

How to Keep Sanctified

By Charles J. Fowler

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Chapter 1

GOD-KEPT

Nothing is clearer in the word of God and in the experience of his people, than the fact of salvation from sin. This is not only true, but this salvation may be permanent -- it may be constantly and unbrokenly kept. More than this is true, and it is, that the power, the blessing and usefulness of this salvation may ever increase. Bless God!

Still it is true that this salvation may be lost, this beautiful experience may be snatched away. Indeed, one may become a real and an awful backslider from even so great a grace. This is clearly taught in the Scriptures and in the experiences of people all around us.

These opposite truths should cause people both to rejoice, and yet to tremble; to take heart, and yet to take heed. That salvation may be lost, should put all on their guard.

One of the secrets of maintaining the experience of sanctification is to recognize that no experience sustains itself. We have all heard the statement and the most of us have made it, "get holiness and it will keep you." This has been said to encourage people who have been tempted to think that if they would get sanctified, they could not keep it.

In saying to such, "if you will get sanctified, it will keep you," we have intended to state what was true; but the fact is, it is not just so. The fact is that no experience keeps an experience; we are not sustained in a certain state of salvation by that state, but by Him who gave it to us. That the experience of holiness places one in a safer place, and girds him with an added power, is unmistakably true; but it does not keep one. Experience may properly be called it. Some object to our teaching sanctification as a "blessing" because they regard the experience as an "it;" they prefer to speak of the "Blesser" rather than the blessing; of him instead of it.

There is truth here mixed with confusing error. Sanctification or holiness is an "it." "Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it." But this blessing is from the Blesser; the "it" from the "him."

For keeping we must look beyond the gift to the Giver. One is not kept sanctified by sanctification, but by the Sanctifier! This must be kept in mind. The psalmist said:

"The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

"Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

"My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth."

Here is a great and constant keeping, but he -- the Lord -- does it! Peter also declared the same when he said, "Kept by the power of God unto salvation."

Physical life demands attention. However powerful and promising, it does not sustain itself. Here is a young man of splendid form and force -- he has broad shoulders, strong limbs, straight back, good blood -- in a word, he is well. Is this splendid life of his self-sustaining? Is his health to continue just because he has it? Let this strong young fellow ignore

certain laws that condition the continuance of these powers and see how long his strength and quickness of step will remain with him; let him neglect sleep, food and exercise and see how soon he is as weak as any other man who boasts of no strength.

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Chapter 2

BACKSLIDING NOT SUDDEN

No more is there an outer man than is there an inner man; there is the spiritual, as is there the physical; and it needs attention.

Life is a tenacious thing and allows no interference without protest; that which seeks to limit the existence or expansion of life, will discover what we mean. The merest worm as it crawls along the earth seeks to protect itself against all encroachments upon its life or liberty. Take a higher or stronger form of life as in a dog; to protect himself against violence he will bite and fight to the bitter end. Take man. He is justified in taking even the life of a fellowman who seeks to encroach upon the liberty and existence which belong to him. This is simply saying that life is sensitive, insistent, exacting, resentful and resourceful, that it may be protected. This is nature; it is just an expression of the great law governing intelligent life, and that not intelligent as well. A strong band of iron about a tree will find itself grown over and literally lost to view while the tree grows out and up as though no grip of strength had encircled it. A sapling has taken root in soil in the crack of a great rock, till not having room for itself it actually breaks open the great dead stone by the demands of its life.

But no life is comparable to the spiritual. It does not give itself up easily and he who gives it and seeks to conserve it, does not retire from the scene of the soul at once upon the approach of the soul's danger.

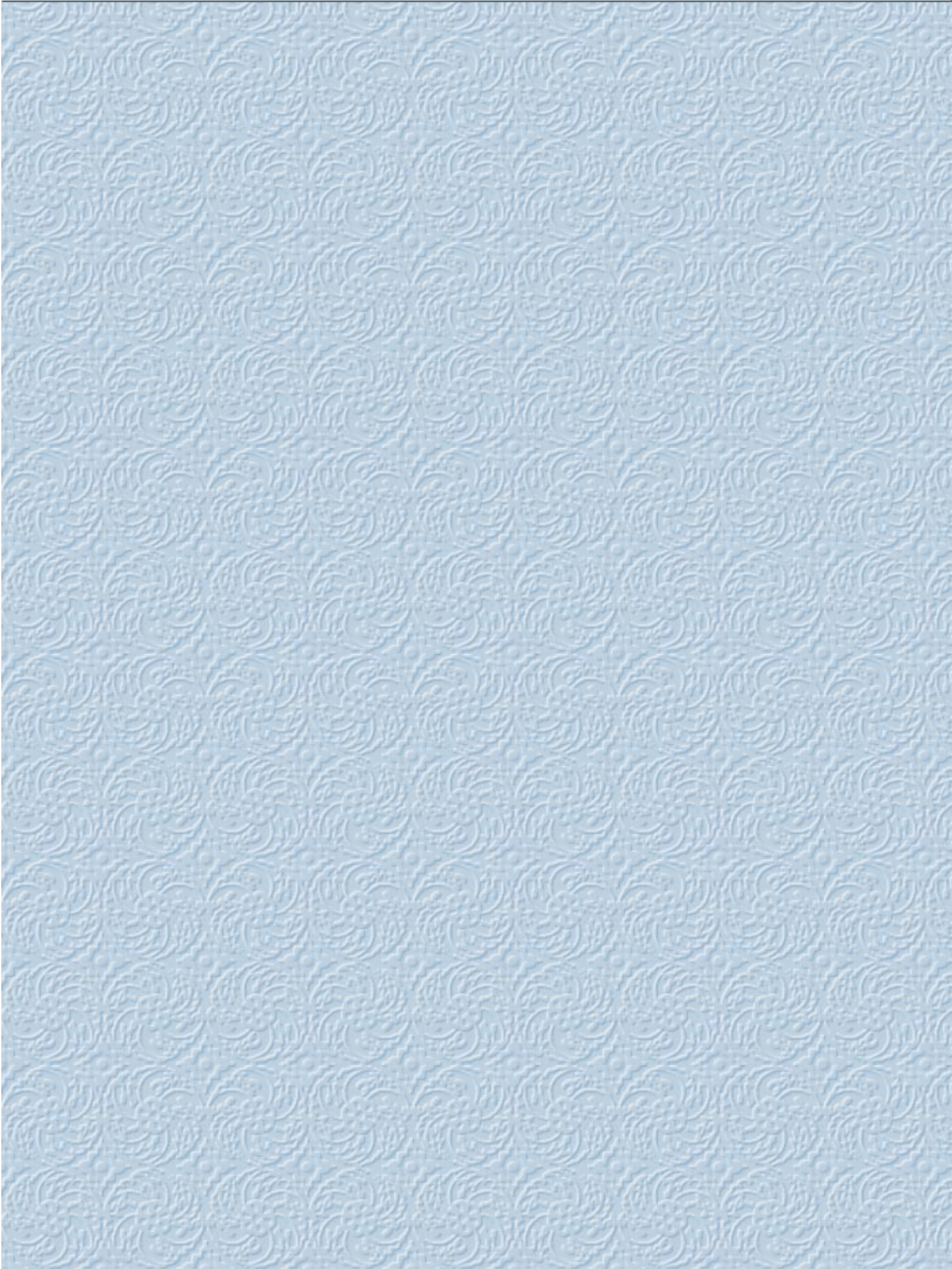
Therefore we have been in the habit of thinking that spiritual declension and death were not come by suddenly; they were reached rather by a process -- a downward going, more or less drawn out. As the young man of strength and of health does not come to a condition of weakness and illness suddenly, so with the spiritual man. If what one eats and drinks be disregarded; if sleep be ignored and a lounging about in idleness in the pent-up quarters of sin be indulged in, it will not be long before the step will slacken and spring be gone from the heel. So with the greater and better man within us. If spiritual food and spiritual rest and spiritual exercise be lost sight of, or ignored, then declension follows which if not rallied from, ends in final death.

How frequently do people contract disease because they were so susceptible to it through a weakened condition; and how many can live in most unsanitary conditions and contract no fevers because of the resistance their good health gives.

We cannot always be well in body it may be, but the soul can. If health and strength are desirable for the body, how much more for the soul. If the outer man is of value enough to demand attention that its interests may be conserved, how should the inner man have it? We cannot altogether get away from the untoward conditions of evil that are around us, for we are in a world that abounds in sin, but we can be rid of the conditions of spiritual weakness that so invite disease that wait to fasten upon the soul.

We all know people who in early or middle life were declared to be unable to resist their physical inheritances long, but would be in early graves, who have taken such systematically "good care of themselves" as to outlive the promising and strong who made the prophecies. Three times a day, in all weathers, there comes to our door a "postman," who only a few years since was given over to die early with consumption, [TB] but those outdoor exercises and hard work have been the means of curing, so that with ease he makes his long round daily. One of the most distinguished editors and ministers in our land, asserts that he has been cured of a lung trouble by mountain climbing, and he is now a hearty man of over seventy years.

The soul needs care unto its spiritual preservation.



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Chapter 3

PRIVATE PRAYER

Spiritual life, if it be maintained and developed, demands stated private prayer. It may be thought well-nigh strange that we should emphasize such a condition as this; one which has so much to do with the very beginnings of spiritual life. It is possible that apology or reason enough may appear as we proceed.

Prayer is the language of love, loyalty and dependence. If one loves another he naturally seeks communion with that one; one finds his heart going out in genuine loyalty, and finds also that this person in the affections is no inconsiderable factor in the life.

One of the figures of the scriptures emphasizing the mutual relation between Christ and his church, is that of betrothal and marriage. If a young couple have any call to get married, the things we have mentioned as elements of love will be noticeably present. We make no apology for employing this figure, and dwelling upon this tender experience of real love.

These young people, genuinely loving each other, want and should want to be much alone, with no company present save themselves.

We are dwelling upon true affection as it exists among the true and the pure. These, whose lives are mutually enwrapped, find out that the bustling world, the care of business or even the presence of the family circle to be in their way. They are a world within themselves, and this great fact that lies rooted in the very nature must have recognition with all concerned, even as it has natural expression with these beautiful young lives. We pity, exceedingly, any whose experiences in life have been so unfortunate or worse, that these words seem to be suggestive of romance or of sin. A young couple came under our notice who though looking toward marriage with each other, seemed not to care to be alone; they sought rather to be in the society of others constantly when together, and seemed restive if not. Our fears were aroused because of the unnaturalness of this situation, and to one whom we dared and in whom we had rights we expressed our alarm. This pair of unmatched people were united in marriage only to seek the divorce court inside of three months.

Love demands the quiet and even the secrecy of one heart; conversation must be had, though pure, in the privacy of two fond hearts; if other ears are open conversation must be in whisper; this is the demand of true love.

And a genuine loyalty has place here in an element of natural affection. Who that is a gadder, or a flirt, has any call to join in life's sacred and lofty privileges and obligations such as the holy relation of marriage carries? What a pity it is that a dear and devoted life should be sacrificed with such an apology for the thing called a man or a woman. Love that is true is filled with this attribute of loyalty, and however bright another might be in person, prospect or position there is but one in the whole world to him or her whose heart beats in true love. These lives are so one in all that is noble, natural and divine, that they are mutually dependent; the one, under right limitations, lives in and for the other. Let these facts be with us and the divorce courts have gone from us forever.

The heart that carries love for the divine Bridegroom demands the quiet and the secrecy of private prayer. "Jacob was left alone" because he sought it. His may have been the exigency of fear, but nothing save the quiet of the night-time by Jabbok's ford could meet the demands of that soul of his.

If our love for and our practice of private prayer be a measure of our love to Christ, how do we fare in the presence of this test?

Family and social prayer are not private prayer. We do not believe that holiness people are lacking in these things. One, we think, will go far and long to find a holiness man, or even a woman, who does not practice family prayer or its equivalent, and as to social prayer -- prayer in the prayer circle of the church -- they are hardly at fault here. But, when it comes to closet prayer we are forced to the conclusion that great fault lies at our door.

"In the closet the battle is lost or won." The battle, alas! too frequently seems to be lost. Who but grieves that so many need to come up to our meetings for repairs. Do not misunderstand us. We are not deploring this coming if there is a demand for it; but that the demand exists. This repair-business is so prevalent, that our minds have been occupied with a study of the secrets of this situation, and we are forced to the conviction we are stating.

As astounding as the statement may seem to some, we are forced to make it, that the holiness people, in general, do not practice secret prayer; and that is a secret, if not the secret of the failure in personal experience and incompetence in Christian service.

We do not mean that there is nothing that passes for this kind of prayer; there is a saying-prayers -- like at the bedside at night or at some hurried, well-nigh begrudged time in the day, but it does not have value that warrants its being called private prayer; such exercises are hurried and brief and finally become formal. There will be excuses enough for this spiritual misdemeanor and some of them may seem for the time to be reasonable, but the end is weakness if not death.

Not a few people who read these lines will read themselves into them, and know that painful as it is, we are stating the truth. If causes are many and increasing, it simply means that the need for stated prayer-seasons is the greater; that person who keeps up the private altar and waits before God, finds that the ashes of his camp fires are not found twice in the same place -- he is farther in the land of Canaan possession each time the sun sinks in the west.

That God is no respecter of persons is as familiar as it is true; but God has great respect for conditions. He would give great grace and that constantly, to all, but does not; and because He cannot. Isaiah's declaration is not sentiment or poetry when he asserts that "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." Do we covet such strength? Then let us not forget it is given to those "that wait upon the Lord."

But does some tempted but misled heart ask, "Is not this strenuous? Is not this making the life of holiness a task and a burden?" Yes, if love knows such a thing! Did the true hearts find the evening ride too long, or the chat at the front gate a burden, or the considerable time given to plans for the future a drudge? Then is Christian love overtaxed in time given to prayer -- talking with God?

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Chapter 4

A TWO-FOLD LIFE

The writer has had a pointed, not to say painful, experience of this matter. He is and has been engaged in the varied work of the holiness minister whose parish is the world. In common with any earnest preacher, his life is a two-fold one -- i. e., it has its own (that related to himself) and that related and devoted to others. These might be called personal and professional. The work for others is not as likely to suffer from a lack of prayer, as is this other responsibility -- this care of himself. What can one do in the field without God, and how can God be had save as He is waited upon for his cooperation? So it is that we pray over our messages and over all our work, and that with earnestness and continuousness.

When in the field, how assured we are of the Divine presence and blessing; if not all we want of blessing attend our labors, it is certain that God is with all faithful workers and at least some results are realized, if not all one craves. Paul sought to save "some" -- he would save all but did not expect it.

But when, for a time, the labor for others is laid by (as it is with most evangelists and should be with all), so far as being afield is concerned, and one retires into the place of change and rest for a season, a peculiar peril confronts him. He does not now need to be before God as when on the firing line, and the danger is that he will be before God but little for this reason, as well as for other reasons that will put in an appearance.

Wherever such a work is, if he be true, his time is mortgaged like to circumstances beyond his control. When in the field, the time belongs to the work of the field, and when at home to the legitimate interests there. Things to do or have done have been saved up for his coming. There is a sled to fix, a cart to mend, a pane of glass to set, some wood to split, a few calls to make, or a little visit among friends with the family; oh, a "thousand and one" things to do that are as much a duty and as truly a privilege as to blow the trumpet for God away from home.

A young man said to the writer, in the midst of a gracious meeting, where a multitude were getting blest, and none more than we workers: "This is great; no trouble in gaining ground here for one's self and getting happy, but what afflicts me is, I do not stand up well when at home." Why not? We think we have been stating the great reason -- this lack of private prayer.

In a really proper analysis of the situation, it will be discovered that we are professional, and that we seek to take on strength when engaged in outward service to do it for the service, and neglect our own soul's upbuilding.

The times we set apart for private prayer when at home we found were not seldom interrupted by that which had claims on us and seemed to have right to those moments; at last in our desperation of soul we determined to protect our faith at all hazards -- to look after the upbuilding of our own experience and faith without regard to the preparation of sermons for the field, or actual labor in it.

But how should this be done? This was a vital and practical question with us, and, if we mistake not, will be with a good many who read these lines. We had no desire or right to demand no interference with these times set for our personal devotion; for it often became necessary then to go on an errand for a hurried woman who needed then a spool of thread from down town, or the telephone demanded an answer to its call, or a child having stuck a sliver under its finger nail had to have attention, or a friend had come around to take us to ride; so it came to pass that we were interrupted, and [that,] in spite of ourselves.

But the demand of our soul-life found a way. It was to do as, at times, our Lord did -- have the prayer hour, as to set and

prolonged time, before the day begins -- before the household was awake, and before the duties of strenuous life were upon us. We bought a reliable alarm clock and set it how and where it would disturb not more than one, and that but for a moment, but would get us awake and out for a good hour alone with God. So, our own personal prayer time is in the early morning, when none wants us around save Him who needs no sleep.

In our own happiness of soul; in our conscious strength against temptation; in our opportunity to cover a wide field in prayer to God; in our increased interest in those who have rights in our prayers and have asked for them; in a constantly growing conviction that we are getting ahead in all that engages us; in a widening vision of what God can and is going to do; in a deeper sense of the privilege of communion with the Father of our spirits; in being advantaged every way, have we something to show for our method as to secret prayer.

We are not stating the duty of another as to when the stated prayer time shall be, but we do mean to declare its necessity; we do fear its scarcity; we do emphasize again and again that the failure so apparent and confessed has its secret here, more than elsewhere.

The flesh is too weak. We demand discipline over it. The cry of an untrained nature (if not of a sinful one) is for ease and a rest not needed. If our Lord were to speak to us as He did to certain ones, "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" Might he not find occasion to chide and rebuke? To be exacting of ourselves will prove to be exceedingly beneficial. Is an hour out of twenty-four too much for the soul's exercise? And we mean just this literally -- sixty minutes. Jesus spoke of time, and so did Paul.

"Oh, I would not be so mathematical in religion!" Well, would we be spiritual in religion? and would we come to something, for ourselves and for others? Then it may become us to take note of this suggested method as a secret of having what could properly be termed private prayer.

This prolonged prayer season will be found to enhance the value of our briefer moments with God; it will give unction to the exercise at the family altar; it will make our fragmentary and ejaculatory prayers more frequent and more fragrant; it will cause an open heaven and an unclouded vision into it; in a word, it will emphasize character -- what we are -- and because of this secure to us a conquest when in labor for others [that is] otherwise impossible.

The brilliant scholar and teacher, Austin Phelps, in a little book entitled "The Still Hour," likens this kind of prayer to the great abutments and piers of a bridge, which make the traffic of the railroad or highway possible; so this stated prayer gives value to our exercises which are more miscellaneous and brief.

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Chapter 5

TAKE TIME TO BE HOLY

Jesus said: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of God." The food of the soul is the word of God. What bread -- "the staff of life" -- is to the outer man, God's word is to the inner. Suppose we neglect or refuse food, then what? The answer is with all, it is weakness and death. What then of the soul-nature? To fail to supply the inner life with the word of God, is to realize this same result -- spiritual weakness and death.

The continuance of spiritual life and its development, demand the time factor. There is a song, familiar to many, the burden of which is "Take Time to be Holy."

To become holy may not involve the question of time; but to continue in holiness certainly does, to a noticeable and proper degree. The fact is, as little as any like the thought, people are too much in a hurry to allow their being holy. And we are not meaning to say that they are too engrossed in the cares of life to give attention to becoming holy; we mean rather, that having become holy they are tricked into dullness of experience if not into the loss of it entirely, by the rush of life.

The market men have a certain stamp they put upon certain bundles, and it is "Rush." That stamp seems to be upon our American life, indeed to an alarming extent. What we seem to need now is to have more days added to the week; time seems to be too brief for people to get into the seven days all that they want to do. The American people in general, and those who live in the latitude which has the most ozone in the atmosphere in particular, are a lively, aggressive and rushing class of mankind. From early morn to the night-time, the usual man and woman are tumbling over themselves in the regular, if not regulated cares and affairs of the day. Take, for instance, the single matter of eating. To look at the child as it comes to be able to "feed itself" at the table, what nature demands and directs relative to speed in eating will be seen. How slowly the usual little child eats. And it by no means is, mainly, because of inexperience; but simply an unperverted nature exercising itself in the manner of food-taking. "Oh, Mary, how slow you are; you never will be done with your breakfast!" So this natural child is taught early to throw the food into its mouth and give it a few turns over and run it down the throat half chewed.

How many people spend much more than forty-five minutes a day at the table eating three meals? Some do; the most do not. This American habit would mean indigestion among so many, that an exception would hardly be found, were it not that the activity of labor, especially out-of-doors, offsets the miserable practice. "Ten minutes for refreshments," the trainmen yell, and the passengers scramble out of the train and tumble up to the counter in the restaurant and eat a lunch made possible to eat in such a brief time by the free use of milk or a liquid of some kind; then a scampering back to the train, which is yanking them about before the passengers can get seated, in its rush to get off.

Tens of thousands of wage earners get out of the places of employment at the noon hour as though driven out by a raging fire; they rush home, tumble into the house and half out of breath eat a hearty meal, and up, out and back by the time the whistle blows one o'clock, and the whole proceeding as though something dearer than life depended upon this race. There is one thing that the inventor must certainly secure for the American people, and that is rapid transit by pneumatic tube -- get in and be shot to the destination of the dinner table. But we forget; there is one thing more to be added, and this is an individual stomach-filler. We suggest as a starter toward the invention, an old-fashioned sausage stuffer. Rushity rush! Rushity rush!

What has this to do with keeping sanctified? Well, if there is any truth in what we are saying, we should say that it has much every way to do with it. The fact is that this manner of life has a direct influence upon our religious experiences.

This rush-life must be resisted, at least to the extent of giving one time to be holy. We have little time to be holy. We have little time to pray. We have little time to read the word of God. Alas! then what? Not a few who read these lines know.

The fact is, we reverse the order of things We do not mean to do it -- we mean not to do it -- and yet so many alas! do it; business and care come first, as against the matter of being holy. Theoretically this is not so; but practically it is. In our thinking we do not allow this -- of course we do not -- but in our living we do. The home caring, the store keeping, the farm working, the school teaching, the dress making, and a multitude of legitimate activities none of which should be wholly ignored or can be, get so nearly the whole time that only a fragment for the soul is left; and a fragment that is so hurried, and stinted, if not actually begrudged, that it carries no value sufficient to be of worth to the soul.

We must face this fact; the sooner the better; whatever we do or do not do, we must be holy! God, or our convictions, demands no impossibility. Character, [inward purity, the experience of entire sanctification] as to quality, is come by at once; but the quantity of it conditions the continuance of the quality! We may and do become holy at once; but holiness must be sustained, and this demands attention. Better, far better, drop one meal a day to get time to read God's word for the health of the soul, if no other method can be found for the supplying the greater nature with its sustenance.

The relation of the scriptures to the peace, the delight and strength of the inner self every Christian knows. To read devoutly a few verses or chapters, is to go from this exercise with as conscious satisfaction and added power as one ever finds in the physical nature from having eaten an inviting and nourishing dinner. Oh, we may not be exactly correct when we say with "as conscious satisfaction and added power," but before many hours have gone, the consciousness will be delightfully present.

Let us urge again the business of being holy. If the term "business" should seem to be somewhat too exacting or worldly to apply to so spiritual a matter, may we not suggest that besides its definition -- that which engages one's attention -- it is sanctioned by our Lord's own use -while his lofty and divine mission was spiritual, he spoke of it as "business." [Luke 2:49 "And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"]

The business of holiness! Many remember the saying of the quaint cobbler when asked as to what his business was, replied, "My business is serving the Lord, and I mend shoes to pay expenses."

Holiness people are not seldom derisively called "hobbyists." This should not be rejected, or accepted with hesitation if the meaning of the term be considered, which is "a favorite pursuit." Holiness people ought always to have this favorite pursuit -- that of following holiness; for it "is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

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Chapter 6

ACKNOWLEDGE GOD

God is not only the most intelligent and loving Being of all intelligences, he is the most sensitive and appreciative. None feel as quickly and deeply as he and none so appreciate the devout attentions of the creature. If God be a Person he has these feelings, and if he be God He has them in an infinite degree. The long-suffering of God in dealing with the misdemeanor of men is far from an evidence that he is unmindful of it.

God would be acknowledged; and he must be upon the part of those who would secure and maintain his favor. "In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths."

We are now seeking to emphasize a feature of devotion, with which, it is possible, we are not as familiar as with other features. By an acknowledgment of God we mean an expression to God and an attitude before him, alone, of appreciation of him and his goodness. Someone has given an interesting division of prayer in these words. "Prayer, with its face toward God, and prayer with its face toward men." The first might be illustrated by the language, "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker." Here is prayer in the aspect of worship, of adoration, of (may we say it?) appreciation; prayer of recognition and praise. The other aspect finds expression in such familiar language as "Ask and ye shall receive." Here is prayer as supplication, as a seeking to get something from heaven.

Of this latter phase we need not speak; all hardly need that this be defined. But this former exercise we wish to emphasize.

Most people are before God only when something is wanted -- the asking of prayer is that with which we are more familiar and in the habit of using, if not that about which we only know; and yet, it is not prayer's highest form. We are not saying that the time is ever with us when we are not in need and may not ask, but we are meaning to say that there is that which is higher, richer and diviner and far more profitable to one's soul than the asking form of prayer; asking if not selfish, is always laden with self-interest as to its motive.*

[The last statement of the above paragraph, that asking is "always laden with self-interest" is not altogether true. For, it is possible for one to ask God for something for another, being completely devoid of any selfish reason for that asking. When Jesus asked the Father to forgive those who crucified Him, "for they know not what they do," there was not one ounce of self-interest in that request. His words, "Father, forgive them," were not a demand, but a request, and asking -- and an asking that was totally concerned about the need of others. Further, it is possible for Christians to likewise ask of God, without a speck of self-interest in their requests. Fowler's statement would have been entirely true by simply changing one word: "asking if not selfish, is often [not always] laden with self-interest." However, these remarks are not intended to be criticism of this excellent message. Now, back to the writers point at hand. -- DVM]

God is good. In Himself and in all His relations to mankind, especially to those who trust Him. One turns his prayer around, or better, he turns himself about from the attitude of seeking something at the hand of God, and adores Him from whom everything of good comes. "O God, how gracious thou art; what hast thou not done for me and for mine. Thou art good to all. Thy tender mercies are over all thy works. Men forget Thee, but thou art gracious, O how mindful art Thou and tender and full of compassion. I love Thee; I worship Thee; I adore Thee; glory be to Thy name forevermore!"

Such is not the language of a suppliant -- not of one who wants something -- but rather is it the language of a giver -- of one sending back an appreciation of divine benefits.

This suggests what we mean by a recognition of God before him and before him alone. It is secret; it is sincere; it is successful. Did one want to get ahead with God -- have heaven really favor him -- there would be no way equal to this. But, to do this to get ahead would spoil it all. No such thought lives with him who finds his heart drawn to this holy exercise of communion.

Again, we say, nothing gives such flight of wing to the soul as this adoration; and nothing so pleases him with whom we have to do and before whom one comes. God values, as none less than God can, a spirit of appreciation upon the part of his creatures. None so in need that they live upon the bounty of another, find the hand of the benefactor so open, as those who remember in gratitude the favors of the past. What child is in such favor with the parent as the one who has a genuine spirit of appreciation of father or mother, so as to love to be with them, more than they care for the presents they may get.

There is a love for the companionship of God apart from what may come to one as a return from being in that company. To be alone with God, one sits in a chair by the window, or lies on the couch, or attends to the active duties of the house; to be alone with God at business, on the train, or anywhere that the devout nature finds itself looking away to Him in whose infinite life he lives; this is to please the Father of our spirits, who loves, infinitely, to have His own creatures bless Him.

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Chapter 7

AND BEFORE MEN

But a recognition of God and of His goodness will naturally and necessarily take another direction -- it will be as well before men. We call this confession; confessing Him in the audience of the people as public opportunity, or even private, is given. Yes, this is Christian testimony; and yet, we choose to use the language we have brought to the front here -- a recognition of God before men; declaring what God has wrought. Let the language and spirit of the devout soul in its attitude before God in secret, be taken up before the people and God gets glory.

We do not like to present this in the form of duty; is it not rather a great privilege? And yet, duty may mingle with privilege here. For, this about which we are writing is so scarce in the usual gathering even of the people of God, as to be regarded "irregular;" the attitude of the unspiritual, and the accusations of the devil make this so difficult sometimes, that duty may have to come to the front somewhat.

But the absence of this testimony increases the obligation and privilege; for if the holy people are betrayed to hide their light, what will become of the reputation of God? Is He a Saviour from sin in the sense of deliverance and maintenance? Does He keep that committed to his trust? Does he really sanctify and satisfy? If any know this, when alas! the most do not, what becomes of God's reputation, we ask again, if those who do know, fail to recognize this before men?

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Chapter 8

THE INDWELLING SPIRIT

In order to maintain sanctification it will be necessary to emphasize, in our thinking and in our faith, the positive aspect of this work.

In the teaching and preaching of holiness people it is said, and said truly, that there are two sides to this work and this grace -- the negative and the positive -- the cleansing of the heart from all indwelling evil, and the coming in of the Holy Ghost. Not that there are here two distinct experiences as to time; not that one is cleansed and then some time later the Spirit comes in; these works are rather coetaneous, yet in the order of thought and indeed of the divine operation, these are separate and distinct. As a vessel must be emptied of whatever may be in it before it can be filled with anything else, so the heart must be cleansed from all the residuum of evil before it can be filled with the Spirit.

The coming of the Holy Spirit into the cleansed temple of the soul is the positive aspect of entire sanctification, and into this temple he has come to dwell.

This is our hope. Here is our power. This Presence in us is the source of our fullness of peace, of joy, of love and of all that stands for the fullness of grace; and His presence is the secret of our constant victory against all contending forces that would disrupt our faith and destroy our souls, As no power is comparable to his, then no power can possibly overcome the heart that has entemped within it this real God-person.

This great and all-important truth must be recognized. God is within and He is our keeper. Whatever of submission to Him, of faith in Him, of appreciation of Him it takes to have Him come in, it takes to have Him abide. To observe these conditions is to keep Him, and having Him we need nothing else and can have nothing more.

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Chapter 9

SANCTIFICATION OF OTHERS

If we keep sanctified we must needs give attention to others that they also may come into the experience of this great grace. Jesus said, "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified," i. e., He consecrated or devoted Himself unto this end. In this sense we are to sanctify ourselves, or devote ourselves to the sanctification of others, To be indifferent to this means to forfeit what we have. This experience is for us to enjoy, to be sure, but for us to communicate to others as well and this should be, with us, a delight.

No single truth can be so dear to God as that of entire sanctification, since it makes one holy. Holiness is God-like-ness. God loves and must love that which makes one like Himself.

The holiness movement is a movement by itself. It is not a Church movement. We must be read here with care. We are not saying that it is anti-church -- opposed to the church -- for it is not; but we are saying that it is not a movement that the church, as such, has fathered and fostered.

To illustrate: The Y. M. C. A. movement, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, etc., were not instituted by the Church. While they are made up to a considerable degree of people who are Church members, the Church as such did not found these and does not foster them. On the other hand the Baptist Young People's Union, the Epworth League, etc., were created by the Church and are cared for by it.

The holiness movement is made up, with the rarest exceptions, of Church members and reliable holiness associations demand that its members be related to some Church, yet no denomination of Christians formed this movement, and no denomination looks after it. It exists independent of all; and in many cases it exists, notwithstanding the wishes of many to the contrary.

If we get others sanctified it means that we appreciate the fact relative to the providential meaning of the holiness movement as such. It is this that brought us into the experience. We were not sanctified through the regular means and methods of the Church, but through the means and methods of the holiness movement itself. It was through some holiness convention, or holiness camp meeting or holiness evangelist, that the Holy Ghost got us sanctified, and if it was our pastor, he in all probability was himself brought into the experience through the means we have mentioned. So that at the farthest we are the grandchildren of the holiness movement.

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Chapter 10

HONOR THE MOVEMENT

The Spirit of God would have the method sustained which He has instituted, at least providentially to carry on this work. The regular ministrations of the Church in the pulpit, prayer meeting, revival services, etc., etc., should be giving attention to this and secure these results; but if they do not, God will have it done by other means as He is now doing in the holiness movement, which method he has been using for some forty or more years.

This means that we need to support this work by our prayers, sympathy, and outward activity in attending its various meetings, etc., and in the giving of our money. We are not meaning to say that we should withdraw these from the local Church where we hold our membership, or from the denomination of which we are a part -- this we do not mean -- but we do mean that we need to honor the movement which God has used to get us sanctified, and do it in ways that are of practical value.

Facts are abundant, in the personal history of multitudes, that prove the position we are taking. In the several decades of this movement a great many people have been at the altars of the holiness meetings as seekers of the experience of entire sanctification, and a great many ministers and laymen in our churches have claimed the blessing, and evidently for a time enjoyed it. But only for a time. Our close and wide observation in twenty-five years has convinced us that this failure has been largely due to a failure to be identified with the movement itself -- a failure to be an avowed and recognized holiness witness and advocate. We know of no person in the entire land who has kept a ringing testimony to this grace outside of those who have been open and constant advocates and defenders of this faith. We do not mean that they have been members of this or that holiness association, or of any association, but we do mean that they have been identified with the holiness people and the movement as such.

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Chapter 11

HOLINESS LITERATURE

Every enterprise has its organs and varied literature to represent it. We have only to suggest this to have it appreciated. What industry, profession or trade, but has its papers and magazines and periodicals of varied sorts to represent it? The farmer, the mechanic, the physician, and even the saloonist and tobacconist have their current printed matter to represent them, inform their constituency, etc.

How essential is this in the holiness movement; and for two reasons:

(1) A general Church organ cannot be an advocate of a particular Church interest: For instance: A Church paper cannot devote itself to Missions or to Temperance, or to Church Extension, etc., not that this paper does not favor these, for it does, and advocates them, but it cannot devote itself to them because its work is of necessity, general; hence the Church has its organs representing Missions, Church Extension, Educational Work, etc., etc., and the great Temperance movement has its own organs and literature.

(2) A Church paper cannot devote itself to holiness if it would, for reasons that we have cited: and the most of them would not if they could; and this is our second reason why holiness literature is a necessity. If we are to be constant and consistent holiness confessors and advocates, we must have the sympathy and encouragement and information that come through the helps God has providentially provided for us.

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Chapter 12

PUBLIC SERVICES

Jesus gave a note of warning that demands our attention. He said: "Take heed what ye hear," and "Take heed therefore how ye hear."

Our experiences of salvation are secured and maintained by the truth. The normal method for our coming to a knowledge of the truth and our keeping in this knowledge, is the public ministry of the word. Paul asserts that Christ gave a diversified ministry in order that Christian Perfection might be obtained and maintained (Eph. 4:11-16). While hearing the word is not the only means of experiencing salvation, yet it is the leading one and for which there should be no substitute. We need help to get and to keep salvation. Though the eunuch had the written word to read, he groped in the dark till a human helper was sent to him (Acts 5:27-31).

God has appointed the public ministry of His word -- "preach the word." This places a responsibility upon the preacher; men must publish it, but there must be the hearer.

This means attendance upon the ministry of the word and attention to it.

It may be that the services we attend are not all we desire as to their spirituality, but it is a poor service that does not give prominence to something of value; even the place itself where God's name is revered is made a means of grace to any devout spirit that frequents it.

This leads us to note that the pulpit and public ministry of the word are not the only divine method by which salvation may be secured and sustained. Were this so then our souls might be imperiled by the unfaithfulness of some ministers and by our inability to get to these places of worship, and it would relieve us of our responsibility relative to our personal salvation were such public means not at hand, or were not of a nature to aid one. God has put the word of truth within our reach and the blessed Spirit of God is ready to aid all who would find its essential teachings.

The Church of Christ represents the kingdom of God in the earth and its services cannot be neglected with safety to one's soul, or without retarding the interests of the community in which the Church is placed as divine leaven. Sanctified people should be noted for their faithfulness to the house of the Lord.

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Chapter 13

TEMPTATION

Keeping sanctified demands that we overcome the varied temptations of life.

We need, furthermore, to be forearmed against temptation by remembering its great purpose in our probation. James utters a startling word when he says: "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." But he gives a reason for this strange exhortation when he says "that the trying of your faith worketh patience."

Temptation is a process of discipline. There is no substitute for it in developing our spiritual nature, whether it be the temptation of testing that God directly brings to the believer (Heb. 11:17), or the soliciting to evil which comes from the devil, which God allows. The fact is the same; it is for our spiritual bettering. These experiences of varied nature are not inviting in themselves, and pleasant, but they result in that which reveals their value (Heb. 12:11). The writer to the Hebrews further emphasizes the "profit" of what he calls being "chastened," in that it is that "we might be partakers of His holiness" (Heb. 12:10).

Temptation, then, is to be expected, and we should be prepared for it. And indeed, while not sought, it should be welcomed; and we are assured it shall not be too severe for our faith. (1 Cor. 10:13).

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Chapter 14

FINALLY STAND

To stand is possible. The forces against the sanctified soul are many and mean; they are cowardly and constant; they are subtle and severe; but they are not too many for the soul, girded and guarded by "the whole armour of God." Our wrestling is evident enough and our enemies are wary and wicked, but against all we may stand and "having done all stand." Our adversary is the devil and the day of his assaults is evil, but our whole armour is sufficient (Eph. 6:11-16.)

"Above all" -- the shield of faith! By this we stand. Not only is this the great secret by which we get salvation, it is the means as well by which we maintain it. God is as solicitous that we continue in sanctification as that we receive it; therefore has He provided for our keeping it. (Jude 24:25).

"Stand, then in his great might,
With all his strength endued;
But take, to arm you for the fight,
The panoply of God;

That, having all things done,
And all your conflicts passed,
Ye may o'ercome through Christ alone,
And stand entire at last."