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### Sanctification

Inasmuch as the image of God consisted not only of knowledge and righteousness, but also of holiness, the restoration of man must not only restore him to a right relationship with God, but must also renew him internally according to the demand of His holy law. Sin is guilt, but it is also pollution. Justification delivers him from the pollution of sin. By the former his consciousness is changed, and by the latter his being is changed. By means of the first, man comes to stand in a right relationship again; by means of the second, man becomes good again and able to do good.

The word *holy* occurs on virtually every page of the Holy Scriptures. Just what the original, natural meaning of the Hebrew word translated *holy* in our version meant is not to be made out with certainty; in Scripture the word is never used in that original, natural sense, but always has a religious significance. Nevertheless the word as used in Scripture very probably came from a root which meant *to be cut off*, or *to be separated*. Nor is it possible to say definitely in what sense the word was first introduced into religious discussion. According to some, persons and things were first called holy because they were set apart from other persons and things, and

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were, so to speak, removed from common use. The opposite of the word *holy* is, according, unholy, unconsecrated, mean, profane.<sup>1</sup> According to others the word first meant, in reference to religious things, that persons and objects stood in a particular relationship to God, and were in that sense different from others. So much can be said for this view, namely, that people and things are never by nature themselves holy, but can become this only through a definite action which accrues to them. Nor can they sanctify themselves, for all holiness and sanctification proceeds from God. Jehovah is holy, and therefore He wants a holy people, a holy priesthood, a holy temple.<sup>2</sup> It is He who designates those who are His own and who are holy (Num. 16:5).

Again and again, accordingly, God is in the Old Testament called the Holy One. It is only in Daniel 4:8, 9, 18, that Nebuchadnezzar too speaks of his holy gods (cf. 5:11). This word *holy* when used in reference to the Divine Being does not intend to designate a particular attribute which He possesses alongside of others, but is used, rather, to give expression to His Divine greatness, sublimity, majesty, and unapproachableness. There is none holy as the Lord, for there is none beside Thee: neither is there any rock like our God (I Sam. 2:2). He is God, and not man (Hos. 11:9). No one is able to stand before this holy God (I Sam. 6:20). He is exalted high above the gods, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders (Exod. 15:11). He is terrible out of His holy places (Ps. 68:35); His name is great and terrible (Ps. 99:2, 3); to swear by His holiness is to swear by Himself (Amos 4:2; 6:8). In short, holiness points to God in His distinction from and elevation above all creatures. He is the Holy One because He is God. Isaiah especially likes to make use of this word for God.<sup>3</sup>

The holiness of God manifests itself in all the relationships in which He has placed Himself over against His people. The whole of the lawgiving in Israel has its first principle in the holiness of Jehovah and has its end in the sanctification of the people. He is holy in all His revelation, in all that proceeds from Him: His name is holy (Lev. 20:3); His arm is holy (Ps. 98:1); His covenant is holy (Dan. 11:28); His word is holy (Ps. 105:42); and His Spirit is holy (Ps. 51:11; Isa. 63:10, 11). Hence He wants His people to be holy also.<sup>4</sup> And among that people He particularly wants the priests and Levites, who minister in the holy things and who are consecrated by particular ceremonies for their office, to be holy (Exod. 29). In fact, everything that stands in some relationship to the service of God, whether places, times, offerings, the garments of the priests, or the temple, and the like, must be dedicated to the Lord and be holy. The whole meaning of the giving of the law is that Israel must be a priestly nation and a holy people unto the Lord (Exod. 19:6). And the people of Israel actually is holy if in everything it answers to the law which the Lord has given it.

We must remember that this law in Israel comprised not merely moral, but also many civic and ceremonial, commandments. Holiness, therefore, consisted of perfection, in total correspondence to the law, but this perfection was not merely of a moral but also of a civic and ceremonial nature. The people, however, frequently fell into one-sidedness and sought the

essence of religion in external, Levitical purity. The prophets, consequently, had to protest against this and had to proclaim that obedience was better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams (I Sam. 15:22); and they had to say that God desired mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings (Hos. 6:6). The prophets had to preach that the Lord required nothing of the people but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God (Mic. 6:8). They pointed out that the holiness of God consisted especially in His moral perfection, in His exaltedness above and His contrast to the sinfulness of the creature (Isa. 6:3-7). When people profane His name and His covenant, then God sanctifies Himself in righteousness (Isa. 5:16; Ezek. 28:22). As the Holy One He most certainly punishes the enemy in order that they may know that He is the Lord (Jer. 50:29; Ezek. 36:23; 39:7), but He will deliver His people by purging it of all unrighteousness, establishing a new covenant with it, and causing it to walk in His ways with a new heart (Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:25-29). And He will do this not for Israel's sake, but for the sake of His own great name (Isa. 43:25; Ezek. 36:22).

In the same way in which God in the New Testament has in Christ given His people righteousness so in the Son of His love He has given them holiness. Christ is our holiness, our sanctification, in the same way and in the same sense as He is our wisdom, our redemption. We must know that He was first of all one who shared in a personal holiness, for otherwise He could not have achieved a holiness for us. That which was conceived in Mary by the Holy Spirit and was born of her was the Holy Thing and was given the name of the Son of God (Luke 1:35). Later, at His baptism, He received the Holy Spirit without measure and was full of the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:22; 4:1). Those who were possessed of devils acknowledged Him as the Holy One of God (Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34), and the disciples by the mouth of Peter made the confession: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life, and we have believed and known that Thou art the Holy One of God" (John 6:68, 69). In Acts 4:27 (compare 3:14), the same apostle speaks of Him as the Holy Child of God (or the holy servant of God), and in Revelation 3:7 He calls Himself the Holy and the True One. Just as Christ was conscious of His sinlessness,<sup>5</sup> so also all His apostles testify that He has done no wrong and that there is no deceit in His mouth.<sup>6</sup>

We must, however, make a distinction in Christ between the holiness which He possessed by nature and that which He accomplished by His perfect obedience. His being conceived and born holy had this benefit, first of all, that He could be our Mediator (Heidelberg Catechism, Answer 16), but it also had the further benefit that He, being our Mediator from the very moment of His conception, covers the sin in which we are conceived and born with His innocence and perfect holiness before the face of God (Heidelberg Catechism, Answer 36). The holiness in which He was born He immediately made a part of the holiness which He throughout His life, even up to His death, had to achieve for His church. We know, for exam-

ple, that the Father already sanctified Him before His incarnation, consecrating Him to the office of Mediator, and precisely to that end sent Him into the world (John 10:36). And Christ sanctified Himself and gave Himself up to the will of His Father before He was conceived in Mary and born of her; His incarnation was already a fulfillment of the Father's will, a deed of sanctification (Heb. 10:5-9). It was not enough that Christ was holy: He had to sanctify Himself from the moment of His conception up to the hour of His death.

As Mediator, after all, He was subjected to the severest trials and temptations, especially after He had received baptism, had been anointed by the Holy Spirit, and had begun to carry out His public ministry. The temptation of which we read in the Gospels, was the beginning of a life full of struggle; when this temptation was finished, the devil departed from Him for only a period (Luke 4:13). We cannot picture to ourselves what these temptations were, but we are expressly told that He became like the brethren *in all things*, and that He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin (Heb. 2:17; 4:15); we have no weakness but He knows of it, and no temptation but He can help us. But whereas we succumb every moment, He remains faithful to the end; He was tempted in all things, but without sin; He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil. 2:8). He did not pray that He be spared death, but He did offer up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him that was able to save Him from death, that He might remain steadfast in His suffering and might by His death accomplish life. And He was answered in this prayer (Heb. 5:7).

But, although He was the Son, He nevertheless had to learn obedience by the things which He suffered (Heb. 5:8). He was obedient from the beginning and He *wanted to be* obedient: His meat was to do the Father's will (John 4:34). But in His passion He received the opportunity to prove that obedience; in and through His suffering He had to translate into deed and action His disposition and will to obey. Thus He was sanctified by the things which He suffered (Heb. 2:11; 5:9), sanctified, that is, not in the things which He suffered, brought to the conclusion He had envisioned all along and so, by reason of the passion of His death, crowned with glory and honor (Heb. 2:9; 12:2). Thus He was made the Captain of the salvation of the children of God and the Finisher of their faith (Heb. 2:10; 12:2). By bearing the cross and despising the shame with a view to the joy that would await Him after His humiliation, He became the initiator, the pioneer, and the workman of the salvation of His own, and, at the same time, the One who begins that faith in them and finishes it. By perfecting Himself in the way of obedience, by seeking the glory at the right hand of the Father in no other way than through the deepest humiliation, He became the author of the eternal salvation of all those who obey Him (Heb. 5:9). He sanctified Himself, gave Himself up as a sacrifice unto death, in order that His disciples might be sanctified in truth (John 17:19). And so He was given us of God unto our sanctification (I Cor. 1:30).

In order to understand the sanctification of the believers properly, one must see clearly that Christ is our sanctification in the same sense that He is our righteousness. He is a perfect and adequate Savior; He does not accomplish His work in part only, but actually and perfectly saves us; and He does not leave off His work until He has caused us to share fully in eternal life and the heavenly blessedness. By His righteousness, therefore, He not only restores us to the state of the righteous, of those who stand free in the judgment of God, in order for the rest to leave the matter in our own hands, so that, so to speak, we ourselves now proceed to earn eternal life by doing good works and conforming ourselves to the image of God; no, Christ also finishes all this work for us. He bore the guilt and penalty of sin for us, and He also kept the law for us and earned eternal life. His obedience was both *passive* and *active*, and it was both at the same time.

His resurrection was the evidence of this. By it we know that God did not leave His soul in hell (thought of in this connection, of course, not as the place of the damned, for the soul of Christ after His death was in Paradise, but as the grave, the realm of the dead, to which Christ also belonged so long as He remained in the state of death) and did not suffer His Holy One to see corruption, but made known to Him the ways of life, and filled Him full of joy with His countenance (Acts 2:27, 28; 13:35-37). In accordance with the Spirit of holiness which dwelt in Him, He was after the resurrection from the dead designated and appointed by God as His Son with power (Rom. 1:4), to be a Prince and a Savior, in order to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins (Acts 5:31), to be a Prince of life who has achieved eternal life and now gives it to His own (Acts 3:15).

But this sanctification which Christ has achieved for His church is not something which remains outside of us but something, rather, which is really shared with us. In justification we are declared free of guilt and punishment on the basis of a righteousness which is outside of us in Christ Jesus, and which through God's grace is reckoned to us and on our own part is received in faith. In sanctification, however, the holiness of Christ is most certainly poured out in us through the Holy Spirit. When Roman Catholicism therefore speaks of a grace which is poured into us, we have no objection to that in itself; we object only to the fact that this grace is regarded as a part of the righteousness on the basis of which we are declared free before God. For, if that were so, then justification and sanctification, the deliverance from guilt and the removal of the pollution, would be confused with each other; and then Christ would be robbed of the perfection of His achieved righteousness and the believing soul of its comfort and assurance. But there is actually such a thing as a grace that is poured in; there is such a thing as a Christ in us as well as a Christ for us; there is such a thing as a renewal after the image of God as well as a transmission to the state of the righteous; there is such a thing as a change in our moral condition as well as in our status before God.

As a matter of fact this sanctification must be maintained with no less resoluteness and power than justification. There have always been those



who have regarded the forgiveness of sins as the one great benefit of Christ, and who denied the inner renewal of men after the image of God or, at least, neglected it and left it unexplored. These hold that if a person is justified and is conscious of this in faith, nothing further needs to happen to him. They maintain that the consciousness of the forgiveness of sins already makes him a different person. In short, for such observers, justification and regeneration are two names for one and the same thing.

Now it is altogether true that the Christian who with a true faith believes that all his sins, out of pure grace, and solely because of the merits of Christ, have been forgiven does most certainly by his awareness become a different person. He feels himself acquitted of all guilt; he has, being justified by faith, found peace with God; he stands in the freedom with which Christ has made him free; and, together with David, he can rejoice and say: Blessed is he whose trespass has been forgiven, whose sin is wholly covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord has not reckoned his unrighteousness! Such a change can even in a certain sense be called a regeneration, a renewal of consciousness.

But if one goes on to infer from this that justification and regeneration are altogether the same thing, he is in error and is going absolutely counter to the testimony of Holy Scripture. After all, the true, saving faith which accepts the righteousness of Christ and becomes aware of the forgiveness of sins does not come up out of the natural man but is a fruit of regeneration, and therefore already assumes a spiritual change which has taken place through the Holy Spirit. And the hearty joy and peace which the believer enjoys by reason of the assurance of the forgiveness of his sins are attributes of the spiritual man who in communion with Christ has been raised from death in sin.

Moreover, a distinction must be made between the status in which a person stands and the condition in which he finds himself. These two are so far apart that an innocent person is sometimes accused and condemned and a guilty person is sometimes acquitted by the judge. A person's status, therefore, does not yet change his condition, nor vice versa. This holds true in the natural but also in the spiritual sphere. Sin is not merely guilt, but also pollution; we are delivered from the first by justification, from the second by sanctification. Perfect salvation consists not alone of knowledge and righteousness, but also of sanctification and redemption. And therefore Christ gave out both of them: the forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

And, what is conclusive in this regard, Scripture distinguishes justification and regeneration very clearly. The promise of the Old Testament contained the idea that in the new covenant the Lord would forgive the unrighteousness of His people, but it contained the idea also that He would give a new heart upon which He would write His law.<sup>7</sup> He would put His Spirit in them, and cause them to walk in His statutes, and to keep His judgments, to do them (Ezek. 36:27). In order to fulfill that promise Christ not only gave His soul as a ransom for many, but after His exaltation to the right hand of the Father He also sent the Holy Spirit, in order that this Spirit should dwell and work in the church. What His Spirit accomplishes in the

church we have previously noted: in and through the Spirit Christ shares Himself and all His benefits with His people.

Accordingly, after Paul in his letter to the Romans has first dealt with the subject of justification he proceeds in chapter 6 to the subject of sanctification. Just as there were later on, so there were in the days of the apostles certain people who thought that the doctrine of free justification would affect the moral life unfavorably. They feared that people, prompted by such a confession, would proceed to sin in order that good might issue from it and grace be made to abound (Rom. 3:8; 6:1). Paul refutes this charge and says that it is impossible for those who have died to sin to live in it any longer (Rom. 6:2).

He proves this by pointing out that the believers who by their faith have received the forgiveness of sins and peace with God have also by witness of their baptism been buried with Christ in His death and been raised with Him to a new life (Rom. 6:3-11). For Paul believers are always persons who have not only accepted the righteousness of God in Christ unto the forgiveness of their sins, but also have personally died and been raised in the communion with Christ, and therefore are dead to sin and alive in God.<sup>8</sup> In other words, the death of Christ has not only justifying power but also sanctifying power (II Cor. 5:5ff). And the faith which has the true stamp upon it accepts Christ not only as a justification but also as a sanctification: in fact, the one is impossible without the other. For Christ is not to be divided and His benefits are inseparable from His person. He is at the same time our wisdom and our righteousness, our sanctification and our redemption (I Cor. 1:30). Such He became for us of God and as such He was given us by God.

The sanctification which we must share, therefore, lies perfectly achieved in Christ. There are many Christians who, at least in their practical life, think very differently about this. They acknowledge that they are justified through the righteousness which Christ has accomplished, but they maintain or at least act as though they hold that they must be sanctified by a holiness that they must themselves achieve. If this were true, then we, in flat contradiction of the apostolic testimony,<sup>9</sup> would not be living under grace in freedom but under the bondage of the law. However, the evangelical sanctification is distinguished just as well from the legal one as the righteousness of God revealed in the gospel is distinguished, not in its content but in the mode of sharing it, from that which was demanded by the law. It consists of this: that in Christ God gives us the perfect sanctification along with the justification, and that He gives us this as an internal possession through the regenerating and renewing operation of the Holy Spirit.

Sanctification is therefore God's work, a work of His righteousness and of His grace at the same time. First He reckons Christ and all His benefits to our account, and thereupon He shares Him with us in all the fulness that is in Him. For it is He who circumcises the hearts (Deut. 30:6), who takes away the heart of stone and supplants it with a heart of flesh (Ezek. 12:19), who pours out His Spirit upon them (Joel 2:28), who creates a new spirit within them (Ezek. 11:19; 36:26), who writes His law in their hearts,



causes them to walk in His ways and makes them His people.<sup>10</sup> The matter is, if possible, put even more strongly in the New Testament where we read that the believers are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:10), a new creature (II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15), and the work of God (Rom. 14:20). There the believers are also called God's husbandry and God's building,<sup>11</sup> and there we are told that all things are of God (II Cor. 5:18). When they were buried with Christ and raised with Him, they were also washed and sanctified;<sup>12</sup> and they continue to be sanctified in the future,<sup>13</sup> until they have been wholly conformed to the image of the Son.<sup>14</sup> The chain of salvation cannot be broken because from beginning to end it is the work of God. Whom He has known, called, and justified, him He has also glorified (Rom. 8:30).

On the basis of this work of sanctification which God brings about through the Spirit of Christ in the church the believers are frequently designated *saints* in Holy Scripture. Israel was already so called in the old day (Exod. 19:6). Israel was separated from the nations in order to be the Lord's (Lev. 20:26), and in order that it should walk in His ways (Exod. 19:5). And in the future, when God established His new covenant, He with even more right and with a profounder sense called His holy people the redeemed of the Lord.<sup>15</sup> When in the days of the New Testament the High Priest sanctified Himself for His people, in order that they too should be sanctified in truth (John 17:19), the believers also immediately received the name of holy ones or saints.<sup>16</sup> This name does not imply that in a moral sense they are free of all sin and above all sin, but rather that the New Testament church has now supplanted the ancient Israel and become the property of the Lord,<sup>17</sup> inasmuch as it has been sanctified in Christ and become a temple of the Holy Spirit.<sup>18</sup>

But this sanctification which Christ has given the church and which at the first was given it by the Holy Spirit places a heavy obligation upon the believers. Sanctification is a work of God, but it is intended to be a work in which the believers themselves are also active in the power of God. In the Old Testament we read at one time that the Lord Himself sanctifies His people,<sup>19</sup> and at another time that the people must sanctify themselves.<sup>20</sup> Sometimes we read that the Lord circumcises the heart (Deut. 30:6), and another time that Israel is called upon to circumcise the foreskin of their hearts (Deut. 10:16; Jer. 4:4). At one point regeneration is called the work of God (Jer. 31:18; Lam. 5:21), and at another time it is called the responsibility of the person himself (Jer. 3:12, 13, and elsewhere). Just so in the New Testament sanctification is also presented as a gift of God in Christ and as a work of the Holy Spirit by which the believers are sanctified.<sup>21</sup> And yet these believers are repeatedly admonished to be perfect even as their Father in Heaven is perfect (Matt. 5:48), to do good works which glorify the Father who is in Heaven (Matt. 5:16; John 15:8), to yield their members as servants to righteousness unto holiness (Rom. 6:19), to be holy in all their walk and conduct (I Peter 1:15; II Peter 3:11), to pursue sanctification and to fulfill it in the fear of God,<sup>22</sup> and to do this because without holiness no man shall see the Lord (Heb. 12:14).

The first is by no means incompatible with the second. It were truer to say that the effort of the believers in working towards their own sanctification is made possible only by the fact that it is a work of God which He fulfills in them. Certainly, grace, so far from obliterating nature, restores it. Inasmuch as man because of sin lacked the desire and the ability to walk in the ways of the Lord, he by virtue of the re-creation is again inclined and equipped, at least in principle, to live uprightly not merely in some but in all the commandments of God. When God penetrates the inward parts of the human being with the powerful operation of the regenerating Spirit, He opens the heart that is closed, mellows what is hard, and circumcises what is uncircumcised. He implants new potentialities in the will, and causes the will that was dead to become alive again, the will that was evil to become good, and the will that did not want to obey to choose His ways, and the will that was rebellious to be obedient. He moves and strengthens that will in such a way that as a good tree brings forth fruits so it can also bring forth good works.

Consequently, when the Reformed Churches express themselves in this way in their confession (Canons of Dort) they thereby place themselves on the basis of Holy Scripture, and find definite support in the profound statement of the apostle Paul: Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, *for* it is God who works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure (Phil. 2:12, 13). Just as in justification the forgiveness of sins, completely prepared in Christ, can on our part be received and enjoyed only through a living and active faith, so God effects the sanctification in us only by means of us ourselves. He does not annihilate our personality, but lifts it up; He does not kill our reason and our will and our desires, but rather quickens them inasmuch as they were dead, and puts them to work. He makes us His allies and co-laborers.

But this sanctification of the believers must then be properly understood. It must not become a legal sanctification, but is and must remain an evangelical sanctification. It does not consist of the fact that the believers proceed to sanctify themselves by means of a holiness which they themselves newly and for the first time bring into being, or of one which exists already but which they by means of their exertion and good works must appropriate. The holiness revealed by God in the gospel is not only completely prepared by Christ but by His Spirit is also applied to our hearts and worked out there. Paul says it so beautifully in Ephesians 2:10: We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them. Just as the first creation was brought into being by the Word, so the re-creation gets its being in the communion with Christ. The believers are crucified, die, are buried, and they are also raised and reborn to a new life in the fellowship with Christ.

And that re-creation has a specific purpose. It has its end in the good works which the believers do. God does not care about the tree but about the fruits, and in those fruits about His own glorification. But those good works are not independently and newly brought into being by the believers themselves. They lie completely prepared for them all and for each one of

them individually in the decision of God's counsel; they were fulfilled and were earned for believers by Christ who in their stead fulfilled all righteousness and the whole law; and they are worked out in them by the Holy Spirit who takes everything from Christ and distributes it to each and all according to Christ's will. So we can say of sanctification in its entirety and of all the good works of the church, that is, of all the believers together and of each one individually, that they do not come into existence first of all through the believers, but that they exist long before in the good pleasure of the Father, in the work of the Son, and in the application of the Holy Spirit. Hence all glorying on man's part is also ruled out in this matter of sanctification. We must know that God in no way becomes indebted to us, and that He therefore never has to be grateful to us, when we do good works; on the contrary, we are beholden to God for them, and have to be grateful to Him for the good works that we do.

From this there follows also the significance of faith in the work of sanctification. It is by no means in justification only, but quite as much in sanctification, that by faith exclusively we are saved. For we on our part can accept Christ and His benefits and make them our own only through faith. If righteousness and holiness were products of the law we should have to bring both of them about by the doing of good works. But in the gospel they are a gift of God granted us in the person of Christ; in Him there is a fulness of grace and truth (John 1:17), of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:3), of righteousness and holiness (I Cor. 1:30). In Him all spiritual blessings are contained (Eph. 1:3), and the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily (Col. 2:9). This Christ gives Himself to us through the Holy Spirit, and joins Himself with us so intimately as does the vine with the branches (John 15:2ff.), as the head with the body (Eph. 1:22, 23), as the husband with the wife (Eph. 5:31, 32), and as He Himself as Mediator is conjoined with the Father (John 14:20; 17:21-23). The believers are one spirit with Him (I Cor. 6:17), and one flesh (Eph. 5:30, 31). Christ lives in them and they in Christ (Gal. 2:20). Christ is all in them all (Col. 3:11).

If Christ is in this way the workman of our sanctification, then on our own part the work of sanctification can be fulfilled only by faith. For sanctification is, like all the other benefits of Christ, so inseparably related to the person of Christ that we cannot receive it except in communion with Christ Himself; and this is, viewed from our side, to be obtained and enjoyed only through a true faith. After all, it is only through faith that Christ dwells in our hearts (Eph. 3:17), and that we live in Christ (Gal. 3:26, 2:20). It is only through faith that we become children of God (Gal. 3:26), that we receive the promise of the Spirit (Gal. 3:14), and that we receive the forgiveness of sins (Rom. 4:6) and eternal life (John 3:16). To live by faith: that is simply the opposite side of saying that Christ dwells in us (II Cor. 13:5; Gal. 2:20). The whole life of Christ is thus a life of faith just as the Bible saints are presented to us in Hebrews 11 as the heroes of faith; so we too are admonished to live by faith (II Cor. 5:7), to let faith work by love (Gal. 5:6), with the shield of faith to quench the fiery darts of the

wicked (Eph. 6:16), and to overcome the world (I John 5:4). And all these admonishments correspond fully with those others which make it obligatory for the believers not to walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit (Rom. 8:4ff.), to put aside the old man and to put on the new man,<sup>23</sup> to accept the Lord Jesus Christ and to walk in Him (Col. 2:6; I Peter 3:16), to put on the Lord Jesus Christ and to fulfill all things in His name (Rom. 13:14; Col. 3:17), to become mighty in the Lord and in the strength of His might (Eph. 6:10; II Tim. 2:1), and to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior (II Peter 3:18). In short, sanctification in an evangelical sense is a continuous activity and exercise of faith.

Many people have objections to this teaching of Scripture. They regard it as one-sided and as being dangerous for the moral life. Sometimes they are willing to concede that in justification the law is out of the question and faith alone is determinative. But when they discuss sanctification, they maintain that faith alone is inadequate, and that the law with all that it commands and all that it forbids, with all its rewards and penalties, must also come into play if a holy walk is to be fruitfully pursued and if there is to be an incentive to good works. And even though it is altogether true that the law remains the rule of life for the Christian, still the gospel never derives the exhortations to a holy war from the terrors of the law, but derives them rather from the high calling to which the believers in Christ are called. Be perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect (Matt. 5:48). Jesus is the vine, the disciples are His branches; they who remain in Him bear much fruit, for without Him they can do nothing (John 15:5). Together with Christ the believers have died to sin, but in Him they have become alive unto God (Rom. 6:11). They are not under the law, but under grace, and therefore sin may not reign over them (Rom. 6:14). They have through the law died to the law and belong to Christ, in order that they may live unto God (Rom. 7:4; Gal. 2:19). They are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, and must therefore walk after the Spirit (Rom. 8:5). The night has passed by, the day has come; the works of darkness must therefore be cast off and the armor of light must be put on (Rom. 13:12). The bodies of the believers are members of Christ and temples of the Holy Spirit; hence they must flee the sin of adultery (I Cor. 6:15ff.). They are bought with a price, and therefore they must glorify God in their body and in their spirit, for these are God's (I Cor. 6:20). They stand in freedom, the freedom with which Christ has made them free; and in Christ nothing avails anything but faith working by love (Gal. 5:1, 6). From that Christ they have heard and from Him they have learned that they must cast off the old man and put on the new man created after God in true righteousness and holiness (Eph. 4:21ff.). As dear children they must be followers of God (Eph. 5:1). They must walk in love even as Christ has loved them (Eph. 5:2). They are light in the Lord, and accordingly must walk as the children of light (Eph. 5:8).

In short, we should have to record all the moral exhortations in the New Testament if we were fully to summarize all the imperatives set forth to encourage the believers to a holy walk. But the passages cited are sufficient to indicate that they are all derived from the gospel and not from the law.

Irrespective of whether the apostles are addressing themselves to men or to women, to parents or to children, to masters or to servants, to women or to maids, to rulers or to subjects, they exhort them all *in the Lord*.<sup>24</sup> The sure foundation of God stands firm and bears this seal: Let every one who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity (II Tim. 2:19).

Faith, then, is the one great work which the Christian must fulfill in his sanctification according to the principles of the gospel (John 6:29). Although this faith presents itself in a different way and is viewed from a different vantage point in sanctification than it is in justification, it is in both of these benefits the only and sufficient means by which we come to share in them. The gospel demands nothing other from us than faith, than the reliance of the heart upon God's grace in Christ. That faith not only justifies us, but also sanctifies and saves us. And the sanctifying power of the faith comes into fine clarity in the following considerations.

In the first place, it must be remarked that the true, unfeigned faith breaks off our false self-confidence, knocks our pride off its pedestal, and makes an end of all self-righteousness. If we leave those out of consideration who do not trouble themselves about God or His commandments, and who consume sin as they do water, and if we leave out of consideration also all those who do the good only externally out of fear of punishment, of loss, or of shame, there still remain those who earnestly strive to fulfill the demands of the moral law in their own strength. But in doing this they can never find the right vantage point to take over against the moral law, nor the genuine principle by which they are to fulfill it. They take position either above or below the law and make themselves serviceable to it or it serviceable to them. In the first instance they say that the good must be done for the benefit and profit that accrues to the individual or to the group because of it. In the second instance they put the moral law high above man, and so make its fulfillment, inasmuch as it is regarded the more seriously, so much more impossible. Thus the natural man vacillates between Saducceeism and Pharisaism, between freedom and authority. He cannot find the balance between the demand of the moral law and the will of man.

But faith puts an end to this vacillation. It enables us to see that the moral law stands high above us and that it demands unconditional obedience, and that it nevertheless cannot actually be fulfilled and cannot give us eternal life. And in this apparently irreconcilable opposition it surrenders itself to the grace of God, trusts His mercy, and glories in the righteousness which He Himself has brought. The true believer gives up all pretension of being able to do according to the demands of the moral law. He lets that moral ideal stand in all its sublime requirement, but at the same time gives up the hope that he can ever by his own exertion do justice to it. And thus he fixes his hope on God who in the law, but afterwards also in the gospel, has revealed His righteousness. Such a faith is, consequently, immediately the mother of many virtues: it fosters humility in man, and it fosters dependence and trust, attributes, all of them, of the greatest significance for the

moral life. And thus the doing of the good gets from religion a sure foundation and an unconquerable strength.

Still other virtues go combined with these. According to the order which God Himself has appointed in the church, the promises of the gospel precede the commandments of the law. First He assures us of His favor, of the forgiveness of our sins and of our inheritance with the saints, and thereupon He leads us in the way of His testimonies and ordinances. The good tree comes before the good fruits. We do not live through good works but for them; we fulfill the law not for eternal life but out of it, for this life has been planted in our hearts through faith. It is according to this order alone that a true moral life is possible. Whoever wants to change this order about, and wants to draw his comfort, certainty, and salvation from his works, will never achieve his purpose, will be constantly torn by doubts, and will live in fear all the days of his life. God takes another way. In the gospel He gives us everything for nothing: the forgiveness of sins; the reconciliation; the annihilation of punishment; the salvation and the blessedness. He tells us that through faith in His grace we can altogether lean upon Him, and He gives us the certainty of this through the testimony of the Holy Spirit. Faith, accordingly, by virtue of its own nature, brings us comfort, peace, joy, and happiness, and these are in turn of invaluable worth for the moral life. They are all together principles and motives of a holy conduct. The purging of the conscience of all dead works has as its end and goal the services of the living God (Heb. 9:14). Those who are comforted of God are thereupon strengthened by Him in every good word and work (II Thess. 2:17). The joy of the Lord is the strength of His people (Neh. 8:10).

In the next place, it should be pointed out that a severing as well as an appropriating activity, a destructive as well as a constructive effort, is common to the saving faith which leans entirely upon God's grace in Christ. It causes the prodigal son to return from his sinful life to the father's house. It puts us into the fellowship of Christ's death and of His resurrection; it crucifies us and raises us up to a new life. Whoever truly believes in Christ dies to sin; he feels heartily sorry for it, because he has drawn down the wrath of God by it, and therefore he begins to hate and to flee it. He brings about a separation between it and himself so that he can say uprightly: I want to do the good although I do not do it and I do not want to do the evil, although I do do it (Rom. 7:19). And on the other hand faith appropriates Christ and His righteousness; it causes Christ Himself to dwell in the heart and constantly lives more fully in His communion. It causes Christ to take form in us and transforms us more and more according to His image. In short, the believer can repeat Paul's statement: I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Phil. 4:13).

Finally, to mention nothing further, faith is often compared, and properly so, with a hand. But a hand is not only the organ with which to take something and to make it our own: it is also the instrument by which we objectify our thought and our will. Thus faith is not only a receiving organ, but also an active force. The faith which justifies and saves is not a dead



faith, but a living one. In its own nature it brings forth fruits of good works; it works by love (Gal. 5:6). Man is not justified by love, but the faith which justifies him proves his living active power in love. Without love faith is not the true saving faith (I Cor. 13:2); and the work of love is always associated with the true faith (I Thess. 1:3), for the end of the law (that is, of the whole apostolical preaching) is love, out of a pure heart and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned (I Tim. 1:5). And this love, as the fruit of faith, is a perfect love which casts out fear (I John 4:18), and it is at the same time the perfect fulfillment of the law.<sup>25</sup>

Accordingly, the gospel does not make the law of no effect, but restores and establishes it. It is true that an end has been made of the demand and curse of the law, because Christ has placed Himself under the law, satisfied its demand, and borne its curse.<sup>26</sup> Hence we are no longer a servant but walk in liberty and in the spirit.<sup>27</sup> And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom (II Cor. 3:17; Gal. 5:18). But this freedom of faith does not remove the law, but rather brings it to fulfillment; the righteousness of the law, that which the law asks in its commandments, is fulfilled precisely in those who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit (Rom. 8:4). While the flesh makes the law of no effect because it does not want to and cannot subject itself to the law (Rom. 8:3, 7), it is precisely the Spirit of Christ which gives men life (II Cor. 3:6), and it is the Spirit which gives light in order to prove what is the good and acceptable will of God.<sup>28</sup>

And for Jesus and for the apostles that will of God, despite the fact that the law has in the sense designated above been discarded, continues to be known from the Old Testament. Jesus did not come to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill them (Matt. 5:17). He never so much as mentions the abandonment of the law except in so far as He prophesies the fall of the city and the temple, and the whole of the civic regime and the public worship (Matt. 24; John 4:21-24), but He does purge it of the human doctrines which have been added to it by the Jewish schools (Matt. 5:20ff.). In His conception of the law He returns from the Pharisees back to the prophets, penetrates through to the inner character of that law, and places the internal high above the external characteristics (Mark 7:15), mercy above sacrifice (Matt. 9; 12:7), and joins prophets and law together in love over against God and the neighbor.<sup>29</sup> The moral laws retain their force.

All the apostles take the same attitude towards the law and the prophets. The Old Testament retains for them the divine authority. It has been given by God (II Tim. 3:15), has been written by holy men under the leading of the Spirit of God (II Peter 1:21), and has been given for our instruction and comfort.<sup>30</sup> Hence again and again that Old Testament is quoted in order to cause the Christian church to know the will of God: Paul, for example, appeals in I Corinthians 14:34, to indicate the subordination of the wife to the husband, to Genesis 3:16; in II Corinthians 9:9, in order to urge liberality to the poor, to Psalm 112:9; and in I Corinthians 1:31, for the admonition to glory only in the Lord, to Jeremiah 9:23, 24. In other words, the moral law is, so far as its content is concerned, quite the same in the Old

and the New Testament. It is contained in the one law of love.<sup>31</sup> True, Christ speaks of the love which the disciples must exercise among one another as of a new commandment.<sup>32</sup> But by this He does not mean that the commandment to love one another as believers was quite unknown before, for Leviticus 19:18 plainly teaches the opposite and Psalm 133 speaks of the loveliness of the living together in community of the brethren.

But this love which must bind the believers mutually together took on a new character in the New Testament. Because in the days of the Old Testament the church and the nation coincided, the difference between the love of the brethren and the love of the neighbor could not yet clearly be distinguished. But in the New Testament this changed: the church was severed from the national history of Israel and became an independent community. In the Holy Spirit it received its own principle of life. Now a distinction began to be made between the love of the brother and the love of all.<sup>33</sup> To this extent brotherly love can be called a new commandment; it binds the believers together in their difference from the world. But, for the rest, there is a single religion and a single moral law in the Old and the New Testament. There is some clarification, it is true, and there is also a different development and application, but no external addition or mechanical amplification takes place. Christ was not a new law-giver alongside of and above Moses, but He Himself in His own life and death fulfilled the law and by His Spirit He brings it to fulfillment in all those who are His disciples.

Although Christ and His apostles regularly relate the moral law of the Old Testament to the love of God and the neighbor, there gradually grew up in the Christian moral teaching the habit of explaining the virtues and the duties of man in explication of the Ten Commandments. This was done especially by the Reformers, because they saw one of the earmarks of good works to be this, namely, that they take place according to the will of God. In so doing they took position against the Roman Catholic Church which reckoned among the good works also those actions which are based on human ordinances and laws (compare the Heidelberg Catechism, Answer 91).

Rome makes a distinction between commandments and advices, and holds that these advices were added to the law of Moses by Christ as a new and higher law-giver. In its earliest period the Christian church did not yet know this distinction; but when the period of persecution passed for the church and all kinds of people joined themselves to her, people who joined the church solely for prestige and distinction, then the moral level fell off and many seriously disposed persons withdrew into solitude. The monasticism which thus put in its appearance tried to cling to the moral idea, but it did this in a way which could not be followed by the ordinary Christians, living as they were in family and vocation. Thus there gradually came to be a distinction between the religious or clerical and the lay people, and so a higher and a lower morality came to be discriminated, a difference between commandments and advices. In other words, the com-

mandments contained in the ten statements were binding for all Christians, but the advices were left to the optional choice of people. Among these additions there were soon reckoned the so-called chastity, or the celibate state, on the basis of Matthew 19:11, 12 and I Corinthians 7:ff.; poverty, or the disposition of all earthly possessions, in appeal to Matthew 19:21 and I Corinthians 9:14; and the absolute obedience to the superior under whose directions one places himself, in reference to Matthew 16:24 and Luke 14:26, 27. But in the monastic orders these are often supplemented by all kinds of abstinences, mortifications, chastisements, all in appeal to Matthew 5:29, 39, and 42. It is true that in doing this, Rome wants to maintain that the ideal of moral perfection is the same for all believers and must be pursued by them all in the way of obedience to the commandments. But whoever adds the advices to the commandments follows a faster and a safer way to the achievement of the purpose, and also attains a greater worth and a richer reward. While the ordinary believer, who fulfills the law, remains an unprofitable servant, who has done only what was demanded of him (Luke 17:10), the other Christian, who has also followed up the advices, hears himself addressed as the good and faithful servant who has been faithful over little and is being appointed ruler over many things (Matt. 25:21).

It is natural enough that the Reformation could not endorse this distinction. Deeply convinced of the depravity of human nature, it taught that the regenerate too could not keep the law perfectly, that their best works were still tainted with sin, and that even the most saintly could achieve nothing more than a small beginning of the perfect obedience (Heidelberg Catechism, Answers 62 and 114). The believer, in other words, could never arrive at the point of achieving the advices, simply because he had more than enough to do in fulfilling the commandments themselves. Anyhow, God requires in the moral law that we love Him with all our mind, and with all our strength, and our neighbor as ourselves (Matt. 22:37; Luke 10:27). How, then, can anything further be added to such a commandment? If God demands us in our entirety in all times and in all places for His service, then nothing remains which represents an option that we can either take or ignore, and which we can according to our free choice either give Him or withhold.

There is consequently no basis for the claim that Christ added anything as a sort of law of freedom to the required commandments of the Mosaic law. For although there are instances in which a person must refrain from marrying, must dispose of his property, must withdraw from his ordinary environment and vocation, no special option comes to him which he can follow up or neglect. Rather, the one and the same law demands in terms of the nature of the circumstances a particular application and constitutes this application a duty. The rich young man did not receive an option from Christ which he could reject as well as accept, but he received, as a touchstone of the integrity and resoluteness of his heart, the commandment to sell all that he had and to give it to the poor. From this it would be manifest whether or not he was totally committed to Christ and His king-

dom. We must distinguish therefore between law and duty: the law is one and the same for all, but duty is the particular way in which the general moral law must be applied by each individual in accordance with his nature and circumstances.

The Reformers accordingly rejected all works which depended upon the determinations of men or upon the prescriptions of the church, and returned to the will of God as the norm of good works. That will, they found briefly and substantially expressed in the Ten Commandments. But the law of the Ten Commandments does not stand loosely and independently by itself; it finds itself, rather, in the middle of a rich environment. In its material content it originally was written on the heart of man created as he was by God Himself. It is partially still preserved there inasmuch as people continue to do naturally the things of the law, and so prove that the works of the law are written in their hearts (Rom. 2:14, 15). Every human being has the awareness that in his existence and in his conduct he is bound to certain definite moral laws, and he feels that when he transgresses these his conscience accuses him. In Israel that law was restored by way of a particular revelation to its original purity, was made serviceable to the covenant of grace which, according to its introductory words, God had set up with His people, and was taken up in a body of rights and ordinances which had to govern the whole life of the people. Besides, this law was explained, developed, and applied throughout the history of Israel by the psalmists, proverb writers, and prophets, so that Jesus could say that the whole law and the prophets hung on the two commandments of love towards God and the neighbor (Matt. 22:40).

Accordingly, when Christ brings on the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises of salvation, He does not discard the law, but fulfills all its righteousness; by His perfect obedience He paves the way and in the Holy Spirit grants the power by which His disciples can and will walk, in principle, according to the commandments of the law. In fact, we can say that the whole bearing of the gospel is that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in those who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. The spiritual life of regeneration is made serviceable to the restoration of the moral life. The long series of admonishments with which the apostles as a general rule conclude their epistles are an amplification and application of the holy law of the Lord, and they are intended to help the believers to live in all their relationships and circumstances according to the will of God and the glorification of His name. The law of the Ten Commandments may not be separated from this rich context of affairs. Indeed, the Decalogue must be viewed and explained in the light of the whole revelation of God in nature and in Scripture.

Understood in this way, the Ten Commandments are a brief summary of the Christian ethic and an unsurpassed rule for our life. There are also many other laws to which we are bound. God also laid down the laws for our thinking, for our appreciation of the beautiful, for our social life, for our study and use of nature. He laid down laws for all His creatures, for heaven and earth, for sun and moon and stars, for day and night, for

summer and winter, for seed time and harvest.<sup>34</sup> But the moral law far outrivals these ordinances, for in distinction from them all, the moral law directs itself to the will of man, or rather to man himself as a willing being, and thus to the innermost essence of his existence, to the core of his personality. And the moral law lays down the demand that it be kept not merely in words and deeds but quite as well in thoughts and desires; the law is spiritual (Rom. 7:14); we must be perfect even as our Father who is in Heaven is perfect (Matt. 5:48); and in the tenth commandment the law burrows through to the root of sin, to covetousness or desire, and constitutes this also guilty and impure before the face of God.

Besides, this law governs all the relationships in which man finds himself, whether to God, whether to his fellow man, to himself, or to the whole of nature. It governs his relationship to his fellow human beings in their various ranks and gradations, in their life, their vocations, and their property. It governs his relationship to the truth of his reason and to the integrity of his heart. And in all this it governs his relationship to the whole nature which is his environment, to his office and his calling, to his work and recreation, to the whole of animate and inanimate nature. And in this innermost core of his being as well as in these rich relationships the moral law requires of man that in everything he does he shall do it to the glory of God (I Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17).

When we first sense the law in this deep, spiritual sense, we are appalled and despair of fulfilling it. If we knew of no other righteousness than that which the law requires of us, we should not be in a position to fulfill it and would not even have the desire to do so. We should then be trying always to rob the law of its spiritual content, to externalize it, to suit it to our fallen condition, and would deceive ourselves into believing that we could by a respectable civic life satisfy its high demands. The natural man is offended by the spiritual significance of the law, that is, by its perfection; internally he resists the absolute righteousness and holiness which it demands. But the moment we have learned to know that other righteousness and holiness which God has given in Christ and which through faith He makes our own, our attitude towards the law and our sense of its significance changes entirely. True, we may still complain as Paul does that we are still carnally sold under sin, but even so we let the law stand in its exalted sublimity, and make no effort to pull it down off its high pedestal. We continue to honor it as holy and righteous and good, for it is the law of God. We love it precisely because it is so spiritual in character. We delight in it according to the inner man. And we thank God not for the gospel only but also for His law, for His holy, righteous, perfect law. That law too becomes to us a revelation and a gift of His grace. How love I Thy law; it is my meditation all the day!

Although the believers receive immediately in regeneration an inner desire and love, and thus want to live according to the will of God in all good works, they are not immediately perfect and, as a matter of fact, do not achieve this perfection in this life. Sanctification is to be distinguished

from justification. Justification consists of a divine acquittal which is at once completed. True, it is repeatedly applied to the conscience, but it is not developed and increased. But the life of sanctification is, like all the life of the creature, bound to the law of development. It has its point of origin in regeneration, it requires nourishment in order to grow strong, and it reaches its apex only when it will be fully revealed with Christ.

In the Old Testament it was already said of the Messiah that He would feed His flock like a shepherd; He would gather the lambs with His arm and carry them in His bosom, and would gently lead those that are with young (Isa. 40:11). And elsewhere we are told even more fully concerning Him that the Lord has anointed Him to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, to comfort those that mourn in Zion, to give them the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, beauty for ashes, in order that they be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, in order that He may be glorified (Isa. 61:1-3; compare Ezek. 34:16).

Hence Christ during the period of His ministry on earth does not direct Himself only to the mature in Israel, but He comes also to the children and ascribes the Kingdom of Heaven to them (Matt. 18:1-6; 19:13, 14). He calls not only the inhabitants of Chorazin and Bethsaida, of Capernaum and Jerusalem, to repentance but also the publicans and sinners, and He invites all those who labor and are heavy laden in order to give them rest. He calls the heirs of the kingdom by various names, speaking of them as those who are poor and those who mourn, as those who hunger and those who thirst, as those who are meek and those who are peaceful (Matt. 5:3-9), and He distinguishes between those who are lesser and those who are greater, those who are first and those who are last in the kingdom (Matt. 11:11; 20:16). He often complains about the smallness of the faith, the timidity and the obtuseness of His disciples.<sup>35</sup> He rejoices when He finds great faith in some (Matt. 8:10; 15:28). And over against all He proves Himself to be the good Shepherd who gathers all His sheep together into one flock, who gives them all life and abundance, who preserves them all and sees to it that none of them is lost (John 10:1-30).

Similar distinctions are made among the believers of the apostolic churches. The believers of the Old Testament were still minors who were placed under wards and guardians and to this extent did not yet differ from servants (Gal. 4:1, 2). Compared with these, the believers of the New Testament are free sons and daughters, accepted by God as His children and heirs, and standing in the freedom with which Christ has made them free (Gal. 4:4-7). Nevertheless all kinds of differences still distinguish them. True, the faith which is given to the members of the church is the same in all, but it is nevertheless given to each in accordance with his nature and in a particular measure (Rom. 12:3); the gifts which the Holy Spirit distributes in the church are differing gifts (Rom. 12:6-8; I Cor. 12:4-11); the place which each member of the church occupies is as different from that of other members as is true of the members of the body (Rom. 12:4, 5; I Cor. 12:12ff.). But, quite apart from this difference of gift



and function, there is among the believers also a difference between the strong and the weak,<sup>36</sup> between children who still require milk (I Cor. 3:2; 5:12) and the perfect, the mature, who can tolerate meat and who by the exercise of discrimination have the ability to distinguish between good and evil.<sup>37</sup> Further, there is a difference among the believers between the young men, who have indeed overcome the wicked one but must nevertheless be careful lest they lose this victory, and the fathers who have had long experience in the struggle and have received a deeper insight into the knowledge of Him, namely, Christ, who was from the beginning (I John 2:12-14). In addition to this, a distinction was made in the apostolic period between churches or believers who were steadfast in the faith, abundant in love, patient in suffering, and those others who allowed themselves to be misled by all kinds of error and succumbed to all kinds of sins. The letters of the apostles and particularly that of Christ to the seven churches in Asia Minor (Rev. 1-3) give us detailed descriptions of these varying circumstances.

All this teaches that man is in his spiritual as well as his natural life born as a small and weak and needy creature, and that he must gradually grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (II Peter 3:18). If the spiritual life develops healthily and normally, if it feeds on spiritual nourishment and drinks of the spiritual drink which is Christ (John 6:48ff.; I Cor. 10:3, 4) a continuous growing in grace, an establishment in it, and a progressive renewal according to the image of Christ take place.<sup>38</sup> But all kinds of obstacles interpose themselves on the way of this normal development. The life of the Christian is not a quiet growth, but a continuous struggle, a struggle against enemies without, and no less a struggle against the enemy who dwells within our own bosoms.

In order to understand the nature of this struggle properly, we ought first to note that in the unregenerate also there is often a struggle present. But this is not a spiritual struggle. It is a rational struggle, a conflict between the human reason and conscience, on the one hand, and his will and desire on the other. By his reason and conscience man still remains bound to the moral law, to the world of invisible and eternal things. In his heart he still hears the imperative: Thou shalt. The moment he wants to do the evil, his better judgment offers resistance, warns him and tries to impede him. There is not a single human being who has strayed off so far or sunk so deep that he does not know something of the duality of this tension in his being. And man can under favorable circumstances sometimes be the victor in this struggle. He can counter his appetites and desires by this reason, can suppress them, and silence them; if he does, he becomes a brave, virtuous human being and he lives an honorable life. But that is not yet the true morality; it is not the Christian sanctification. For the struggle in the natural man is constantly the struggle between reason and passion, duty and desire, conscience and appetite. The battle is not waged against all of the sins, but only against some of them, and for the most part only against certain external and publicly offensive sins. The struggle is not waged against sin as sin because it elicits the wrath of God, but against

certain particular sins which stand high in the world's estimate of evils, and which go accompanied by loss or shame. And the human being may on a favorable occasion restrain the evil inclination and harness it, but he cannot root it out and he can bring no internal change to pass inside his heart.

The spiritual struggle which the believers must conduct inside their souls has a very different character. It is not a struggle between reason and passion, but between the flesh and the spirit, between the old and the new man, between the sin which continues to dwell in the believers and the spiritual principle of life which has been planted in their hearts.<sup>39</sup> These two forces are not spatially separated, as though one part of the man—the reason, for example—were regenerated, and another part of him—the heart, for example—were not. Rather, these two forces spread themselves out over the whole man and over all his powers and abilities, so that either one of them can be called a man—the one the old, and the other the new.

It is thus that Paul usually gives expression to the distinction, but in Romans 7 he makes use of other names. There he designates the new, spiritual man as the will that loves the good and wants to do it, as the inward man who delights in the law of God. And he calls the old man the flesh, the sin that dwells in him, the law in his members which wars against the law of his spirit and takes him captive under the law of sin which is in his members. This constitutes a difference in statement, but it is the same matter. In Paul the flesh is often the name used to designate the sinful which continues in the believer and which very certainly continues to dwell in the inner man, in his soul and heart and spirit. The works of the flesh, after all, are not only adultery, fornication, and the like, but also idolatry, hatred, variance, wrath, and the like (Gal. 5:19, 20). And when he thinks of the inward man, the apostle is not thinking only of something which lies deep inside the human being, which continues hidden there and which never in any way comes to external expression, for he plainly states that the believers walk after the spirit and constitute their members weapons of righteousness. But he calls the new man the inward man in this connection because in the fearful struggle against the flesh this man so often lies deeply imbedded and so rarely reveals himself.

The struggle between the two forces consists of this, that the Spirit of Christ who dwells in the believers tries to arouse all kinds of good thoughts, deliberations, inclinations and drives (such as love, joy, peace, and the like: Gal. 5:22) in their mind, heart, and will, and that the flesh on the contrary thereupon raises its voice and tries to defile the whole man with its evil lusts and desires (Gal. 5:19, 20). And in this struggle the flesh appears so mighty again and again that the believers do not do, in the way and in the measure they intended, the thing they wanted to do (Gal. 5:17). When they want to do the good, evil is present with them (Rom. 7:21). The spirit, indeed, is willing, but the flesh is weak (Matt. 26:41).

The conflict, in other words, is not between reason and will, between duty and desire, but is quite differently between willing and doing, between the inner disposition and the sinful act which interposes itself and stands in its way, between the inward man of the heart recreated to God in

true righteousness and holiness, and the old man who, though having lost the position of centrality, nevertheless wants to maintain himself, and who fights the harder in proportion to the extent that he loses more and more ground. This is not a battle between two faculties or two parts of man as it would be if it were conducted by the head against the heart, the reason against the passions, or the soul against the body. Rather, these two forces stand, armed and militant, over against each other battling for the whole of the human person. In one and the same reason of one and the same person there is a battle going on between faith and unbelief, between truth and falsehood; in one and the same heart there is an opposition between pure drives and desires and impure ones; in one and the same will an evil lust opposes a good one and an evil disposition takes issue with a pure one. The struggle is in very fact a struggle between two beings in one and the same being.

Psychologically this can be explained in such a way that in the field of consciousness two groups of ideas have taken position over against each other, and in the field of the heart and desires two series of passions oppose each other. True, we speak of an old and a new man in the believer, and so we give expression to the fact that in the new life the whole man has in principle been changed, and that nevertheless the power of sin continues to dwell in all his faculties and members. But actually what it is is that there are two groups of interests, ideas, inclinations, and the like, which do battle against each other and of which neither the one nor the other has been able to gain the full control of any single human faculty. If the truth of God had completely taken over and conquered the consciousness of the believer, there would naturally be no room left for error and falsehood; and if the love of God had wholly filled the heart, there would be no room for hatred, envy, wrath and the like. But that, as every one knows from his experience, is not the case; and Scripture testifies that we cannot look forward to such a perfect condition in this life. The struggle will remain until the end because faith, hope, love, and all the Christian virtues will never be perfected in this life and therefore room remains in our soul for unbelief, doubt, discouragement, fear, and the like.

In every deliberation and deed of the believer, consequently, the good and the evil lie, as it were, mingled through each other. The measure and the degree to which both are present in any particular thought or deed differ greatly, of course, but nevertheless there is something of the old and something of the new man in all our actions and thoughts. All our ideas, words, and deeds are consequently tainted by sin; they require reconciliation and purging. All the same, they may be called good works to the extent that they are mingled with faith. For all these reasons we must be on guard against Antinomianism, for this heresy separates the old from the new man and sets them over against each other in spatial distinction in a way somewhat like that which distinguishes the spirit from matter, and the soul from the body.

The result of this kind of erroneous thinking is the harmful doctrine that the sinful thoughts and deeds are to be reckoned to the account of the old

man and have nothing to do with the new man. Scripture and experience both, on the contrary, teach that the believer is not an external combination of two beings, but that he remains one being, a single self, a single consciousness, heart, and will, and that no two independent beings but rather two groups of desires and dispositions are conflicting inside one and the same person.

The seriousness of this struggle already intimates that it will be a long time before the new man achieves the victory. Nevertheless many Christians have the idea that believers achieve perfection already upon the earth, and can here and now subdue every sinful deed and inclination. The Pelagians had taught this long ago. In the Council of Trent, Rome took a similar position, and many a Protestant group assumes it also. People tend to appeal to the fact that Holy Scriptures frequently use such glorious words to describe the Christian's condition, for example, I Peter 2:9, 10; II Peter 1:4; and I John 2:20. They point out that Paul, after his conversion, is fully assured of his salvation, and that he remembers the sinful past only as a memory and nothing else, and that the admonishments to the saints to be blameless in their conduct are absolute in their demands (Matt. 5:48), that these admonishments assume the possibility of achieving perfection,<sup>40</sup> and that the grace of God which can be obtained by prayer can avail all things.<sup>41</sup> Accordingly, these people argue that it were doing injustice to the riches of God's love if one regarded the moral perfection of the believer in this life unattainable, and one would at the same time be removing from the believers a strong incentive by the exertion of all their power to strive after such perfection.

Now there is in very fact no doubt about it that the Holy Scriptures speak of the privilege and the status of the people of God in the most arresting way. They refer to the Israel of the Old Testament as a priestly kingdom which God has chosen out of all the nations of the earth as His own, as an object of His love, as His portion and His honor, His son and His servant, His bride whom He adorned and perfected by the glory which He laid upon her.<sup>42</sup> And the believers in the New Testament are called the salt of the earth (Matt. 5:13), the light of the world (Matt. 5:14), the children of God who are born of God and accepted by Him (John 1:13; Gal. 4:5), elect, called, holy, and sanctified (I Cor. 1:2), a chosen generation and royal priesthood (I Peter 2:9, 10), partakers of the divine nature (II Peter 1:4), anointed with the Holy Spirit (I John 2:20), made to be kings and priests by Christ Himself (Rev. 1:6), and heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:17). That which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him, *that* God has prepared for His own now in the days of the New Testament (I Cor. 2:9). Whoever rejects the teaching of Scripture concerning sin and grace can see only gross exaggeration in all this. A radical change, such as takes place in justification and regeneration, is then neither necessary nor possible. But for Scripture, the change which the human being undergoes in faith and conversion is a change from darkness

to light, from death to life, from bondage to liberty, from falsehood to truth, from sin to righteousness, from the expectation of the wrath of God to the hope of glory. And the believers who loom up before us in the Old and New Testament, and who are aware of this enormous change, can only glory in the God of their salvation, and rejoice in His fellowship. How far we stand behind them in the joy of this faith!

Further, Scripture holds up the highest of moral ideals before the believers. The tendency is to ride roughshod over this fact. It is said that the moral life which Christendom wants is one-sided, over-spiritual, exclusively directed to the life in heaven, quite averse to the embrace of earthly concerns, antagonistic to culture, the sort of thing which throws the poor and the oppressed the sop of eternal life hereafter but is altogether indifferent to the improvement of their condition here on earth, something which may be perhaps rich in passive virtues and full of prescriptions about subjection, long-suffering, and patience, but poor in the active virtues which can lead to a conquest and reform of the world. Hence there were many who aspired to a different, better, and higher morality, to an ethical teaching which laid down a dedication to the service of humanity as the highest duty, and which limited its point of view to that of the life on earth.

A concern for earthly interests is in itself, however, in such little conflict with Christian morality that it can in fact be said to be based and founded on the creation of man according to God's image. Man was and in a certain sense still is the image bearer of God, and he is therefore called to subdue the earth and to have dominion over the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air, and all the animals that creep upon the earth (Gen. 1:26-28; Psalm 8). There is no book that does so much justice to the whole of nature as the Holy Scripture. Paganism is always vacillating between an arrogant abuse of the world and a slavish, superstitious fear of its mysterious power. But Moses and the prophets, Christ and the apostles, stand perfectly free over against the world, because they are raised above it by the fellowship with God. And, although it is true that Scripture enjoins it upon us to seek the Kingdom of Heaven first, and although it is further true that the Christians of that early period, tiny group as they were, had to withdraw from numerous circles of life and had to abstain from many things because in the world of that time virtually everything was permeated by the pagan spirit, Christianity in principle included within itself all of the elements which not only gave the freedom to subdue the world and have dominion over the earth but also made these accomplishments the duty and the calling of man.

After all, the Christian ethic is none other than the one briefly and pointedly comprised in the Ten Commandments and which, for the rest, is illuminated and interpreted throughout the whole of Scriptures. In those commandments the love of God stands in the foreground, but the love of the neighbor is the second law, like unto the first. In this love of the neighbor there lies contained, provided it be properly understood, not in a Buddhistic, passive sense but in its Christian, active character, the duty of mission, of reformation, and of culture. By missions the religious and moral possessions of Christianity accrue to all peoples and nations; by

reformation, which is not limited to one period in the church of Christ, nor to one moment in the life of the Christian but must always go on, there takes place the progressive renewal of heart and life, of family and society, according to the demand of the Lord's will; and by culture the subduing of the earth to the control of man, the dominion of matter by spirit, and of nature by the reason, takes place.

The Kingdom of Heaven, which must be sought first, brings all the other things in its wake (Matt. 6:33). Godliness is profitable to all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come (I Tim. 4:8). Nothing is unclean of itself, for every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving, for it is sanctified through the word of God and through prayer (Rom. 14:14; I Tim. 4:4, 5). Christianity, which finds the basis of all culture in the creation of man according to the image of God and its restoration in the resurrection of Christ, calls its faithful confessors to the deliberation of whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, and if there be any other virtue or other praise, of that also (Phil. 4:8).

No higher morality, nor any higher religion is thinkable than the one which is preached to us in the gospel. True, one can go in pursuit of another, but if he does he soon strays off into by-paths. The time in which we are living offers us the strongest evidence for this. The morality of the Scriptures is rejected, but the thing that takes its place is continually coming into conflict with the simplest laws of the ethical life.

The first thing that happens is that all the commandments which are related to the love of God are taken out of the moral teaching. There is then no longer any concern for the love of God, of His name, His truth, and His service; indeed, how should people be able to love God when as a matter of fact they doubt or deny that He can be known, that He reveals Himself, or even that He exists? But in doing this, those who derry the relevancy of the first law undermine the commandments of the second table, for if there is no God who makes it obligatory for man to love his neighbor, what ground for such love can there exist? Consequently, the proponents of a moral teaching independent of religion are hopelessly divided on the question of what principle lies behind the love of man for his fellow man. Some try to base this love on self-interest, some on the happiness it brings about, a third group on the virtue of pity, of compassion, a fourth group on the conscience, but they all together prove that without divine authority for the duty which binds the conscience there can be no such imperative.

As a consequence the proponents of such a morality get into difficulty with each of the particular commandments in which the love of the neighbor is more specifically worked out and circumscribed. It is generally said that people, although they differ greatly in religion, nevertheless remain close together in the sphere of morality. There may be some truth in this, for nature fortunately is stronger than theory, and because the work of the law stands written on the heart of every man, but for the rest reality teaches us something very different. There is not a single commandment of the second table of the law which remains unchallenged in our time. The



authority of father and mother and of all those appointed over us is openly attacked and rejected. Murder is being taken less seriously as time goes on: in the case of suicide it is often smoothed over, and in the case of abortion it is not seldom defended. Marriage is regarded as a contract which is assumed for an arbitrary length of time, and adultery has its defenders and supporters. Property is, in the estimate of many, another name for theft. Truth is made serviceable to utility, is made dependent upon evolutionary development, and is distinguished from falsehood only in time and place, or in form and degree. And as for covetousness, it celebrates its triumph in the mammonistic spirit of our age.

Over against all these bastardizations of morality Scripture maintains the moral ideal in uncurtailed and unadulterated form. It never does violence to the holiness of God and the sanctity of His law, but again and again places these in all their majesty sharply before the consciences of men. The thing that Jesus said to His disciples, Be ye perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect, is repeated in different words by all the apostles in their admonishments to the believers. Sin has no right at all to existence, least of all in those who are named by the name of Christ. Nothing may ever be subtracted from the demand of the moral law, least of all by those who have died with Christ and with Him been raised to a new life. And if then, in the providence of God, the old man only gradually dies out in the believer, and the new man only gradually grows up and only hereafter accomplishes perfection, all this points to the great long-suffering and forbearance of God. This is a forbearance which He can exercise because Christ covers the sin of the church with His righteousness and holiness and guarantees the perfecting of His people.

Although the moral law, which is the rule of life for the believers, can be satisfied with nothing other than a perfect love of God and of the neighbor, it is nevertheless quite as evident that according to Scripture no single believer has ever reached such perfection or ever can reach it in this life. The saints of the Bible were all people who often faltered or stumbled, and some of them, such as a David or a Peter, fell into grave sins, although they also in the deepest remorse made confession of it afterwards. No matter whom we may choose to overhear, we never hear the affirmation which can sometimes be spoken by Christians: I do and I have no more sin. On the contrary, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David (Ps. 51), Solomon (I Kings 8:46), Isaiah (Isa. 6:5), Daniel (Dan. 9:4), these, and others like them, all confess to transgression and acknowledge their sins and errors.

The same holds true of the apostle Paul. He was crucified with Christ and he then walked in newness of the Spirit. He stands justified before God and is fully assured of his salvation. He gets glory, humanly speaking, for his apostolic work and is conscious of the faithfulness with which he has fulfilled his calling.<sup>43</sup> But besides ascribing all this to the grace of God,<sup>44</sup> he confesses that no good dwells in his flesh (Rom. 7:18), that the flesh lusts against the Spirit (Gal. 5:17), that to will and to do are in continual conflict in him (Rom. 7:7-25), and that he follows after perfection, but has not yet attained it (Phil. 3:12).

Moses and the prophets make a similar testimony concerning the people of Israel, Christ makes it of His disciples, the apostles of the churches entrusted to their care. Jesus calls His disciples to perfection (Matt. 5:48), and nevertheless teaches them to pray for the forgiveness of their guilt (Matt. 6:12). The Christians in Rome have been raised with Christ to dwell in newness of life (Rom. 6:3ff.), and are nevertheless admonished to make their members serviceable to righteousness unto holiness (Rom. 6:19). The Corinthians were washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of God (I Cor. 6:11), and were nevertheless carnal (I Cor. 3:1-4). The Galatians had received the Spirit by the preaching of the faith (Gal. 3:2), and nevertheless permitted themselves to be tempted into disobedience to the truth (Gal. 3:1). The good work was begun in the Philippians, but it was not completed (Phil. 1:6). In all the churches there are conditions, errors, and defections which are not in harmony with the Christian life. And the apostles are themselves all convinced that sin will continue to cling to the believers so long as they live. We all offend in many things (James 3:2). If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us (I John 1:8).

Still, although perfection is not attainable in this life, the admonishments and appeals nevertheless continue useful and serious. Those who hold to the perfectibility of the believers in this life do, of course, raise this objection, and say that admonishments which cannot or at least cannot *fully* be carried out must necessarily lose their force and in time sap the energy of the believers. This is however a false piece of argumentation. From the fact that a person must do something it does not follow that he can do it. A man may have to pay a sum of money and yet not be able to pay it; in that event he nevertheless remains obligated to pay. And in this same way the moral law can never stop laying down its demand, even though human beings because of sin cannot satisfy it. And, on the contrary, it can be argued with more justice that the person who teaches the perfectibility of the believers always comes out at a lowering of the moral ideal and at a less serious sense of sin.

Certainly, whoever in thinking of sin does not think merely of external, sinful deeds, but also includes within it sinful thoughts and inclinations, can hardly seriously maintain that in this life the believers can be wholly delivered from it. One can hold to the perfectibility of the saints only if one does not take seriously the sinful nature of man, if one does not regard his sinful thoughts and inclinations as sin, and if one does violence to the absolute holiness of the law. In the form for the administration of the Holy Supper in the Reformed churches it is said that we rest assured that no sin or infirmity which still remains in us *against our will* can hinder us from being received of God in grace. There has been much dispute about whether or not the regenerate can still fall into such sins as do not take place from infirmity but are deliberate in character and must therefore be called sins of evil aforethought. Two things however are certain: the one is that in those who are really born again not only the conscience but also the new life, the disposition and the will, in a lesser or greater degree come

into opposition against those sins; and the other is that even the sins of infirmity which we do against our will are sins and are in conflict with the holiness of the law.

Moreover, the admonishments to a holy walk, so far from being useless and unbeneficial, are precisely the means by which Christ applies the righteousness and holiness given to the believers in Christ and works them out. Christ in His highpriestly prayer prays that the Father may sanctify His disciples in the truth, that is, by means of His word, which is truth (John 17:17; compare 15:3). The word which God gave us is in very fact the chief means for our sanctification; the blessing which has accrued, not only to the public preaching, but also to the reading, study, and meditation of that word in the solitude of the family circle, has simply been immeasurable for the nurture of a Christian life. To this word as the means of sanctification there is added the prayer in Jesus' name (John 14:13, 14; 16:23, 24) which gives us access to the divine majesty and fills us with confidence, since there is no one in Heaven nor on earth who loves us more than does Jesus Christ. To these are added further the singing of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), for these exercise a deep influence on the attitude of the heart and the readiness of the will. And finally there are the watchings and fastings,<sup>45</sup> practices which have unjustly fallen into virtually complete disuse. All these means of sanctification prove that in this work also He does not despise the use of means.

Naturally, God is the Almighty One, and He could, had He wanted to, have perfectly sanctified all His children in the moment of regeneration. But that apparently was not His will; in the re-creation He does not deny Himself as Creator. All the life of the creature is born, grows up, and only gradually reaches its maturity. Because the spiritual life is actually life it comes to be and it develops in this same way. God does not inject the righteousness and holiness of Christ into us mechanically, or pour it out as one does water into a vessel, but He works it out in us in an organic way. Hence the one detail does not conflict with the other when the Scripture constantly presents the matter as though the believers must *become* that which they *are*. The Kingdom of Heaven is a gift of God (Luke 12:32) and yet it is a treasure of great worth which must be sought after (Matt. 6:33; 13:45, 46). The believers are the branches of the vine, and they can, accordingly, do nothing without Christ, and yet they are told in His word to remain in Him, in His word, and in His love (John 15). They were elected in Christ from before the foundation of the world, and yet they must be diligent to make their calling and their election sure (Eph. 1:4; II Peter 1:10). They have been sanctified by the one sacrifice of Christ, and must nevertheless follow after sanctification, without which no man shall see the Lord (Heb. 10:10; 12:14). They are complete, and nevertheless require constant perfecting and establishment (Col. 2:10; I Peter 5:10). They have put on the new man, and must nevertheless constantly put him on (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10). They have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts, and must nevertheless still mortify their members which are upon the earth (Gal. 5:24; Col. 3:5). It is God who works in them both to will and to

do according to His good pleasure, and yet they must work out their salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12, 13).

These data do not conflict with each other. The one is simply the ground and guarantee of the other. Because sanctification, like the whole of salvation, is the work of God, we are admonished, obliged, to a new obedience, and we are also qualified for it. He grants abundant grace not that we should instantly or suddenly be holy and continue to rest in this holiness, but that we should persevere in the struggle and remain standing. He hears our prayers but does it in accordance with the law and order which He has fixed for the spiritual life. Hence we are always of good courage, for He who has begun a good work in us will finish it until the day of Jesus Christ. The believers can and they will *become* holy because in Christ they *are* holy.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Lev. 10:10; I Sam. 21:5; Ezek. 22:26.

<sup>2</sup>Exod. 19:6; 29:43; Lev. 11:45ff.; 19:2.

<sup>3</sup>Isa. 5:16; 6:3; 29:23; 30:11, 12; compare Ezek. 37:28; 39:7; Hab. 1:12; 3:3.

<sup>4</sup>Exod. 19:6; 29:43-46; Lev. 11:44; 19:2.

<sup>5</sup>Matt. 12:50; John 4:34; 8:46.

<sup>6</sup>II Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 7:26; I Peter 1:19; 2:22; 3:18; I John 2:1; 3:5.

<sup>7</sup>Jer. 31:33, 34; Ezek. 36:25, 26.

<sup>8</sup>Gal. 2:20; 3:27; Col. 2:12.

<sup>9</sup>Rom. 6:14; Gal. 4:31; 5:1, 13.

<sup>10</sup>Jer. 31:33; 32:38; Ezek. 36:27, 28.

<sup>11</sup>I Cor. 3:9; Eph. 2:20; Col. 2:7; I Peter 2:5.

<sup>12</sup>I Cor. 1:2; 6:11; Titus 3:5.

<sup>13</sup>John 17:17; II Cor. 3:18; Eph. 5:26; I Thess. 5:23; Titus 2:14; Heb. 13:20, 21.

<sup>14</sup>Rom. 8:29; I Cor. 15:49; Phil. 3:21.

<sup>15</sup>Isa. 62:12; Joel 3:17; Obad. 17; Zech. 8:3; 14:20.

<sup>16</sup>Acts 9:13, 32, 41; 26:10; Rom. 1:7; I Cor. 1:2 and elsewhere.

<sup>17</sup>II Cor. 6:16; Gal. 6:16; I Peter 2:5.

<sup>18</sup>John 17:19; I Cor. 1:30; 3:16; 6:11, 19.

<sup>19</sup>Exod. 31:13; Lev. 20:8; 21:8.

<sup>20</sup>Lev. 11:44; 20:7; Num. 11:18.

<sup>21</sup>John 17:17-19; I Cor. 1:2; I Thess. 5:23.

<sup>22</sup>II Cor. 7:1; I Thess. 3:13; 4:3.

<sup>23</sup>Rom. 6:4ff.; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:10.

- <sup>24</sup>Eph. 5:22ff.; 6:1ff.; Col. 3:18ff.; I Peter 2:13ff.; 3:1ff.  
<sup>25</sup>Matt. 22:37-40; Rom. 13:8-10; Gal. 5:14; James 2:8.  
<sup>26</sup>Matt. 3:15; Gal. 3:13; 4:4.  
<sup>27</sup>Rom. 7:1-6; Gal. 4:5; 26ff.; 5:1.  
<sup>28</sup>Rom. 12:2; Eph. 5:10; Phil. 1:10.  
<sup>29</sup>Mark 12:28-34; compare Matt. 7:12.  
<sup>30</sup>Rom. 15:4; I Cor. 10:11; II Tim. 3:15; I Peter 1:12.  
<sup>31</sup>Rom. 13:8-10; Gal. 5:14; II James 2:8.  
<sup>32</sup>John 13:34; compare 15:12; I Thess. 4:9; I Peter 4:8; I John 3:23; 4:21; II John 5.  
<sup>33</sup>Gal. 6:10; I Thess. 3:12; II Peter 1:7.  
<sup>34</sup>Gen. 8:22; Jer. 31:35; 33:25.  
<sup>35</sup>Matt. 6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8; Luke 24:25.  
<sup>36</sup>Rom. 14:1ff.; 15:1; I Cor. 8:7ff.; 9:22; 10:25.  
<sup>37</sup>I Cor. 2:6; 3:2; 14:20; Phil. 3:15; Heb. 5:14.  
<sup>38</sup>Rom. 12:2; II Cor. 3:18; 4:16; Eph. 3:16; I Peter 5:10.  
<sup>39</sup>Rom. 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:4-9; Gal. 5:17-26; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:9, 10.  
<sup>40</sup>Phil. 2:5; I Thess. 2:10; 3:13.  
<sup>41</sup>John 14:13, 14; II Cor. 12:10; Eph. 3:20.  
<sup>42</sup>Exod. 19:5, 6; 29:43; Deut. 7:6ff.; 32:6ff.; Isa. 41:8ff.; Ezek. 16:14.  
<sup>43</sup>Rom. 15:17ff.; I Cor. 4:3; 9:15; 15:31; II Cor. 1:12; 6:3ff; 11:5ff; Phil. 2:16ff.; 3:4ff.; I Thess. 2:10ff.  
<sup>44</sup>I Cor. 15:10; II Cor. 12:9; Phil. 4:13.  
<sup>45</sup>Matt. 17:21; 26:41; Eph. 6:18.

## 14

*Bernard Ramm*

### The Glorification of the Soul

#### The Glorification of the Soul Involves Its Perfection

The Old and New Testament teach (1) that God is a God of glory; (2) that Jesus Christ is the Lord of Glory; (3) that God intends to share his glory with his children in the form of their glorification; and (4) that our present salvation, already begun, is a process which shall terminate in end-time, eschatological glory. [Our topic is] the details of this final glorification.

Salvation can be studied in the New Testament according to several themes. One of the more neglected ones is the concept of perfection. This involves a number of similar words in the Greek language (*telos*, *teleiōtēs*, *teleiōsis*, *teleō*, *teleios*). One of the reasons that there is so little constructive material on perfection is that the literature on the subject bogs itself down in debates over the degree of sanctification attainable in this life. Accordingly, the theme of perfection as a motif for salvation and as a strong eschatological concept is neglected.<sup>1</sup>

The perfection motif can be briefly sketched as follows. God intends a goal (*telos*) for his people. This goal involves the perfection (*teleion*) of

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