

It is worthy of special note, again, that their differences are altogether those of opinion, not at all of fact. All are agreed as to the essential facts of the experience in question. The shades of difference in the manner of narrating are not at all essential. All agree especially in the one great matter, that the experience is that of the way of sanctification by faith—that of really practically receiving Jesus for sanctification by faith, as before He had been received as a sacrifice for sins. This may be variously expressed, but this is the marrow and substance of the whole matter in every case, and with every class.

Again, all agree as to the fact that this practical, experimental apprehension of Christ is instantaneous in every case, whether the instant can be marked, as in the cases referred to, or not. However long the struggles beforehand, and however gradual the rising of the light afterwards in the soul, there is a moment when Christ is first seen to be *the Way*, and when the soul leaves every other way and trusts solely in Jesus. In these facts all agree. And it may be added, that in the one essential doctrine of the way of sanctification as by faith and not by works, they all agree, of course, if they agree in its practical reception in the experience in question. Theologically, therefore, they are so far in harmony.

Now the differences are, first, as to whether this experience is that of *entire instantaneous sanctification*, or not. Whether the instant the sinner is given up to Christ to be "sanctified, soul, body, and spirit, and preserved blameless until the coming of our Lord," as the apostle prays that the Thessalonians may be, whether then the sinner is indeed in that moment made perfect in holiness, or not. Or if not, whether in any proper sense he may be spoken of as perfect.

Oberlinians affirm, in the case, absolute moral perfection.

Wesleyans affirm a modified perfection called "Christian."

Lutherans affirm neither, but deny both. Then as to terms descriptive of the experience, there is a corresponding difference.

Oberlinians use freely and without qualification the term "entire sanctification."

Wesleyans also use the word *entire* in a restricted sense, though their favorite names are "perfect love" and "Christian perfection," as modifying and qualifying the idea of absolute perfection.

Lutherans have discussed the experience less as a thing distinct, and therefore have known it less, and named it less distinctively, than either Wesleyans or Oberlinians.

Cases of it have always occurred in every great awakening, and often also in solitary instances, in the furnace of affliction or under the special influences of sovereign grace and power. Such cases have generally received the convenient name, "second conversion:" but in the standards, as in the "Westminster Assembly's Confession," it is called "the full assurance of grace and salvation," and elsewhere, "the full assurance of faith," while in hymns it is often named, "full salvation."

Now, as to the reasons of these agreements and these differences, it will be easy to see them, if we scan the matter closely.

All agree in the facts of the experience, because the facts themselves are in harmony in all cases. And all agree in the doctrine of sanctification by faith, because in every case that is the great principle received experimentally in place of sanctification by works. And all agree that this experimental reception of Christ for sanctification is instantaneous, because it could not be otherwise. For in every change of one principal of action for another, however long the matter may be under consideration beforehand, the change at last, when it does occur, must from the nature of the case be instantaneous.