness of God" <sup>[6]</sup> in the experience of Christian perfection and the continual outpouring of the Spirit as the hunger and thirst enlarges with the development of Christian character. This is the source and continuance of the establishing phase of the experience of entire sanctification. God is always constant in quality; and as man keeps in the relative position of continual yielding and abandonment to God, the Spirit keeps the believer filled and perfect in love. This sense of stability gives the Christian a certainty of the standard for his personal moral quality and the consciousness of the enjoyment of a nature harmonious with and in unison with the source of the standard.

Another phase of God's operation which is in harmony with His own nature and complete in meeting man's need is the divine method of personal spiritual illumination. God does not give the individual, at the time of conviction, a complete revelation of all the details of life which will be experienced in a walk of faith of from one to seventy or more years. He knows the limitations of the human mind. If He gave so much knowledge at once, it would have almost the same effect on man's personality as if a fireman tried to generate enough steam in the boiler of a locomotive to propel a train five hundred miles. You know what would happen. The usefulness of the locomotive would be temporarily if not permanently impaired. So it would be if God gave a person full understanding of all that was included and necessary to live a whole life for Him. It would so overwhelm the individual that he would be apt to be discouraged and his usefulness, both to himself and the Lord, would be temporarily or permanently impaired. God regulates the revelation, illumination, or light according to the need of the hour and the ability of the individual to receive it. Yet there is a beautiful harmony in this aspect of God's method. First, all new light is based upon or added to what was given previously; it is never in conflict with or antagonistic to former directions. Then also, it is given according to the ability of man to apprehend it. God never blinds man with a spectacular display of His effulgent glory. He deals slowly, patiently, and personally. The Spirit of God never gives divine light to the masses. It is always individual in its direction and application. Thus one person may receive light from a sermon and no other one in the service may get the same illumination. Then the harmony is more clearly seen in that the revelation is always for the person's welfare and progress in the advancement of the kingdom of God. The Spirit always leads the believer toward better things. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." <sup>[7]</sup> Also in this revelation the believer becomes conscious that what he is receiving is just a taste, a sample or an earnest, of an unlimited reserve of supply. While he is conscious of the fact that he will never be able to comprehend or receive the fullness of the omnipotent resources, yet there is something about the connection to infinity and the absolute perfection of God which draws man forward and increases his desire for more and more of the fullness of God. This is what Paul meant in his letter to the Philippian church when he wrote: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." <sup>[8]</sup> Paul clearly explains the drawing power of those who "are

already perfect" (enjoying Christian perfection) and the certainty for the progressive revelation of the Spirit to all who desire progress. God challenges each Christian to release his inner powers and abilities in contemplation of increasing enjoyment of things divine. Jesus said: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine."<sup>[9]</sup>

The divine-human experience of Christian perfection is based on love. Love demands cultivation and increase both for enjoyment and continuance. God's program of atonement, redemption, and salvation is based on love, propagated by love, experienced in love, and moves forward to a greater realization of love. Personal salvation is the reciprocation of love from the penitent wooed by love. "We love him, because he first loved us."<sup>[10]</sup> A study of Christ's teachings will show that His conception of the laws of salvation was that they were founded on the positive dynamic of love and not on negative ethics. When asked: "Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."<sup>[11]</sup> Jesus taught the same principle in the Sermon on the Mount. E. M. Ligon explains Christ's teaching in a practical manner: "Loving your enemies has been called the impossible commandment. To 'turn the other cheek' is thought by some to be an act of cowardice. 'Returning good for evil' and 'praying for those who spitefully use you' are pretty generally conceded to be far too difficult for most of us. If Jesus' teachings are to be used very much in everyday life, they must not be so far above the normal abilities of ordinary human beings. Is it possible that we have been mistaken in our understanding of what Jesus taught about love? The scientist forms an hypothesis and tests it by finding out whether or not it will explain his data. What hypothesis, in this case, will bring these teachings from the realm of the impossible to principles which can be utilized in the normal development of personality? Such an hypothesis is the central theme of this book. In this hypothesis will be found an understanding of Jesus, which will show His teachings to be psychologically sound. Jesus did not teach brotherly love, He taught Fatherly love.

"Notice what a change this hypothesis makes in the so-called impossible teachings of Jesus, 'Love your enemies.' It has been thought mighty hard to love one's enemies, but think of a father loving an enemy son. No one thinks David was abnormal or unnatural because he still loved Absalom when the son had become his bitterest enemy. That seemed perfectly natural for a father. What father does not have to 'turn the other cheek' to his son hundreds of times? What parents do not pray fervently for children who 'spitefully use them'? How frequently parents 'bless' their children, even when the latter are 'cursing' them! Fathers are constantly 'returning good for evil.' This hypothesis, then, makes these great ethical principles, not other-worldly impossibilities, but perfectly normal behavior.

"Then, look at it from the point of view of psychology. Students of personality are almost unanimously agreed that mental health can exist only as an accompaniment of social interest. Certainly, no social interest is greater than a father for his son. Parental love has long been recognized as the noblest impulse in mankind. Psychology has shown that fear and anger are the great enemies of personality. Parents lose their fear for themselves in the interests of their children. Anger is not the characteristic response of parents toward their children. What emotional attitude, then, could be formed which would be so mentally healthy as this attitude of fatherly love toward others?"<sup>[12]</sup>

Love must be expressed and cultivated in order to continue. Love is a combination of affection, emotion, nature, and sentiment based upon appreciation and loyalty. True love demands wholehearted loyalty, and unless ways and means are used to manifest the loyalty and express the emotion the intensity of the affections will diminish. Paul I. Murphy says: "Love is not a finished product that, once it comes, can forever be trusted to keep its strength. Like everything else that is alive, it must be kept growing through exercise or it wastes away."<sup>[13]</sup> Love expressed always reacts strongly on the lover. One preacher, wishing to illustrate this reaction, said: "When I give my wife a box of candy, I always get more out of it than she does." Even if this admits a double benefit, yet the principle is true that love cannot continue unless it expresses itself. Love knows no limits and it cannot be limited. It must be sincere and entire to be real, and it must increase to preserve itself.

These principles operate in the realm of spiritual love between God and His children. God proves the expression of His

love in manifold ways moment by moment. His plan of salvation is so arranged that man can reach a place and state where love can flow unhindered from his inner life. One aspect of the experience of Christian perfection is love. "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" <sup>[14]</sup> But as there is no end to love, except the beginning, the child of God must recognize that this glorious experience is simply God's means for greater development in Christian character and a continuing increase of love. The Scripture speaks of love abounding: "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment." <sup>[15]</sup> "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." <sup>[16]</sup>

Writers of religious literature have recognized this progression in Christian living and have urged the believers to press on. John Wesley said: "There is no perfection of degrees, as it is termed, none which does not admit of a continual increase. So that how much soever any man has attained, or what degree soever he is perfect, he hath still need to grow in grace, and daily to advance in the knowledge and love of God his Saviour." <sup>[17]</sup>

John Fletcher said: "A perfect Christian grows far more than a feeble believer whose growth is still obstructed by the shady thorns of sin, and by the draining suckers of iniquity." <sup>[18]</sup>

J. A. Wood said: "Christian perfection does not exclude growth in grace. The pure in heart grow faster than any others. We believe in no state of grace excluding progression, either in this world or in heaven, but expect to grow with increasing rapidity forever. It is the same with the soul wholly sanctified as with the merely regenerate: it must progress in order to retain the favor of God and the grace possessed.... Holiness may be perfect and yet progressive. Perfection in quality does not exclude increase in quantity. Beyond entire sanctification there is no increase in purity, as that which is pure cannot be more than pure; but there may be unlimited growth in expansion and quantity. After love is made perfect, it may abound more and more." <sup>[19]</sup>

E. A. Girvin, in *Prince of Israel*, quotes Dr. P. F. Bresee as saying: "A sanctified man is at the bottom of the ladder. He is now to learn; to grow; to rise to be divinely enlarged and transformed. The Christ in him is to make new and complete channels in and through every part of his being -- pouring a stream of heaven through his thinking, living, devotement and faith. The divine battery -- His manifest presence -- is to be enlarged. The truth of God is to be revealed, and poured through the soul and life, with holy fire and divine unction more and more abundantly. A lack of personal realization that I, myself, must stir myself up, has brought wreck and ruin to many. God will stir him up who stirs himself, until he comes 'unto the measure of the fulness of the stature of Christ.'" <sup>[20]</sup>

D. S. Corlett speaks of holiness as a life of dependence and shows the need for continual obedience, faith, and progress. "The source of all grace, of all life, and of all power is God. Only as the Christian constantly relies upon God can he maintain a satisfactory relation with Him. Holiness is a gift from God, for a holy man is a partaker of God's holiness, and to have holiness continue as a state of life man must depend constantly upon the holy God. Holiness is not a deposit given to man to be kept independent of God; a holy life is maintained moment by moment through active faith and obedience to God. 'For God does not give them a stock of holiness,' says John Wesley, 'but unless they receive a supply every moment nothing but unholiness will remain.' . . . Since this state or condition is a relative, not absolute or ideal, holiness, and since it is manifested through human nature or differing backgrounds, there may be a difference in the manifestation of holiness; but in each case there will be a development toward the mature or perfect man. There will be acquired 'a certain skill in the art of living, in prayer, in the understanding of the Word and a larger faith and more power

to resist temptation. There is less practical ignorance of God and His ways of working with man; higher attainment in the moral discernment of conscience is evident' (Curtis in an Epoch in Spiritual Life). There is no limit to the progress possible in this life of holiness." [21]

The possibilities of development in a life perfected in love are almost unlimited. But the child of God should remember that progress in grace can be made only by continual choices for good, by a daily self-discipline and determination to "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." [22] The Christian must keep his will continually submissive to the will of God. His choices must be centered more firmly in the pleasure of the Almighty and the affections so enraptured in the qualities and characteristics of the divine Lover that nothing of self and sense will have a drawing power. Greater faith must be exercised in the guidance of the Spirit and firmer reliance be placed in His wisdom. To mature in love man must direct his paths continually in following the footsteps of the Master.

The Christian life is a co-operative life in every phase. It is the enjoyment of a life of partnership with God: "For we are labourers together with God." [23] Man walks in the light; the Spirit sustains and makes him an overcomer. "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." [24] Man feebly expresses his desire in prayer, and the Spirit carries it to the Father in proper form and manner. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." [25] The believer may be puzzled and perplexed regarding some matters as he lives daily for his Lord, but if he holds steady Christ's promise will be fulfilled. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." [26] This aid and guidance are promised and given in all the details of Christian living. They are dependent upon the believer's continued abandonment and obedience: "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." [27]

The child of God, in the obedient walk, naturally develops a greater appreciation for God, His character, and His ideals. The interest and emphasis pass from His blessings and benefits to His character and appreciation for the privilege of fellowship with Him and of rendering service for Him. Like the one leper out of the ten whom Jesus healed, the Christian turns to the Father again and again to express his thanks and appreciation. There is no questioning of His methods but, as with the five wise virgins, there is an atmosphere or feeling of expectancy, not only for His second coming, but also for further illumination and clearer directions for useful service in this present world. Paul reveals this sense of deepening appreciation in his writings as he walked with the Lord in all kinds of experiences. He followed unquestionably, and God was so faithful to all of His promises that Paul recorded one of his conclusions about life: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." [28]

This relative perfection is preserved by faith. So as fellowship and confidence increase, faith is strengthened and the consciousness of God becomes more constant. As the Christian obeys God to the best of his ability, God gives grace and glory. Even in times of perplexity and depressive moods there is a consciousness of being located on the foundation of the eternal purposes and provisions of God. Dr. D. S. Corlett describes this life of victory: "It is a life of victory maintained moment by moment through active faith and obedience in Christ, a real victorious life. By the grace of God taking away the inner strain and bringing and maintaining a state of spiritual wholeness, nothing of the outward world need defeat that life. There is a normal manifestation of the Christian graces, for the holy man is like the disciples after Pentecost -- he is not painfully endeavoring to follow Christ; he is giving free and normal expression to a fulness of life and devotion to God with an ease that is captivating and with a joyousness that is contagious." [29]

While the sanctified person is enjoying only a relative perfection, two things must be kept in mind. First, that in this co-

operative Christian living the person possessing Christian perfection and walking in all the light he has, never is conscious of a moment when God fails to keep his heart filled with divine love. The promise, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled," <sup>[30]</sup> will be verified as long as the appetite is craving and asking for more. There will be an increasing sense of the availability of greater resources of divine grace which can be had to meet every need. The joy of anticipation increases and the child of God sees beyond this veil. The things of heaven and eternity draw ever onward. Death is robbed of its fear, the grave is stripped of its horror, and the glory of the prospect leads ever nearer and nearer to God's ideal of perfection. This is the process of maturity and will continue while the believer lives on earth and also, I believe, forever in heaven.

God's standard is Christian perfection for everybody. His provisions are universal, unlimited, and accessible. His method is superior to the best man has produced. His love, interest, and sympathy lead man forward to his greatest possible development. God has a majestic harmony in all of this, and it is all performed in accord with His ideal of perfection.

1 Genesis 2:7

2 I John 1:7

3 Ligon, E. M., *The Psychology of Christian Personality*, Printed Book Copyright 1936, The Macmillan Company, p. 14

4 Colossians 3:3

5 Matthew 5:6

6 Ephesians 3:19

7 Proverbs 4:18

8 Philippians 3:12-15

9 John 7:17

10 I John 4:19

11 Matthew 22:36-40

12 Ligon, op. cit., pp. 22, 23

13 Murphy, Paul I., *Your Life* (Magazine), February, 1948

14 I John 4:16-20

15 Philippians 1:9

16 Ephesians 3:17-19

17 From John Wesley's Sermons

18 Fletcher, The Last Check

19 Wood, J. A., Perfect Love, Printed Book Copyright 1912 by the Christian Witness Co.

20 Girvin, E. A., Prince of Israel, Printed Book Copyright 1916, Nazarene Publishing House

21 Corlett, D. S., op. cit.

22 Titus 2:10

23 I Corinthians 3:9

24 Romans 8:37

25 Romans 8:26

26 John 14:26

27 I John 1:7

28 II Corinthians 4:16-18

29 Corlett, op. cit.

30 Matthew 5:6