

new covenant Voice

Praise is a natural response of a loving, grateful heart, expressing itself thoughtfully and warmly to God.

G.W. North

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to GOD the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect and to JESUS the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel See that ye refuse not him that speaketh

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WHOM DO MEN SAY THAT I ... AM?

GEORGE W. NORTH

The Lord asked this question of His disciples after they had assisted Him in feeding a crowd numbering thousands of people. It was a very popular, social miracle, the second of its kind, and He was concerned to know what everybody thought of Him. They had certainly never before seen the like, and He knew that quite naturally thinking people would be seriously trying to make up their minds about Him, and that was good. Who was He? No-one knew; not even His disciples really understood the truth about Him, even though, following the first of these miracles, He had made plain statements about Himself to those who sought Him.

It was very vital to the Lord that He should be told of men's ideas about Him, He wanted to know. He had come into the world purposely to build a Church so powerful that the gates of hell could not prevail against it. He had to dig deep into men's private opinions and public statements about Him, for a foundation had to be laid deep in every man's heart; as He had said, 'Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh'. So, having first asked the apostles to tell Him what other men were saying about Him, He put the question to the apostles themselves, 'Whom say ye that I am?'. It was more important to Him to know what they thought and were saying among themselves, than what the rest of men were saying. He planned to make these men the foundations of His Church, He must be sure about them, and they must be sure about Him. Every man who forms an opinion of Christ must tell Him exactly who he personally believes Him to be; quoting another person's opinions and convictions will not do for the Lord.

EVERY MAN'S PROVIDER

We live and move and work among people of all kinds and shades of opinion, we hold conversations with them, hear their opinions, observe their conduct and share common needs. We absorb their ideas also, learn from them, respond to them, argue with them, and often without knowing it, are influenced by them. It is interesting to know the thoughts of those with whom we mix, sometimes they can be helpful, but in the end we have to make up our own minds about the Son of man. Who is this person that gives multiplicity of bread and fish to these people, this all-powerful provider of the present basic needs of every man? Who is He? This person that my compatriots feed upon, from whom are they drawing their daily life - is He man or God? The answers were received. 'Some say John the Baptist: some, Elias; others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets'. In our modern world it could be any one of a handful, or a hundred other lesser men. The first suggestion the apostles reported to Jesus was foolish, the second wishful, the third depressing, the fourth confused - all were wrong.

Seeking to trace the source of people's opinions, it is sometimes quite easy to detect the various ideas that have influenced them and have had powerful or subtle bearing upon

the conclusions they have reached. To a certain extent, we are all affected by other people's opinions; some are wholesome, others are damaging, others are positively destructive - it has been so throughout time. Before and during the time Christ was on earth, the Pharisees and the Sadducees had infected everyone with their doctrine. They were sworn political and religious enemies, but in one way or another their leaven-like teachings affected everybody, particularly their view of Christ. For the common cause the Pharisees and Sadducees had sunk their differences and combined their evil hearts as one to destroy Jesus and His gospel. Their common ground was jealousy; their root, pride; their stock, cruelty; their branch and fruit, hatred, falsehood, unbelief, rejection, destruction and death. They fed the minds of the multitudes upon bread poisoned with their own subtle leaven of unbelief, all the while holding forth Elias and Jeremias and the prophets as the people's true food.

ONE WITH THE FATHER

Posing as true and faithful enquirers, these people came to Jesus and said, 'Shew us a sign from heaven'. Their deceit was at once obvious to Him. With well-chosen words they were seeking to entrap and destroy Him; at that very moment, in their hearts, they were planning to end His life, but not just now. For the present they were seeking to destroy His influence over the minds and hearts of the people. What a bait it was, calculated (so they thought) to lure Him on to their barbed hook. They desperately wished to catch Him and pull Him out of the ocean of love and power in which He lived and moved with His Father. The bait was seeming sincerity, artful, the hook was self-reputation. Many have gone to destruction, caught upon just such an identical hook, but not Jesus.

The truth is that both Jesus and they knew that, to be true to Himself and His Father, He could not show them a sign from heaven. He only had power from on high to do the works His Father showed Him. He did not have power within Himself as of Himself, to do what they or He Himself wished. He had been publicly anointed by His Father to do His works and will, and although he had life in Himself, He had publicly said that He had come to do His Father's will. At no time did He say that He had life in Himself to do His own or any man's will. He knew that He had life only because His Father had given Him to have it in Himself; He was different from other men. Quite deliberately He had spoken words calculated to confuse all but those who knew Him: Father and He were one He said, making Himself equal with God. But (and here lay the mystery of His manhood and obedience), He never said that He had life in Himself in the same way that His Father had life in Himself. It had not been given to the Father by anyone to have life in Himself; 'My Father is greater than all', He said, and then added, 'Father and I are one'. No-one but He could grasp the meaning of His words, but obviously to Him the latter phrase in no way invalidated the former.

THE PERFECT MAN

In the Godhead, as in any family, Father is first and greatest, and, as such, exercises the greater authority; by common consent He has the power of command. He it was who gave authority, privilege and ability to the Son of Man to have life in Himself, and having received it, He lived in such obedience to His Father's will that He retained it all His days. Without deviation, He studiously kept the original spiritual order and social relationship (fellowship) of vital life in heaven sacred on earth; it was a covenant of trust between Himself and His Father. From His birth onward, through the moment of His ministerial anointing to the hour of His death, He never spoke or acted in any way, at any time, except it was given to Him of His Father. He did and said many things, but He never claimed to have done any of them by His own personal power. On one occasion He said, 'I have done one work and ye all marvel', but thereby He was not asserting independence from His Father. He fully accepted responsibility for His words and actions so He used the personal presence. He was not an automaton, He was the perfect man God wanted and men needed.

Jesus of Nazareth was the perfect example of God's creation of and intention for man. He lived totally dependent upon God; He continued in the flesh the life He had always lived in spirit before He was manifest on earth. At all times He was one spirit with the Father, one will, one mind, one power, one life. He was one with God, and could of His own self do nothing, it was impossible, He and His Father were one. Such is the mystery of eternal life and eternal love.

HE KNEW THEIR HEARTS

The Pharisees and Sadducees were not told all this by Jesus, but they were astute men, and from the Lord's remarks had grasped the fact that it would be fatal for Him to attempt to give a sign from heaven just to satisfy their request. The request was not genuine, it was an appeal to pride, an artful attempt to lure Him off the ground of the agreement between Himself and His Father and to break the covenant; but they did not know their man, He had no pride. Besides, the Lord had furnished enough proof to convince all intelligent people that He and His ministry were directly of God from heaven. There was no need, therefore, to respond to any such a request. Why attempt to satisfy hearts that had no intention of accepting any kind of proof? They had already decided what they wanted to believe. He had given sufficient signs to prove to any unprejudiced mind that He was of God; one of these was the repeated feeding of the multitudes. Why then should a certain group decide what they would accept and what they should refuse to accept? The solemn fact is that men may do so, but what shall be the end of them?

Jesus knew how deeply people's minds were infected by the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. He was quite aware that although they said He was John the Baptist, or Elias, or Jeremias, or one of the prophets, their thinking and statements did not arise from simplicity of childlike faith. He also knew that His very own disciples, chosen apostles all, were so deeply leavened with plausible unbelief. Soon He would have to tell one of them that he was satan. Small wonder then that He warned them to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees, which is hypocrisy. He did not mean that they openly taught that hypocrisy is righteousness, nobody would do that; He meant

that as a result of believing their teachings men would become hypocrites, as they were, covering up unbelief with a mask of righteousness.

THE PROMISED MESSIAH

Jesus had seen through them and their veneer of spirituality, it was a covering for worldly wisdom and sin; He knew how it was leavening and infecting all who heard them; it would destroy all who listened to them. 'He is John the Baptist', the people were saying; but who except the most unintelligent and the ignorantly superstitious could ever think that? John had only recently been beheaded, how then could Jesus be John? Did they believe in reincarnation? (Present day beliefs, though seeming so modern, are only a rehash of ancient heresies after all). But John did no miracle; how then could this Jesus who both prior to John's death, as well as since John died, had already done so many miracles before them all be John? Such talk was preposterous, but some apparently believed it. Some said He was Elias, that seemed more scriptural; in their minds there was a definite link between John the Baptist and Elias. They had hoped that John, with his ministry of promised restoration, was indeed Elias, if not in body then in spirit, but at thirty one or so years of age, John had lain in Herod's dungeon, waiting for the headman's axe. Was it this Jesus, and not John, who was Elias after all? Was some kind of metaphysical religious idea being fed into people's minds by these Pharisees and Sadducees? Were they teaching that whilst he was alive, John the Baptist was just John, but that when he died his spirit entered into Jesus, his cousin, and transformed him into Elias? If so, were they to expect some as yet unknown third person to appear and be the promised Messiah?

What mixed-up, crazy thoughts bedevil and complicate the minds of Christ-rejectors! Even so, wrong as such ideas and expressions would have been, they reveal deep down heart-longings of a people dearly praying for deliverance. Others said, 'Jeremias': what desolation lies here. At least the hope that it was Elias had lighted the flame of optimism in some hearts, but Jeremias was the prophet of gloom and doom. Captivity, devastation, desolation, despair, death, followed in the wake of Jeremias's ministry. Oh, the relief then to think that it may after all be some other prophet; but who? No-one knew - confusion! But at least that is better than hypocrisy. Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees at this point. Let the disciples and companions be clear, even though the compatriots be confused.

THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD

'Whom say ye that I am?'. He wants to know, for He has come to build His Church. We all must tell Him. We may not say, 'They say this', or 'They say that', or 'Someone says', 'Oh, anybody', or 'Nobody' ... none can answer nothing, silence is a confession. Peter said, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God'. 'Blessed art thou, Simon bar Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven', Jesus said. Hallelujah! His warning had not gone unheeded, though the danger had been real enough. His men had not been affected by the leaven after all. The Pharisees and Sadducees had succeeded with many, but not with these. Nor had they been caught up in the unbelief of the crowds which had lately fed from His hands. Neither were they answering from Bible knowledge, but by sheer revelation from His Father in

heaven. It was not a new thought to Peter; he had been holding the revelation for some time past. Now Jesus confirms it to him; it was a revelation from God to his heart concerning His Son. Peter hears Jesus speaking to him further, 'And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter' (If there has to be a verse break in this particular paragraph I would place it here). Peter had said to the Son of Man, 'Thou art the Christ', and the Christ said to the son of Jonah, 'Thou art Peter'; (person for person, name for name. It is a tremendously meaningful passage as it unfolds). 'And upon this rock I will build My Church'. There was no hypocrisy in either heart.

THE SIGN OF JONAH

It is no coincidence that, in course of answering the Pharisees and Sadducees, the Lord had said, 'A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given unto it save the sign of the prophet Jonas'. Jonah was the prophet who ran away from his commission and was thrown in the sea to be swallowed by the great fish and vomited up upon dry land, that though against his will, he should finally fulfilled his calling. Under Jesus' instruction unto the Jews he was a sign of the resurrection. What joy it must have been to Peter that Jesus should say to him, 'Thou art Simon son of Jonah', for by this the Lord was linking him with the prophet of the resurrection; he was the son of the man who was the sign of the resurrection to his generation. Jesus had spoken about signs in unmistakable words; He said, 'signs of the times' were to be observed by all in the same way as a man observes and reads the signs of the weather and pronounces upon them with certainty. Such signs are local, varying from one race and locality to another, not always dependable, but one universal sign, unmistakable and clear, was to be given to that age and generation, it was the resurrection. Jonas means 'Dove'. The prophet 'Dove' was the sign of the resurrection.

John the Baptist said of Jesus that He was the Son of God, and that the sign of His Sonship was that the Holy Ghost descended from heaven in bodily form as a dove and abide upon Him, and it took place in Jordan. As He was coming up out of the waters of baptism it all happened - the approving Father sent the descending dove upon the risen Son - the Saying, the Sign and the Son were as one. It is no strange thing that water was the chosen element from which Jesus should rise, prefiguring it all in a kind of resurrection. Did not Jonah come up out the water as a 'dove' to preach repentance and salvation to Nineveh?

THE RESURRECTION

Jesus, the 'Dove-man' went out from the waters all over Galilee, Judea, Caesarea Philippi and Samaria, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom. He was the Son of the Dove; begotten of the Father, born of the Holy Ghost. He was borne of Mary into this world. But, true as all was, it was all as in a figure. His birth of Mary was as though He came from death, for no man had known His mother. He had lain aside His glory, (dying to it, as it were, considering equality with God not a thing to be grasped at) and humbled Himself to humanity and servitude and obedience unto the death. To become a man entailed a kind of death; to be born was a symbol of the resurrection. It was the same at His baptism also: picturing death and resurrection more clearly, it severed Him completely from Nazarene carpentry, cut Him off from His earthly family, and separated Him finally unto God His Father for the life of

ministry. As with His natural birth, at His baptism He was shown to be begotten of the Father from the dead, born of the Spirit, this time borne to the nation by the ministry of John, a man filled with the Spirit from his mother's womb. In words strongly similar and related to Mary's. 'I know not a man', John confessed, 'I knew Him (the man, his cousin Jesus) not'. Both these human vessels of mercy and grace bore record that all is of God; and how marvellous it is in our eyes.

Greater still was to follow, that we may all marvel yet more. Reserving His best wine till last (after men had already drunk of what, to them, might well have seemed best wine) at Lazarus' reanimation Jesus announced that He Himself was actually the Resurrection and the Life. This was absolutely true, but to those who heard it, it was amazingly new. They all believed all history was moving towards an event called the resurrection, but Jesus said that He is the Resurrection. 'I am the Resurrection'. To prove it, He moved on majestically to the tomb and called Lazarus forth from it. Lazarus, reanimated at His word and fully alive again, was as a sign to them in support of the Lord's claim: the Resurrection had come. He had done the same sort of thing several times before, the difference upon this occasion being that, whereas the others whom He had restored to life had been dead only, Lazarus was both dead and entombed, and his body in an advanced stage of corruption. Having made such a statement, and done such a wonderful miracle, it became necessary for Him to prove it in Himself. It was one thing to show that He had power to raise others from the dead, but it would be quite another to rise from the dead Himself.

THE LIFE

Although a man could raise the dead, being Himself alive, it did not scientifically prove that He is the Resurrection and the Life. It might be accepted as evidence of His claim that He is Life, it certainly proves that He has power, but it cannot prove to those who need or demand proof that He is the Resurrection, and if it cannot do that, then He cannot claim to have established the fact that He is Life. If a man wishes to prove that He is Life, He must never die. He must stay alive, but who would believe any man who said He had lived for two thousand years? Very few believe that Methuselah lived nearly a thousand years. They ask how it can be proved. Behold then, the genius and wisdom of God: He would show that He is Life by dying. Man would say that the only way a man could show that He is Life is by remaining alive and not dying, but the Son of God would show that He is the Life by demonstrating that He is the Resurrection and the Life.

Man's demands in this realm can never be met, for if God attempted to meet them He would be immediately countered with arguments based on the reasoning already outlined. Were Jesus to be yet a man on earth today, people would be demanding to see His birth certificate, and there would be no such thing in existence. There would have been no New Testament in existence either. His birth is amply and repeatedly certified therein by several men, but the documents were not written until after His death and resurrection, which undeniably is another most wise and wonderful move of God. No lasting claims were to be made to following generations of men that He is the Life until it was established beyond reasonable doubt, by conclusive evidence, that He is the Resurrection and the Life; only atheists could reject that. Such a claim is preposterous to the human

mind, for to be the Resurrection a man must die, but in order to be Life a man cannot die; he may not do so or else he invalidates his claim. Logically, to claim to be one makes it impossible to be the other. However, as Jesus once said concerning a certain matter, 'With man it is impossible, but with God all things are possible'. Such a situation as this is one in which He delights, for it is in these things that He shows Himself to be God, and man to be mere man. To the confounding of all human logic, the confusion of His enemies, the consternation of all devils, the confirmation of His claims, the completion of His earth-work, the crowning glory of His life, and the consummation of all truth, Jesus died and rose again. His physical life died, His spiritual life continued, enhanced by His death; eternal life continued uninterrupted through the cross and the tomb. His dead physical body became a spiritual body; He arose. 'I am the Resurrection and the Life', He said, He proved it.

BEGOTTEN BY THE FATHER

Upon His resurrection His Father said to Him, 'Thou art my beloved Son, this day have I begotten thee', and to the angels He said, 'Let all the angels of God worship Him'. Of the Holy Ghost it is said that Jesus, 'through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God', and that Jesus is 'declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead'. As with both Mary and John Baptist before them, the two on the Emmaus road knew Him not; Mary Magdalene confessed, 'I knew not'; the apostles knew Him not, but thought He was a spirit when He appeared to them. Ignorance abounded on every hand and in every heart.

With amazement and wonder, we marvel at our God's consummate skill and almighty power as we see how Jesus, the Resurrection and the Life, in resurrection conjoined all in one. Stunned by the unexpected fulness of it, breathless with admiration, overwhelmed and wordless with adoration, we can scarcely take in all the truth opening up to our gaze as we stoop and look into the glory and light of the open tomb. The Resurrection joins in one with itself and fulfils the mysterious prefiguring resurrection of His birth and baptism; it shows that this is why He was born - 'This day have I begotten Thee', was His Father's greeting as He stepped bodily down from His rocky shelf, not as He left Mary's womb. Furthermore, at His water baptism His Father had said to Him, 'Thou art My Son', but He did not go on to add the words recorded above, even though he had witnessed Jesus rise from the waters as though from the dead. Of His death Jesus Himself said, 'I have a baptism wherewith I must be baptized', and in so saying linked the figurative Jordan experience with Calvary's cross and tomb. His conception by Mary, His immersion by John, His burial by Joseph of Arimathea, all speak of His death. His birth, His emergence from the waters and His resurrection all speak of His begetting by the Father through the Spirit. Jesus, the Son, the Christ, the Resurrection, is the Son of the Dove.

HE BORE OUR SINS

Peter also was the son of 'Dove'; not in the same way as Jesus at that time though. He had been baptized in Jordan, but the dove did not descend on him as on Jesus. By what seemed a strange coincidence the connection was that his father's name was Jonah; but if his father had died by that time, he had not risen from the dead, so what could it all mean? The significance of it lies in the fact that, in order to be a true son of the Dove, Peter had

also to die and be of resurrection as Jesus. Jesus could say, 'I am the Resurrection', that is born of the Spirit, the Dove. Before Peter or Paul or any other could know this, Jesus had to die and rise again. What He was by nature, which had already been displayed by His birth, and again at His baptism in water, had to be made available unto man; He had to create a death, burial and resurrection for us. Physical death, burial and resurrection did not need to be created for mankind, for death and consequent burial came into the race as a result of sin. Likewise resurrection is a fixed event thrice already miraculously anticipated by the Lord's power, to which the whole race is committed at some time in the nearing future.

What Jesus had to do was to create a spiritual death, burial and resurrection which should reverse the effects of the fall in Eden. He came to change the state of man, which is sin and death, and the relationship of man, which is to Satan, to a state of righteousness, which is life unto correct relationship to God. This He did by means of physical death, burial and resurrection wherein He:

(1) was crucified as the sinner, bore our sins; was made an offering for sin; died unto sin; bore away the sin of the world; He is the propitiation for our sin, that is, the place where God shows mercy to every sinner, thereby making it possible for man's state to be eternally changed.

(2) lay in the grave three days, as foreshadowed in many types, and particularly by Jonah, to show that His death was indeed real, and that cessation from sin, and all activities connected with that state is a factual possibility for all men; 'he that is dead is justified from sin'.

If we have been 'planted together in the likeness of His death' it can only be as we have been buried with Him into death. He was not only crucified unto death, that is, till He was dead, He was also buried into death.

THE LAMB WHO WAS SLAIN

Abraham, seeking a burial place for Sarah's body, said to the sons of Heth that He wanted a tomb for her, 'that I may bury my dead out of my sight'. Burial means dead and out of sight, finally gone, the parting made, the farewell taken, the severance complete, duty done, decency upheld, the last rites performed, death taking its proper course and reaching its logical end. Risen from the dead, alive without sin, He had put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself; the relationship had been re-established. Sin and death are overcome. The greater life, the greater power, the greater Man has destroyed them. Jesus, that wonderful Spirit, God manifest in flesh, rises from the dead the same as ever, unharmed though not unmarked: behold His hands and His side.

The great Creator created a new death, even the death of the cross. He had been 'in deaths oft' before, and in resurrections as many, but this death and resurrection is the greatest of all. He had originated death. Before the world was, Jesus the Lamb was slain. Long before man was created or the foundations of the earth were laid there was death in heaven, Jesus died. Lucifer and hosts of first created seraphs died with Him, long before death came by man to men. Spirit-death and soul-death came to this planet long before physical death. It came to heaven first, but was cast out. Satan introduced it to

Adam, and because of sin, the Lamb had to die long before men had sinned and died. Death is not, and never has been, an end of being, only a cessation of life on one plane or in one conscious state. Basically death for man is a change from one state of existence to another before he reaches his final destination. If he has known resurrection, he has known regeneration from death to life; if he has not known resurrection he can only know change in a permanent state of death - from death to death, the second death, existence without cessation of being, existence without life. We praise God that it is the Resurrection and the Life who created a new death for us, and gladly go to His new-created death and burial in order to pass thereby into Resurrection and Life. So it was that the day of Pentecost came, and with it Peter's birth. That day he became a son of the Dove, a child of the resurrection. He who had been for so long a-dying, ceased to be; he died and rose again to be a sign to his generation in lieu of Jesus, who had gone back to heaven on his behalf.

THE DOVE

Jesus is the first sign, the true fulfilment of that episode which He quoted from Jonah's experience, and Peter and those with him were the perpetuation of the sign. We too must be sons of the Dove, we must be plunged into the Holy Spirit and be born anew. Since He, the Son of the Dove, is the one who plunges us into the Dove, He must take for us the place and title of the greater Jonah in this respect, in which case He is the Dove who baptizes in the Dove, the Holy Spirit, thereby making us as He is Himself, a son of Dove. That such a thing should be is not preposterous. To call the Holy Ghost the Dove, and in the same breath to call Jesus the Dove also is quite in order, for the term 'the Dove' is a description, not a name. It is a term of emphasis, bringing to our notice a particular characteristic of the person nominated as 'the Holy Spirit in bodily form as a dove'. The name of the person being spoken of is the Holy Spirit, the form He is adopting is a dove; the implied meaning we understand is that He is gentle, tender, sweet, graceful. We do not think that the Holy Ghost is a dove because this obviously implied description of Him is given us. If we examine one of the figurative descriptions used of the Lord Jesus in the same way, we may say, 'Jesus Christ is the Lamb'. But we do not expect to see a four-legged animal when we see Him, any more than we expect to see bread, though he is described as that.

The difficulty may arise because He is called both the Dove and also the Son of the Dove. But a thought or two will speedily dispel any idea of incongruity. Since the word dove is only a description, and we use it in the nominative sense merely to highlight the side of a person's character and activities we wish at the time to be seen, when used of one person of the Triune Being it is obviously true of God as a whole. Each person of the Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, may equally bear it, for if it is true of one, it is true of all. Both the Father and the Holy Spirit are as truly lambs in nature and character as is the Son; each could speak as Jesus of One-ness. The Father is as dove-like as the Holy Ghost, and Jesus is as dove-like as both. What each one does, and what He portrays or embodies at different times for different ends, may for a period and for God's purposes demand that He be known by a certain name in the same way as we may use the words doctor, or matron, or shepherd, or general, or premier. The only difference is that such appellations as these have strict reference to office, ability or occupation only, whereas such names as any Person of the

Godhead bears describe nature and character as well as office or ability.

THE FIRST FOUNDATION

Now it is in the nature, as well as the context, of such things as these that the whole statement concerning building the Church is both conceived and made. The concept, as indeed the whole possibility, of such a building/company could not have arisen or been imagined, except it had been derived from the reality of the facts as they lie revealed in principle in both the similarity and the dissimilarity of:

- (1) the figurative meaning of Jonah and the resurrection, and
- (2) the meaning of the name Peter and the word Jesus used for Rock.

To this must be added the fact that the word Church (Gr. Ekklesia) means 'called out'. We have noticed at length that the underlying truth of the Son of the Dove is the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Peter, though himself a son of 'Dove', had no personal experience of what his name implied, until He who is the Resurrection and the Life underwent what His Name implied to Him. In this, Peter was not first or fundamental; he was not the Son of the Dove, but a son of (a) Dove. Though there is a similarity in the names, in reality there is great dissimilarity, and none knew it better than his Lord and he.

The difference between the masculine and feminine genders marks the dissimilarity between Peter and the Rock. As in the matter of 'the Dove' and of death and Resurrection, the Lord Jesus is obviously the first and great foundation. Until Peter was regenerate following Pentecost, Peter's rock nature was hard against his Lord, as his threefold denial in the judgement hall and his preference for fishing, in disobedience of the risen Christ's command, plainly show. He was no eternal rock upon which to build the Church; he was unreliable, vacillating, brilliant at times, abysmal at others. Sometimes he spoke like a god, at others he spoke like another satan. Reading on in this same chapter we find that within moments of saying to Jesus, 'Thou art the Christ the son of the living God', he sought to direct Him out of God's will. How much more truly than at first appears did Jesus name Simon 'Peter', for is not this incident an almost exact reproduction of the most fateful thing that ever befell man in the garden of Eden? Then and there, satan opposed God in the subtlest of manners by using the female against the male. Eve, the woman, proved to be the weak point: she, the feminine, having already fallen to satan's temptation, turns into satan to the masculine Adam, and successfully tempts him to disobey God. It was the beginning of sin on earth in the human race, the tragedy which brought in the sorrows of the ages.

THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE

Adam became the representative of satan, the father of the lie, to all his progeny. Eve fell from being the mother of all living, to being the mother of all dying, and Eden itself changed from being the foyer of heaven's joy, and was in danger of becoming the precinct of hell; so God drove out the man and the woman, closed the garden and barred the way to the tree of life. Here again we have a repetition of patient satan's subtle method:

Peter (Gr. petros - masculine - implication 'a small rock') tempts Jesus the Rock (Gr. petra - feminine - implication 'great rock, the mass') but fails to move Him (Adam) from going on to the tree of life (the cross). Jesus said that He was the Life, and that He had come to give life to men. The cross was the tree of death to all who hung upon it. Peter, having, under Jesus' teaching, partaken of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, sought to restrain Him from the tree of death, or the death of the cross. But Jesus had come to be 'obedient unto death'; He had to take Life to the tree of death to make it the tree of Life. Behold then the devilry of satan, the folly of Peter, and the reason for the rebuke by Jesus. As we have seen in the matter of the Dove, the Lord had linked Peter with Himself in a wonderful way. As Eve was given to Adam to be joined one with him, so was Peter to be joined to his Lord; but also, as Eve, though without success, he had allowed himself to be the tool of satan to Jesus.

The apostle was no massive rock upon which to build the Church; ignorance, sin, selfishness, egotism, vanity, weakness, blindness, confusion, lies, shame, aggression, in fact all the inherent fatal flaws and complications of us all, were in him; he represented us all. First he tried to prevent Jesus from going to the cross; having failed in that, he said he would go with Him to it; then, in the shadow of it he ran away from it; after that he stood in the crowd gazing upon it from afar, and finally left it, preferring to let an unknown Joseph do what a 'father' Joseph might have done for his adopted 'son', had he been alive. Poor, tragic, human Peter; he was just a little rock. Jesus had never expected anything more of him, but He loved him still. He was no hypocrite, even if he was no Dove; he was just like every other man who has walked down the bitter road of self-discovery, disillusioned with self and all men, ideals gone, fantasy turning to disenchantment and then reality. Peter would one day be a rock, but he could never be the Rock. The Rock upon which the Church is built is the Rock of Ages; the rock that Peter now is was no rock until Jesus named him so. He had no existence in reality until the age of Pentecost, wherein he was baptized into eternal life, via the tree of death and the resurrection, this made Peter a rock upon the Rock. In common with all the apostles and prophets of the New Covenant he was laid in the foundation of the Church as a cornerstone, Jesus Christ Himself being the

Chief Cornerstone. Therefore, in a manner, Peter is a foundation stone upon which, in the same way as with other stones of his rank and calling in his day, the Church is built. Because this is so, Paul, when speaking to the Corinthians, did not say 'other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Simon Peter', but '... which is Jesus Christ'. That is how all the apostles and prophets saw it; Peter was just 'a stone' built upon our great Rock Jesus, as Peter himself says.

THE ROCK

There is no doubt that Peter did have a special, important and unique position among the apostles in the early Church, and although it is foolishly wrong to accord him a position which neither the Church nor his contemporaries gave him, it must be recognized that his ministry was quite fundamental, and it would be utterly foolish to attempt to deny it. It is as though the Lord, having first elicited from His apostle the heavenly revelation that He is the Christ, and announced the fact that He is going to build His Church, also makes certain dispositions among the apostles for the achievement of His purposes. In accordance with this, He gives to Peter the keys to the kingdom, and certain promises and privileges not, apparently, given to the others. These are quite plainly stated, and reading the Acts of the Apostles, we as equally plainly see how faithfully he discharged his responsibilities.

In the same way the Lord gives to every living stone in His Church some specific promise and many privileges so that each may properly fulfil His calling. We would not thereby claim to be equal with Peter, and it is quite certain that, although Peter was specially privileged, he did not thereby think he was any greater than his contemporaries. He said, 'Thou art the Christ', but he was only speaking for all the apostles really; these all knew that Jesus was the Rock, and were each built upon Him, that in turn, by them, we may be built upon Him also.

The conclusion of the matter is not, 'Whom do men say that I am?', but 'Whom do I say that men are?'.

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PURITY OF HEART

WILLIAM BOOTH

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PREFACE

The following letters were, in the first instance, addressed to weekly meetings of Salvation Soldiers. They called forth so many expressions of thankfulness, and so many requests that they might be printed in a permanent form, that I have gathered them together in this little book.

They do not, of course, profess to treat this great subject with anything like completeness, nor do I make any claim for them to literary elegance or power, and yet, if they are used at all, they must go as they are, for I have no opportunity to properly revise them.

WILLIAM BOOTH.

LONDON, January, 1902

1. PURITY: WHAT IT IS

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God - Matthew 5:8

MY DEAR COMRADES,

We Salvationists are always singing or praying or talking about a Pure Heart. Indeed, there are few subjects of which we more frequently speak, or in which we more truly glory. Some of our most beautiful and heart-stirring songs are on this theme. Perhaps, no one is more frequently sung by us than that commencing,

‘Oh, for a heart to praise my God;
A heart from sin set free.
A heart that always feels the Blood,
So freely spilt for me’.
Is it not beautiful? But it goes on better still -

‘A heart in every thought renewed,
And full of Love Divine;
Perfect and right, and pure and good,
A copy, Lord, of Thine’.

Great, however, as is the power of such songs to stir our hearts, perhaps nothing delights the genuine Salvationist more than the definite testimonies of those living in the enjoyment of the Blessing, or the earnest prayers for its bestowment, or the fervent appeals to Comrades to secure this Pearl of Great Price, so often heard of in our ranks.

And yet I am afraid that many of our Soldiers do not definitely experience and openly profess the enjoyment of the Blessing and I have been thinking that, perhaps, it is because the subject is not so well understood as it should be. I propose, therefore, to try to explain it in a few letters, which I hope my Comrades will carefully consider.

Now, please remember that my subject is ‘Purity of Heart’. I want to explain what we mean by a Pure Heart to show how you may obtain the precious treasure, if you are not possessed of it already and how you may keep the Blessing when attained. I will start off by saying -

WE ALL KNOW WHAT IS MEANT BY BEING PURE.

When we talk about the purity of things around us, we mean that they are clean and unadulterated. That is, that they are not only without dirt or filthiness, but have no inferior substance mixed with them.

When we say that a man is pure, in the religious sense, we mean that he is right and honest and true inside and out, that he not only professes, but practises the things that have to do with his duty to God and man.

Sin is spoken of in the Bible as filthiness or defilement of the body, mind, or spirit. Purity in religion must mean, therefore, the absence of such filthy things as drunkenness, gluttony, dishonesty, cheating, falsehood, pride, malice, bad tempers, selfishness, unbelief, disobedience, or the like.

In short, to be pure in soul, signifies deliverance from all and everything which the Lord shows you to be opposed to His Holy Will. It means that you not only possess the ability to live the kind of life that He desires, but that you actually do live it. Now, Purity, I need not tell you, my Comrades, is much admired and greatly desired by all right-minded beings. To begin with:

We all like material purity. For instance, I am sure that everyone reading this letter prefers to have a clean body. When you rise in the morning, you are not comfortable till you have washed yourselves. When the miners come from the pit, or the farmers from the field, or the girls from the factory, their first demand is for water with which to cleanse themselves.

You like clean clothes and clean linen, do you not? Consider the money and labour that are expended in keeping your garments clean.

You like a clean home. See how the housewife scrubs and washes and brushes and dusts to keep the floor and windows and furniture clean.

You like a clean city. What a laborious and costly sweeping of the streets, and carrying away of rubbish there is, and what money is spent on the fixing and cleansing of sewers to keep our towns and cities sweet and pure.

We like this sort of purity, because it is pleasant to the eye and good for health. We know that dirt is hateful to the sense, breeds vermin, generates cholera, plague, and diseases in general, and hurries people to the grave. So we hate it, and say, ‘Away with it, let us be clean’.

But all right-minded beings admire the purity of the soul far more than they do the purity of the body, or the clothes, the home, or anything else, and that, because it is so much more important. For instance:

a. GOD LOVES SOUL PURITY. It is His nature to do so. I have no doubt, like us, He prefers to see His children outwardly clean. He tells us, through Paul, that we are to have our bodies washed with pure water, but the washing of the heart is far more desirable to Him than that of the body.

‘His saints are lovely in His sight,
He views His children with delight;
He sees their hope, He knows their fear,
And looks, and loves His image there’.

Yes, God delights in Holiness. Heaven, His dwelling-place, is pure. Its inhabitants are pure. Its employments, and enjoyments, and worships are all alike pure.

b. THE ANGELS LOVE PURITY. If any unholy creature could, by any means, be introduced into the Celestial City, the inhabitants would, I am sure, avoid such a creature, as we should avoid a being who had some dreadful disease.

c. THE DEVILS KNOW THAT PURITY IS A PRECIOUS THING - although they hate it and oppose it with all their might.

d. MANY WICKED MEN ADMIRE PURITY. They look on it as being beautiful and desirable in others, although they regard it as being impossible to them. In their thoughtful moments, when the Spirit of God strives with them, when the recollections of the innocent days gone by crowd into their memories, and they see people who they know are clean and good, they hate themselves because of their own impurity, although all the time refusing to submit to God, and to accept the Salvation that would make them pure.

e. LOST SOULS IN HELL FEEL HOW INFINITELY SUPERIOR HOLINESS IS TO WICKEDNESS. They see how much better it would have been for them if they had washed their hearts in the Blood of the Lamb when they had the privilege of doing so. Oh, what would they not give to have such opportunities as those enjoyed by you!

Are you in love with Purity, my Comrades? Perhaps you have been to Jesus for the cleansing Power, laid yourselves at His feet, given up your doubtful things, offered yourselves to

do His Will, living or dying, and believed that the Blood of Jesus Christ has made you clean.

Oh, if that experience has been yours, happy are you, and happier still if you are walking in the power and peace of that experience today. If it is so, I congratulate you, I delight in you, and praise God on your account.

But if this Blessing is not yours, are you longing after it? Does the thought of it fill your soul with desire? Does it make you feel like the poet, when he sang -

‘O glorious hope of perfect love,

It lifts me up to things above,

It bears on eagles wings.

It gives my ravished soul a taste,

And makes me for some moments feast

With Jesus’ priests and kings’.

Come along, my Comrades. Your happiness and your influence are all connected with your being holy. Oh, I beseech you to kneel down here and now, and ask God to make you each and all pure, by the Power of the Holy Ghost, through the Blood of the Lamb.

Yours affectionately,

WILLIAM BOOTH

2. PURITY COMMANDED

Follow ... holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord - Hebrews 12:14

MY DEAR COMRADES,

I want again to take up the subject on which I wrote in my last letter. It is, indeed, a precious topic. I have loved it and talked about it all the way through my religious life, and, today, I regard the enjoyment and publication of the Blessing of a Clean Heart as being essential to my own peace, power, and usefulness, and as necessary to the progress and prosperity of The Army as ever it was.

Let me proceed, then, with the work of explanation. A right understanding of the subject will help you to obtain this Blessing for yourselves. What did our dear Lord mean when He spoke of the ‘Pure in Heart’, and pronounced them blessed? What is it to have a Pure Heart? To answer that question, I must begin by asking another -

What is meant by the heart? To which question I answer, we do not mean that organ which you can feel beating in your breast, and which is the central force of the bodily system. That is a very important part of man, and the keeping of it in good condition is most essential.

But it is not the heart in your body to which Jesus Christ referred in this passage, and about which I want to talk to you; but that power which being the central force of your soul, may be said to answer to it. As the heart which palpitates in your bosom is the great driving-force of the Natural Man, so the heart we are talking about is the great driving-force of the Spiritual Man.

a. IN THIS SENSE IT IS YOUR HEART THAT FEELS JOY OR SORROW. When you say, ‘That poor woman died of a broken heart on account of the ill-treatment of her husband’, you mean that it was the bitter anguish of her soul which killed her.

b. IT IS THE HEART THAT CHOOSES BETWEEN RIGHT AND WRONG. When you say, ‘My brother’s heart is on the side of God, and goodness, and truth’, you mean that these things are the supreme choice of his soul.

c. IT IS THE HEART THAT DECIDES ON THE PARTICULAR LINE OF CONDUCT TO BE PURSUED. When you say, ‘This young man went to the Mercy-Seat and gave his heart to God’, you mean that he decided, in his inmost soul, to accept Salvation and become a Soldier of Christ.

d. IT IS THE HEART THAT LOVES RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATES INIQUITY. When God says ‘My son, give Me thy heart’, He means, ‘Come along, young man or woman, and love Me and Holiness, and Souls, and hate the devil and sin, with all the powers you possess’.

e. IT IS THE HEART THAT MOULDS THE CHARACTER, GUIDES THE CHOICE, AND MASTERS ALL THE COURSE AND CONDUCT OF A MAN’S LIFE. The heart is the captain of the ship. It determines whether a man shall accept mercy, serve God, follow righteousness, live for the Salvation of his fellows, and finally enter the Heavenly Harbour in triumph, or whether he shall live a life of rebellion, die in his sins, and finish up a wreck on the rocks of everlasting despair. How important it is to each one of us that we should have **A GOOD - A RIGHT - A PURE HEART.**

Now, seeing that the Heart is so thoroughly the master of the man, nothing can be much plainer, can it, my Comrades, than the necessity for that heart being pure? But what is a Pure Heart? What is it to have a heart that has been cleansed by the Power of the Holy Spirit through the Blood of Jesus Christ? That is a very important inquiry, and I do hope that my dear Soldiers will give me their careful attention while I strive to answer it.

1. AND FIRST, A PURE HEART IS NOT A HEART THAT IS NEVER TEMPTED TO DO EVIL.

Possibly there is no such thing in this world, nor ever has been, as a non-tempted heart, that is, a man or a woman who has never been exposed to temptation to commit sin, of one kind or another. Not only was our Blessed Lord tempted by the devil in the wilderness, but He was beset with evil attractions all the way through His life. St. Paul expressly tells us that our Saviour was in all points tempted like as we are, but Hallelujah! He effectually resisted the world, the flesh and the devil, and came through the trying ordeal without strain. He triumphed over all, for the Apostle exultingly assures us, that ‘He was without sin’.

You will be tempted, my Comrades, all through your earthly journey, even to the very gates of Heaven, but, thank God, temptation is not sin, and grace, abundant grace, is provided to enable you to triumph over all the fascinations of earth and all the devices of hell. You can come off more than conqueror. But, remember, although you may have a Pure Heart, you will have to fight temptation.

2. A PURE HEART IS NOT A HEART THAT CANNOT SUFFER.

Beyond question, Jesus Christ had a Pure Heart. He was holy and undefiled, and yet He was ‘The Man of Sorrows’. Paul tells us that although he exercised himself to have always a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man, yet was he not saved from being, at times, ‘in heaviness through manifold temptations’.

All the saints of old had hours of darkness and depression, many of them going through seas of anguish. And as with the saints of old, so it is with the saints of modern times. It is not

sinful to weep and be cast down, if in our distress we do not give way to unbelief and despair and wrong-doing. Cheer up, brothers and sisters. 'By floods and flames surrounded, you must still your way pursue'. If you keep believing you will not be confounded; God will deliver you.

3. BY A PURE HEART WE DO NOT MEAN A HEART THAT CANNOT SIN.

The devil was once a beautiful, sinless creature. But he yielded to temptation. The sinless crown fell from his beautiful brow, and from a pure archangel he was changed into a foul fiend, and hurled all the way from his bright and sinless Heaven to his dark and gloomy hell. Adam was pure when he came from the hands of his Maker. God pronounced him to be good, but, led away by Satan, he lost his purity, and was cast out of Eden into a world of sin and sorrow and death.

Alas! Alas! we have the unspeakable sorrow of too frequently seeing saints and soldiers fall from holiness into sin. Some of the many miserable backsliders around us once walked closely with God, kept their garments unspotted from the world, and were examples of all that is pure and good. But they have gone back to the beggarly elements of the world, and like the sow that was washed, they are again wallowing in the mire.

So, my Comrades, you will see that no matter however pure you may become, it will be possible for you to sin. Though you wash your garments white, and for a season walk with God in holy communion, and have faith so that you can remove mountains and save multitudes, you must remember that while you are in this life it is possible for you to fall from grace. Nay, you must remember that unless you take heed to yourselves, and watch and pray, the probabilities are that you will be overtaken by some besetting sin, and, after having saved others, become yourself a castaway. Therefore, 'let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall'.

4. BY A PURE HEART, WE DO NOT MEAN ANY EXPERIENCE OF PURITY, HOWEVER BLESSED IT MAY BE, THAT CANNOT INCREASE IN ENJOYMENT, USEFULNESS, AND POWER.

Pull the weeds out of your garden, and the flowers and plants and trees will grow faster, flourish more abundantly, and become more fruitful.

Just so, this very moment, let Jesus Christ purge the garden of your souls of envy and pride, and remove the poisonous plants of malice and selfishness and every other evil thing, and faith and peace, and hope and love, and humility and courage, and all the other beautiful flowers of Paradise will flourish in more charming beauty and more abundant fruitfulness.

Oh, will you not go down now before God, and give yourselves fully over into the hands of your precious Saviour? He is waiting to sanctify you. Cast overboard all that hinders. It is God that purifies the heart. Will you let Him do the work? Now cry out in faith:

'Anger and sloth, desire and pride,
This moment be subdued
Be cast into the crimson tide
Of my Redeemer's Blood'.

But you must go a little further, my Comrades, and boldly and believingly, sing that song of triumph:

'Tis done, Thou dost this moment save,
With full Salvation bless;

Redemption through Thy Blood I have,
And spotless love and peace.'

Yours affectionately,
WILLIAM BOOTH.

'Come, Holy Ghost, all Sacred Fire,
Come, fill Thy earthly temples now
Emptied of every base desire,
Reign Thou within, and only Thou.
Thy sovereign right, Thy gracious claim
To every thought and every power
Our lives to glorify Thy name,
We yield Thee in this sacred hour.
Fill every chamber of the soul;
Fill all our thoughts, our passions fill,
Till under Thy supreme control
Submissive rests our cheerful will.
'Tis done! Thou dost this moment come,
My longing soul is all Thine own
My heart is Thy abiding home.
Henceforth I live for Thee alone'.

3. PURITY MEANS DELIVERANCE

That He would grant unto us, that we ... might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life - Luke 1:74-75

MY DEAR COMRADES,

I hope that I shall not weary you by returning again to the question of 'A Pure Heart'. The subject is so important to the whole Christian Church, to the entire Salvation Army, nay, to the wide, wide world, that it must be lifted up. Holiness has been so great a blessing to us in the past, and will, I am sure, be so much greater a blessing to us in the future, that I feel that it must be brought to the front. You must see its value, and understand its meaning. If you are not living in the enjoyment of the peace, power, and gladness of holiness, it is, possibly, because you entertain some mistaken notions respecting it. The ability of the devil to lead people astray on this, as on many other questions, is largely in proportion to his power to deceive them. Can I better make you understand what is meant by purity of heart?

You will remember that in my last letter I tried to show you that by a pure heart we did not mean a heart that could not, or would not, be tempted, or that could not, or would not, be called to suffer, nor that the Soldier out of whose heart all impurity had been expelled could not sin, or would have reached such a state of experience beyond which he would not be able to grow in faith, and hope, and charity, and in all the graces of the Holy Spirit.

What, then, is a pure heart? I reply that a pure heart is a heart that has been cleansed by the Holy Spirit from all sin, and enabled to please God in all it does, to love Him with all its powers, and its neighbour as itself. Where this experience is enjoyed by anyone, it may be said that God has made the heart pure, even as He is pure.

But here I may be asked the question, 'Does not God bestow this wonderful deliverance from sin on the soul at conversion? Does He not sanctify and make it good and holy at the same time that He pardons its sins?' No, I reply, although a great work is done for the soul at conversion, its deliverance from sin at that time is not complete. It is true, that He does a great deal for a man when he makes that remarkable change. He destroys the bondage in which sin holds the transgressor, but the destruction of sin out of the heart and out of the life is not entire. Here let me try and show you the difference in the purification that comes to a man when he is fully cleansed. I will do this by setting forth the three different states into which the soul can come with respect to sin:

1. BEFORE A MAN OR A WOMAN IS CONVERTED, SOME PARTICULAR SIN IS THE MASTER OF THE SOUL. That is, some unlawful appetite or selfish passion always rules the individual, and makes him act as it dictates.

What do I mean by sin being the master? I answer that the unconverted soul is held by it in a bondage from which it cannot get away. It has no choice. It is under its power. It must sin. The soul may have light to see its evil and ruinous character. It may hate it, struggle against it, make resolutions never to do it again. But it is driven, by its own nature, to do things that it does not want to do and is prevented from doing the things that it wishes to do, often, as the Apostle describes, crying out in bitterness of spirit, as it struggles and fights with it, 'O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this wretched condition of slavery that is worse than death?'

This is the experience of every unsaved man and woman; at least of everyone who has to see what an evil thing sin is. It is true, that the character of the mastering sin will differ in different persons. In some people the governing evil may be something that is looked upon by the world as vulgar, such as drunkenness, or lust, or dishonesty, or gambling, or some other evil passion that has got hold of the sinner, and from which he cannot get away, and for which every precious thing on earth and in Heaven is sacrificed. In other cases, it may be some sin that is not so much despised by what is called the respectable part of the community, such as pride, ambition, selfishness, secret infidelity, or the like. But, in some form or other, sin rules in the heart of every ungodly man. He is mastered by sin.

2. NOW, LET US LOOK AT THE SECOND STATE INTO WHICH A MAN CAN COME WITH RESPECT TO SIN.

When he is saved, not only does he receive the pardon of sin, but deliverance from its bondage. The yoke is broken, the fetters are snapped, the prison doors are opened, he is free. Instead of sin being his master, he is master of sin. Instead of drink, or temper, or money-worship, or worldly pleasure, or some other devilish thing driving him down the broad way to destruction, against his own judgement, against his own wishes, against the strivings of the Spirit, he is made free to do the Will of God and to climb the narrow way to Heaven.

But, great and glorious as is the change wrought in the heart at conversion, maybe deliverance is not complete. The power of sin is broken, but there are still certain evil tendencies left in the soul. There are what the Apostle terms 'the roots of bitterness'. These evils ordinarily grow and increase in power, involving the soul in constant conflict, and as time goes by, often gain the mastery, and as the result, there is much sinning and repenting.

3. THEN COMES THE THIRD STATE. Tired of this conflict, hating these internal evils, weeping over the pride and malice, and envy and selfishness, that the soul still finds within, it rises

up, and cries out:

'Tell me what to do to be pure,
In the sight of the All-seeing eyes?
Tell me, is there no thorough cure,
No escape from the sins I despise?
Tell me, can I never be free
From this terrible bondage within?
Is there no deliverance for me?
Must I always have sin dwell within?'

To this question, God sends the glad answer back - 'Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgements, and do them'. 'All things are possible to him that believeth.' Then the soul believes, the sanctifying Spirit falls, and the Third Stage is reached - which is Salvation from all sin. In the First Stage the soul is **UNDER SIN**
In the Second Stage the soul is **OVER SIN**
In the Third Stage the soul is **WITHOUT SIN**
In which stage are you, my Comrades? Settle it for yourselves. Have you got a Pure Heart? Examine yourselves. What is your reply?

Some of you in describing your experience can adopt the words of the Apostle, with a little variation, and say: The very God of peace has sanctified me wholly; and He preserves my whole spirit and soul and body blameless, and He will continue to do so unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that has called me to this experience of purity, who also will do it.

All glory to God, my Comrades. Give Him all the praise. Be careful to 'walk in the light, as He is in the light', then shall you have fellowship with Him and with other sanctified souls, and the Blood of Jesus Christ His Son shall keep you cleansed from all sin. In which case He will use you to promote His glory, make you useful, and show you still greater things. To those who know that they do not possess a pure heart, I put the question, **WILL YOU HAVE ONE NOW?**

God is waiting to cleanse you. What doth hinder your receiving the purifying Baptism? 'Now is the accepted time'. Tell God that all the doubtful things shall be given up, and then go down before Him, singing while you kneel:

'Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,
And looks to that alone,
Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries, 'It now is done'.

Yours affectionately,
WILLIAM BOOTH

4. PURITY DESCRIBED

Now the God of Peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus ... through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in

you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Hebrews 13:20-21.

MY DEAR COMRADES,

Has anything I have said set anyone among you longing after the possession of the precious, the inestimable, blessing of a pure heart? Has anyone in your Corps been heard singing:

‘Oh, when shall my soul find her rest,
My strugglings and wrestlings be o’er?
My heart, by my Saviour possessed,
Be fearing and sinning no more?’

It is those who ‘hunger and thirst after righteousness’ that are to be ‘filled’. If this desire has been created, in any degree, I am delighted. Let me try and increase that longing, by holding up before your eyes some of the advantages that flow out of the possession of the blessing. And the first thing I mention that seems calculated to create this desire is the fact that **1. A PURE HEART WILL ENSURE A HOLY LIFE.** But here does anyone who has not heard my previous explanation of this subject ask, ‘What do I mean by a holy life?’ I answer, that it is a life that meets the requirements, and ensures the fulfilment of the promises of this Holy Book; a life fashioned after the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. It will, at the best, be very imperfect, have many weaknesses about it, and be subjected to many mistakes; but still, according to the light possessed, it will be a holy life.

Is not such a life desirable, my Comrades? Is not a man who is able to live out his religion before his family, before his workmates, and before the world, highly privileged? Will he not be a means of blessing to those around him, whichever way he turns? Look at him.

He is honest and faithful in all his worldly dealings, in his shop, factory, home, or wherever he may come. **HE HAS AN HONEST HEART.**

He is true to his promises and engagements. His word is his bond. You can trust him either in or out of sight. **HE HAS A TRUE HEART.**

He is industrious. He neither shirks his duty, nor wastes his time, nor scamps his work. **HE HAS AN INDUSTRIOUS HEART.**

He is kind. He is loving to his wife, tender to his children, faithful to his comrades, considerate for his servants, gentle to the weak, sympathetic to the sick. **HE HAS A KIND HEART.** He is compassionate. He pities the poor, yearns over the backslider, fights for the Salvation of sinners in public, cries to God for their deliverance in private. **HE HAS A SOUL-LOVING HEART.**

He is a holy man. His secret life is holy. In thought and feeling, conversation and disposition, he is able to please God and do His blessed Will. **HE HAS A PURE HEART.**

Is not such a heart desirable, my Comrades? I thank God for as many of you as have been brought, by Divine Grace, into the possession of this beautiful treasure, but I want you all to come up to this standard. I want you all to enter this holy state. **2. BUT, FURTHER, A PURE HEART WILL GIVE YOU PEACE.** It is a condition of peace. You cannot have peace without it. I am always saying to you, in one form or another, that you must not expect a life of uninterrupted gladness in this world. It cannot be. Our imperfect bodies, with all their pains and weaknesses; the temptations of the devil, and the miseries of a world in rebellion against God, prevent anything like a life

of unmixed rejoicing for you and me.

But peace, ‘the peace of God, the peace that passeth all understanding’, is your birthright, and with a pure heart, the treasure shall be yours. I say again, that while you are here you must have certain strife. You cannot help it. You will have strife with the devil. War to the knife with hell. You will have strife with wicked men. They will fight you because you are for righteousness and God, and for the deliverance of men from their power.

But, Hallelujah!, in the heart that is purified by the Holy Spirit, and sprinkled with the Blood of the Lamb, the strife with God has ceased, the war with conscience is ended, the fear of death and hell is over. The soul possessed of a pure heart has entered, ‘the rest that remaineth to the people of God’.

Do you enjoy this rest, my Comrades? Is the inward strife over? Oh, make haste, and let the blessed Spirit, who wants to sanctify you wholly, cast out the enemies of your soul. It is not your poverties, nor your persecutions, nor your afflictions, nor your ignorances, nor ever so many other things all put together, that prevent your perfect peace. Sin is the enemy; and when malice and indolence, and ambition and unbelief, and every other evil thing has been cast out, your ‘peace shall flow as a river, and your righteousness shall abound as the waves of the sea’.

3. PURITY OF HEART IS THE CONDITION ON WHICH GOD WILL ENTER AND DWELL IN YOUR SOUL. Now listen, my Comrades, and cry to God for an increase of faith, seeing that what I am going to say is a great mystery. But it is, nevertheless, gloriously true.

God wants to live with you, not only in your home, but in your very heart. Poor and ignorant as you may be among men, and little noticed, nay, even despised, by the great and rich people of the world, yet God - the great God, whom the ‘heaven of heavens cannot contain’ - wants to come and live in your heart, and that not as a visitor only, but as an abiding guest.

An old writer curiously says, ‘God is like the rich people in one respect. He has two houses - a town house and a country house. His town house is in the Celestial City, but His country house is in the hearts of His people’. Hear what He says Himself: ‘For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place’ - **AND** - ‘with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit’ - **IN ORDER** - to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones’. Brother, sister, can you hear Him saying, ‘Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him’?

‘O joyful sound of gospel grace!

Christ shall in me appear;

I, even I, shall see His face

I shall be holy here.

This heart shall be His constant home,

I hear His Spirit cry,

‘Surely’, He saith, ‘I quickly come’,

He saith who cannot lie’.

Will you not say, ‘Amen, come in, Lord Jesus, and come quickly?’ Will you not let all go that would prevent Him entering? Will you not fling the gates of your soul wide open, and let Him come in? If you will, go down before Him just now, and bid Him welcome.

I have much more to say to you on this precious subject, but I must wait till another time. Meanwhile, wait no longer for

a full Salvation.

Yours affectionately,
WILLIAM BOOTH

'Jesus, my All-in-all Thou art,
My rest in toil, my ease in pain,
The medicine of my broken heart,
In war my peace, in loss my gain,
In grief my joy unspeakable,
My life in death, my All-in-all.
In want my plentiful supply,
In weakness my almighty power,
In bonds my perfect liberty,
My light in Satan's darkest hour,
In grief my joy unspeakable,
My life in death, my heaven in hell.'

5. PURITY AND LOVE

But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life - Romans 6:22

MY DEAR COMRADES,

Since writing my last letter, I have been visiting the Salvationists of Switzerland, Italy, and France. Everywhere I have met with dear Comrades longing to make the most of their opportunities and everywhere, it has seemed to me, that most red-hot religion would make these Comrades equal to the splendid chances of usefulness that lie right before them.

But is it not the same in Great Britain, America, Australia, and in every other part of the world to which these letters will come? Is it not so in your Corps? - nay, is it not so with every individual Soldier who reads these words?

Now, as I have explained to you before, by red-hot religion I mean hearts made hot with love for God, for Comrades, for perishing souls, for noble work, and for every other good thing possible to men or women on earth or in Heaven.

I mean hearts made hot with holy love, such love as will compel us to toil and sacrifice for the welfare of the object cared for. Such love as will make its possessor the servant of those beloved, and exercise a self-denying mastery over the heart that experiences it. Such love will be like our Master's. For 'herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us'.

Look at the mother's love. Does it not make her sacrifice time, comfort, and health for her child?

Look at the patriot's love. Does it not compel him to turn his back on home, family, business, to fight and die for his country?

And so hot love in the Salvationist will make him lay health, time, goods and all he possesses at the feet of his Lord, and there use all in blessing and saving the souls of men.

Now it is this spirit of love which makes this blessed heat in the souls of men and women. As the devil lights and feeds the fires of malice, ambition, selfishness, pride, lust, and the other evils that encourage and strengthen souls in their warfare with God, and carries them down the broad way to destruction, so the fierce heat of pure love, created and maintained by the Holy Spirit, makes the Salvationist watch and pray, toil and talk

and suffer, careless of what it costs him in doing so, if he can thereby gain the blessed object on which his heart is set.

But the Holy Spirit only dwells, in all His mastering power and burning zeal, in souls that have been cleansed from evil; so that if you are resolved to spend your life in blessing and saving men, and fighting for your Lord, you must have a pure heart.

A pure heart will make you a blessing to those around you, and that not merely as a result of what you do, but from the fact of what you are. People will, no doubt, be drawn to love Christ, and seek Salvation, and fight for The Army by what you say and sing. Your appeals and your prayers will all affect them, but if, in addition, you possess this treasure they will also be led to God and Holiness and Heaven by what they see you are.

A pure heart, as we have seen, makes a good life. Goodness is attractive; men respect it, and are drawn to it, for what it is in itself. Even if they are themselves the slaves of what is bad and devilish, they cannot help admiring what is Holy and Divine. And if this is the case with the slaves of sin and vice, it will be a thousand times more so with those around you who have already been captivated by the charms of Holiness. To such hearts, your life, if governed and inspired by pure love, will be a constant source of light, and strength, and consolation.

This is what we call influence. It is something that is always going on. It is like the fragrance of a rose. You take the flower and place it in the middle of a room, and day and night it will send forth a sweet smell to all around. You have not to do anything at it, or with it. You need not wave it about, or pass it from one to another. It will spread abroad its pleasant perfume quite apart from any movement.

So it is with the Soldier who enjoys purity of heart, and lives in harmony with the experience. A holy influence will be going out from him all the time, not only from what he says and does, but from what he is himself.

You feel the power, and the sweetness, and the genuineness of his spirit and devotion. And when you hear his testimony, or listen to his prayers, or hear his pleading with sinners, you feel this blessed influence proceeding from him wherever you find him.

As you look into his eyes, and shake his hand, or sit by his side, it will be there. When you see him in the furnace of affliction, or stand by his dying bed, or follow him to the grave, nay, long after he has passed from mortal sight, this influence will continue to flow out to you. For years to come, a sight of his photograph or the bare mention of his name, will warm your heart, strengthen your courage, sustain your faith, and increase your love for all that is Christlike and true. Why is this, my Comrades? It is because you believed he was a Holy man. You admired his self-sacrificing life. You felt that he had a pure heart.

There is another inducement which should lead you to seek a pure heart, and that is, because it will bring you into the possession of a good hope. This is a precious treasure. To feel that whatever clouds may darken the sky, or whatever sorrows may sweep over your soul, there is a good ground for anticipating peace, and joy and victory in the future, must be a precious and desirable thing.

A Soldier who knows that he sincerely loves God, and that he is living in obedience to Him, has an inward assurance that God will care for him, whatever troubles may arise. Whereas one who feels that he has malice, hatred, pride, love of the world, and other wrongs hidden away in his secret soul, and who knows that he is daily neglecting his duty to his family or to

6. PURITY POSSIBLE

Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate - Heb.13:12

MY DEAR COMRADES,

I can very well imagine that some of my Soldiers, after reading what I have been saying about a pure heart, will be asking the question: 'Is it possible for me to obtain this treasure?' I am aware that many people outside our borders openly assert that such an experience is impossible. They declare that no man or woman can live in this world without committing sin. They say that no matter how we hate our sins, or weep over them, or pray to be delivered from them, or trust in Jesus Christ for victory over them, we must be beaten in the strife and go on sinning, or, at the best, keep on sinning and repenting, right down to the River of Death.

Now, with regard to this objection, I maintain with the Apostle John, that not only is God willing and able to forgive our sins - which no one who believes the Bible will deny - but that he is equally willing and able to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

But before we go further, let us have another word of explanation. We must understand one another. What is it that I am saying? I reply, I am declaring to you who hear these words, nothing less than the Scriptural doctrine that God can keep you from committing sin.

Perhaps some of you will ask, 'What is sin?' I reply that the same Apostle, that is John, answers that question in such a simple manner that anyone can understand him. He says in his Epistle, that 'All unrighteousness is sin'. That is, whatsoever thing a man does, or consents to being done, in his thoughts, desires, or actions, which he knows to be wrong, that is sin.

Now I affirm, on the authority of the Bible, that Jesus Christ your Saviour is able and willing to keep you from doing wrong. His Name was called Jesus, that is, Saviour, because He 'should save His people from their sins'.

As I have shown you already in these letters, you may make mistakes; you may have temptations, you may be low-spirited, you may have pain in your body, perplexity in your mind, and anguish in your heart. The world may be against you, dark clouds may hang low, and the future may be threatening, nay, you may, like Jesus Christ on the cross, even feel as though God and man had forsaken you, and yet, in spite of all this and all else of the same kind, you can be kept from sin. In the name of my dear Lord, I assert that it is possible for you to have and to keep a pure heart.

Many of you believe this already - and are sure of it as I am myself. But some may be in doubt. Let me try and make it plain to them.

1. AND, FIRST, YOU CANNOT DOUBT GOD'S ABILITY TO MAKE AND KEEP YOU FREE FROM SIN. He who made you, and sustains you in being, who redeemed you on the cross, who pardoned your sins, and wrote your name in Heaven, can surely do this for you. He who will raise you from the dead, and land you at last safely in Heaven, is surely able to keep you from breaking His commandments and grieving His Holy Spirit all the rest of the short time you may have to spend in this world. I am sure He can.

It will be a difficult task, perhaps, fixed as you are, with your particular trials of body and soul, or circumstances. There

himself, to his Corps, or to the poor sinners around him, can no more have a bright hope that God is going to make him a happy future, than the sinners can expect that they are going to have Heaven at the end of a sinful life. He may hope for it, but it will be like the hope of the hypocrite, certain to be destroyed.

But when the soul has the witness of the Spirit and of a consistent life, to the possession of inward purity, it can look forward with confidence to victory over every foe, deliverance out of every sorrow, and in the end, glory and honour, immortality and eternal life.

Have these blessed experiences any charm for you, my Comrades? Let me review them. I think they are entrancing. **1. THERE IS THE HOLY LIFE THAT WILL ALWAYS BE THE OUTCOME OF A HOLY HEART.** If the fountain spring is pure, the flowing waters of daily life and action will be pure also.

2. THERE IS THE PEACE OF GOD THAT PASSETH ALL UNDERSTANDING, WHICH IS EVER ASSOCIATED WITH INWARD HOLINESS. 'The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt'. Any evil left in the soul must make trouble. Purity and peace are bound together by God Himself.

3. THERE IS THE PRESENCE OF THE INDWELLING OF GOD AS A FLAME OF HOLY LOVE, WHICH IS THE STRENGTH AND SPIRIT OF HOLINESS. This is the fiery baptism which burns up hatred, and grudges, and self-seeking, and self-will, and purifies all our motives and affections.

4. THERE IS THE USEFUL LIFE AND THE HOLY EXAMPLE THAT FLOW FROM A PURE HEART, which will not only speak in favour of God and Holiness while you live, but shall go on influencing the world long after you have passed to your reward in the skies.

5. THERE IS A BLOOMING HOPE OF THE FUTURE AND THE BRIGHTNESS OF YOUR CROWN IN ETERNITY. The realization of all this glorious experience, my Comrades, hangs on your possession of a pure heart. These are only some of the inestimable blessings that flow out of this eternal spring of purity and power. Have you got this treasure? If so, Hallelujah! If not, I want you to go down and seek it now.

Yours affectionately,
WILLIAM BOOTH

'Love surpassing understanding,
Angels would the mystery scan,
Yet so tender that it reaches
To the lowest child of man.
Let me, Jesus,
Fuller know redemption's plan.
Love that pardons past transgression,
Love that cleanses every stain,
Love that fills to overflowing,
Yet invites to drink again,
Precious fountain
Which to open, Christ was slain.
From my soul break every fetter,
Thee to know is all my cry
Saviour, I am Thine for ever,
Thine I'll live, and Thine I'll die.
Only asking,
More and more of love's supply.'

may be something in your family or your business very strongly opposed to your leading a holy life. You may have tried before, again and again, but only to fall. You may be full of doubts and fears, even to despair, and nothing short of a great Salvation will meet your case. But God will be equal to the undertaking. I am sure He will.

He has saved you from many sins already. Evil habits and passions, that used to reign over you, have been mastered - nay, some of them have been destroyed. Why, then, should not your prayer be answered?

‘Finish, then, Thy new creation,
Pure and spotless let me be.
Let me see Thy great salvation,
Perfectly restored in Thee.’

I see no reason why He should not do this. He is able to keep the Angels from sinning. They do not keep themselves. It is His Almighty arm that holds them up, and prevents them from falling.

He will be able to keep you from sinning when you reach the Celestial Land; and, thank God, He can keep you here. You believe He is mighty to save. You sing, and sing, and sing again:

‘All things are possible to him
That can in Jesus’ Name believe;
Lord, I no more Thy truth blaspheme,
Thy truth I lovingly receive;
I can, I do believe in Thee,
All things are possible to me.

2. AND THEN, MY COMRADES, IF GOD IS ABLE TO MAKE AND KEEP YOU PURE, YOU CANNOT QUESTION HIS WILLINGNESS TO DO IT. This must be equally plain to you, and yet it will bear looking at. It is very important indeed, that you should see - yes, and feel as well - that Jesus Christ is not only able, but perfectly willing - nay, waiting, even while this is being read to you, to take away from your hearts the evil things that have been the plague of your lives, and for ever to keep them from coming back to harass, and wound, and torment you again.

a. THE VERY NATURE OF GOD PROVES HIS WILLINGNESS TO MAKE YOU HOLY. All beings everywhere act out their own nature. You see illustrations of this around you every day - wicked people delight in the wickedness of their neighbours. Good people find pleasure in their goodness. God is Holy. He tells us so, again and again; and being Holy and hating iniquity, He must abhor wickedness in men and women, and find the great delight of His heart in making them pure and good like Himself.

I am sure that nothing would gratify Him more, my Comrades, than to take the very thing that is unclean out of your hearts and lives. Will you let Him do it?

b. GOD TELLS US, IN PLAIN LANGUAGE, IN THE BIBLE, THAT HE WANTS TO MAKE YOU HOLY. Listen to some of His words: ‘Put on the new man’, He says, ‘which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.’ ‘Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.’ ‘For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto Holiness.’ ‘This is the will of God, even your Sanctification.’

3. JESUS CHRIST CAME INTO THE WORLD, AND LIVED AND SUFFERED AND DIED THAT YOU MIGHT BE MADE HOLY. This was the main object of His life and death and resurrection. ‘For this purpose the Son of God was manifested,

that He might destroy the works of the devil’. Paul says that ‘Jesus gave Himself for His Church’ - that is, for you and for me - ‘that he might sanctify and cleanse us, and that He might present us to Himself ... not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that we should be holy, and without blemish.’

4. HIS LOVE FOR HIS CHILDREN PROVES HIS WILLINGNESS TO SAVE THEM FROM THEIR SINS. No miser ever loved his gold; no patriot ever loved his country; no mother ever loved her babe; no father ever loved his boy; no bridegroom ever loved his bride; no, not all the love of all created beings on this earth put together would equal the love which God bears to you, His children, my dear Comrades. And knowing as He does, that your sin is your great curse, He must, nay, He does, long to deliver you from it.

5. GOD HAS PROMISED YOU A CLEAN HEART, IF YOU WILL SEEK IT. ‘Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.’

6. BUT I AM ALSO SURE THAT GOD IS WILLING TO GIVE YOU A CLEAN HEART, because He has done the work for so many of His servants in the days gone by, and for so many of you Comrades in our present time. He is no respecter of persons. You are as welcome to wash away your inward iniquities, in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, as any other son or daughter of Adam. Oh, He will be delighted for you to step into the blessed streams at once:

‘Will you, will you now enter in?
Will you, will you wash and be clean?’

7. IF YOU ARE A HOLY MAN OR WOMAN YOU WILL HELP FORWARD THE WAR, AND SPREAD THE GLORY OF CHRIST’S NAME FAR MORE EFFECTIVELY THAN YOU WILL IF YOU ARE NOT FULLY SAVED. Holy people are the great need of the world. I am sure they are one of the great wants of The Army.

8. DO YOU NOT FEEL IN YOUR HEART, WHILE I AM TALKING TO YOU, THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT WANTS YOU TO BE PURE, AND IS WAITING NOW TO GIVE YOU THE BLESSING? The fire of desire for your sanctification is burning strongly in my heart while I write this letter. Does not your desire also rise up for this? I believe it does. Well, wait no longer. All things are now ready! Is not a holy yearning springing up within you? Go down this moment before God, and sing:

‘Oh, that the Fire from Heaven might fall,
And all my sins consume!
Come Holy Ghost, for Thee I call,
Spirit of Burning, come’.
‘Refining Fire, go through my heart,
Illuminate my soul;
Scatter Thy life through every part,
And sanctify the whole.’

Yours affectionately
WILLIAM BOOTH.

‘More hard than marble is my heart,
And foul with sins of deepest stain;
But Thou the mighty Saviour art,
Nor flowed Thy cleansing Blood in vain;
Ah, soften, melt this rock, and may

Thy Blood wash all these stains away!
 O grant that nothing in my soul
 May dwell, but Thy pure love alone;
 O may Thy love possess me whole,
 My joy, my treasure, and my crown!
 Strange flames far from my heart remove
 My every act, word, thought, be love'.

7. PURITY, GOD'S GIFT

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us - 2 Corinthians 4:7

MY DEAR COMRADES,

I now come to one of the most important parts of this very interesting subject. 'How can a pure heart be obtained?' I think I hear you say, 'It is good, very precious, very desirable, oh how I wish this treasure was mine. But how can I get it?'

Now, here I think it will be profitable for us to have a look back over the road we have travelled together while considering this blessed experience. And first of all, you will remember that I tried to show you what holiness was. I begged you not to set it too high, as though it meant anything like continued rapture or an every-hour hallelujah feeling. Then, I cautioned you against setting it too low - that is, regarding it as being consistent with anything like the commission of actual sin. Then I showed you how valuable the blessing would be to you, because it meant peace and usefulness, and the continued smile of God. Then I went on to explain that it was a possible experience, maintaining that, no matter whether rich or poor, young or old, married or single, God could cleanse you from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, and enable you to be perfect in holiness before Him all the days of your life. I come now to answer what I hope is the cry of many hearts, 'How can I find this pearl of great price?'

Now you ask - 'What must I do to be pure?', and in reply I say that there is certainly something to be done, and something that you will have to do yourselves. To understand what that something is, you must keep well before your minds the fact that there are two forces or powers that have to unite in the purification of the heart.

The first is the Divine - that is, God.

The second is human - that is, man, which means yourself.

God and man are partners in the transaction. This is nothing new, it is the same in the affairs of your every-day life. You use the natural abilities God has given you to buy and sell, and plough and plant: and, as the result, God gives you food and raiment. This was the case when you were converted - you repented and believed, and God saved your soul. It will be the same when you are sanctified. The great work of cleansing your heart, and keeping it clean, will be performed by God Himself, but there will be some conditions which you will have to fulfil on your part.

From first to last it is 'God that saves'. Fix your mind well on that truth. If ever you have a pure heart, it will come from God's own Hand. When Jonah arrived definitely at the belief that salvation was of the Lord, and trusted Him for it, his deliverance was nigh - for we read that immediately the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited him on to the dry land.

Only God can take out of your heart the bad temper, pride, malice, revenge, love of the world, and all the other evil

things that have taken possession of it, and fill it with holy love and peace. To God you must look - to God you must go. This is the work of the Holy Ghost; He is the Purifying Fire; He is the Cleansing Flame; He only can sprinkle you with the water that purges the dross and takes away the sin; He only can make and keep you clean. What a blessing it is, you have a God who is not only so Mighty, but so willing to save.

'Yourself you cannot save,
 Yourself you cannot keep;
 But strength in Him, you surely have,
 Whose eyelids never sleep.'

But then, as I have said, there is something to be done on your side, and the chief part of that something is the exercise of faith. The Apostles, met in council at Jerusalem, affirmed that God purifies the heart by Faith - that is to say, where the soul comes to God, and offers itself to Him for the doing of all His sacred Will, and believes that, for the sake of Jesus Christ, He does then and there cleanse it from sin, that moment the Spirit answers to the faith, the work of purity is done, and the soul can sing:

'He tells me when, and where, and how,
 Just at His footstool as I bow;
 The Blood of Jesus cleanses now,
 This moment I believe.'
 You will see then, that

1. THIS PURIFICATION IS NOT EFFECTED BY ANY HUMAN POWER. No priest or officer can by his own force cleanse your heart. We can help one another by our example, by our testimony, by our exhortations, by our advice. There is not a Soldier here who, if he will yield himself up to God, and trust Him for a full deliverance, will not at once receive power to bless and save those around him as never before. But no Comrade has the power to reach into the heart of a Comrade, and cleanse it from the evil it finds there, that is the work of Jesus Christ alone. He can touch you this very moment with His loving blood-stained Hand, and say, 'I will, be thou clean', and the work is done. You will not get a Pure Heart from your fellow-creatures; if ever the treasure is yours, you will get it from God, and you will get it by faith.

2. PURIFICATION WILL NOT BE EFFECTED BY ANY CEREMONIALS, MEETINGS, KNEELINGS AT THE MERCY-SEAT, SINGING OF SONGS, OR THE LIKE, APART FROM THE SPIRIT OF GOD. These observances can wonderfully help you. Oh, what a marvellous influence goes out from soul to soul, when Comrades kneel together, and join heart to hand to seek God's sanctifying grace. But such gatherings will be a curse, rather than a blessing, unless they carry you on to that simple faith in God Himself which claims and receives the sanctifying power.

3. PURIFICATION OF THE HEART, MY COMRADES, IS NOT BY KNOWLEDGE. It is true, you must know something about the treasure you seek. For instance, you must know that purity means that it is possible to you, and that God will give it to you when you trust Him for it. But you may know all this, and a thousand times more, and be no nearer its realization, if that is all.

The Israelites knew that Canaan was just over Jordan. They were quite sure of it. They could see the hills and dales of the country they had sought so long but they were not in

possession of the land, and died without ever setting their weary feet in it.

What a number of my dear Soldiers love to read, and hear, and talk, and sing about holiness. They are never tired of the subject. They know all about it, but stop short of the faith which alone can bring them into its enjoyment.

4. THE PURIFYING OF THE HEART IS NOT BY REPENTANCE. Some people are always mourning over the sins of their hearts and the inconsistencies of their lives. Oh, how they hate their coldness and pride, and worldliness and bad temper, and the other evil things that still cling to their heart and make them troubled. Oh, how ashamed they are of the feebleness of their love for Christ, the littleness of their zeal for His kingdom, and the lukewarmness of their concern for souls. They are constantly giving up their evil ways and promising to do better. But this repenting and renouncing does not help them, because they do not go on to that definite act of faith that brings deliverance from the evils over which they mourn.

5. THE PURIFICATION OF YOUR HEARTS, MY COMRADES, WILL NOT COME BY YOUR PERSONAL CONSECRATION TO THE SERVICE OF GOD, IF YOU SIMPLY STOP THERE. What you want is, not only the readiness to do the will of God, but the power to do it.

This purification is, as the Apostle says, 'by faith'. It is by faith that the soul presses on beyond desire and knowledge, and repentance and consecration, and says, 'The blessing is mine'. This is the last round in the Salvation Ladder. You may have to climb up by all, or only some of the steps I have named; but you must reach this step, or you cannot enter the Temple of Holiness. You say 'I desire', 'I repent', 'I consecrate'. Good, very good, excellent, but can you, will you, not take the last step, and say 'I believe that He purifies me now'?

Yours affectionately,
WILLIAM BOOTH

'Answer that gracious end in me

For which Thy precious life was given,
Redeem from all iniquity,

Restore, and make me meet for heaven;
Unless Thou purge my every stain,

Thy suffering and my faith are vain.

Didst Thou not in the flesh appear

Sin to condemn, and man to save?

That perfect love might cast out fear?

That I Thy mind in me might have?

In Holiness show forth Thy praise,

And serve Thee all my spotless days?

Didst Thou not die that I might live

No longer to myself, but Thee?

Might body, soul, and spirit give

To Him who gave Himself for me?

Come then, my Master and my God,

Take the dear purchase of Thy Blood.'

8. PURIFYING FAITH

That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth

knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God - Ephesians 3:17-19

MY DEAR COMRADES,

You will remember that when I closed my last letter, I was considering a very interesting part of our subject, namely, that particular act of faith which purifies the heart. I said something to you then on this question, but I must have another word, because I sense that it is here that many of my dear people stumble and fail in seeking the blessing of purity. They come to the door of full deliverance from sin - they look inside the Temple of Holiness, they long to be there, but they hesitate to take the step which alone can carry them in.

They cannot, or do not, or will not exercise the faith that purifies, and so turn away and go back to the unsatisfactory state of sinning and repenting in which they have lived so long. Now, I feel quite sure that this is often caused by ignorance or mistaken notions, and I would, therefore, very much like to explain a little further what that wonderful faith is, by which the soul enters into the enjoyment of a full salvation.

I may have again to pass over some of the ground we have already travelled together. But that cannot be helped. I had better repeat myself a thousand times and be understood, than leave you in doubt as to my meaning.

1. I remark that PURIFYING FAITH IS THE FAITH THAT HAS SOME DEFINITE KNOWLEDGE OF THE NATURE OF THE BLESSING DESIRED, AND THE MEANS BY WHICH IT IS ATTAINED. That knowledge may be very imperfect, but it is enough to apprehend the nature of the purity sought for. This faith sees that purity is not merely a passing wave of feeling or a deliverance from temptation. It perceives that it is not a condition of uninterrupted happiness, but a state of holiness in which the servant of God ceases to grieve the Holy Spirit, obeys the call of duty, and loves Him with all the power he possesses.

Purifying faith fixes its eye on the blessing, and says, 'I want a pure heart, I need it; it is the will of God that I should have it. Christ bought it for me when He died on the Cross. Oh God, let it be mine.'

Has your faith got as far as that, my Comrades? Do you see what purity means? If so, that is a gratifying attainment. Hold it fast until God bestows the great treasure upon you.

2. PURIFYING FAITH SETS THE SOUL LONGING AFTER THE POSSESSION OF THIS TREASURE. Looking at a thing which you consider valuable and possible, will certainly awaken the desire for its possession. If I am informed of some site of land, or some piece of property, which I could see would be of great service to the Army, the more I think about it, the longer I look at it, the more strongly shall I desire its possession.

It is so with holiness, my Comrades. If you believe it to be the precious thing it really is, you will consider it, keep it before your mind, turn it round and round, and the more you do so the more you will desire it. Does your faith compel your attention? Does it make you think? 'O Lord, increase our faith'. If you will only keep looking at it you will come to long after it with earnest desire.

3. PURIFYING FAITH IS THE FAITH THAT LEADS THE SOUL TO CHOOSE THE BLESSING. It says, 'I'll have it if it is for me,' and sings:

'Give me the Faith that Jesus had,

The Faith that can great mountains move,

That makes the mournful spirit glad,
The saving Faith that works by Love;
The Faith for which the saints have striven,
The Faith that pulls the fire from Heaven.'

Purifying Faith goes further than merely admiring and talking, and longing and praying: it elects to make the experience its own. It says, 'Now, Lord, this great deliverance shall be mine. I choose it. If it is to be attained, I'll have it.'

We all know how the sinners around us pain our hearts by the way they trifle with Salvation. They say, 'Oh, yes, it is good, and it's very kind of Jesus Christ to make it possible for us to be saved. We must have Salvation. We must not be lost. But we won't see it now.' Even so, I am afraid many Soldiers trifle with Holiness. They say, 'I ought to be Holy; I wish I were holy. Oh Lord, make me holy - but not now.' But Purifying Faith chooses the Blessing desired. It says, 'I'll begin to seek now with all my heart - and I'll seek until I find it.'

4. PURIFYING FAITH COMPELS THE SURRENDER OF EVERYTHING THAT STANDS IN THE WAY OF THE POSSESSION OF HOLINESS. It is willing to pay the price. Oh, how cheerfully people give us pleasant things in order to gain those which they believe to be still more desirable. So here, when men really do see and believe in the worth of Purity, they will be ready to abandon everything which seems likely to hinder them obtaining it.

Oh, my Comrades, have you got thus far? Does your Faith duly value the treasure we are talking about? If not, it cannot be said to be Purifying Faith. If it does, it will cry out:

'Is there a thing beneath the sun,
That strives with Thee my heart to share?
Oh, tear it thence, and reign alone,
The Lord of every motion there
Then shall my heart from earth be free
When it has found repose in Thee.'

5. PURIFYING FAITH LEADS THE SOUL TO THE CONSECRATION OF ALL IT POSSESSES TO THE SERVICE OF ITS SAVIOUR. Now, my dear Comrades, has your faith got as far as this? I am afraid many come close up to this point, and then grown afraid. They shrink back from full consecration, and give up the holy strife. They will say, 'If I place myself in the hands of God, for Him to do just as He likes with me, who can tell where He may send me, or what he may want me to do?'

For instance, I fancy, some of my Soldiers hang back from the fear that God should say to them: 'You will have to put on the Uniform', or 'You will have to speak to your relatives about their souls', or, 'You will have to plead with strangers', or, 'You will have to be officers', or do something else from which their unsanctified hearts turn back; and so they go no further in the search for purity.

But purifying faith sees Jesus Christ to be the altogether lovely, His service to be infinitely desirable, and the privilege of joining with Him in the work of saving and blessing men so honourable and desirable that the soul controlled by it leaps forward to lay itself at the Master's feet, willing to be used in any way He thinks best, and so gladly offers a consecration which knows no hesitation, has no reservation, the limits of which being bounded only by its ability.

6. BUT PURIFYING FAITH GOES FURTHER THAN THIS -IT REALIZES THAT HOLINESS HAS BEEN BOUGHT BY

THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS CHRIST, AND IS PROMISED IN THE UNCHANGING WORD OF GOD. Do you see that this treasure of treasures is yours, my Comrades, and that God, having provided and promised it, is now waiting and willing to give it to you?

Faith hears God say, 'From all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you'. Faith replies, 'True, Lord, and I am waiting and longing for it to be done. It shall be mine.'

7. BUT PURIFYING FAITH GOES FURTHER STILL. It believes that it actually receives the purity which it seeks. It says not only, 'God is willing and waiting to save', but 'Jesus does sanctify me now'.

My Comrades, I want to ask you this question, 'When shall this purity come into your hearts? Do you say tomorrow?' I answer, 'Perhaps it may be tomorrow. I do not know whether it may.' Do you say, 'When I am dying?' I answer, 'Perhaps it may be when you are dying, but I do not know whether it will be possible then'. 'Do you say Now?' I answer, '**YES, IT CAN BE NOW**, for Now is the accepted time, and Now is **THE** day of Salvation'.

Yours affectionately,
WILLIAM BOOTH

9. WITNESSES

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth - Acts 1:8

MY DEAR COMRADES,

Have you grown tired of my subject? I hope not. From my youth until this very day the subject of holiness has always had an unspeakable charm for me. To pray and hear, and sing and believe, and testify to the power of the Precious Blood to cleanse from sin, and fill with love, and keep from falling, has been among the most precious privileges of my life. The charm is as fresh to me today as ever. I trust you feel as I do.

A devout saint of old sang in words that always thrill my soul when I hear them:

'I'll carve His passion in the bark
And every wounded tree
Shall droop, and bear some sacred mark
That Jesus died for me.
And men shall wonder as they read,
Inscribed through all the grove,
How Heaven itself came down to bleed,
To win a mortal's love.'

Is not that beautiful, my Comrades? Ought not we Salvationists to be anxious to sound out, by our lips and lives, to the sons and daughters of men, at every opportunity the glorious fact, that Jesus Christ died not only to save men and women from open and deliberate sin, but to purify unto Himself 'a peculiar people', inwardly as well as outwardly clean.

Has He wrought this deliverance for you, my Comrades? Or are you deterred from seeking it by doubts as to His ability to effect this purification of the heart? Let me call a few

witnesses, who will testify to its realization in their experience. I am sure you will listen to what they have to say.

I will begin with the saints of the Bible. Hear them. To begin with, we read that:

1. ENOCH WALKED WITH GOD THREE HUNDRED YEARS. God Himself testifies that Enoch's ways were pleasing in His sight. What a blessed testimony. Who can question that Enoch had a pure heart?

2. NOAH WAS A GOOD MAN, AND PERFECT IN HIS GENERATION. So far as he had the light, he lived up to it. He condemned the world and became 'heir of righteousness', that is the holiness 'which is by faith'. He had a pure heart.

3. THE LORD HIMSELF TESTIFIED, THAT JOB WAS A PERFECT AND AN UPRIGHT MAN. He was perfect in love, and perfect in faith. He was able to look up even in the darkest hour, and say, 'Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him'. He loved God with all his heart, and his neighbour as himself. He had a pure heart.

4. WE HAVE A MOST REMARKABLE TESTIMONY TO ABRAHAM'S FAITH AND OBEDIENCE. God told him, as He tells you, to 'Walk before Him, and be perfect', and we have the most striking evidence of Abraham's obedience to God in the offering up of his son Isaac. Who can doubt that he had a pure heart?

5. ISAIAH WAS A HOLY MAN. We read that when the prophet acknowledged his uncleanness in the Temple, God's angel touched his lips with a live coal of fire from off the altar, and testified that his iniquity was taken away and his sin was purged. Whereupon Isaiah rose up and consecrated himself there and then to go out as the messenger of God. He had a pure heart.

6. ZACHARIAS AND ELIZABETH HIS WIFE, WE ARE INFORMED, WERE BOTH RIGHTEOUS. They walked in all the commandments of the Lord blameless. Being delivered out of the hand of their enemies, they served God without fear, in holiness and righteousness all the days of their lives.

7. THE APOSTLE JOHN TESTIFIED THAT HE WAS MADE PERFECT IN LOVE. 'God is love', he says; 'he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.'

8. PAUL CALLED HIS COMRADES TO WITNESS THAT HIS LIFE WAS A HOLY LIFE. 'Ye are witnesses', he says to the Thessalonians, 'how holily, justly, and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you.'

But let me call a few witnesses of modern times. I testify that they belong to the choicest spirits who have ever walked this earth. I start off with the saint, John Fletcher, a clergyman. He says:

'I will confess Him to all the world, and I declare unto you in the presence of the Holy Trinity that I am dead indeed unto sin; Christ is my Prophet, Priest, and King, my indwelling Holiness, my All in All.'

Hear another witness:

'All at once, I felt that a Hand, not feeble, but Omnipotent, not in wrath, but in love, was laid upon my brow. It seemed to diffuse through me a holy, self-consuming energy. The depths of God's love swallowed me up. All its waves and billows rolled over me.'

Hear the testimony of one of the holiest and most useful men ever possessed by the British Church - a man whom I admire more than words can tell:

'My soul was all wonder, love and praise. It is now

twenty-six years ago. I have walked in this liberty ever since. Glory be to God. I have been kept by His power. By faith I stand.'

A host of other testimonies are before me. One more is all I can find room for. Hear him. He says:

'I was alone in the field one beautiful day in the early spring. The sky clear, the sun glorious, the happy birds, and all nature, quick and springing into life, were but the symbol of my heart's experience. It was a glorious day within and without. I can never forget that day. I shall never enjoy a happier until I walk the fields of Paradise. 'What is it you want?', seemed to be asked me. 'I want victory over all sin', was my answer. 'Have you not got it?'. 'Yes', I replied. 'What else do you want?' I answered, 'I want power to perform all the known will of God'. 'Do you not do this?' 'Yes', I answered, 'Glory to God'. 'Well then, have you not received the blessing you have asked for?' And never from that hour have I doubted for a moment the reality of that work.'

Comrades, I have convinced you that there is no fatal necessity laid on you, to sin, either in word, or thought, or deed. I have declared to you the unchanging faithfulness and power of your redeeming God. And now, what will you do? Your Lord is waiting to bring you into the land of Perfect Purity, of Perfect Love. I have shown you how you can enter in. Again, I beseech you to rise, and go up to possess the good land, in God's own way; that is, by faith. But, do it now, and if at first you do not succeed, do not give up the search but persevere, and try, and try, and try again.

Yours affectionately,
WILLIAM BOOTH

'Now rise, exulting rise, my soul,
Triumphant sing the Saviour's praise,
His name through earth and skies extol,
With all thy power through all thy days.'

10. HOW TO KEEP PURE

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him - James 1:12.

MY DEAR COMRADES,

After trying to show you the desirability of this experience, and urging it upon your acceptance, I cannot help feeling that a few counsels bearing upon the best method of retaining the blessing of Holiness after it has been gained may be useful.

Beyond question, many do find this sacred treasure of a pure heart, and exult in the confidence and joy it brings, who after a short season lose it again. They enter the Holy Temple, and then for one reason or another desert it. They struggle with tears and prayers up on to the Highway of Holiness, and turn aside on to some by-path or other, where they become the prey once more of the doubts and fears and sins of the olden times. This is a great pity. Those who act thus are the chief sufferers; but, alas! a great injury is also inflicted upon others by their unfaithfulness.

But the failure of those who obtain the grace to keep what

they have received, should be no discouragement to you who have entered upon this holy path, and no argument against your preserving in it.

What you have to do, my Comrades, is to make up your minds, that having found the pearl of great price, no enemy shall rob you of the treasure. To this end my first counsel is:

1. SEEK TILL YOU OBTAIN A SETTLED CONVICTION IN YOUR OWN HEART THAT THE WORK IS DONE. Be content with nothing less than the assurance that God has really and truly cleansed your soul from sin. Do not allow yourselves to rest in any pleasant feelings merely, or in any hope of a future revelation on the subject. Continue to wrestle and pray, and believe, until you are satisfied that the work is accomplished.

But do you ask again, 'How can I tell whether God has cleansed my soul from sin?' I reply, 'How did you find out that God had forgiven your sins? How did you come to know that precious fact?' For, assuredly, a precious fact it was when you were saved. I suppose that since that gracious gift was yours, you have sung over, a thousand times or more, the words

'I never shall forget the day
When Jesus washed my sins away.'

'How did you come to the personal assurance that you were saved?', I ask, and you reply that God spoke it to your heart. Well, the assurance of your sanctification will come in the same way. The Holy Spirit will produce a delightful persuasion in your soul that all the pride and malice, and envy and selfishness, have been taken away, and that God has filled you with peace and love.

This precious persuasion will, no doubt, come in different forms to different individuals. To some it will appear as the 'rest of faith', to others as the 'baptism of fire', to others as the 'fulness of love', and to others as the Enthronement of Christ come to reign in their souls - supreme over an inward Kingdom, which is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

But to all alike when the work is real and complete there will be the conviction that the blood cleanses and that the heart is pure.

Be content with nothing less than this, and leave to God's good pleasure the giving or the withholding of more.

2. BEING SATISFIED THAT GOD HAS PURIFIED YOUR HEART, CONFESS THE FACT. You must do so, if you want to retain the blessing. Many of the holiest men and women the world has known have, under the influence of false modesty or diffidence or other motives, been hindered from avowing the wonderful things that God has done for them, and have thereby grieved the Holy Spirit and lost the blessing. Satan will tempt you to hide your light under a bushel after the same manner, but you must resist him, and boldly confess to all around you the salvation God has given you.

Acknowledge it to yourselves. Say over and over again to your own heart:

'Glory, glory, Jesus saves me;
Glory, glory to the Lamb.
Now the cleansing blood has reached me,
Glory, glory to the Lamb!'

Acknowledge it to your Saviour. Tell Him that you trust Him, and glorify Him for what He has done for you.

Confess it to your Comrades at every reasonable opportunity. Let it be known in your own family. It may not only

greatly help you, for those nearest and dearest to you to know what God has done for you, but it may prove a great blessing to them.

Of course you will be careful not to exhibit anything like a boastful spirit, and to give all the glory to God for all that He has given you to enjoy, and I am sure you will not make any professions as though you condemned those Comrades who have not been brought to see and possess this great salvation. Love will be in all your words as well as in your heart.

But you must confess the fact that God has cleansed your heart, and that, by His Spirit, He enables you to live day by day without grieving Him. It may be, at times it will be, a cross. But you must take it up, and in doing so you will become a light and a power and a joy to your Comrades and friends.

3. TO RETAIN THE BLESSING YOU MUST STRIVE TO LIVE IN THE SAME SPIRIT OF SUBMISSION, OBEDIENCE, AND CONSECRATION TO GOD as that which you entered into its enjoyment. Your everyday experience must be that which we often sing:

'Here then to Thee Thy own I leave,
Mould as Thou wilt Thy passive clay,
But let me all Thy stamp receive
And let me all Thy words obey,
Serve with a single heart and eye,
And to Thy glory live and die.'

4. TO KEEP THIS EXPERIENCE YOU MUST CONTINUE IN THE SAME SPIRIT OF TRUST THAT FIRST BROUGHT THE BLESSING INTO YOUR HEART. You did not receive the gift of purity by feelings or by knowledge or by works; no, nor by desire nor by prayer. **YOU BELIEVED AND YOU WERE SAVED.** If you had said 'I won't', or 'I can't believe that Jesus cleanses, unless I FEEL the work done in my heart', you could not have rejoiced in its possession. You trusted and the work was done. You must go forward in that spirit. There will be hours when all will seem to be hard and dark and desolate. Those will be the hours when you will have to fight the fight of faith, and to cling to the beginning of your confidence, whether you feel pleasant or unpleasant, whether your heart seems hard or tender, that the blood cleanses. **HOLD IT FAST.**

5. TO KEEP A CLEAN HEART YOU MUST RESIST TEMPTATION. You will have temptation, it will come from different sources, but especially from the devil, in three particular directions:

a. He will try to draw you aside into old habits, either doubtful in their nature or positively evil. He will know your weak points. Set a double watch there.

b. He will suggest his own evil wishes and desires, and then seek to persuade you that they are from your own heart. He will say, 'How can you be sanctified and have such sinful thoughts as those?' Disown his productions. Tell him they are not yours. Tell him that you hate them. Tell him they belong to him.

c. He will strive to make you think you have lost the blessing because you do not always FEEL as though you had it. But you are to live not by feeling but by faith.

6. TO KEEP A PURE HEART YOU MUST CAREFULLY CONTINUE THE USE OF SUCH MEANS AS GOD HAS APPOINTED FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE. Purity does not bring you into any state that renders the use of means for its maintenance and increase unnecessary.

7. TO KEEP THE BLESSING

a. You must pray; and I strongly urge you to pray at stated hours,

and for given periods.

b. You must read and study your Bible.

c. Read such books and papers as are instructive and encouraging on the subject of holiness.

d. Watch and pray. Be ever on your guard.

8. **KEEP ON FIGHTING FOR SOULS**; do not be led off into a selfish occupation with your own experience, or in promoting the same experience in other Comrades. I think it is right and proper that you should devote a portion of your time and energy to the duty of sanctifying yourselves and of spreading a full salvation among your Comrades. But nothing can relieve you from the duty of fighting for the salvation of dying souls around you.

I have only space for one other word. It is one of deep importance. With all the emphasis I can command, I would say to every reader of these letters, if from any cause whatever you should lose the assurance that the blood of Jesus cleanses you, or if, more melancholy still, you should lose the blessing of purity, fly at once to your Saviour's feet, confess your wrongdoing, give yourself up again to the full service of your

Lord, and once more plunge in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness; and then, profiting by the sorrow and disappointment of your fall, start afresh to live the life of faith in a purifying Saviour.

Yours affectionately,
WILLIAM BOOTH

'What though a thousand hosts engage
A thousand worlds my soul to shake,
I have a shield shall quell their rage,
And drive the alien armies back:
Portrayed it bears a bleeding Lamb,
I dare believe in Jesus' name.
Me to retrieve from Satan's hands,
Me from this evil world to free,
To purge my sins and loose my bands,
And save from all iniquity,
My Lord and God from heaven He came,
I dare believe in Jesus' name.'

DEATH - FRUITFULNESS

John 12

GEORGE W. NORTH

Few have realized the importance of the basic principles of spiritual life revealed by the Lord and recorded by John in this chapter. Yet either to miss or dismiss, or in any way ignore His teaching here is to drift away from our anchorage or move off our foundations.

Some Greeks, wanting to see Jesus, make an appeal to an apostle to this end. Not knowing what to do about it, he approaches another apostle, who becomes as bewildered as he. Together they decide to approach Jesus and tell Him about the request. How would He handle the problem? This was something new: would He meet these people? No, He did not; surprisingly perhaps. Without directly answering either the Greeks or the apostles, apparently speaking to no-one in particular, He gave an answer for everyone to hear. His immediate response was to state a basic principle governing all inanimate natural life: 'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone, but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit'. Everybody knew this, though perhaps some may never have thought of it or heard it expressed in these words. There is no exception to this rule, it is law, God made it, and it is inviolable, it is based upon invariable spiritual principles. In one form or another

these principles and this law have been incorporated into all natural life: though varied in application and changed in form, it can never be altered, it is of God.

THE LAW OF FRUITFULNESS

The Lord had not come to disrupt or break natural or any other kind of law; He said He had not come to destroy the law but to establish it. At the time He was speaking of Moses' laws, but what He said was true of all law in every realm, including the law of sin and death. The laws of simple nature, uncomplicated by all the complexities of sin, are right, they are of God, they function as of nature. Therefore, in relationship to the Greeks, Jesus enunciates the law governing fruitfulness. It should be noted that He did not say these things to the Greeks but to those around Him, chiefly the apostles. His men, more than anyone else, needed to know it, and not just for enlightenment either.

The background of, and partial reason for the utterance was what was happening all around Him. The Lord had just entered Jerusalem, riding on the peak of popularity: He was David's son, the king of Israel: 'Hosanna', they cried; waving palms and

casting their coats on the ground. He knew that He was only on the crest of a wave, though, not on the top of a mountain. The flamboyant display attracted attention, worked up the crowds into a religious fervour; praise drawn from ignorant hearts upon wrong grounds and for the wrong reasons, is like foam on water, created to appear for a moment and then disappear. The substance of thanksgiving was not in it, it was an empty hollow sound in His ears, the crowd would just as easily betray Him. Jesus uncrucified had no power to hold them permanently. His was a magnetic personality, He was a most attractive man, but no man can be His by attraction; admiration is not a life-line. Popularity is transient, cultivated by the deluded with intention to deceive. He was unresponsive to all of it, He had never sought it, nor had it ever meant anything to Him.

A PLENTEOUS HARVEST

What He had seen and heard that day, beyond being fulfilment of Scripture, was not the harvest He was seeking. How could there be a harvest when, as yet, the seed had not been planted? Yet He had come to gather a harvest, and to this end had sent out His servants to gather it. 'The harvest is plenteous', He said, 'but the labourers are few', and He lamented the fact. 'Pray ye the Lord of the harvest', He instructed the apostles, 'that He should thrust forth labourers into His harvest'. They gathered everywhere, but who can say how much they gathered? That harvest-time was coming to an end. He had a different harvest in mind.

He had not come to gather this harvest, but to plant the seed of it and 'grow' the harvest from Himself. His mission was to ensure for His Father a harvest of sons like Him (self). For this, He, like every other kind of seed, must fall into the ground and die; this is the law. Whether it be He, or they, or the Greeks - everybody - all must fall into the ground and die. Corns of wheat can only bear fruit when they have disappeared from sight in one form and risen from their graves in another, or which seems to be another. God has purposed that fruit of one kind or other must result from every life, whether good or evil. As for Himself, Jesus knew that though all His physical attractiveness be destroyed, His life would not pass away, it would bring forth the fruit God wanted.

THE DEATH OF THE CROSS

So it was that in this confidence, and in

knowledge of spiritual and natural law, the Lord responded to the Greeks' request. If His apostles or any other than they were thinking He was alluding only to Himself, He speedily disillusioned them, 'If any man SERVE Me, let him follow ME', He said. Were they following Him? Following His meaning, that is? To love and seek the glories and admirations of the flesh and the natural man was fatal, His men must follow His leading and example in every sphere of life. They had followed Him over country roads, into towns and cities, and now along the streets of Jerusalem; would they go with Him all the way?

He moved their attention away from the operation of law they knew so well in the natural world to the operation of that same law in the spiritual world. It was a move from the expected to the unexpected. 'I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me'. There was nothing charming about a cross, Greeks would not be attracted by that. Taken away from the crowds, separated from His admirers and pinned up between two thieves, would people want to see Him then? Only the macabre, the bloodthirsty, loyal friends and loved ones. Romans would be forced to behold Him, but not the Greeks, they would not come. There would be no human beauty there, only ugliness; no sweetness, only stench. He said He would draw all men to Himself, but only afterwards, not till then, the cross would be a repellent, suffering is no attraction.

CHRIST LIFTED UP

Men had flocked to Him by the thousand wherever He had gone before. He had been betrayed, but for what reason who could tell? Why had they come? To see Him? To be healed? To see miracles? What had His popularity rested upon these three years? Could He be sure of anyone beyond a handful of souls like the family at Bethany, and Mary Magdalene and a few others. Even they had not yet passed the supreme test; when it came, would they rise and respond to it? He had come to change human values, reform the whole basis of human estimates, but not to alter spiritual law. Human personality, charming, kingly, all-powerful, so highly thought of by men, must fall into the ground and die. Unless they were drawn by the attractiveness of the Crucified One, they could never come. Wonderful though His life was, it had no power to produce fruit of itself till wholly invested in death. Of themselves, human magnetism and popularity are a deterrent to God's

purposes, they must be crucified, they only attract to self.

By introducing these two forms of death - falling into the ground and dying, and lifting up on the cross, and coupling them together, the Lord revolutionized human thinking. The former refers to the necessary end of all accepted means of attraction between persons on earth; the latter is based entirely on the spiritual law of attraction to God and to eternal life: it is not of the flesh, but of the spirit.

Men must be drawn to Christ lifted up. The Greeks, seeking wisdom, would resist the attraction, thinking Him to be a fallen idol, a shamed and dishonoured folk hero; they would be disenchanted with Him. The Jews would stumble at the cross, to them it would prove He was an impostor. No-one would be disenchanted with Him though, only with the man they thought Him to be. What no-one listening to Him that day realized, was whose hour and power He was speaking of when He said the hour of judgement had come for them. In a few minutes He told them. 'Now is the judgement of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out', He said.

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

The world and its prince? Did He mean the Roman Empire and Caesar? They were mystified. He did not mean any kingdom or king of earth, the prince of this world was not Caesar, he did not hold power over the world, he could not. In the world Caesar was a puppet: he thought he owned the earth, but he did not: he thought the world was his Empire and he ruled over it, but it was not, and he did not reign over it. The world was not his element, neither was the earth his territory, another ruled over them both.

Had he been privy to a previous dialogue between Jesus, and the devil, Caesar would have found it an education - a most enlightening one. The rulers of this world are demon princes, ruling in satan's name, they keep the kings and kingdoms of men in total darkness. Caesar was a slave, unseen and unknown evil spirits and powers ruled over his soul, over his empire of kingdoms. Caesar was satan's man and so was every man who ruled under him. None of them were aware that in a part of Caesar's empire, Light had sprung up, a Prince had arisen over whom satan and his demon princes had no power. Some of Caesar's subjects (though not loyal to him) had sought to extinguish it, but had failed.

For more than three years He had shone out in Palestine, as one of his centurions could most certainly testify, if he were asked, and it was that Man who was announcing the judgement of the world and saying the prince of this world would be cast out. He would draw all men unto Him then; all men - without distinction of nationality or class, but not without exception. He would not force men to come, but would refuse no-one who came (including Caesar himself if he wished). Whosoever seeks reality, and desires truth for truth's sake will allow himself to be drawn to the Man who wanted to fall into the ground and die rather than deceive men or manipulate them by sheer force of personality. He would draw them from beyond the tomb, by the sheer power of His Spirit, and not by a hypnotic personality. Charisma and charismatic powers and gifts can be most seductive in men's soul realm, and yet devastate them and leave the spirit dead. It is the Invisible One who draws us, lest what is seen with the eye and loved by the senses should become the barrier He died to remove.

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