

3. But St. John is especially the apostle of the Christian mystic experience, and if we find that he, too, recognizes that Christian holiness is not merely an experience, but also an active will, through which experience "works," we can have no doubt as to the New Testament teaching on this point. Bearing in mind that all exhortation appeals to the will, we find in St. John's first epistle exhortations as follows: to keeping the commandments, ch. ii. 4-6; to brotherly love, ii. 9, 10; to abstinence from love of the world, ii. 15, etc.; to purity, iii. 3; to abstinence from all sin, iii. 6, etc.; to works of love, iii. 18, and iv. 7, etc. Finally the epistle ends with this appeal to Christian will, "My little children, guard yourselves from idols." While it is true that everywhere these ethical elements are intermingled with phases and forms of inward experience, and words are sometimes used which seem almost to imply an absolutely necessitating connection between the experience and the ethical life, as in iii. 9, yet even in these the element of will is implied, as is evident by comparing v. 18, "We know that whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not; but He that was begotten of God keepeth him (rather himself, see margin), and the evil one toucheth him not." The "cannot sin" of iii. 9, is therefore an ethical, and not a physical cannot, such as a good man uses when he says, I cannot lie, or I cannot disobey God. We take it then to be the common consensus of the writers of the New Testament that the work of the Spirit becomes practical life only through the will. Even such matters as humility, sympathy, brotherly kindness and charity are matters of will, not only as to the outward expression in act, but also as to the *fully perfect* feeling itself, and are, therefore, properly ethical in their character.

The bearing of all this upon the practical side of Christian perfection is most important, and may form the subject of another article. We shall conclude this one by calling attention to the harmony of this process of the work of God's grace with the constitution of our moral nature.

The process of perfecting Christian character and life is two-fold: (a), purification, or, as Wesley phrases it, the death of sin; and (b), maturity, or the fulness of the positive graces and