

When a man sick unto death has become fully convinced of the utter hopelessness of his case in his own hands, and thrown away every remedy devised by himself or recommended by his friends, and sent for a physician who has wisdom to understand and skill to heal his disease, it would be folly to say that at the moment his case was intrusted to the physician his cure was complete. So in the Lutheran view, the transfer and the trust of the soul, for the whole work of sanctification by the Holy Spirit is but the first effectual step in the work. It is the door of the way fairly entered, and the way clearly perceived. So much, no more. The goal and the crown are yonder in the glorious future, and in the open vision and unveiled presence of the King immortal and eternal—but as yet invisible—the only wise God our Saviour.

And it is also easy to see why the Wesleyans reject the idea of absolute perfection attained in the experience, for they see and know that, according to their standard of sinless obedience, it is not true; while, at the same time, it is easy to see how the fact that it is an experimental apprehension of the true way of sanctification, together with the desire to give the experience a distinctive name, has led to the adoption of such terms as "*Christian perfection*" and "perfect love," with a disclaimer of any profession of sinless perfection or absolute angelic holiness of heart and life.

For the Oberlinian idea that the experience brings the soul into a state of sinless perfection, or entire sanctification, the grounds must be sought in three things: first, their philosophy of the will, according to which each volition or choice is in itself absolutely holy, or absolutely unholy, and altogether so. So that when God is chosen, while that choice is predominant, the soul is perfectly holy; and when the world is chosen, then, while that choice is uppermost, the soul is perfectly sinful:—This, with their view of the law of God, as graduated to the sinner's condition, whatever it is, not requiring of all alike the same entire conformity to the absolute and unchangeable standard of heavenly holiness, but claiming no more than the sinner's earthly blindness permits him to see, and no more than his earthly weakness permits him to do. And to these two a third must be added: viz., their definition of sanctification, according to which it is consecration only—or setting apart to God—and so is man's own work, instead of God's. Whereas, according to the popular acceptance, sanctification is the work of God in the soul after it is set apart to God by voluntary consecration. These three things taken together, and taken together with the experience, may serve to shew us why and how the Oberlinians adopt the terms and accept the idea of "entire sanctification" as attained in the experience.

As a closing remark: Let it be borne in mind that these differences are only differences of opinion. Important certainly; but, after all, nothing in comparison with the great facts in which all are agreed. Not for a moment should they be allowed to keep one back from securing the great and blessed realities of such an experimental apprehension of Christ and salvation as is set forth in the examples given. The experience is a reality. Jesus is freely offered as our sanctification as well as our justification. Faith—full trust in him—will bring full salvation with him to the soul. Let no one fail of the grace of God. "Behold, saith he that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth, I have set before thee an open door and no man can shut it."

*(To be continued.)*

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"It may be a sin to long for death, but I am sure it is no sin to long for heaven."—MATTHEW HENRY.