

'Be perfect,' remember, was not said only to such as Abram. It was said, it is said, to such as you and me, by One who knows our infirmities and imperfections better than we do ourselves.

'Be ye perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect.' This was our Lord's own saying to such as ourselves, and to ourselves.

It was, indeed, repeating the charge to Abram, 'Walk before Me,' wherein we find the clue to the way which leads to perfection.

To set before us the perfect pattern of God's goodness, to follow it with a perfect desire of getting nearer to it without any by-ends, self-serving, or vain-glory : this is our perfection, counted to be such by a merciful One who weighs in His just balances the infirmity of our tempted and feeble nature.

Consider yourselves, then, to be walking as children of a Heavenly Father ; children of feebleness and infirmity, strong only in reliance on the Stronger Arm, and safe only under His guiding eye. Lean on His arm, keep to His path, watch His steps, tread where He trod (you have the footsteps of the perfect Son of God manifest in the flesh to guide yours), then you shall be counted to have reached the child's measure of perfection.

For the child is counted perfect if he follows his father's ways and aims at his likeness, *after his measure*, allowing for the difference of his age, size, and strength. When we say that a child is perfectly like his father, we mean that he is like according to the measure of his age, his abilities, and condition ; and the same do we mean when we say to any creature of flesh and blood, 'Be thou perfect, even as thy Father in Heaven is perfect.'

Thou art perfect, then, my brother in Christ, if thou art ever aiming to be more perfect, learning thy weakness from thy falls, humbled by thy failures, driven to seek the Unseen Help. Thou art perfect, in spite of all thy child's feebleness and tottering, if thou art truly walking before God, with no motive but His glory, nothing in view but His narrow path, no side-glances, no longing to escape from that, no end to reach but His holiness, and finally, His rewarding presence.

O let us comfort each other with these thoughts, lest we faint in our minds when we think of the lofty aims that God has placed before us, and of our own sad and disheartening shortcomings ! Henceforth let neither the loftiness of our calling nor the littleness of our performance fill us with dismay, if only we find that our motives are growing purer, our eye more single, our desire to please God more unmingled, and our pleasure in being used as instruments of His glory, be it only in patient suffering, more unalloyed.

Then may we hope that His Fatherly goodness may lead us on through the lower stages of earthly perfection, even as it led His saints of old, Enoch, Noah, Abram, till with them, and with all the spirits made perfect in Heaven, we may be freed from the imperfections of the flesh, and be called to serve Him as His perfected saints do in His perfect kingdom.

