

Almost every word of this passage is emphatic. The grandeur of its surroundings is also remarkable, consisting of great and wonderful precepts ; of rich and broad exhortations evidently condensed, but boldly and hurriedly delivered, with signs of strong emotion in the apostle's spirit—and a full soul : all bearing the burden of perfection, preparing us for the grandeur of the prayer that follows. Nowhere have we, in the same limits, so grand an array of such divinely spoken precepts as here. Precepts which never demanded more from, nor put a higher honor upon human ability. As we proceed, we are made to feel as if the apostle is about to ask some great thing—but, a great thing where there is full preparation and arrangements to receive it ; by having proved all things, held fast that which is good, and kept from every evil. Just at that point, when our ambition to be perfect has been stimulated to the utmost—the transition takes place from what we can do ourselves—to what God must do for us. “The very God of peace sanctify you wholly.”

“*The very God of peace.*” The language is significant and very characteristic of him who does the work. He is emphatically *the very God of peace* ; when men revolted from his allegiance and fell under wrath, God devised means to restore him. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. He hath made *peace* through the blood of his cross ; and preached peace to them which were afar off. Righteousness and peace are the strongholds of his Kingdom. Peace begins the state of grace. Rom. v. 1. Peace pervaded it, and peace is its perfection (John xiv. 27,) and reward,—“the end of that man is peace.”

*Sanctify.* God only is the sanctifier of his saints. It is God that justifieth, it is no less him that sanctifieth. It is not anything we can do ; a man's ideas and language must be very lax, when he speaks of sanctifying himself. When the scriptures speak of our part in this matter, other terms are carefully used. One only could say “I sanctify myself.”

It must, however, be rightly understood what the apostle means. While we are engaged in cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and Spirit, “proving all things,” “holding fast that which is good,” “avoiding all appearance of evil,” then to complete the work and clothe the whole with divine radiancy, he prays, may “God himself sanctify you wholly.”

There is a patriarchal meaning of the word which comes up with it along with the Old Testament. As the sprinkling of typical blood, and the washing of typical water sanctified to the purifying of the flesh, so the better blood, and the purer water of the gospel washed the Spiritual body of the sacrifice. Heb. x. 22.

It is thus applied throughout the epistle to the Hebrews, also with a certain change in St. John's epistles. In this sense, sanctification is one with justification. By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Heb. x. 14. In this sense we are with them a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, to offer up *spiritual sacrifices*, acceptable unto God through Jesus Christ.

The sanctification of the text is not a disciplinary or self-consecrating effort—not the result of a new direction or new impetus given to our