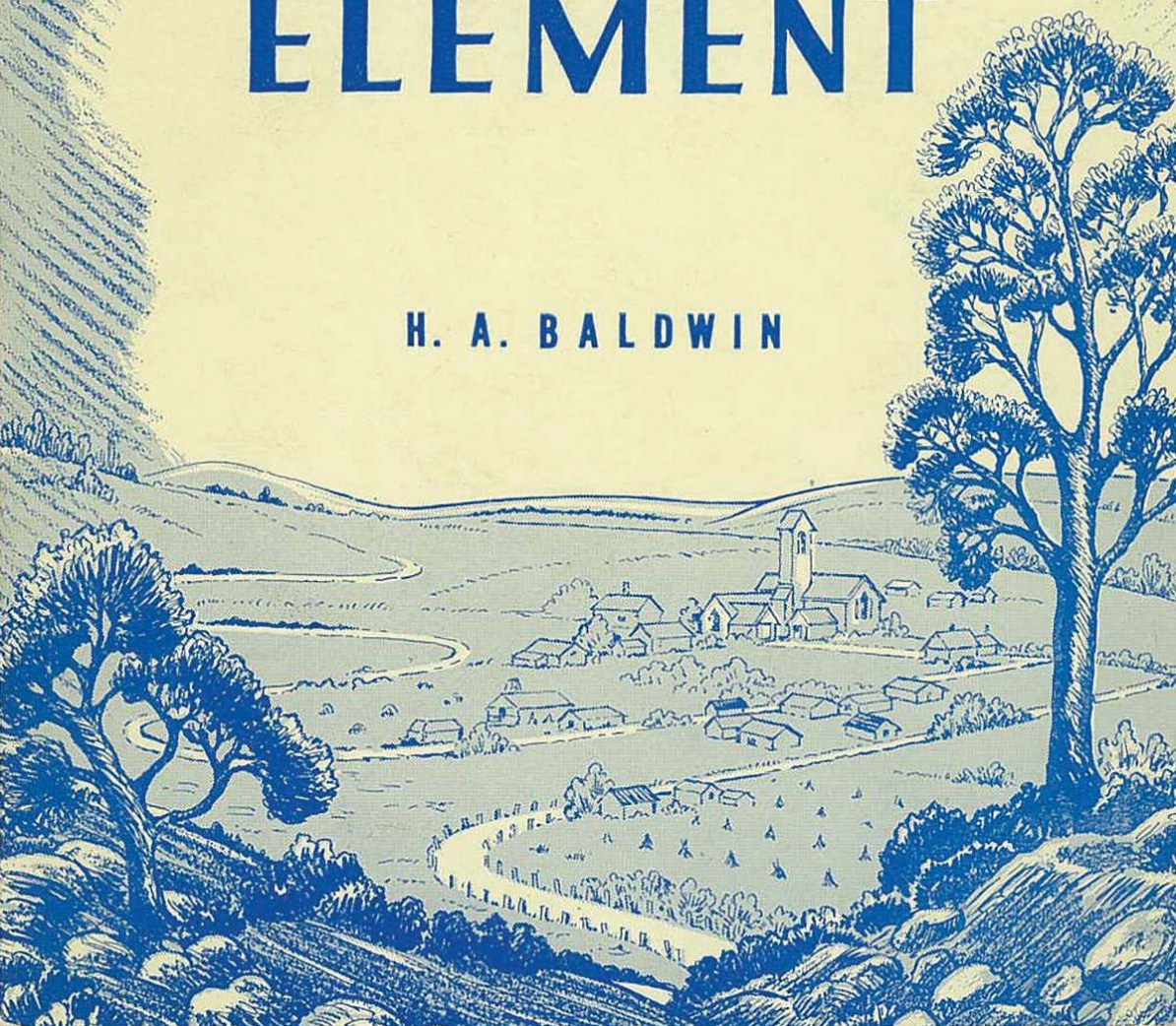


# *Holiness*

AND THE

# HUMAN ELEMENT

H. A. BALDWIN



HOLINESS  
*and the*  
HUMAN ELEMENT

by  
H. A. BALDWIN

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## PREFACE

Some of the reasons for writing the following pages may be of interest to the reader. In our association with the holiness movement we have encountered two extremes in statement: one so thoroughly negatives the human element as to intimate that the life of a holy man will be all but angelic, while the other allows so much for the human that, in some respects, there would be very little difference between the life of the sanctified and that of the sinner.

Again, in our study of the literature of holiness we have noted the fact that, with few exceptions, writers stop short of the practical application of the experience by failing to show how grace does coexist with human frailties, and by so doing they leave the inquirer to grope his way through the mazes of disturbing elements as best he can. Religious teachers of all classes are too often content to deal with generalities and seldom descend to particulars. But the thing that puzzles the average disciple is to be able always properly to apply general rules to the intricacies of his own daily life and feelings.

Often in the public utterances of teachers of holiness there is such a confusion of claims and counterclaims that we have feared the novice would be placed somewhat in the position of a mariner with a defective compass, or a traveler with a number of disagreeing guides.

We do not claim to have settled all the questions that may arise; neither do we claim to have settled any question to the satisfaction of all. We have just done our best to discover the proper line and to keep to the divine order

of things. Others might have done better had they set themselves to the task; but since, as far as we have been able to discover, they have not done so, we trust the reader will accept our effort as well intentioned and, to the best of our light, after years of study and observation, as far as we have gone, a true analysis of the heart, feelings, and life of holy men who are still living in the flesh and compassed about with human infirmities. We would not knowingly draw the line in such a way as to allow for or excuse evil; neither do we wish to discourage that man whom the Lord approves.

The various sections of the following work were originally published as newspaper articles, and we have made little or no attempt to change or improve them, and bespeak the forbearance of those who would be critical because of either literary deficiency or lack of theological statement. It is experience and not dogmatic accuracy for which we aim. Our attempt is to win the soul, not to please the intellect. If we succeed in this, or in assisting towards this end even in the least degree, we shall consider the result well worth our labors.

H. A. BALDWIN

March 22, 1919

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## CHAPTER I

### Statement and Definitions

The saintly Fletcher says: "It is excessively wrong to conclude that all these burdens, infirmities, appetites, passions, and aversions are those sinful workings of our corrupt nature, which are sometimes called the 'flesh.' You cannot continue a whole day in deep prostration of body and soul, nor perhaps one hour upon your knees; your stomach involuntarily rises at the sight of some food which some persons esteem delicious; your strength fails in outward works; your spirits are exhausted; you faint or sleep, when others are active and toil; you need the spiritual and bodily cordials which others can administer; perhaps also you are afflicted with disagreeable sensations in the outward man, through the natural necessary play of the various springs which belong to flesh and blood; your just grief vents itself in tears; your zeal for God is attended with a proper anger at sin; nay, misapplying what the apostle says of the carnal man under the law, you may declare with great truth, 'The [extensive] good I would, I do not; and the [accidental] evil I would not, that I do;' I would convert every sinner, relieve every distressed object, and daily visit every sick bed in the kingdom; but cannot do it. I would never try the patience of my friends, never stir up the envy of my rivals, never excite the malice of my enemies; but I cannot help doing this undesigned evil as

often as I strongly exert myself in the discharge of my duty.”

The reasons why so many fail to comprehend the experience of entire sanctification are as numerous and varied as are the dispositions of the numberless persons who are concerned; and, as a consequence, it is impossible that any line of instruction should fit all. Concrete examples must be advanced in order that definite instructions may be given. But, in the absence of such examples, we must either be content to confine ourselves to some general rules which are capable of specific application, or suppose examples which will illustrate certain classes of individuals. What we have to say will be a blending of these two methods.

Many persons make the mistake of observing their own experiences, and sometimes the observations are very superficial indeed. Thus the individuals reach certain conclusions which they form into universal rules and proceed to apply to one and all without respect to character, surroundings, make-up, degree of light, or physical or mental conditions. By such a course souls are utterly confused, and are unable to reach satisfactory conclusions as to their duty and standing.

Remember that the only test of holiness is deliverance from sin, and not certain peculiar manifestations which you observe in your own experience. These manifestations have to do with your own peculiar temperament and not with your heart condition.

If the experience of holiness were stripped of the human element it would be the simplest thing in the world. But, owing to the presence of this complex element, the manifestations, both inward and outward, for



which we can look when one professes the experience become so exceedingly complex that at times we almost despair of clearing up the fog with which, even by well-meaning people, the doctrine is surrounded.

Let us draw the distinction between the two works of grace. Many theologians teach that justification and sanctification are the same in kind, and that they differ only in degree, that is, holiness is only a bigger blessing. To us this is a fundamental mistake, tending only to foster error and to befog the real point at issue—deliverance from the carnal mind.

When a person is justified (and we here use the word justified in its broad sense, including all the accompaniments of initial salvation), first, all his sins are forgiven, and all his moral relations with both God and men, and with the universe, are changed. God reveals, by the witness of the Spirit, the fact of forgiveness, translates the recipient into the kingdom of Christ, and adopts him into the family. He also fills this newly saved one with joy as a result of his deliverance from sin and condemnation, and gives a deep and blessed consciousness of divine favor. But in addition to all this, God introduces into his moral faculties a new vigor, by which he is enabled to hold under control the sinful tendencies which still characterize the essence of the soul, and to defeat the temptations of the devil. New "lamps are hung through his intellect" by which he is enabled to discern the presence of moral evil, and the will of God. God puts new quickness, tenderness, and control into the renewed conscience, new intensities into all the good sensibilities, and new energy into the will.

The additional work which is accomplished in sanctifi-

cation is the removal of inbred corruption and the intensification of the graces already received, this intensification coming more from the removal of remaining and hindering depravity than from the addition of new measures of grace.

## CHAPTER II

### Causes of Confusion

We are in the habit of saying that the present world is a place of trial. If this is true, and there is no doubt that it is, then there must be enough lack of comprehension to cause at least some degree of uncertainty or there would be no need of faith, our patience would never be exercised, and, as a consequence, there could be no *reward for firmness under temptation*. *The trial of your faith is much more precious than gold*. Blessed is he that endureth temptation.

When we say "uncertainty" we do not mean to cast any cloud around the witness of the Spirit, for this is God-given and positive. But the uncertainty arises from the peculiar feelings, movements, aversions, temptations, suggestions, and erroneous standards of measurement which are inseparable from us during our earthly sojourn. If all of these things could be immediately and unerringly analyzed on every occasion, one can readily see that the soul would become infallible, and trial would be a thing of the past.

Because we fail to preach definitely and intelligently on the subject of holiness we leave people in darkness and confusion. Notwithstanding our strong professions, yet it remains a fact that the doctrine of holiness is not emphasized so strongly as it should be; very few ever expound the doctrine in a series of sermons; more mention it often in the course of their public ministrations.

Definite preaching should cause definite seeking, and definite seeking should produce definite results.

Then some who do preach holiness seldom, or never, bear down on the experimental side of the question, but instead advance dry doctrinal treatises. The common people care little for theological definitions, but they want to know concerning the practical manifestations of the experience in their own lives. Doctrinal definitions are at times a necessity; but if they are not carefully worded and properly explained, they confuse more than enlighten. Theology and experience are two different things, and very often the Holy Ghost ignores all our wise doctrinal theories and cuts cross-lots to sanctify a soul. The old lady cried, "O Lord, take the grumble and growl out of my heart." And the Lord did it.

Again, we would state that if dry theological definitions are unsatisfactory, on the other hand, dry and stereotyped experimental definitions are even more unsatisfactory and confusing. The thing that is meat for one is poison for another. To illustrate: It is stated, without any explanation, that trifling and jesting are not compatible with the highest degree of grace. This is true—but one person who has been devil-driven because he laughs at something ludicrous, or because some word has escaped that appears frivolous, is immediately cast down and almost thrown into despair; to this man the undefined truth is poison. On the other hand, the man who is guilty of transgression along these lines should be warned by the same truth and caused to amend; it is his food.

Then we sometimes fear that there is a lack of earnest, conscientious study of this all-important subject by the

prospective teacher. Good books are helpful, but above all we would emphasize the Word of God, and that learning which comes alone through actual contact with the cleansing Blood, diligent prayer, and personal observation of the things of the Spirit. God can teach you more in five minutes than you can get out of the best books written, after the most careful and arduous study. Then draw close to the Holy Ghost, the mighty Teacher, and learn of Him; He will guide you into all truth.

Even such great teachers as Wesley, Fletcher, and Clarke do not always adequately define some of the most essential points of experience, and after the most diligent study we feel dissatisfied because of their indefiniteness. Just two examples: Wesley says:

1. "One commends me. Here is a temptation to pride. But instantly my soul is humbled before God. And I feel no pride; of which I am as sure as that pride is not humility."

Is this always the case? We think not; for if this humbling of the soul always followed as definitely as is here supposed, there would be no real temptation to pride. We have heard three classes of testimonies: (1) that the soul was immediately humbled, as Wesley says; (2) that there was no conscious response to the suggestion, but the soul continued in quiet indifference; (3) some have testified to a great inward struggle before the enemy was conquered—not a struggle against enemies in the soul, but against the pressure of the enemy from the outside. All these are consistent with the highest degree of grace.

2. "A man strikes me. Here is a temptation to anger. But my heart overflows with love. And I feel no anger

at all, of which I can be as sure as that love and anger are not the same."

Again we ask, Is this always true in practical life? To be sure, there will be no anger or resentment if the heart is clean, but there may be a feeling of grief or of physical suffering that, for the moment, may be so prominent as to hide the natural overflowing of love for the offender.

One great source of confusion is found in the exaggerated statements of teachers as to the power and character of the grace of entire sanctification. There is danger of destroying the foundation of the experience when men make strong claims which neither they nor their hearers ever will fulfill. Very often these statements are made to stir people to action. The plain truth concerning holiness should be sufficient to move any honest soul to seeking, and anything which falls short or overreaches the truth is not the truth, no matter how great the pretensions.

## CHAPTER III

### Various Statements

One person (and he is one of a large class) declares with great earnestness and conviction, "If you doubt your experience you have lost it already, and need to be at the altar." While we will concede that doubts generally have "legs to stand on," yet we will not concede that an honest doubt as to one's standing is a sure sign of forfeited grace.

"To retain perfect purity," says James Caughey, "requires a continual acting of faith upon the leading promises of the gospel. . . . The temptations to doubt concerning one's purity are much more intricate and perplexing than those regarding the forgiveness of sins. The most holy and devoted persons are more frequently compelled to approach the cleansing blood by faith,—for the *evidence* of purity than for that of pardon." Then he quotes from the Lady Maxwell: "I have often acted faith for sanctification *in the absence of all feeling*, and it has always diffused an indescribable sweetness through my soul."

But someone asks, If a doubt concerning one's standing does not of necessity forfeit the experience, then what is the doubt that does? We answer, The condition the sanctified soul is in when he hesitates concerning his standing is that of a man surrounded by numerous and bloodthirsty enemies, hesitating as to which weapon

to use, his knife, club, or gun; or a mariner in a fog attempting to determine by compass the direction in which his ship is headed. Hesitancy as to personal duty or standing is not distrust of God. May we illustrate the doubt that overcomes the soul? A sister testified that she made the discovery that she had lost the experience of holiness. In casting about for the reason for this loss she remembered that some time before in the midst of sore pressure the enemy had suggested, God is not able to keep you. To this suggestion she gave assent, and her experience was gone. One will readily see that this was distrust of God, and such distrust is inconsistent with a fully cleansed heart.

Another person gives us to understand that every time we testify we must say something about sanctification, and that if we do not we will forfeit the grace. Many persons, because of such teachings, have been so tempted over a failure to say, "Saved and sanctified," that they have thrown away the grace already attained, and fainted by the way.

A constant forced repetition of the most precious facts is apt to cause weariness and it may be discouragement. We once read of a woman who was impressed that she must under all circumstances keep saying, "Praise the Lord!" After weeks of this constant exercise, she grew discouraged and lost out.

There is a blessed variety in the personal leadings of the Holy Ghost, and if we follow Him in our testimonies *no two will be alike and no trite expression will mar the beauty of their originality or of their inspiration.* For one, the writer must confess that he has often during a love



feast been perfectly captivated by the testimonies, sparkling with originality and saturated with the Spirit.

Another declares that if persons are back of the clearest light ever given, if they are not walking unerringly in all the will of God, their grace is all gone, they are backslidden. If the persons who make this statement refer to actual sin against known light, there is no room to question their accuracy; but, strictly speaking, if this claim is true a man's grace is forfeited every time he fails to pray as much or as often as he should, every time he eats a piece of pie after he feels he has had enough, or every time he speaks an unnecessary word; for are not all these contrary to his highest light?

Again, how do people generally backslide, gradually or suddenly? The consensus is that it is a little neglect here, an unnecessary word there, a little self-indulgence in another place, until the strength is gradually gone, and then, when the crucial test comes, the soul is not able to stand. The first neglect is a backward step. Although none can tell how far this may proceed without actual backsliding, yet it is an error to place that point earlier than facts warrant or, on the contrary, to presume on the long-suffering of the Lord.

Another person says that if our hearts are clean, and we properly trust God, we will never reach the bottom of the flour barrel, thus teaching that gain and godliness are parallel. He attempts to prove his point by quoting David's words, I have "not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." But One greater than David speaks of a certain beggar who was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom, after he had died full of sores and befriended only by dogs. If David never saw

a saint in want, well and good; but Jesus Christ had, and I have also.

Some have never known want, and because they have not they would blame those who have (like Job's friends) with lack of grace or a carelessness that is little short of criminal, on financial lines. The writer once heard a minister take this stand in a camp-meeting sermon, and then proceed to testify that all his temporal wants had been supplied, he had never scraped the bottom of the flour barrel, etc. After the service we approached a brother, well beloved in the church, and ventured the statement that we could not give such a testimony. The good brother replied, "That man has not been where you have." That's just it. We once knew a brother who, because of a lack of means, did without meat or butter for two years at a time; he fed his family on corn meal, hominy, and potatoes (when he could get them), wore patched clothes, and cut the legs off his trousers and turned them around, that the worn knees might not be so prominent, and all the while kept eternal victory and saw souls saved. Job had just as much grace, and perhaps a little more, when he lost all as when he was surrounded by great riches. Neither riches nor poverty is godliness.

Then there is the extreme divine healer who says that if you do not get healed you are wrong. There is no possible answer, for these folks know; but may we say that some of the best saints we have ever met were the most afflicted, and some of them even died.

We would not be understood as disparaging the matter of divine healing; we simply refer to those who make a hobby of healing and unchristianize those who are sick.

We lay down as a rule: The fact that a person has great faith for healing does not prove that he has either great grace or great love; and the fact that one is able to exercise little faith for healing does not prove that he has little love or grace. These things do not always run parallel. Sickness is an inheritance of the human family, and, sooner or later, all will be overtaken.

## CHAPTER IV

# Discouragement

Another favorite saying is that discouragement is inconsistent with holiness, and that if such a spirit overtakes you, you do not have the experience; and this is said without the least qualification or explanation. Before we could concede such a claim we would want to know several things, especially, What do you mean by discouragement? It would be interesting to take a vote of the holiness preachers who read these lines and see how many can truly say that since they professed the experience of holiness they have never felt discouraged with their success in the work of the Lord and almost decided to quit.

On the contrary, we claim that heaviness and even awful depression are perfectly consistent with the highest degree of grace. These depressions may come from various sources, as we shall soon see.

Our vacillating feelings are a poor gauge with which to measure our grace. They run all the way from the melancholy to the hilarious without the slightest movement of the will, and at times they refuse to be controlled. We weep brokenheartedly over the grave of our loved ones, and rejoice over the successes of our friends. The whole earth turns blue when our minds are depressed, and yellow when our liver or stomach is disordered, and it sparkles with sunshine and throbs with delight when

our blood courses naturally and our nerves lose their strain. In which case have we the most grace? I do not know, but one thing is sure: He who keeps the victory in his soul in the midst of depressing circumstances and torturing pain is a conqueror, whether critical men write his name high or low.

"There are some herbs, you know, whose virtue consists chiefly in their fragrance, but some of them are quite scentless and uninteresting till bruised; then they shed their perfume all around. Thus it is with many a Christian. The fragrance of his piety is never diffused abroad until he is well bruised" (*Caughey*).

The feeling that is commonly called discouragement may arise from various causes, physical, mental, and spiritual; within ourselves and from outside causes. It may come from our circumstances, our health, our surroundings, our associates, or the enemy himself. It may be consistent with a high degree of grace or it may be fatal to grace. And for any person to apply the same rule to every case is a failure to obey the command to rightly divide the word of truth.

Then, besides, various persons have different ideas of what discouragement is. If definitions were asked, the answer would range all the way from the feeling of heaviness that always accompanies temptation, to the melancholia of insanity. The *Standard Dictionary* defines "discourage" thus: "To damp or destroy the courage or depress the spirits of; lessen the self-confidence of; dispirit; dishearten; deter. To destroy or attempt to destroy the confidence in; try to bring into disfavor, etc."

Let us examine a few of the experiences which are sometimes labeled "discouragement," and see how far

they can be justly called carnal, or rather be sure signs of a carnal heart.

1. *Physical depression.* Some persons who have always enjoyed uninterrupted health think it strange that anyone should be depressed under physical disability. Then there is another class of persons (but it is not a very large class) who declare that they feel spiritual exaltation and enjoy constant communion when they are sick. But by far the greater number of persons testify that during seasons of bodily pain they feel depressed and downhearted; and this is especially true in diseases of long continuance. Take the man who is naturally ambitious and active, steal away his power to labor and yet leave him with the unbounded desire for accomplishment; now let his indisposition continue indefinitely, and it is nothing short of a miracle if he should continually feel exalted in soul. It would be a miracle even in the realm of miraculous grace—a supreme miracle. Such things are not only possible but they do occur; but, commonly, the victim must endure seasons of awful depression. We once knew a saintly old minister, superannuated, whose seasons of depression because of his lost physical powers were deep, and at times touching.

Even Wesley says: "*Faith no more hinders the sinking of the spirits (as it is called) in hysteric illness than the rising of the pulse in fever.*" And may we say that, judging by the common experience of sanctified people, one is just as much a matter of grace as the other. A greater than Wesley speaks of being "cast down, but not destroyed."

2. *Mental and spiritual depression.* A saint of God has spent months, it may be years, on a certain piece of

work, feeling all the time that he was laboring to the glory of God; at the end of this time he sees, or fancies he sees, his labor all go for naught. There is a possibility that he may have to think twice, and it may be pray three times, before he can shout over the loss. Job said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord"; but any person can easily read between the lines that this saying was wrung from a heart crushed with sorrow and verging on despondency. A voice from the ash heaps of blasted hopes; bitterly sorrowful indeed, but faithful in despair!

A faithful minister labors for months, perhaps the whole year, and sees but little, or nothing, accomplished. The enemy has scaled the walls and entered the flock; the minister himself, although all his labors have been in love and with tearful eyes, is accused by the very persons his heart longs to bless; at conference a committee insists on his removal, and attempts to tarnish his reputation as a minister of the gospel. Of course, we understand that under such circumstances the persecuted man of God should have grace enough to shout for joy and triumph as though nothing had happened! But do sanctified men always do it?

3. Causes of discouragement within ourselves. No person has such a full view of his own astonishing weakness as does the holy man. "Oh," says someone, "a holy man is not weak." Indeed, and who is this that is wiser than what is written? Paul says, "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling" (I Cor. 2:3.) Again, "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities"

(II Cor. 11:29, 30). Again, "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" (II Cor. 12:9). And there are many other passages on the same line. Paul felt that by his personal weakness he was made strong in Christ, that he was compassed about with infirmities, and that he was set forth last, as it were, delivered unto death. Will we assist the three false friends of Job by adding accusation upon accusation because he cried unto God from the sackcloth and ashes of his own personal weakness and suffering?

I prayed that in a certain place God would give me one hundred souls. He answered my prayers. In another place I prayed just as earnestly and with just as much burden, but no fruit was forthcoming. My weakness! my weakness! Oh, that I had the ability of a Paul, the eloquence of an Apollos, the strength of a Peter, the courage of a Daniel, the burden of a Jeremiah, the triumphant faith of an Isaiah, the power of a Moses, the spiritual sweetness of a David, the thunderous power of a John or a James, yea, above all, if I had the divine compassion of my Master himself, then (hear and be ashamed, O earth!) I could not, in some places, do many mighty works—because of their unbelief! I conclude that my own weakness reproaches me, perhaps, when it should not; but this does not always hinder me from accusing myself of being a failure. Is not this the common experience of the God-fearing, burden-bearing servants of God?

Oh, that I might plead with Moses, weep with Jeremiah, mourn with Isaiah, groan with Paul, and go to Gethsemane with Jesus! Oh, that I might see the travail



of my soul, and look upon newborn souls! But are your hopes blasted and your prayers unanswered? Despair not, for God has said it, "In due season we shall reap, if we faint not." It may be that God writes success when men, and even yourself, write failure.

Jeremy Taylor likens us to the fabled lamps in the tomb of Terentia which burned underground for many ages; but as soon as they were brought out and saw a brighter light, went out in darkness. Then he adds: "So long as we are in the retirements of sorrow, of want, of fear, of sickness, we are burning and shining lamps; but when God lifts us up from the gates of death, and carries us abroad into the open air, to converse with prosperity and temptations, we go out in darkness, and we can not be preserved in light and heat, but by still dwelling in the regions of sorrow." There is beauty and some truth in all this, but the danger is that such a life would produce only a morbid and ghastly piety, and these bright lights would irradiate—"only a tomb." But God knows how to temper the sunshine and the rain. "He who made us, and who tutors us, alone knows what is the exact measure of light and shade, sun and cloud, frost and heat, which will best tend to mature those flowers which are the object of His celestial husbandry; and which, when transplanted into the paradise of God, are to bloom there forever in amaranthine loveliness" (*Rogers*).

Then, who is it that has reached a place in his religious experience where he is completely satisfied? He may be satisfied with the quality, and he is if his heart is cleansed, but the quantity is another question. Show us the man who has reached a place of complete satisfaction, and we will show you a man who has become stagnant in soul.

The Psalmist declares that he will be satisfied when he awakes in the likeness of God. There is a possibility that present attainments when measured by the attainments of others, and the vast possibilities of grace, will seem so meager that there will be danger of the soul sinking in despair unless strenuous effort is immediately made for further advancement. Do not attempt to gauge your own experience by the reported experiences of men whose lives have been written, such as Bramwell, Carvosso, Fletcher, etc. Why? Simply because the biographers have often omitted the struggles and losses and inserted the victories and good things. They want to make a hero of their favorite. God only knows the struggles of soul through which these great men passed before they gained the victories which are recorded. Are you, too, willing to struggle? Then you can be great—in God's sight, if not in man's.

4. Causes of discouragement from without. This would include all such things as financial loss or want, persecution, vile accusations, the character of our associates, and hundreds of things which we cannot understand and which persist in crowding themselves into our everyday life.

Just one: financial want. Some may laugh at the man who groans under financial pressure; perhaps such persons have felt such pressures, perhaps they have not. Wesley says: "O want of bread! want of bread; who can tell what this means, unless he hath felt it himself? I am astonished it occasions no more heaviness even in them that believe!" May we add that it is comparatively easy to endure such things one's self; but when your children are in want, and your companion is fading because

of a lack of proper nourishment, then the heart will surely groan. That minister of the gospel, or layman either, is made of martyr stuff who can steadily pursue his way in the path of duty when others are plentifully supplied and his own are suffering for absolute necessities. Is he sinning when he looks at his strong right arm, and feels the pull towards secular labor which would supply all his needs? But someone says, "If a man does God's will, God will always supply all his needs." Such talk as that is an easy way out for the man who will not give of his cash to help support the gospel. It puts all the responsibility on the servant and lets the one who should give, and does not, go scot-free.

The writer in one place, after a trip around the circuit, drove his faithful horse into the barn for the night. There was not a fork of hay or a quart of grain to give him, and while Duke looked over toward the manger and pawed the floor, we looked into his big, kindly eyes and wept. "Old faithful fellow, you can have nothing tonight." But why should this poor beast go hungry? Let us not attempt to locate the blame, for that is not our question. The matter in hand is the depression which we naturally felt. If we did not yield to a complaining or faultfinding spirit, our tears were but the result of natural pity and did not show a corrupt heart.

5. Some of God's most successful ministers are most beset with discouragement because they feel their labors are producing so little results. It is said that at one time Bishop Asbury had fully made up his mind that his work was a failure and that he would quit. In this frame of mind he slipped into a meeting, taking a seat unobserved near the door. During the testimony meeting a sister

arose and stated that she owed her salvation to Bishop Asbury, giving time and particulars. When she was seated, the bishop arose, told of his temptation and decision, but declared that if he had been instrumental in the salvation of one soul he would continue to preach the gospel. Just such facts are the only things that keep some of the rest of us going. Are our hearts unclean because we are thus depressed? Not necessarily.

Some of the best of God's people have almost been driven to despair in their very dying moments. A notable example of this is found in the annals of early Methodism. Thomas Walsh, a Methodist minister, was so holy and devoted that even Wesley stood in awe of him. But his biographer says that in his dying hour "his great soul lay thus, as it were, in ruins for some considerable time, and poured out many a heavy groan and speechless tear from an oppressed heart and dying body. He sadly bewailed the absence of Him whose wanted presence had so often given him the victory over the manifold contradictions and troubles which he endured for His name's sake." The characters of neither good nor bad men can be surely inferred from their dying words—it is the life that tells.

The discouragement which blasts the soul: When I yield, in the midst of the pressures, to a distrustful spirit, when I become despondent concerning God's power or willingness to help me; when I cease to rejoice in God in the midst of my sorrows, or to trust God in my pains; when I am persecuted *and* forsaken, cast down *and* destroyed; then, and only then, is my spiritual strength stolen away, and I am become as other men.

But any approach towards this point is, in that degree, detrimental to grace and a hindrance to success. No man can be his whole bigness for God when he is looking sadly at his weaknesses or despondently viewing his temptations. The Word of God says, "In due season we shall reap, *if we faint not.*"

## CHAPTER V

### Ecstatic Feelings

Another ambiguous statement is that the sun is always shining (meaning ecstatic blessings) in the holy man's sky. We sing:

*"Here the sun is always shining,  
Here the sun is always bright;  
'Tis no place for gloomy Christians to abide.  
For my soul is filled with music,  
And my heart with great delight,  
And I'm living on the hallelujah side."*

There is no doubt that the Sun of Righteousness is always shining, and that the holy man always resides under His healing rays and is a constant partaker of His beneficent influences; but it is also a fact that the holy man must pass through clouds. These clouds need not, and if the man keeps holy they will not, succeed in intercepting the power of the rays of the Sun of Righteousness. Yet they may temporarily intercept one's consciousness of these rays, and then the holy man sings,

*"I oft pass through tunnels  
That seem dark as night,"*

and it is possible that for the time being he may lose sight of even the inner light. Job had such an experience,

but he said, "When thou hast tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

While Wesley strongly accuses Madam Guyon for teaching that God at times withdraws the consciousness of His presence and favor even from the soul that is cleansed, and says some good things about God not playing bopeep with His children, yet, on the other hand, he admits the possibility of strong temptations clouding, temporarily, the work of God.

"But does not sanctification shine by its own light? And does not the new birth, too? Sometimes it does; and so does sanctification; at others it does not. In the hour of temptation Satan clouds the work of God, and injects various doubts and reasonings, especially in those who have very weak or very strong understandings. At such times there is absolute need of that witness, without which the work of sanctification not only could not be discerned, but could no longer subsist."

We once heard a holiness preacher make the statement at the head of this chapter in substance, and then consume fifteen or twenty minutes in endeavoring to reconcile some of the Bible facts about trials, afflictions, heaviness, etc., with his unbiblical premise. We concluded that it was a hard job to split hairs close enough to bolster up a statement which contradicts both the Bible and everyday experience. While a man may always rejoice in the facts of redemption and personal participation in its merits, yet it is a question whether a person can be in heaviness through manifold temptations and at the same time feel the ecstasy of joy that he does when the heaviness is removed. We once heard of a good brother who was

subject to seasons of great temptation and pressure. After enduring for some time he would begin to shout. When asked why he shouted, he replied, "I am shouting to think how good I will feel when I get out of this." Those who are often overtaken by temptation might try that for a while.

But some testify that it is an actual fact that never "a cloud does arise to darken their skies." This is good, and we rejoice with such persons with exceeding joy; but when these persons insist in making their experiences a standard by which to measure all others, and harshly accuse the ones who suffer either mental or spiritual depression while under a stress of temptation or physical disability, we wish to register our humble objection. We have heard people loudly boast of their unclouded joys and undisturbed serenity, reproaching those who did not reach the same standard; and then we have seen these same persons in the furnace, and have decided—well, we are all human after all, even though we may be sanctified. It is not the amount of ecstasy which I enjoy that measures my grace, but the amount of victory I have in the midst of trials.

On the same line, some say that the sanctified, and some that even the justified, live a triumphant life. The Bible says that God "always causeth us to triumph in Christ" (II Cor. 2:14). If the reader will turn to this passage and read the context, he will find that the triumph of which the apostle speaks is along two lines, personal soul victory and success in preaching the gospel. There is no suggestion of the continual mountaintop ecstasies which some would have us believe are inseparable from a pure heart.



Doubtless, if one lives right these soul thrills will come, and perhaps the nearer to God one lives the oftener they will come and the more glorious they will be. But the hundreds, yea, thousands that have fallen by the way because they did not continually feel the ecstatic triumphs that they were made to believe they should have are witness to the error of such teaching and the need of a warning voice.

Do you have soul victory? Do you do God's bidding? If so you "triumph in Christ," no matter how heavy the burdens or how gloomy your earthly prospects. George Nitsch says: "We can not have heaven twice; and that is how a chain of anxiety and trouble is woven into our happiness; and that is the reason Christ's kisses are so scarce, and His visits so rare. But when we come together above the sun and the moon, then we will experience the full riches of His love, which He will pour out upon us to all eternity."

This is soul triumph—to live a holy life.

Again, we are told that there are no movements in the clean soul in response to temptation. A second thought would surely show the error of such a statement; for if the temptation is detected and repelled there must of necessity be a movement of opposition. The response of righteous indignation is aroused at hearing the name of that God whom the soul adores blasphemed, or at the sight of vice and guilt outraging virtue and innocency.

If, in place of saying there is no response to temptation, we should say there is no agreement with temptation, we are correct, provided we except those solicitations which are directed at the natural appetites and desires which remain in the nature of even the sanctified. The

devil tried this latter method with Jesus when he suggested that Jesus turn stones into bread to satisfy His hunger. There was a desire for food, and doubtless a desire to which the suggestion could appeal; but since at that special time the working of the miracle to satisfy the desire for food would have been obedience to the devil, Jesus rejected it immediately. Thus when our natural appetites are aroused and solicited grace detects the enemy's ruse and overcomes. No sin is committed and the heart remains pure.

## CHAPTER VI

# Righteous Indignation

We are often asked to explain righteous indignation, and to show the difference between this and what is commonly called anger or impatience. This is a difficult question, and we have looked in vain for some person who has drawn a satisfactory distinction. Some writers seem to approach an explanation, and then stop short, leaving us still in the dark. Most of them allow too much, and the only difference they see between righteous indignation and real, simon-pure anger is in degree and not in quality. If anyone has found a good definition and distinction it would be a blessing to bring it forward; but we mistrust that the real answer can be known only by experience; it cannot be expressed in words. Nevertheless we may be able to give some light. We will first bring forward a few authorities and then add some thoughts of our own.

Definition. "Anger: Violent, vindictive passion or emotion aroused by injury or insult, real or imagined, and directed against the cause thereof; sudden and strong displeasure; wrath; ire." "Indignation: The state of being indignant; a feeling involving anger mingled with contempt or disgust, aroused by injustice, meanness," etc. (*Standard Dictionary*).

"We may be angry and sin not; but this disposition may become sinful, and this in the highest degree. It is so

when it is excessive, when it is rage, and makes us lose control of ourselves. It is so, and may become a vice, when it leads us to wish evil to those who have offended us. It is resentment when it prompts us to meet and repay evil by evil. It is vengeance when it impels us to crush those who have injured us. It is vindictiveness when it is seeking out ingeniously and laboriously means and instruments to give pain to those who have thwarted us. Already sin has entered" (*McCosh, in "Motive Powers"*).

"Anger is not evil *per se*. The mind is formed to be angry as well as love. Both are original susceptibilities of our nature. If anger were in itself sinful, how could God Himself be angry? How could He, who was separate from sin and sinners, have looked round upon men with anger? An essentially immoral character can not attach to it if it be the mere emotion of displeasure on the infliction of any evil upon us. Anger may be sinful, when it arises too soon, without reflection, when the injury which awakens it is only apparent, and was designed to do good" (*McClintock and Strong*).

"All anger is by no means sinful; it was designed by the Author of our nature for self-defense; nor is it altogether a selfish passion, since it is excited by injuries offered to others as well as ourselves, and sometimes prompts us to reclaim offenders from sin and danger, but it becomes sinful when conceived upon trivial occasions or inadequate provocations; when it breaks forth into outrageous actions, vents itself in reviling language, or is concealed in our thoughts to the degree of hatred" (*Buck's Theological Dictionary*).

“If ye have a just occasion to be angry at any time, see that it be without sin: and therefore take heed of excess in your anger. If we would be angry, and sin not (says one), we must be angry at nothing but sin: and we should be more jealous for the glory of God than for any interest or reputation of our own. One great and common sin in anger is to suffer it to burn into wrath, and then to let it rest. . . . Though anger in itself is not sinful, yet there is the utmost danger of its becoming so, if it be not carefully watched, and speedily suppressed” (*Henry, comment on Eph. 4:26*).

“Anger is not always sinful; this passion being found in Him in whom was no sin. But then it must be noted that anger is not properly defined by philosophers, *a desire of revenge*, or causing grief to him who has provoked, or hath grieved us; for this desire of revenge is always evil: and though our Saviour was angry with the Pharisees for the hardness of their hearts; yet He had no desire to revenge this sin upon them, but had a great compassion for them” (*Whitby*).

“It would be proper to express displeasure at what was wrong, on many occasions, in the management of families, in reproofing sin, and even in ordering their temporal concerns; so that all anger was not absolutely prohibited: yet let Christians be very circumspect and vigilant to restrain that dangerous passion within the bounds of reason, meekness, piety, and charity; not being angry without cause, or above cause, or in a proud, selfish, and peevish manner; not expressing their displeasure by reproaches, or the language of vehement indignation; or suffering it to settle into resentment and malice: but always endeavoring to subordinate the exercise of it to

the glory of God, and the benefit of the offender himself, as well as that of others; and to show stronger disapprobation of the sin committed against God, than of the injury done to themselves" (Scott, *comment on Eph. 4:26*).

These are samples, and the reader will see that while some of the writers quoted approach the verge of drawing a distinction between righteous and unrighteous indignation or anger, they all stop short of the mark, and only make the difference reside in the degree and not in the character of the passion. But we believe that there is a vast difference in the *character as well as the degree*. We will venture a few suggestions, only inklings of which we can find in any other place.

1. There are two kinds of anger, carnal and holy. An example of the former is found in Cain when he slew his brother, and I fear that some of the writers quoted above had that sort in mind in their comments. There are various examples of the latter even in the life of Jesus: "Our Lord's anger was not only not sinful, but it was holy indignation, a perfectly right state of heart; and the want of it would have been a sinful defect. It would show a want of filial respect and affection, for a son to hear, without emotion, his father's character unjustly aspersed. Would it not be a want of due reverence for God, to hear His name blasphemed, without feeling and expressing indignant disapprobation?" (Scott, *on Mark 3:5*.)

2. Carnal anger is not necessarily aroused by a thing which possesses moral quality, and may be manifested on the most trivial occasions, as when a man pounds his thumb, or because of a mosquito bite. Anger which is not sinful is always manifested toward or on account of

moral evil; as when your daughter or some other person's daughter, is insulted by a vile man.

3. Carnal anger springs from an unholy principle in the soul. Righteous indignation does not, and may be, and often is, a result of holiness itself.

4. Since carnal anger springs from an unholy principle in the soul, and since the groundwork of sin is self (the sinful self-life, or carnal selfishness), then carnal anger is a selfish emotion, arising from a feeling of personal injury, or the transgression of one's rights, or the crossing of one's plans or ideas, or a disturbance of his pleasures. This might be extended to refer to fancied or real injuries to others who are more or less connected with us or our plans. Righteous indignation is free from the principle of selfishness and is stirred by seeing others maliciously injured, or when God is insulted, or God's laws and the laws of righteousness are ignored or abused.

5. Carnal anger is belittling, degrading, and altogether demoralizing. Righteous anger, since it refers primarily to the assistance of the weak and the overthrow of wrong, as well as the glory of God, is elevating and ennobling.

6. The more sinful a man becomes, as a usual thing, the more terrible his angry passions are stirred. The more holy a saint of God becomes, the more he hates sin. Like his Master, he is angry at sin all the day long.

So-called righteous indignation becomes sinful when it takes on a self-centered or selfish character.

Adam Clarke seems to take this general view of the question: Commenting on Eph. 4:26, he says: "Perhaps the sense is, Take heed that ye be not angry, lest ye sin;

for it would be very difficult, even for an apostle himself, to be angry and not sin. If we consider anger as implying displeasure simply, then there are a multitude of cases in which a man may be innocently, yea, laudably angry; for he should be displeased with everything which is not for the glory of God and the good of mankind. But, in any other sense, I do not see how the words can be safely taken."

This same thought is brought out in the explanation of the synonyms for "anger" in the *Standard Dictionary*: "Anger is sharp, sudden, and, like all violent passions, necessarily brief. . . . Anger is personal and usually selfish, aroused by real or supposed wrong to oneself. Indignation is impersonal and unselfish displeasure at unworthy acts, i.e., at wrong as wrong. Pure indignation is not followed by regret, and needs no repentance; it is also more self-controlled than anger. Anger is commonly a sin; indignation is often a duty."

The reader will readily see that the above thoughts draw the line in the *character* of the passions. One is carnal and is cast out in the article of holiness; the other is a necessary accompaniment of holiness, and resides even in the character of God.

One more thing: Some parents are fearful of correcting their children, lest they themselves should become angry, and as a consequence the children are softly allowed loose rein. Discipline is necessary. We need policemen, judges, and jails. A policeman, judge, or jailer could be sanctified and yet uphold the requirements of the law. Some people have a soft idea of holiness. One person said that if a sanctified army would catch the kaiser they would hug him to death! If some sanctified



officers, then, would catch a highwayman, or a murderer, or an adulterer, they would love and hug him! No, sanctified men would see that such persons were put where there would be no possibility of their injuring the public, either in morals or person; and they could do it without the least vindictiveness, and to the glory of God and for the good of men.

## CHAPTER VII

### Feelings

Again, we are informed that when a holy man is insulted his feelings are not stirred, and the implication is that holiness will leave the soul in a condition of almost stoical insensibility. On the contrary, we claim that the more holy the soul the more keenly an insult will be felt and the more quickly a slight will be discerned. The very purity and innocence of the character of Jesus Christ caused the affronts and abuse of the rabble to be all the more keenly felt, until His great heart melted, and He cried, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

While it is true that a holy person will feel a slight or an insult, yet it is also true that he will not under such circumstances yield to anger or even have the uprisings of impatience in his soul. Some persons thus yield and call it righteous indignation. Concerning anger Wesley says:

"The same effect may be produced by giving place to anger, whatever the provocation or occasion may be; yea, though it be colored over with the name of zeal for the truth, or for the glory of God. Indeed, all zeal which is any other than the flame of love, is 'earthly, animal, and devilish.' It is the flame of wrath. It is flat, sinful anger, neither better nor worse. And nothing is a greater enemy to the mild, gentle love of God than this. They never did, they never can, subsist together in the same breast."

While these words of Wesley are sharp and to the point, and while they properly cover all the cases to which he refers, yet they do not cover all the question. As we have seen in a former chapter, there is such a thing as righteous indignation, and this indignation is a holy principle and existed in the spirit of the lowly Jesus. The only question is to know where to draw the line, unless you have the experience of holiness, and then you will learn for yourself. To quote from Fletcher:

“‘But if David only had an angry thought, he had still been a murderer in the sight of God.’ Not so; for there is a righteous anger, which is a virtue and not a sin; or else how could Christ have ‘looked round about on the Pharisees with anger,’ and continued sinless?”

We note again that the *sensibilities of a holy soul* are keenly alive to discern a slight from some person; we do not refer to carnal touchiness or unholy sensitiveness, but to a matter of spiritual discernment and the “feeling” which must of necessity accompany this knowledge. Madam Guyon declares she reached a place where one sort of food was as pleasing as another. This is easily explained by the fact that she had so stultified her physical senses by Catholic austerities that she had either killed the natural taste or was so hungry that anything tasted good. Our Protestant teachers are only one step behind her when they declare that all unpleasant spiritual sensations are killed.

Andrew Murray says: “Humility is perfect quietness of heart. It is to have no trouble. It is never to be fretted, or vexed, or irritated, or sore, or disappointed. It is to expect nothing, to wonder at nothing that is done to me, to feel nothing done against me.” Let us be honest now!

Everyone who has, beyond a conscientious hesitation, such an experience as that, please let it be known. Many will not take such a stand, and it is well they do not, for nearly every word is unscriptural and contrary to regenerated and sanctified human experience. You may have the victory amid such circumstances, but Jesus Christ himself was grieved when He came to His own and His own received Him not. Pascal, that holy, keenly intelligent man of the times of the Reformation, says:

“The mind of this sovereign of the world is not so independent as not to be discomposed by the first *tintamarre* that may be made around him. It does not need the roar of artillery to hinder him from thinking; the creaking of a vane or a pulley will answer the purpose. Be not surprised that he reasons ill just now; a fly is buzzing in his ears,—it is amply sufficient to render him incapable of sound deliberation. If you wish him to discover truth, be pleased to chase away that insect who holds his reason in check, and troubles that mighty intellect which governs cities and kingdoms!”

These stirrings of the human sensibilities by outward circumstances or the temptations of the devil may be, at times, difficult to distinguish from the former stirrings of carnality. But a careful and prayerful analysis of internal conditions will reveal the truth.

When a person whose heart is still carnal is opposed or insulted, a “feeling” of resentment, retaliation, or even a desire for revenge may be present. Under the same circumstances a holy heart will feel none of these things. The “feelings” of a holy soul (and we use the word “feelings” for want of a better) under such circumstances will be better expressed as grief, pity (not self-pity), humilia-

tion (and this, at times, to a painful degree), and burden of soul. This sounds easy, but is not always so easy in practical experience. "As chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing;" as "cast down, but not destroyed."

Again, certain persons are naturally so highly "sensitized" that the very spirit of even secret opposition has a tendency to depress. Such persons must be careful or they will confuse the suggestions of the devil, or imaginary occurrences, as the opposition of those who are really their friends. This condition is often found in persons of an extremely nervous temperament, and we have known of some who suffered untold agonies, not because of touchiness or carnal sensitiveness, but because they feared they had done something unwittingly that offended a brother. You say, "Go and have a face-to-face talk with the brother." That sounds good; but we have also known of this being done and the one approached steadfastly denying any knowledge of offense and then passing on to the next neighbor and repeating the same charge. This is hypocrisy, you say. Indeed, but only in the second party and not in the one of whom we are speaking.

If we might, we would add in a stage whisper, How much of this sort of hypocrisy can be found among professed holiness people? If it were not for concealing the truth we would fear to tell such things in Gath or to publish them in the streets of Ashkelon, lest the adversary would say, "I told you so." To be sure, these persons are not holy, but sometimes they stand high in the councils of the holy! Oh, that God would deliver us from this worse than human element!

## CHAPTER VIII

# Nerves

Someone says, "If you have holiness you will not know you have any nerves." If I were Job I would say, "Who knoweth not such things as these?" Such theories have been spun up and down, warped and woven, preached and argued, until they might be put to a long-meter tune; but the song would be only sounding brass or tinkling cymbals, and holy men's nerves would continue to tingle, and peculiar sensations would still surge through their bodies, which the Psalmist insists are fearfully and wonderfully made.

Let us examine the question from a common sense point of view and see what conclusions we can reach. But some person insists that grace is supernatural, and hence not explainable by the rules of common sense. Possibly common sense cannot thus explain grace (although we are not entirely willing to admit that, even in the realm of grace, God ignores the highest faculty of man, his intellect); but nerves are not grace, and, to some extent at least, are governed by natural laws.

Nerves are spread throughout the bodies of all except the lowest form of animals. They are like delicate electric wires scattered throughout the body, with the receiving and dispatching center located in the brain. Nerves are primarily physical organs and, hence, subject to disease, the same as other organs of the body. But their peculiar

nature, which in some ways approaches the mental, their relation to both the brain and body, like connecting links between mind and matter, makes them strange in their operations. It is a mistake to suppose that all so-called nervous people are controlled by some mental hallucination. The nerves can become diseased (authorities differ widely on this subject) and at such times they are subject to unpleasant sensations the same as are the muscles or other organs, and the fact is that the sensations of the muscles and other organs are dependent on the nervous system for their distress messages to the brain. Under such diseased conditions, over these delicate wires are sent clicking, rasping, harrowing messages from head to foot, producing all sorts and tones of feelings, ranging all the way from a depression that carries the whole being with it, to a jerky, hysterical mirth which is painful even to the one in whom it is manifested. In their extreme manifestation nervous diseases cause spasms, prostrations, hysterics, insomnia, etc.

When the nerves are diseased or in any way disturbed, unpleasant feelings may be caused by various circumstances and things, mental, physical, external, and internal, according to the peculiar make-up of the person concerned. It is a mistake, as is often done, to confuse nervousness with carnality, and to accuse the person whose nerves are extremely sensitive with being carnal, or on the other hand to excuse the person who gives way to carnality by saying he is nervous.

Thus far we have dealt almost entirely with the physico-mental manifestation of nerves. Let us now see if we can join the thing up and discover what connection nerves and holiness have with each other, as

that is the point at issue. In discussing this question we must often bring in the mental and physical, for they are really inseparable.

We are living in a nervous age, and especially in a nervous country. We say Americans are full of "ginger," "pep," that they are "nervy," etc. These are only slang methods of expressing the extremely wrought-up condition of the nerves of the average American citizen. He cannot be still. When he starts a job he is not content until it is finished. If things do not move fast enough to suit him, he will try to invent some method to hurry matters along. Hurry, hurry, rush, rush, till there is no rest, and the head becomes sick with the mighty strain! Yes, holiness will, to some extent, calm this person down. But if he becomes too calm the devil will get ahead of him, and when he reaches the vineyard he will find nothing but leaves; the devil will have plucked all the fruit.

We have heard of some persons who could get there and back again, while some other person was making up his mind to go. Action, action, do, do. We would say to this hair-trigger person: Take time to wait on the Lord, be calm; and if you cannot be as calm as some would have you, be as calm as you can, but keep clean.

Irritability is another manifestation of nerves. The *Standard Dictionary* speaks of "irritable nerves." The writer once visited a physician to inquire about some ailment. Among other questions the doctor asked if he felt irritable, to which he replied: "Well, Doctor, I have just the same feelings as others do when they become irritable, but I have religion." The doctor replied, "Well, there is something in that." And there is. In other words, the same rasping, disagreeable sensations chase each other



up and down the nerves, but the spirit is steady. Thank God!

Several years ago I was in bed with nervous prostration. In the community in which we lived there was a great deal of opposition to the old-fashioned way. In the adjoining house was a young lady who despised the preaching of the Cross and delighted in persecuting those who were saved. One day she came out in the back yard and set up a very disagreeable noise. Our nurse went out and asked her to please stop. But instead of obeying, she yelled all the louder, saying, "I'll try his religion." When the nurse told us of her reply, we said, "She did not try our religion very much, but the noise was rather severe on these poor nerves."

We have known people who would be horrified to acknowledge that they were ever "annoyed" by untoward circumstances to become quite "annoyed," or something akin to it, by a barking dog, a crawling bedbug, a buzzing fly, a cackling hen, or any other thing that disturbed their rest. It rasped over their nerves like sandpaper, and set them so wild that rest was impossible.

Why don't those persons in the next tent who talk so loudly and so harshly love their neighbor as themselves, and stop? Why does that cricket get under my bed and insist on singing his shrill song all night long? Oh, that the mother of that boisterous child would make him stop his everlasting clatter! I just begin to feel sleep stealing over me, when one of those noisy streetcars comes slam-banging by the house, and with every turn of the wheels it goes crashing through my screeching nerves!

Do persons who are thus annoyed have holiness? They may or they may not; but one thing is sure, these things

are not a test of experience. We have known of the lifting of a latch or the breaking of a straw almost to throw a super-nervous person into spasms. Did you ever "enjoy" the toothache? Is it "delightful" to listen to that dry, long-winded preacher? Does it "please" you, Mr. Preacher, when your congregation sits listless or goes to sleep on your hands? Of course you can sing, "Praise God, etc.," and keep saved when you are in a hurry and your automobile refuses to start; but do you really "enjoy" it?

The stirring of the carnal in the form of anger or impatience, even under such circumstances, shows a lack of holiness; but the rasping of the nerves is a natural result that must inevitably follow when high-keyed nerves are rudely handled. The striking of a certain key of the piano will jar a loose windowpane; and the striking of certain pleasant or unpleasant chords will cause a vibration in the sensory nerves. But this vibration has no more to do with your spiritual condition than does the pain a dentist produces when he touches an exposed nerve in your tooth. Carnality is in the soul, not in the nerves, be they diseased or healthy.

How will "nerves" manifest themselves in the outward deportment? The answers to this question would be as numerous as the numberless individuals concerned and the infinite variety of circumstances with which they might come in contact. At times the nervous person may feel overexuberant, and a few moments after be prostrated. He may laugh or cry as the particular circumstances with which he is faced seem to demand—or, rather, he will do one or the other without any seeming reason for so doing. One person declared that at times

he must either laugh or cry, and wondered which would be the most consistent with holiness. We do not know, but perhaps it would be more pleasant to others if he would laugh.

How will or should I behave myself when my children are disobedient and boisterous? One thing is sure, as far as possible they should be made to obey. If soft means fail, harsher measures should be used. The tone of the voice may not always be modulated to conform with the ideas of the critic; possibly it may not always be modulated according to the strict requirements of the case. Wesley says, "But is it not proof, if he is surprised or fluttered by a noise, a fall, or some sudden danger, that he is not sanctified?" Then he answers, "It is not; for one may start, tremble, change color, or be otherwise disordered in body, while the soul is calmly stayed on God, and remains in perfect peace." Carnality may be revealed by the modulation of the voice, and it may not. Some cases may demand severe, it may be harsh, treatment, others more gentle; and it is inconsistent to say that the actions in each case will be the same. One will produce pleasure, the other pain. Paul says, "Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction" (II Cor. 13:10). See also verse 2; I Cor. 4:21; II Cor. 2:3; 12:20; and Matthew 23.

The softness, fawnishness, and delicacy of the average modern minister of the gospel, and even some in the holiness ranks, in their dealing with sin and sinners is the curse of the Church and a sure sign of her downfall. Oh, for sons of thunder who will fearlessly storm the

gates of sin and worldliness, and not weakly yield and slobber their apologies when they are opposed and mistreated! Take off your gloves, as our fathers did, and do not be afraid to defile your hands. Some men do not even make the devil mad; everybody wants them! We have denaturalized Luke 6:26.

How will I behave under trying circumstances? One answers, "You will always sing and shout, no matter how severe the trial." Perhaps you will, but it may be you will not. I have known a hard-working, nervous little woman, after toiling all the morning over the wash-tub and meeting various disagreeable circumstances, to sit down and cry like a child when the clothesline broke and let the clothes in the mud. This was just one straw too much for those overwrought nerves. Now you big, strong men, who never knew what a nerve is, stand back and call her foolish and accuse her of a lack of grace if you wish, but in so doing you are wounding one whom God would have you comfort.

How will I behave when opposed? First and always, you will be free from a spirit of retaliation or revenge. After that the manifestations may be various. Whenever I see a man under pressure loudly declaring, "I don't care, let them do as they please," I must confess that it is hard to suppress a suspicion that that man needs grace. But some, under the strain of persecution, especially if these misunderstandings come from their brethren, have been known to collapse entirely, and some have even died as a result of the strain. "But," says one, "he should have thrown all his cares on the Lord," etc. To be sure, and doubtless in his soul he does; but his nerves are gone, and his power of physical resistance is a thing of the past.

To those who would accuse such men it might be well to repeat the words of Job: "If your soul were in my soul's stead, I could heap up words against you, and shake mine head at you."

Poor, tired, weary one, Jesus cares. Draw close to Him until you feel the pressure of His hands as He soothes your weary heart and brow. Amen. I am impressed that the following poem will help some weary one on his pilgrim journey:

*God never would send you the darkness  
If He thought you could bear the light,  
But you would not cling to His guiding hand  
If the way were always bright;  
And you would not care to walk by faith  
Could you always walk by sight.*

*'Tis true He has many an anguish  
For your sorrowing heart to bear,  
And many a cruel thorn crown  
For your tired head to wear;  
He knows how few would reach heaven at all  
If pain did not guide them there.*

*So He sends the blinding darkness,  
And the furnace of sevenfold heat;  
'Tis the only way, believe me,  
To keep you close to His feet;  
For 'tis always so easy to wander  
When our lives are glad and sweet.*

*Then nestle your hand in your Father's,  
And sing if you can, as you go.  
Your song may cheer someone behind you  
Whose courage is sinking low;  
And, well, well, if your lips do quiver,  
God will love you better so.*

## CHAPTER IX

### Fear

We were at one time approached by a young lady who said: "Between my home and the place of meeting there is an old, deserted factory on a dark and lonesome street. Some terrible things have occurred there. Am I wrong because I am afraid to pass that way at night?" We replied, "You would be foolish to pass that way; go around and avoid danger." This brings us to the thought of fear, and how far it is consistent with holiness.

Fear is defined as "an emotion excited by threatening evil, or impending pain, with the desire to escape." We are often told that self-preservation is the first law of nature, and we do know that there is in every man a deeply laid something, "instinct" is perhaps the best name for it, which causes him to wink involuntarily when some object approaches his eyes, or to dodge with lightning rapidity when in danger of coming in contact with some "irresistible" body, or inwardly to shudder and shrink away at the thought of impending pain. If there were no such a thing as the law of self-preservation the race would soon become extinct, or rather it would never have continued. This "fear" is found in the lower animals as well as in man and is a safeguard against injury. This fear is not cast out when an individual is perfected in love.

One man said, "I was on a porch with a number of other people when it began to fall. They all ran away

quickly, but I didn't. I had perfect love." That is not perfect love; it is perfect foolhardiness. It would have been just as sensible for Jesus to cast himself off the pinnacle of the Temple. Why should He fear? He surely had perfect love. "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

In the village of Cortland, Ohio, there is a large brick Methodist church. The rear of the building, where the pulpit is located, is towards the west, and the auditorium is on the second floor. One Sunday morning when the people were gathered for preaching service there arose an awful storm. The wind, lightning, and thunder were so terrific that the people became uneasy and frightened. The minister was standing in the pulpit doing his best to encourage them, and said: "Do not be afraid. Before I was converted, I, too, was afraid of storms; but when I was saved I lost all that fear." At that moment the whole gable end of the church fell in and started for the pulpit where the minister was standing. There was no time to consider, or to think of perfect love casting out fear; he jumped from the pulpit and ran down the aisle, shouting, "Come on, brethren." Some of the folks laughed at him—after it was over. If he had been swimming in the love of God, he would have done just as he did or he would have been a suicide.

The writer was on the campground at Steubenville, Ohio, when a cyclone struck it. Thirteen trees were blown down in the circle of tents, the tabernacle fell on the congregation, tents were blown about, people were pinned to the earth, and one young lady was killed. These people were good; some of them professed, and doubtless had, the experience of holiness. But, notwithstanding



this fact, some of them were on the verge of a nervous collapse, some of them did go under for a time, and others would leave the grounds as soon as a little wind arose. The writer confesses that he has never felt quite so easy in a tent since that time. If the wind blows he would sooner see *how things are going on outside* than be cooped up in his tent, and he would rather have a tent out in the open than be in danger from falling trees. Now if any person questions the state of the writer's experience, he has company, for there are others who were there that eventful day that will testify to the same feelings. There are possibly some "nervous women" who have never recovered from the shock.

I do not know what form of neurosis a physician would call it, but I have heard a big man testify as follows: "When I was a small boy I had two older brothers who were always scaring me about ghosts and all sorts of spookish things. The impressions thus formed have never left me; and, while I know better and have no real fear (?), yet I can scarcely go out in the dark without fearing that there is some lurking bugaboo about. And this is true although I have enjoyed perfect love for a number of years." Remember the deep impressions of this man's childhood—and we are told that such impressions are never forgotten—and perhaps you will have an explanation of this phenomenon.

Will a holy person fear a thunderstorm? Some say, "No"; others say, "Possibly." One thing that convinced Wesley of the genuineness of the religion of the Moravians was their fearlessness in the ocean storm. It may be this question should be studied with reference to the psychological or mental make-up of the individuals con-

cerned. In some the sense of sublimity is so highly developed that they stand in awe before a mighty mountain, a waterfall, a rushing cyclone, or the crashing heavens. They are very near eternity. Combine this with a nervous dread of sudden developments, or unlooked-for occurrences (and sublimity and nervous susceptibility are very often combined in the individual), and one will readily see why a chain of lightning or a crash of thunder might startle such a person, and this might develop into an almost hysterical dread. The law of self-preservation will cause one to stand at attention when facing real or supposed danger.

There are two kinds of fear, as there are two kinds of love, natural and spiritual. We have never seen this distinction definitely drawn unless it is by implication in this passage from Adam Clarke: "Natural fear is a necessary accompaniment of our mundane existence, and it is not cast out by perfect love." It would be absurd to unchristianize a person because he fears a backbiting dog, a kicking mule, or a murderous man; or because he trembles as he stands before a congregation, or shrinks from public notice. Bramwell says: "Our work as ministers of the gospel is of such importance that I frequently tremble exceedingly before I go into the pulpit. Yea, I wonder how I ever dared to engage in such a work." This is the natural man trembling under the burden of the cross. Some of us often feel the same way! Fletcher says that perfect love inclines to timidity.

On the other hand, spiritual fear, as we have called it, for want of a better name, is servile dread of the Almighty, slavish fear of man, carnal shrinking from showing one's colors, shrinking from doing one's duty because

of the consequences, or any other form of fear that hinders a man from being his whole bigness for God and from standing in every place where brave men are needed.

Then there is what the Bible calls the fear of the Lord. This fear, in a greater or lesser degree, exists in every saved or sanctified heart. But even this fear, as we will see in the quotation from Edwards below, is regulated by the fullness of the Spirit which one has attained. When the fear of the Lord becomes servile, it is inconsistent with sanctifying grace. The fear of the Lord which is not cast out by perfect love is filial and loving; servile fear is salutary and tends to lead the soul to God; filial fear is binding and tends to hold the soul in loving contact with the Lord. With awe and reverence the trusting soul pillows its head on the bosom of the Almighty, and says, "I love Thee, for Thou hast loved me."

The feeling of natural fear will cause one to shun dangerous places or circumstances, such as burning buildings, falling walls, thin ice, pestilences, dark and dangerous alleys, dangerous communities. One may dread public notice, false accusations, or calumny. One may stand in awe before natural phenomena, such as earthquakes and storms, or before those considered superiors or those who are unduly critical. One may hesitate under the cross of an unusual burden, and cry, "If it be possible, let this cup pass"; but grace will add, "Nevertheless, not my will, but Thine, be done."

Clarke says: "We are not to suppose that the love of God casts out every kind of fear from the soul; it only casts out that which has torment. .1 A filial fear is consistent with the highest degree of love; and even neces-

sary to the preservation of that grace. This is properly its guardian; and, without this, love would soon degenerate into listlessness, or presumptive boldness. 2. Nor does it cast out that fear which is so necessary to the preservation of life; that fear which leads a man to flee from danger lest his life should be destroyed. 3. Nor does it cast out that fear which may be engendered by sudden alarm. All these are necessary to our well-being. But it destroys: 1. The fear of want. 2. The fear of death. 3. The fear or terror of judgment. All these fears bring torment, and are inconsistent with perfect love."

As we have seen in a former article Wesley makes a strong point of the depression which very often accompanies want of bread. We submit that there is in the very nature of every man, possibly some would not call it fear, a shrinking from the article of death. The Lord has promised to deliver those who through fear of death are all their lifetime subject to bondage, and He does this when He takes away sin, the sting of death; but He still leaves the sanctified man with a spirit which loves life and shuns death. Holiness will not rob the judgment of its awfulness, but it will rob it of its dread, for the heart is right.

Wesley and Clarke agree in the following statements from Clarke:

"1. Profligates and worldly men in general, have neither the fear nor love of God.

"2. Deeply awakened and distressed penitents have the fear or terror of God without His love.

"3. Babes in Christ, or young converts, have often distressing fear mixed with their love.

"4. Adult Christians have love without this fear; because fear hath torment, and they are ever happy, being filled with God."

Jonathan Edwards, in his treatise "On Religious Affections," gives the following excellent description of the alternations of fear and love:

"There are no other principles which human nature is under the influence of that will ever make men conscientious but one of two, fear or love; and therefore, if one of these should not prevail as the other decays, God's people, when fallen into dead and formal frames, when love is asleep, would be lamentably exposed indeed; and therefore God has wisely ordained that these two opposite principles of love and fear should rise and fall like the two opposite scales of a balance; when one rises, the other sinks. Love is the spirit of adoption, or the child-like principle; if that slumbers, men fall under fear, which is the spirit of bondage, of the servile principle; and so on the contrary. And if it be so that love, or the spirit of adoption, be carried to a great height, it quite drives away all fear, and gives full assurance: agreeable to that of the apostle, I Jno. 4:18, 'There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear.' These two opposite principles of lust and holy love bring hope and fear into the hearts of God's children in proportion as they prevail, that is, when left to their own natural influence, without something adventitious or accidental intervening, as the distemper of melancholy, doctrinal ignorance, prejudices of education, wrong instruction, false principles, peculiar

temptations, etc. Fear is cast out by the Spirit of God no other way than by the prevailing love; nor is it ever maintained by His Spirit but when love is asleep."

After all, real courage is not ignorance of danger or heedlessness of consequences, but he is a courageous man, who, seeing the danger, in spite of trembling limbs or quaking heart, goes ahead and does his duty. The following poem by Almon Hensley, descriptive of the reveries of the mother of a soldier boy who did his duty even though he was afraid, beautifully expresses the thought.

*Leave me alone here, proudly, with my dead,  
Ye mothers of brave sons adventurous;  
He who once prayed: "If it be possible  
Let this cup pass," will arbitrate for us.*

*Your boy with iron nerves and careless smile  
Marched gaily by and dreamed of glory's goal;  
Mine had blanched cheek, straight mouth, and close-  
gripped hands,  
And prayed that somehow he might save his soul.*

*I do not grudge your ribbon or your cross;  
The price of these my soldier, too, has paid.  
I hug a prouder knowledge to my heart,  
The mother of the boy who was afraid.*

*He was a tender child, with nerves so keen  
They doubled pain and magnified the sad;  
He hated cruelty and things obscene  
And in all high and holy things was glad.*

*And so he gave what others could not give,  
The one supremest sacrifice he made,  
A thing your brave boy could not understand;  
He gave his all because he was afraid!*

## CHAPTER X

### Worry

One of the favorite questions asked at holiness conventions is, "Is worry consistent with the experience of holiness?" This question is extremely ambiguous from the fact that it is hard to tell what is meant by the two words, consistent and worry. As to the word consistent, in this place it may have either of two meanings. First, can worry and holiness "consist" together, i.e., "exist in conjunction, or stand together" (*Standard Dictionary*) in the same person at the same time? Does a holy person ever worry? Or does he immediately forfeit his experience when he does worry ever so little? The other sense of the word may be, while a holy man may retain his experience even though he may worry yet is it "consistent" for him, being a holy man, to worry?

From all our observation we would answer the former interpretation of the word in the affirmative, i.e., some holy men do sometimes worry some; and the latter interpretation in the negative, for no holy man *should* worry, and a thing he should not do is, in some sense, inconsistent, no matter what he may or may not profess. But does every inconsistent act denote a lack of experience? If it does, then neither you nor I ever saw a holy person. Inconsistency is a synonym for humanity.

We now turn to the word worry. Is worry always a carnal principle? Before we would answer such a ques-



tion as this by a simple yes or no we would first demand a clear statement of the questioner's idea of what constitutes worry. Some men who have never professed religion are so happily constituted that they never worry, while some sanctified folks are so constituted that under certain circumstances they seem, at least, to worry. From all this we would conclude that worry, or the disposition thereto, is in some sense a constitutional disorder. In such a case it is no more a sure sign of carnal conditions than is dyspepsia or liver complaint, and the fact is that the tendency to worry may be an outward manifestation of a bad stomach or liver and not of a bad heart.

But as to the definition of worry: When used as an intransitive verb it is defined, "To be uneasy in mind by reason of care or solicitude; be troubled or anxious; chafe; as, she always worries when he is absent" (*Standard Dictionary*). When used as a noun, "A state of perplexing care, anxiety, or annoyance; distracting or disturbing care or occasion of anxiety; vexation; fret; as, worry over a delayed letter; household worries; the worry of business" (*Ibid.*)

If the reader will carefully analyze these definitions he will be surprised at the breadth of meaning which the word worry contains. I will give you my own definition of that worry which cannot exist in connection with a clean heart. That spirit of chafing at divine providence which causes me to doubt God, or inwardly complain at His dealings with me, is carnal; that spirit which meets the rebuffs and insults of sinners, or, it may be, the slights and misunderstandings of my brethren, with a complaining and resentful heart is carnal; that spirit which meets circumstances with grumbling, or which be-

comes carnally fretful and peevish under physical disability, is carnal; and that spirit which meets the temptations of the devil with an inward complaint which involves the integrity and veracity of the Almighty is carnal. Thus we see that carnal worry involves my integrity as a holy man; it disconnects me from God by my doubtfulness and complaints.

But, beyond this, there may be a "worry" which comes from physical or mental conditions which none but God can truly diagnose; or from my surroundings and obligations, which none but myself can appreciate; or from the devil himself whose suggestions to me, for the time being, may be beyond my clouded apprehension, and they surely are beyond the comprehension of others; this "worry," if it must be called by that name, no more separates me from God than do my involuntary physical or mental conditions or my perplexing surroundings or temptations. Wesley says that the infirmities which necessarily flow from the corruptible state of body are not contrary to love, nor, in the scriptural sense, sin. Perhaps the best way to get at the subject is to analyze the above dictionary definitions.

1. *To be uneasy in mind by reason of care or solicitude.* That man who can truthfully say, "I never have a care," is, perhaps, to be congratulated. But the great majority of mortals cannot thus testify; and sometimes, in spite of ourselves, these cares heap up until our minds are almost distracted, and we cry,

*"I cannot bear these burdens alone."*

Peter tells us to cast all our cares on the Lord, thus intimating that we have cares or we could not thus throw

them on God. Paul groaned under the "care of all the churches"; the Lord cautions us to be watchful lest the "cares of this world" choke out the good word of life. "Solicitude" refers to one's earnest desire for the welfare of others, especially those who are entrusted to our care. The parent who lacks the proper solicitude for his child, and the minister who lacks a deep, divinely-given solicitude for his people, are in a bad state. In various ways and places Paul expressed his solicitude for the church, and even Jesus wept over Jerusalem. We will leave it to the reader to decide whether this condition of care and solicitude will always leave the mind easy and serene.

2. *To be troubled or anxious.* The Psalmist declares that the Lord is his Refuge and that He will hide him in time of trouble (Ps. 9:9; 27:5); and again he complains that God hides himself from him in his trouble (10:1). God comforts us in tribulation, that we may in turn comfort those who are in trouble (II Cor. 1:4). In Asia Paul was in such trouble that he was "pressed out of measure" and "despaired even of life" (II Cor. 1:8); again, "I am troubled on every side" (II Cor. 4:8; 7:5). His anxiety for the churches is seen in many places. See II Cor. 2:1-5; 7:12-15. There is no Stoicism here. Paul felt deeply and, with the Master, often groaned in spirit.

3. *To chafe* is to become irritated or sore in spirit. The horse chafes under the restraint of the harness. Sinners chafe under the restraint of the law. Unsanctified Christians chafe because of the constant friction and war of good and bad principles in the soul. In the sense of uneasiness a holy man may chafe when a preacher is attempting to make a display of his own wisdom instead of the cross of Christ.

4. *A state of perplexing care, anxiety, or annoyance.* We are aware that Wesley makes freedom from "anxious care" a test of holiness, but we cannot help wondering if Paul does. We quote from an article by Rev. F. D. Brooke. It will bear repeating.

"We will never in this world reach an experience where we do not feel life's heavy burdens, and will not be distressed by its many disappointments; and we will doubtless have occasion as we press our way toward the home of the saints to repeat the sentiments of Saint Paul at times, 'For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even life. . . . For when we came into Macedonia our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears. Nevertheless, God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted 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.'

"Think of a man raising a standard of life for mortal beings where there is no 'disappointment or trouble,' where we will 'expect nothing, wonder at nothing that is done to us, and feel nothing done against us!' Well, I have known of a few instances where men and women have reached such an experience in this world, but when they appeared in society they did not care whether they were naked or clothed, and their friends went weeping from the cemetery and left them alone, in their caskets and in their graves. All may obtain the same experience by doing as they did—DYING."

5. *Distracting or disturbing care or occasion of anxiety.* We read some beautiful stories about holy men who trusted God so implicitly when goods and money were all gone that their needs were supplied by miraculous intervention, and we should and we do honor them for their shining examples of faith. But needs are not always supplied in that way as far as we can see, and the rule is so common that we hear very little of those other holy men who wept and prayed while they toiled and sweat; who through toil and pain, want and weakness, the opposition of men and devils, worked their way to a place in God's hall of fame. *Very few men can sit quietly and wait for ravens when they have a strong right arm.*

My friend, if you can truthfully say that, even though your family is sick, your provisions gone, your money used up, your means of support taken away, your own physical condition so low that you are unable to "put your hand to the plow"; I say, if you can truthfully say that even under such circumstances you never have an anxious care, you are made of better stuff than most mortals. "But," you say, "I never ran against such a combination of circumstances." But some have; and, like Job, in the midst of their, for the time being, unalleviated sorrows they have cried, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." What sort of spiritual timber are you made of? Such crushing calamities will tell.

6. *Vexation* is the state of being annoyed or vexed. To be vexed, in the sense in which we here use it, is to be "grieved, afflicted, troubled, or distressed." Jesus was grieved; Paul was afflicted, troubled, and distressed.

7. *Fret* refers to the restlessness and uneasiness which are manifested by some, and which are the result of

nervousness, excitability, or instability of disposition. It may be a constitutional indisposition and not necessarily carnal. Perhaps we can illustrate what we mean: Four-thirty and Johnny should have been home from school half an hour ago. His mother has looked out the window, gone to the door, called, gone to the gate and looked up the street; no Johnny. What can be the matter? Johnny never stays away like this. "Here; Jim, go and see if you can find Johnny; maybe he has been run over by an automobile." Some mothers "worry" more if Johnny is gone half an hour than others do if he is out till nine o'clock.

Now, we are fully aware that the various component parts of the above "dictionary definition" may be referred to a deep-laid and carnal principle; but this phase of the definition we ruled out in our preliminary definition, as well as in all our explanations. Thus, commonly speaking, to "chafe" is to become impatient under restraint; to "fret" is to fuss and fume impatiently when disappointed or under delay; to become "vexed" is to get angry, either in outward appearance or inwardly; and thus through all the various shades of the definition. When sin, carnality, hatred of God, fretting at God's ways of dealing, or any other spirit that departs from God, does not enter into our manifested or inner dispositions our hearts are clean.

To be sure, we have heard all those wonderful things about God numbering the hairs of our heads, about the beautiful clothing of the grass of the field, about caring for the sparrows; and we have read that beautiful lesson of trust, "Take no thought for the morrow." But men are human, and sometimes while some good men are walking "over life's tempestuous sea," like Peter they

see the dashing waves and are likely to sink, and cry, "Lord, save, or I perish." Does the Lord rebuke them? Yes. But, oh, His rebukes are so gentle! "Wherefore didst thou doubt, O ye of little faith?" He does not, as He did with the cities of Galilee, upbraid them for their unbelief; neither does He upbraid them for their lack of wisdom. But His reproofs are like ointment that melts the heart but does not break the head.

Oh, that God would give us faith, in the midst of the surging troubles and heartbreaking anguish of this sin-cursed world, to peer through the darkness and keep a vision of our gentle, loving, forgiving Christ walking the heaving billows of our sorrows! I know if I can but touch His hand He will say to my heart, "Peace be still," and through all my being will descend a great calm.

*Child of My love, lean hard,  
And let Me feel the pressure of thy care.  
I know thy burden, child. I shaped it;  
Poised it in Mine own hand; made no proportion  
In its weight to thine unaided strength.  
For even as I laid it on, I said,  
"I shall be near, and while she leans on Me,  
This burden shall be Mine, not hers:  
So shall I keep My child within the circling arms  
Of My own love." Here lay it down, nor fear  
To impose it on a shoulder which upholds  
The government of worlds. Yet closer come:  
Thou art not near enough. I would embrace thy care;  
So I might feel My child reposing on My breast.  
Thou lovest Me? I knew it. Doubt not then:  
But, loving Me, lean hard.*

## CHAPTER XI

### Infirmities

One of Fletcher's definitions of infirmities which was given for the purpose of reconciling the doctrine of Christian perfection with human weakness is as follows:

"An infirmity is a breach of Adam's paradisaical perfection, which our covenant God does not require of us now; and, evangelically speaking, a sin for a Christian is a breach of Christ's evangelical law of Christian perfection; a perfection this, which God requires of all Christian believers. An infirmity, considering it with the error which it occasions, is consistent with pure love to God and man; but a sin is inconsistent with that love: an infirmity is free from guile, and has its root in our animal frame; but a sin is attended with guile, and has its root in our moral frame, springing either from the habitual corruption of our heart, or from the momentary perversion of our tempers: an infirmity unavoidably results from our unhappy circumstances, and from the necessary infelicities of our present state; but a sin flows from the avoidable and perverse choice of our own will: an infirmity has its foundation in an involuntary want of light and power; and a sin is a wilful abuse of the present light and power we have. The one arises from involuntary ignorance and weakness, and is always attended with a good meaning, a meaning unmingled with any bad design or wicked prejudice; but the other has its source



in voluntary perverseness and presumption, and is always attended with a meaning altogether bad; or, at least, with a good meaning founded on wicked prejudices."

Since the days of Augustine the error of Calvinism has been to confuse sin with innocent infirmities or even with legitimate human tastes and dispositions. We are prepared to show that Augustine was the first Christian imperfectionist. Fletcher calls him the father of "the rigid imperfectionists"; and the Augustinian method of classifying sin has been followed by imperfectionists since his day. We contend that such a classification has no warrant either in Scripture or human experience. As samples of his methods we note the following found in the *Confessions* of Augustine, Book X, beginning with the thirtieth chapter:

(1) Impure dreams are sign of a corrupt heart. (2) He considers pleasure in the taking of food a sin, saying, "This much hast Thou (God) taught me, that I should bring myself to take food as a medicine." (3) He considers that love for music is a sin. (4) He considers that it is a sin that "the eyes delight in fair and varied forms, and bright pleasing colors." (5) He considers it a sin to watch a hound chase a rabbit, a lizard or a spider catching flies, because this is prompted by curiosity, which, according to the theology of Augustine, is always evil.

We answer: (1) Bad dreams are not always a proof of a bad heart any more than good dreams are of a good heart. (2) Our taste was given that our food might be pleasing, and we would pity the woman who had to cook for a man who took his food as medicine. (3) The love of music was born with us and in itself is as innocent

as the faculty of hearing. (4) The delight in bright landscapes and symmetrical forms is as natural as our faculty of sight: (5) To eliminate all such "curiosity" would be to cease to learn.

God has promised to remove the moral curse, and after this is done the human subject is still compassed about by infirmities, and still retains his natural disposition and appetites. God removes our sins and the disposition to sin, but He removes these infirmities only insofar as their presence would show the existence of either actual or inbred sin; and He changes (possibly we should say, controls) our dispositions only to such an extent that they may conform to the law of holiness; and, while He takes away unholy appetites and desires, tearing them out of the soul root and branch, He also gives grace that the remaining natural desires may, as nearly as possible, be caused to occupy their proper position and not usurp control of the life or hinder the full manifestation of the Spirit of God.

## CHAPTER XII

# Physical Infirmities

Both Wesley and Fletcher class infirmities under three heads: those of the body, of the mind, and of the spirit. Owing to the complexities in the composition of body, mind, and spirit, and the ever interlacing of the manifestations of their various movements, it is at times impossible to separate them, and to say with a surety, This is of the body, this of the mind, and this of the spirit. We will attempt to separate them only in a general way.

*Physical infirmities.* There would be very little need of teaching concerning physical weaknesses were it not for the fact that it is sometimes a difficult matter for some to understand the effect that these weaknesses may have on the spirit, and where legitimate effects end and sinful principles enter. Certain it is that, under the present order of things, the Creator has so amalgamated our entire being that all is interdependent, and one part is strangely influenced by another.

The physical man has its limitations, and these limitations are often painfully manifest. We will not be taken to task when we say that some things are physically impossible. Men cannot flap their arms and fly like birds; they cannot swim like fish; their voices are weak and they cannot roar like lions; they can lift only so much, walk so fast, do so much work. They finally reach a place where their finiteness arises and says, "So far and no further."

The strongest man will wear out and must take rest. God has acknowledged this fact in the alternations of night and day, in setting apart one day in seven, and in frequent cautions to turn aside and rest awhile. In my scrapbook I have a long poem about the preacher's vacation in which the writer very strongly depreciates such a thing as a preacher taking a vacation, since, as he says, the devil, saloonkeepers and others do not do so. This might be a good argument, if it were true, and if the physical man would never wear out. But it does, and in these modern days the fact is acknowledged that *at some time during the year every workman should have a vacation*. But when it comes to the work of the Lord some people are inclined to go on the principle of the man who, when he heard some Christian workers speaking of being tired, said, "Work on, and die, and go to heaven."

Some have wished and prayed for a stronger physique that they might do the work their hearts prompt them to do. They have looked at some big, muscular fellows who do—*nothing much*—and almost envied them their physical powers. Notwithstanding the peculiar teachings of some, it still remains a fact that physical and spiritual strength do not always run parallel; and that though at times the outward man perish, yet the inward man may be renewed day by day.

Some of God's saints must continually fight against harassing pains, some against sluggishness of body, some against distressing nerves; others are overtaken by uncontrollable weakness, and some gradually break down and fall into the grave. Who will venture to say that in spite of any or all of these physical ailments the soul will mount on eagle's wings, and feel exalted to the third

heaven? But if this soul continues steadfast in the faith, God's favor will not be withdrawn. Thus we learn that continual ecstatic joys are not essential to the favor of God. It is the true heart that counts.

While we live in this world we will never be wholly free from physical desires and appetites. In themselves these desires and appetites are legitimate and are not a sign of depravity. But when men fell their natural appetites became depraved and will never, in this life, reach such a state that their possessors will not be forced to deny themselves daily—to keep their bodies under. In other words, while, in the article of holiness, moral depravity is removed, yet physical depravity remains; and a man must deny his inordinate appetites, tastes, desires, and preferences to such an extent as to keep his body under and his soul in the ascendancy. Be careful when your bodily appetites, the lowest part of man, are getting control, for you are in danger of becoming a castaway.

(Note. The words *depravity* and *inordinate*, as used above in connection with the natural appetites, must be properly qualified, or they will lead to misunderstanding. Depravity is used for want of a better word and refers, not to sinful depravity, which can reside only in the spirit, but to the lack of that perfection which originally characterized the whole man, even his physical desires. The word *inordinate* as we have here used it does not refer to that condition in which the physical desires conquer the whole man, but simply to the fact that, even in the sanctified, certain desires are so strong that there remains the necessity for self-denial.)

In a holy man the natural desires may be warped in

the direction of one's own individual besetment; this is not actual sin, but is only a proof of physical depravity. Although God may, He does not usually, or it may be ever, so change a man's natural disposition as to make him entirely unlike his former self; but his former self is often so sanctified and made meet for the Master's use that it is scarcely recognizable, and the Lord says that old things are passed away and all things are become new. One man's natural besetment is lightness; he must cultivate seriousness. Another's is melancholy; he must learn to rejoice in the Lord. One man is given to too much talk; he must study to be quiet. Another does not talk enough; he must learn to speak. We knew one man who had an inordinate desire for food; his efforts at self-control carried him into asceticism. We have heard of a horse becoming frightened of the water on one side of a bridge and jumping off into the water on the other side.

When a person demands any form of recreation, association, food, pleasure, or indulgence to make him happy he is leaving the track of self-denial and is putting some other thing in the place only God should occupy. This is one of the strongest arguments against the use of tobacco, opiates, or any form of narcotics or stimulants. They form a habit which steals one's happiness until gratified. Even common sense is forgotten and God's presence often obscured in the intense longing for the favorite indulgence. "The passions become eagle-eyed, the judgment blind."

The proper limit of any gratification is one's own good, the good of others, or the glory of God. Anything beyond this is allowed; *allowed*, not commanded, because of the weakness of the human instrument. And when

we say allowed we do not mean to teach that God ever winks at self-indulgence, but He can pardon because of the atonement. The spirit of the sanctified truly is willing, but the flesh of even this man is weak, and God forgives his unwitting trespasses because of the Blood and judges him by Christ's evangelical law of liberty. This is what we mean when we pray, "Forgive us our trespasses [debts or sins], as we forgive those who trespass against us"—not actual transgressions or inherent sin (this latter cannot be forgiven), but inadvertent trespasses against the infinitely pure law of God, which allows of no mistakes, caused by human shortsightedness and lack of understanding.

"Except a man deny himself," refers to that thing which would be pleasing to the natural man but the doing of which would be displeasing to God and detrimental to the soul's best good. *Except a man, when occasion arises, put away pleasing food, pleasing associations, pleasant occupations, the possibility of gain, desirable position; except he accept, when the occasion arises, unpleasant things, annoying circumstances, scant supplies, ridicule and scorn, the road of tribulation, he cannot be Christ's disciple. If a man would gain his life, he must consent to lose it. All this, holiness will do for a man even though the flesh is weak. By this ye shall know whether ye are Christ's disciple, if ye love Him more than these.*

Concerning the physical infirmities of Christ and the corresponding infirmities of the holy, Fletcher writes:

"Was not our Lord Himself imperfect? Did His bodily strength never fail in agonizing prayer, or in intense labor? Did His animal spirits ever move with the same sprightliness? Do we not read of His sleeping in the ship

when His disciples wrestled with the tempestuous sea? Did He not fulfil the precept, 'Be ye angry, and sin not'? Had He not the troublesome sensation of grief at Lazarus' grave, of hunger in the wilderness, of weariness at Jacob's well, and of thirst upon the cross? If He was 'made in the likeness of sinful flesh,' and 'tempted in all things as we are,' is it not highly probable that He was not an utter stranger to the natural appetites and uneasy sensations which are incident to flesh and blood? Is it a sin to feel them? Is it not rather a virtue totally to deny them, or not to satisfy them out of the line of duty, or not to indulge them in an excessive manner on that line? Again: Did not His holy flesh testify a natural, innocent abhorrence to suffering? Did not His sacred flesh faint in the garden? *Were not His spirits so depressed that He stood in need of the strengthening assistance of an angel?* Did He do all the good He would? To suppose that He wished not the conversion of His friends and brethren is to suppose Him totally devoid of natural affection: but were they all converted? Did you ever read, 'Neither did His brethren believe in Him,' and, 'His friends went out to lay hold on Him; for they said, He is beside Himself'? To conclude: Did He not accidentally stir up the evil He would not when He gave occasion to the envy of the Pharisees, scorn of Herod, the fears of Pilate, the rage of the Jewish mob? And when He prayed that the bitter cup might pass from Him, if it were possible, did He not manifest a resigned desire to escape pain and shame? If every such desire is indwelling sin, or the flesh sinfully lusting against the spirit, did He not go through the sinful conflict as well as those whom we call perfect men in Christ, and consequently, did He not fall at once from



mediatorial, Adamic, and Christian perfection; indwelling sin being equally inconsistent with all these perfections? What true believer does not shudder at the bare supposition? And if our sinless Lord felt the weakness of the flesh harmlessly lusting against the willingness of the spirit, according to His own doctrine, 'The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak,' is it not evident that the conflict we speak of—if the spirit maintains its superior, victorious lusting against the flesh, and by that means steadily keeps the flesh in its proper place—is it not evident, I say, that this conflict is no more inconsistent with Christian perfection than the suffering, agonizing, fainting, crying, and dying, which were the lot of our sinless, perfect Saviour to the last?"—*Last Check to Antinomianism, Sec. VII.*

## CHAPTER XIII

# Mental Infirmities

*Mental infirmities and varying dispositions of holiness professors.* It is to be doubted if God ever made two persons exactly alike, either in appearance or mental characteristics. These differences often lie in the varying strength of our good points or the extent of our weaknesses. In what ways do men differ, and how far are these differences consistent with holiness of heart? This method of examining the strength and weakness of holy men is different from the course usually pursued in such investigations. But possibly by putting the truth in this new way it may help to a clear understanding of conditions.

1. *Differences in personality.* Personality is defined thus: "The attributes, taken collectively, that make up the character and nature of an individual; that which distinguishes and characterizes a person."

Modern society demands that men behave themselves by set rules, called the rules of etiquette. By following these rules the real man is often so hidden under their set forms that his genuine personality seldom comes to the surface. There is danger that such practices will make a person artificial to the extent of hypocrisy.

In their methods of administering truth preachers so often follow the same pattern that one who leaves the rut and follows the course God has marked out for him

is considered a curiosity. By following his God-given methods, or possibly we should say the methods for which God has naturally fitted him, his life becomes so Spirit-anointed that it is a rebuke to those who possess nothing original.

A sanctified personality enables a man to fill the special place for which the wisdom of the all-wise Creator has fitted him; and when he consents to submerge his own personality in the generalities of social, religious, or denominational conduct he has consented to his own elimination as a factor in God's hands for bringing special things to pass. To the extent he thus loses his personality he loses his power to do all the good he should do, and this all comes as a result of the fact that he has gotten out of God's order—and become common.

Men speak of pleasing and unpleasing, of strong and weak, personalities. These discriminations only express the viewpoint of the individual who sits as a judge, and are not a reliable criterion; neither are they of necessity a correct estimate of a man as God measures him. The strong man in God's sight may be the despised of earth, and the weak man in God's sight may be the world's hero. The wise man says that "he that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city." The man who takes a city is earth's hero; the man who rules his spirit is heaven's hero. Pride and humility, haughtiness and lowliness!

The manifestations of one's personal characteristics are consistent with holiness insofar as they are governed by the will of God, and when they tend to the edification of those around about. In every place where we learn that these ends are not gained we should seek to correct our

methods and, as far as possible, conform them to the divine plan for us. That even in the holy man the manifestations of strictly personal characteristics must at times be modified arises from the degenerating effects of sin, forgiven and cleansed though it be, which effects still remain in the very make-up of our beings. No man should be condemned for his unconscious and involuntary personality, but he should be taught so to govern his life as to please even his neighbor as far as possible to edification and the glory of God. No man and no set of men have a right to condemn any other man because he is himself, if he is sanctified and sincerely seeks the glory of God.

2. *Differences in individuality.* The individuality of a man is the sum total of those characteristics which distinguish him from every other man, not simply as a separate person, but marking him as different from other men. Some people have a very marked individuality, while others are scarcely distinguishable from those around them. God gives every man naturally a certain degree of individuality; but most men yield themselves so thoroughly to the leading of others that they lose about all personal initiative and become so near nothing that, when they are gone, the best we can do is to say with Cowper that they have eaten up all their bread.

It is men of strongly manifest individuality who have moved the world and the Church. As examples of the former we note Napoleon, Washington, and Lincoln; and of the latter, Paul, Luther, and Wesley.

The weak points in a strong man are more liable to be copied than the strong ones, and here is a great danger.

We have known of men who, by the exercise of their strong personality, have held others to the rigid line of their own ideas, with the unhappy result that when they withdrew their restraining hand their followers obeyed them no more and went their own way. The weakness in all this lies in the fact that the leader made the mistake of thinking that he must govern and give light by the pressure of his own spirit, and thus assumed prerogatives which belong to the Spirit of God alone. Those who are converted and held by the influence of the presence of the pastor or evangelist are very apt to be only wood, hay, and stubble; while those who are kept by the power of God are gold, silver, and precious stones.

God wants men of strong individuality, but He wants them consecrated to Him. Here is the fly in the ointment: It is impossible to find a strong man without a weakness; and while some follow him blindly, faults and all, others make the mistake of considering him an offender for one noticeable flaw and forget his strength. The latter start throwing stones, forgetting that they themselves live in glass houses. Let him that is without fault cast the first stone.

*What are another's faults to me?  
I'm not a vulture's bill  
To pick at every flaw I see  
And make it wider still.  
It's enough for me to know  
I've follies of my own,  
And on myself that care bestow,  
And let my friends alone.*

### 3. *Oddities and eccentricities of holiness professors.*

There is not a more original lot of people on the face of the earth than those who are entirely sanctified. When men throw off the restraints of custom their own native characteristics come to the surface, and people call them odd and eccentric. "Surely," they say, "this is a peculiar people." God can use a man the way He made him to much better advantage than when his own individualism—personal independence of action—or eccentricities, if you wish to call them by that name, are buried under a flood of generalities.

Perhaps it is true that every man has some oddity or eccentricity in his make-up. He may not know it, but his friends and his enemies do, and if they would be very honest they could tell him things that would surprise him. These peculiarities are so many proofs that we live in earthen vessels, and that any power we may have is of God and not of ourselves. Some would reject a man because of some real or fancied peculiarity. What a mistake! Why throw away the whole pot of beans because it happens that one black one has strayed in? And listen, critic friend, there are a half dozen black beans in your mess, and the only reason why you stand is because you have been able to conceal them.

But who says that oddities and eccentricities are always wrong, and that the one who has them should be rejected? His church fought Lorenzo Dow all his life, but while they fought he plowed ahead and doubtless saw more good done than any of his miserable critics. Where can you find a more eccentric man than Peter Cartwright? But these very peculiarities made his spiritual successes all the more prominent. We have known of

men who, because of or in spite of their peculiarities, have done more good than any of those who are contented to be "average men," and take to riding the seesaw of public opinion and established custom.

Some men may not be Samsons, but they are at least Samson's foxes; and one thing is sure: wherever they go they will set fire to the standing corn of the Philistines and rout the devil in whatever hole he may be hiding. Such men will slay more with the jawbone of an ass than some men will with all the regulation artillery that can be found.

Do not get discouraged and give up because these "average men" are all the while finding fault with you, or because you cannot do things in the average way. When General Patterson suggested that he would seek redress for unmerited censure which he had received, Lincoln told him that he need not expect to escape abuse as long as he was of any importance or value to the community. How true of the Christian! So live for God, keep your special peculiarity sanctified, and go ahead; and when you get to heaven it may be that you can have a place with "weeping" Jeremiah, "singing" David, "enrapt" Isaiah, "burdened" Moses, "zealous" Phinehas, "shut in" Noah, "sojourning" Abraham, "praying" Hannah, "dancing" Deborah, "denunciating" Amos, "groaning" Paul, "impulsive" Peter, or "ecstatic" John. Who knows?

4. *Temperamental differences and weaknesses in holiness professors.* Someone said that when God made a saint He threw the mold away and never made another just like him. Holiness people differ temperamentally just as much as they do in other ways. Some are quick,

others slow; some are impulsive, others always look before they leap; some are openhearted, while others are more reserved; some are precise, while others are more inclined to be careless; some are very particular about their appearance, while others care very little for such useless details (as they call them); and so on to the end.

It would be hard to find two persons who were perfectly compatible temperamentally. Wesley tells of a mistress and maid who, before they were sanctified, were a great trial to each other. When they both obtained this blessing he suggested that doubtless their differences were a thing of the past; but, to his surprise, he found that the same incompatibility remained.

Holiness does not change our natural dispositions or turn of mind; it takes us as we are, sanctifies us, and makes the best possible use of the material on hand. A philosophic mind will still reason and explore; an incredulous mind must still be shown, and will still find difficulty in accepting unproved statements, while the credulous mind can easily be led and needs but very little demonstration; and the dogmatic mind will still state and define. The difference after being sanctified lies in the fact that evil principles are eliminated; and the renewed mind, which once served the devil, the world, and self, now serves God.

Because of an error in a watch a train is missed. An impulsive man is apt to say, "I'll get rid of this watch; I can't afford to be fooled this way." But the quiet, reasoning man will sit down, correct the watch, get it fixed if necessary, and—forget it. Both may have the experience of holiness; the difference is in their dispositions.



Two young men, both sanctified, are looking for a life partner. One is attracted by a sprightly, vivacious lassie whom he makes his own, while the other finds an unassuming, old-fashioned girl and immediately gives her his heart. No wrong is done; their temperaments differed and as a consequence they were suited by the different temperaments in a companion.

But sometimes we are thrown with persons whose temperaments are not to our liking—what then? Bear and forbear. The man who cannot look beyond his own likes and dislikes and see the good in those with whom he is not in agreement temperamentally has not passed very far along the road of perfect love, or even of brotherly kindness. The man who is still unable to feel kindly toward another who is not temperamentally to his liking, or who because of this lack of agreement will use his influence, great or small, for the undoing of the one with whom he is tried, needs a new baptism of regenerating grace. Holiness will cover a multitude of sins, and this includes a multitude of incompatibilities in the dispositions or actions of others. This is a good way to measure your love: Have you love one for another? If so, your love will cover a multitude of sins and infirmities in your brother, and your own preferences will not be so prominent.

One says, "I am of Paul. I like his wonderful philosophic mind, and his deep, searching truths." Another says, "I am of Apollos. I just love to listen to his oratorical flights, and to mark his well-rounded sentences and fine figures of speech." Another says, "I am of Peter. He always keeps you guessing, and just won't let you go to sleep." Another, "I am of James. I tell you he hews

to the line and, besides, he gives us all something to do." And still another, "I am of John. He is so kind and full of love." And, right here—in these differences of opinion—a rift is started in the church. While preferences are natural, yet we can keep from making our preferences so prominent that we not only injure the Church of God but hurt our own experiences in the bargain.

5. *Differences in education and environment.* Most of us, perhaps all of us, have been trained in the wrong school. We are aware that some may resent this statement, but such resentment only helps to bear out the truthfulness of our premise. One man was reared in so-called high society. Naturally this man expects high positions and honor. Another man was reared in poverty. Generally he expects nothing and is often even too content to let the other man rule. This is an incipient autocracy presided over by the one who considers himself superior.

The man who leads is not always the best man. Such a doctrine would be an accommodation of the evolutionary rule of the survival of the fittest. There are various circumstances which place men in the lead.

(1) Real worth. This is the only legitimate method. (2) Educational advantages. An educated man may be a good ruler or he may not. (3) Financial advantage. There is still too much catering to cash. The gold ring still frequently gets the best seat. The president of a certain state Sunday-school association was a millionaire. Why did he occupy that position? Simply because of his cash. His predecessor was also a millionaire. (4) Accident of birth or circumstances. Some men are "born to be kings," some "chance" to be elected or otherwise to

obtain positions they never were fitted for. (5) Politics advance some. Wirepulling is not all a thing of the past. (6) A determination to dominate places some in the lead while the meek man, no matter how great his ability, is almost always ruled.

*The rank is but the guinea's stamp,  
The man's the gold, for a' that.*

"I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth" (Eccles. 10:7).

But what about all this and holiness? Much every way. You can never judge a man's experience either by the position he holds or the esteem in which he is held by others. Shine where you are, even though it should be on the back side of some desert.

Education has its disadvantages as well as its advantages, according to the system under which we are trained. Before we too harshly condemn any person, would it not be well to ask ourselves the question, "Would I have done any better in my brother's circumstances?" But you say that he has the same opportunities and light that you have. It may be, but we must remember that individuals differ greatly in their capacity for receiving and obeying light. The Lord recognizes this as a fact, and says, "Of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire."

An ignorant man can be as holy in the sight of God, if not as great in the sight of men, as his more highly favored brother. The way is before us and we can walk it even though we may be ignorant.

6. Then there is the matter of *judgment*. The Bible says that "every way of a man is right in his own eyes"; and that includes his own estimation of his own judgment. But when all has been said concerning the reliability of any man's judgment there is a vast chasm between it and perfection. Man knows no perfection except the perfection of love, and that is not of the human; it is God-given. Why should one mortal man look on another mortal man and pass sentence on the character of his judgment, and thus virtually say, "If I had been in his place," etc.? All men will err in judgment as long as they are in the flesh, no matter what position they may occupy, humble or exalted.

## CHAPTER XIV

### Infirmities of the Spirit

Concerning infirmities of the spirit, Wesley says: "From wrong judgments, wrong words and actions will necessarily flow; and, in some cases, wrong affections may also spring from the same source. I may judge wrong of you; I may think more or less highly of you than I ought to think; and this mistake in my judgment may not only cause something wrong in my behavior, it may have a still deeper effect; it may occasion something wrong in my affection. From a wrong apprehension, I will love and esteem you either more or less than I ought. Nor can I be freed from a liability to such a mistake while I remain in a corruptible body. A thousand infirmities, in consequence of this, will attend my spirit, till it returns to God who gave it. And, in numberless instances, it comes short of doing the will of God, as Adam did in Paradise."

At first thought one who is accustomed, and properly so, to have a high ideal of the perfections of holiness will be shocked when it is stated that there are infirmities which still remain with the sanctified soul. *When we say "infirmities" we do not mean "sins," but that which Fletcher calls involuntary lack of power.* Apply this definition to the specific manifestations of your own spiritual life and activities and perhaps you will begin to realize its justice.

So few ever trouble themselves to search into the deep things of the Spirit. They are so accustomed to accept as law and gospel and to take their theological creed every peculiar experimental speculation of their teachers that they are apt to be surprised when they are told that they have placed the standard of holiness too high or too low, and that one reason for their inability to stand is their errors in doctrine. Fletcher says:

“Some people aim at Christian perfection, but, mistaking it for angelic perfection, they shoot above the mark, miss it, and then peevishly give up their hopes. Others place the mark too low: hence it is that you hear them profess to have attained Christian perfection when they have not so much as attained the serenity of a philosopher, or the candor of a good natured, conscientious heathen.”

Concerning infirmities of the spirit, the first thing we notice is that there is a limit to the spiritual power or ability (in the human agent) to accomplish things. Who among us has succeeded in saving as many souls or doing as much good as he would? The person who has, certainly does not have a very high standard, at least not so high as some who will not be satisfied unless they see the world bowing at Jesus' feet. Again we quote from Fletcher:

“If we consider our Lord Jesus Himself as a man, did He do all the good He would while He was upon earth? Did He preach as successfully as His perfect love made Him desire to do? If He had all the success He desired in His ministry, why did He look round about upon His hearers ‘with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts’? Why did He weep and com-

plain, 'How often would I have gathered you,' etc., 'and ye would not'? Were even His private instructions so blessed to His own disciples as He could have wished? If they were, what meant these strange expostulations? 'How is it that ye have no faith?' 'Faithless generation, how long shall I be with you?' 'Hast thou been so long with me, Philip, and yet hast thou not known me?' 'Will ye also go away?' "

## CHAPTER XV

### Lack of Spiritual Vision

With the most keen-sighted saints there still lingers such a measure of inability to see that at times it becomes very noticeable. That is, while they see some things clearly, other things they fail to see.

There is a dimness of vision which comes from the presence of the carnal mind. Carnality is blinding. Our first parents put on leaf aprons and thought they were covered; they skulked among the trees of the garden and flattered themselves that they were hidden. Ever since that day men have been carnally blind to the real facts of the glaring visibility of their sins, as well as blind to their own heart conditions and the condition of the world around them. Besides all this they do not know God and are blind to the fact that they are led captive by the devil at his will.

Carnality in its atheism is an owl that closes its blue-fringed eyelids tight and, flying athwart the glorious sun in heaven, hoots, "Where is it?"

Carnality is a horse with blinders which can see nothing but its own path, self-sufficient, filled with its own ways.

Carnality is a bat that delights in the darkness, and covers with its demon wings every good thing.

Carnality is a mole that burrows in the earth, feeds on its filth, and hates the light of day.



Nothing good can be said of carnality. It is evil, only evil and always evil! When this hateful thing is under consideration, we cry,

*Death, and only death for him,*

*Without pity, limb from limb!*

*Hew him with the Spirit's mighty, flaming sword.*

But in our zeal to escape carnality we should not rush men into an impossible task of endeavoring to become omniscient. Only God sees all. Perhaps angels see enough that they never mistake; but men are so blind naturally that they never will, in this life, get beyond mistakes in spiritual vision. There are various reasons for this lack of vision.

The world does not believe in the Spirit, from the fact that it does not see Him. Christians have a spiritual vision of Jesus.

Men are materialists. In proportion as they learn to look beyond the material and are governed by the spiritual, in that proportion they become spiritually minded. Since men live in material bodies, speak with material tongues, hear with material ears, feel with material hands, and see with material eyes, it stands to reason that they to some extent judge, weigh, and draw conclusions from the material point of view. But this view may be wrong; and while the soul *may* discover this error, it is entirely possible that it may not.

A worshiper shouts the praises of God. One person says, "That shout is surely of God"; another says, "I cannot see any God in it." Both of these persons who ex-

pressed their opinions were good men, but one was surely mistaken, and this mistake was doubtless caused by a lack of spiritual insight.

An evangelist preaches. One says that that preacher is not of God; another man declares he was overwhelmed with a sense of the Divine Presence. Someone has misjudged the preacher. Either the first man has misjudged because he did not feel any special blessing on his own soul or did not discern his ideal of power, or it may be the second man is mistaken in ascribing to the preacher a blessing which originated in his own soul. The first man may have judged by the sight of his eyes. One thing is sure: infallibility of spiritual sight is not a necessary accompaniment of holiness of heart.

Then this lack of spiritual vision may be caused by errors in education. It is a noted fact that some very spiritual people have held some very erroneous doctrines. We need only to cite the reader to the Catholicism of Madam Guyon and Fenelon; the mystical tendencies of George Fox, which caused him to reject all ordinances; or the asceticism of Origen, Tertullian, and hundreds of others.

One of the most spiritual of New Testament commentators is Pasquier Quesnel, a Jansenist Catholic. In spite of the occasional Roman Catholic errors of his doctrine he was so spiritual that he drew down upon himself the anathemas of the pope, and that impostor condemned the writings of Quesnel in a bull in which were cited one hundred and one so-called errors. Quesnel died in exile. Concerning this seeming contradiction, in the introduction to Quesnel's *Reflections on the Gospels*, Daniel Wilson says:

“And when we see the eminent, the almost unparalleled attainments in the spiritual life, of such men as Pascal, Nicole, Quesnel—when we see their love to God, their separation from the vanities of the world, their holy communion of prayer, their sense of the unutterable evil of sin—their apprehension of the divine grace, as the source of all good—their simple, fervent, self-denying love of Christ—their compassion and zeal for the souls of their fellow-creatures; we must acknowledge that intellectual errors are less valid to overthrow than moral and affectionate emotions of the soul are powerful to sustain the spiritual life. The Christian lives by love, not by doctrine. If there be light enough in the understanding to lead to an acquaintance with ourselves and with Jesus Christ, our attainments will go on in proportion to our holy affections, our fervent prayers, our measure of the Holy Spirit, our self-abasement and our union with Christ, the Head of all influence and grace.”

Again, a lack of spiritual vision may be caused by a lack of reasoning powers. It is not necessary that men possess gigantic reasoning powers to be wholly sanctified. They must know enough to recognize God and their own spiritual duties, but beyond this they may know very little. Most people live by impulse, not by reason. Deficient reasoning powers may be assisted or quickened by the incoming of holiness; and while they may, yet they doubtless will not, be made strong. The man who lived by impulse before his conversion will generally do the same afterward; that is his mental make-up and he cannot change it. We all know that a conclusion formed by impulse is not so reliable as one formed by sound, normal reasoning; and a conclusion concerning spiritual

matters formed by impulse is not so dependable as one which will bear the scrutiny of intelligent investigation.

To be sure, there is such a thing as divine impulse, or being moved by the Holy Ghost, and we would be the last to disparage it; but God has warned us not to believe every spirit, and has told us to put each to the test. Here we note that there is such a thing as a lack of the power of spiritual discernment which will allow some on the spur of the moment, or because of strong appeal, to form wrong conclusions of duty. Infallible understanding of one's whole duty is not an absolute essential to holiness of heart; neither does strong spiritual vision prove that the heart is clean.

Finally, lack of spiritual vision may be caused by a lack in the faculty which discerns the fitness of things. Neither is this faculty infallible. It is possible that a preacher, a holy man, will reprove when he should comfort, or comfort when he should reprove; he might preach holiness when justification is needed, or talk when he should be praying. Preachers are not infallible. A layman might stay at home when he should go to meeting, or withhold when he should give, or possibly he might give when he should withhold. Laymen are not infallible. With all of us there lingers a surprising lack of *fitness*. If the reader should think himself exempt, this very fact proves his lack of self-discernment. The old heathen said, "Know thyself"; but while the Christian approaches the ideal, yet even he has not thoroughly mastered his subject.

This blindness is often manifested in a lack of ability to see one's own faults and a persistency in seeing the faults of others. We will never forget the picture in an

old reader: A tall, stoop-shouldered man is walking along the path; behind him is a little hunchback pointing at the tall man's stooped shoulders and grinning. We often think of this picture when we see professors of holiness perfectly unconscious of their own faults and always ready to see the faults of others. "Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?"

Our eyes are not set in our heads for introspection but for extrospection. Until God opens our eyes we see others and not ourselves. Possibly with all of us there still remain some things about ourselves to learn.

## CHAPTER XVI

# Wandering Thoughts

How far are wandering thoughts consistent with the experience of holiness?

Some answer that if a man's heart is clean his mind will never wander. We do not hesitate to stamp this statement as untrue. Why do men persist in raising impossible standards, and holding people to an unattainable ideal? Holiness itself is a glorious experience; and, if presented in its actual light, free from all exaggeration on the one hand and looseness on the other, or as nearly so as the human mind is capable of definition, it will attract honest souls. But if the doctrine is surrounded with physical, mental, and moral impossibilities or inconsistencies we cannot blame our hearers for becoming discouraged and at times disgusted.

There is a saying that has been repeated so often that it has become threadbare, to the effect that we cannot keep the birds from flying over our heads but we can keep them from building nests in our hair. We would suggest as a paraphrase: We cannot keep the unclean birds of earth or hell from presenting evil thoughts to our minds, but we can have our hearts so renovated by the blood of Jesus Christ that such thoughts will find no lodgment in us. Yea, more, we can have such clean hearts that they (our hearts) will not hatch or originate one unclean thought, and will utterly despise

the vile suggestions of the devil. And we would go one step further: The more godlikeness we possess, the greater victory we will have over wicked suggestions, and the less ability the devil will have to inject his trash.

This subject of wandering thoughts is not only interesting, but it is to the highest degree important. We have heard some very fine distinctions drawn which left the inquirer as much in the dark as he was before. For instance, there is a difference between evil thoughts and thoughts of evil. To be sure this is true; but the thing which puzzles the novice, and sometimes older ones, is to decide which is which, and he also wonders whether the birds are just flying over or have commenced to build in his hair. You will remember that when Bunyan's pilgrim was passing through the Valley of Humiliation evil spirits whispered blasphemy in his ears, and the pilgrim thought it was his own heart that was blaspheming. Perhaps you never went through this valley. Some people have, and can testify to the truth of Bunyan's picture.

There are two sorts of wandering thoughts: those that wander from God and those that wander from the particular point in view. The former are sinful, the latter are not. (Note: In some of the positions taken in what follows we wish to acknowledge our indebtedness to Wesley's sermon on "Wandering Thoughts.")

Concerning thoughts that wander from God, these thoughts proceed from and are a sure sign of an unclean fountain. That man whose whole aim and study is the world and the things of the world—What shall I eat, drink, and wear? What shall I see, hear, or gain? How shall I please myself, my neighbors, the world?—this

man's heart is far from God. The constant aim of the holy man is to occupy himself as little as need be with worldly pursuits and callings, and when this necessity is ended his heart rests in God. Because he is finite he may not always properly gauge his necessities; but his heart is in God, all else is secondary.

All carnal thoughts, unbelief, doubtfulness of God's providences, all murmuring and repining, all proud and vain imaginations, all angry, malicious, or revengeful thoughts, all desire for the sinful pleasures of the world—all these are sinful and draw the heart from God. To dwell in imagination on sinful pursuits or things is a sure sign of a carnal heart. For illustration: the enemy suggests a vision of past sinful indulgences, it may be with the thought of present possibilities. Thus far the heart may be clean. But if after a short time the person thus attacked arouses to the realization that there is in the very inmost soul a something that has held to the sinful suggestion and has re-enacted past events with a pleasurable feeling or an almost unconscious desire for present gratification, then there is proof positive that there is in the soul an unclean principle, a carnal fountain. A saved soul immediately rejects all known unclean or sinful thoughts; a sanctified soul has nothing within that clings to the sinful; when Satan comes he hath nothing in the clean man—nothing sinful to agree with the enemy.

We believe and wish to impress the thought that at the door of every clean soul there is a monitor, never off guard (called in one place the "shield of faith"; in another, "he that keepeth Israel"), which immediately, and it may be almost unconsciously, recognizes sinful approaches and sets up an impassable barrier to their en-



trance. There may be a struggle, but if we trust God the victory is sure.

A man can judge his spiritual standing by the moral standard of the things his heart ponders with pleasure.

Now concerning those wandering thoughts which do not depart from God but simply wander from the particular point in view. The ability to hold one's self to any particular line of thought depends as much on the mental make-up of the person as it does on his spiritual standing, or it may be more. Horace Greeley wrote some of his editorials which stirred the country, sitting on some person's doorstep or elsewhere in the streets of New York, and the crowds surging by never seemed to break the continuity of his thought or the consistency of his argument. We read of a young man who learned a long poem in a specified length of time, while his comrades did all they could, except touch him, to distract his attention. This is the power of concentration, and is a mental and not a spiritual accomplishment.

You have heard preachers who could not hold to one consecutive line of argument for five minutes. You have heard people sitting and conversing on innocent subjects, and have noticed them jump from one theme to another, never holding long to one point. Two old people will bring up remembrances reaching all the way from old "Indianny" to sunny "Californy"; from their childhood in the backwoods to these days of airplanes and automobiles; from who married Jane Hawkins to who preached in the log schoolhouse in '59; barn raisings, husking bees, spelling schools, sleigh rides, and what not, all come in for their share. We say this is a sign of the infirmities

of old age, but possibly some signs might be found in the younger generation.

The understanding is immediately affected by a diseased body, and at such times consecutiveness of thought is extremely difficult. This wandering may range all the way from a passing fancy to temporary delirium or even raging madness. Nervous disorders are noted for their tendency to unsettle the mind and keep it from performing its legitimate functions.

The old mystics made much of meditating on the passion of Christ. But with some it is impossible, without some tangible purpose in view, to keep their minds in one place for any length of time. In God's law the holy soul meditates day and night, but the weary brain may travel the wide world around.

The various things and circumstances with which we are surrounded have a tendency to distract the mind, and it is impossible for the holiest to become at all times thoroughly disengaged. A passing automobile, a ringing bell, a screeching train, a crying child, an annoying mosquito, all call for their share of attention, and momentarily draw the mind from the most serious thoughts.

Then, as Wesley suggests, sometimes our minds are too heavy, dull, and languid to pursue long one chain of thought. Some preachers insist on filling in forty-five minutes or an hour with one heavy thought after another, and never relieve their discourse with some interesting illustration, and as a consequence the mental strain of the hearers is not relieved from beginning to end. Not one mind in ten (and that is quite liberal) is able to follow such a discourse through to its end. The mind is languid and stubbornly refuses to take it in.

This may be a lack of mental capacity in the hearers, but it is surely not of necessity a lack of holiness.

Either pleasure or pain may cause the mind to wander. An aching head, a sour stomach, twitching rheumatism, the fragrance of a rose, the sound of beautiful music, will cause one to leave the point in hand, and he may never be able to recall that thought again.

These are some causes of wandering thoughts, and such thoughts are no more sinful than the motion of the blood in the veins.

To sum up the whole in the language of Wesley:

“To expect deliverance from these wandering thoughts which are occasioned by evil spirits is to expect that the devil should die or fall asleep, or, at least, should no more go about as a roaring lion. To expect deliverance from those which are occasioned by other men is to expect either that men should cease from earth, or that we should be absolutely secluded from them, and have no intercourse with them; or that having eyes we should not see, neither hear with our ears, but be as senseless as stocks or stones. And to pray for deliverance from those which are occasioned by the body is, in effect, to pray that we may leave the body. Otherwise it is praying for impossibilities and absurdities; praying that God would reconcile contradictions, by continuing our union with a corruptible body without the natural, necessary consequences of that union. It is as if we should pray to be angels and men, mortal and immortal, at the same time. Nay!—but when that which is immortal is come, mortality is done away.

“Rather let us pray, both with the spirit and with the understanding, that all these things may work together

for our good; that we may suffer all the infirmities of our nature, all the interruptions of men, all the assaults and suggestions of evil spirits, and in all be 'more than conquerors.' Let us pray, that we may be delivered from all sin; that both root and branch may be destroyed; that we may be cleansed from all pollution of flesh and spirit, from every evil temper, and word, and work; that we may love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul, and with all our strength; that all the fruit of the Spirit may be found in us—not only love, joy, peace, but also longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, temperance. Pray that all these things may flourish and abound, may increase in you more and more, till an abundant entrance is ministered unto you, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ."

# HOLINESS AND THE HUMAN ELEMENT

By H. A. Baldwin

The experience of holiness does not bring Adamic or angelic perfection. The human element is inherent in finiteness. Just where to place the dividing line between sin and humanity is frequently difficult if not impossible. There are two extremes practiced by professing holiness people. One is to make too much allowance for human frailty, thereby lowering Bible standards of holy living. The other is to set up such idealistic patterns of perfection that no one can conform to them. This results in confusion, discouragement, and defeat.

This book was written to help the newly sanctified believer as well as the mature saint to avoid either extreme and live a consistent life of separation from the world, yet be a normal, Bible Christian.

Here is no academic, psychological treatise of religious experience, such as have been foisted upon an all too gullible public in recent years. It is a sound, understandable, clearly expressed discussion based on Scripture and on tested Christian experience. It should save many young people, in particular, from fanaticism, misunderstandings, backslidings, and spiritual darkness.

Some of the troublesome aspects of holiness considered are: causes of confusion, discouragement, ecstatic feelings, righteous indignation, feelings, nerves, fear, worry, physical and mental infirmities, lack of spiritual vision, and wandering thoughts.

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