

4. The Lord Jesus Christ does not leave his work half done. "He will *thoroughly* purge his floor." Let no man think that he shall escape the narrow and accurate scrutiny which he will make, for he will thoroughly purge away the chaff, and will winnow and fan his people in such a manner as to detect and cast away the empty hypocrite. When he came into the world it was with the design of making atonement for sin by the sacrifice of himself. Nor did he need to do this often, for the excellency of his person he completed at once this great work. He made a thorough expiation by his death on the cross, and by his obedience he wrought out a righteousness for the actual justification of his people. Thus he fulfilled all righteousness. In this great work he did not stop till he said it is finished, and bowed his head and gave up the ghost. Nor did he here leave his work when he had made atonement, but he is exalted as a prince and saviour to carry his work into effect by his operations in the hearts of his people. He lives to give remission of sins to his people, and to give them his Holy Spirit. He exercises his power in taking the prey from the mighty, and in snatching many from the snare of Satan. In the day of his power he comes into the heart, implants his grace, bestows his spirit, and makes all things new. Nor is he here at an end with his work, for he carries forward his grace into lively exercises, and makes the soul to increase in grace, and grow up in conformity unto himself. He not only justifies, he sanctifies his people, and presents them unto his Kingdom and glory. Here we may take occasion to reprove the error of those who would have Christ for righteousness, but see no necessity of holiness.—Here is comfort to the saints who are complaining of a body of sin and death. He will finish his work, for he that hath begun it will also perform it in the day of Christ.

5. Though his work is a thorough work, yet we are not to expect perfection in the present life. The saints are indeed perfect in regard of their justification the moment they are united to Christ; and in reference to his righteousness they are as much justified as they will be to eternity. But this is not the case as to their sanctification. Though the reigning power of sin is broken, so that the man is no longer under its uncontrollable sway, yet it is not wholly destroyed. The lusts of the old man in part remain in the soul in the present state, and sometimes break forth in open acts of rebellion against God and his law. This is what the apostle calls the law in his members which he finds to his sad experience, leading him captive into the law of sin. This is that struggle which there is between the flesh and the spirit which are consequently lusting against one another. These are the two armies which you may see in the Shulamite, Song vi. 13. By reason of these the people of God often suffer a very severe conflict. Nor is there any discharge in the war till they are at death admitted into the Kingdom of their Father. There they are made perfect indeed, every spot will then be washed away, and that which is only in part will be succeeded by that which is perfect. The case with the church of God in general, bears a great similarity to that of particular saints. There is chaff in the floor of the visible church. There are tares among the wheat till the time of the harvest. There are foolish virgins mingled with the wise till the Lord comes to make the separation, And there are