

upon us, whether of justification from the law, or of sanctification to God, or of glorification in his presence above; and thus we are changed by the view of Christ into his image from glory to glory. The same thing is expressed also by the apostle in another form in 1 Cor. i. 30, where the various relations of Christ are unfolded in order to us as they do actually open out in experience, to meet our unfolding wants from stage to stage—"Made of God unto us WISDOM," that is, conviction of folly and sin, conviction, as Jesus himself says, because they believe not on me. The fear of God which, according to King Solomon, is the beginning of wisdom—RIGHTEOUSNESS, that is, justification from sin—SANCTIFICATION that is, transformation into the likeness of God—and REDEMPTION, that is, transfiguration from the earthly image of the Lord to the glorious image he bears now in heaven, and translation to heaven.

The answer, therefore, to the question, "Why speak of the Christian life as a thing of stages at all?" is first of all because *it is so*, and so to speak of it is to speak truth.

But this is not all. There is another reason impelling it, because it is a fire in the bones—it must out.

And another and a better one still, because it is the way of all ways to arrest attention, and induce men to pass for the experimental apprehension of that which is set before them.

The preaching of John the Baptist had this striking feature, that it was distinct and clear above all who had gone before him, and therefore his success was greater, insomuch that the Saviour said that amongst those born into the world a greater had not risen than John. His trumpet had the clarion ring of an Elijah in its power. And it had also the clear ring of an apostle almost in the definiteness with which he presented the one stage of experience, "*metenoye*," change of heart.

The force of John's preaching is in some measure hidden to us by the translation of the word *metenoye* as repentance, whereas its full meaning is new birth or change of heart. But as we, in imagination, bend the ear and listen to the prophet on the banks of the Jordan, proclaiming to the gathering crowd coming from far and near the baptism of repentance, the need of a change of heart to escape the damnation of hell, we might almost imagine it to be Whitefield on Bristol common, reiterating the Saviour's words, "Except ye shall be born again, ye cannot see the kingdom of God," and urging his message by depicting the wrath to come. It was just this vivid apprehension of the truth, and this definite presentation of it, which gave both the Judean and the Anglican prophets such power and success.

The success of the apostles in winning men to the higher experience—the baptism of the Holy Ghost—first received by themselves, and then definitely proclaimed by them to others, as the privilege of all who would believe on the Lord Jesus, was due also, in a great measure, to the definite vividness with which they set this stage of the Christian life before men as an object of desire and attainment.

There are those who seek to muffle the arrows of truth, lest their naked points should pierce the heart and hurt the feelings; but arrows must be *sharp* in the hearts of the King's enemies, or they will not fall under them.

It is the lack of a definite experience, first, in our own hearts of the fact and truth that Christ is made of God unto us *sanctification*, and then the consequent lack of a clear and vivid presentation of it to others, as an experience within sure and easy reach of all who will make it a point, and urge their way to it, which, more than anything else—love of the world not excepted—keeps the church back from receiving and living in the fulness of the blessings of the gospel of peace.

(*To be continued.*)