

But we need salvation from the polluting influence of sin,—from its contaminating, and demoralizing influence. In other words, we need *sanctification*. Even the best of God's people on earth are but partially purified. We need to grow in grace, in knowledge, in spirituality of mind. We need to develop our moral Character, imbibe the spirit of Christ, love, and live the law of love, and conform our outer and our inner man to its holy requirements. We are to crucify the flesh with its affections and its lusts ; to put off the old man, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. We are to forget the things which are behind, and press on toward the mark. I am to work out *my own* salvation ; you are to work out your own salvation. Each Christian is to perform his own duties, not the duties devolving upon some one else. Hence the injunction, work out *your own* salvation. And yet there is a most important sense in which it is our imperative duty to work out *each other's* salvation. We can do much to increase the faith, the knowledge, the holiness, the heavenly-mindedness of our fellow Christians. We can pray for one another, love on another, labour for the spiritual and eternal well-being of one another. In this way the people can work out the salvation of the pastor, and the pastor the salvation of his people ; in this way the members of the church can work out not only their own individual salvation, but also the salvation of one another, and the sanctification of the church of which they are members. Let us, dear Christian reader, be in future more active in working out our own salvation ; let us “ give all diligence, adding to our faith, virtue ; and to virtue, knowledge ; and to knowledge, temperance ; and to temperance, patience ; and to patience, godliness ; and to godliness, brotherly kindness ; and to brotherly-kindness, charity. For if these things be in us and abound, they make us that we shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

You will notice also that we are to work out our own sanctification “ *with fear and trembling*.” There are various kinds of fear spoken of in scripture, but the fear of which the apostle here speaks is obviously the fear of dishonouring or displeasing God. We are to fear God. “ The fear of the Lord,” we are told, “ is the beginning of wisdom.”

We are also to distrust our own evil wicked and wayward hearts. The injunction, “ with fear and trembling ” is something like, “ let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” Or