

The
Christian's Secret
of a
Happy Life

Complete and Unabridged

Hannah Whitall Smith



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The Cry of Saint Paul

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is,
that they might be saved.

Romans 10:1

Oh, could I tell, ye surely would believe it!
Oh, could I only say what I have seen!
How should I tell, or how can ye receive it,
How, till He bringeth you where I have been?

Therefore, O Lord, I will not fail nor falter;
Nay but I ask it, nay but I desire,
Lay on my lips thine embers of the altar,
Seal with the ring, and furnish with the fire.

Give me a voice, a cry, and a complaining,—
Oh, let my sound be stormy in their ears!
Throat that would shout, but cannot stay for
straining,
Eyes that would weep, but cannot wait for
tears.

Quick, in a moment, infinite forever,
Send an arousal better than I pray;
Give me a grace upon the faint endeavor,
Souls for my hire, and Pentecost to-day!

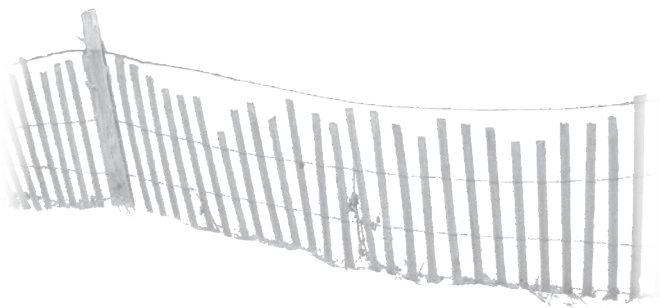
Scarcely I catch the words of His revealing,
Hardly I hear Him, dimly understand;
Only the Power that is within me pealing
Lives on my lips, and beckons with my hand.

Whoso has felt the Spirit of the Highest,
Cannot confound, nor doubt Him, nor deny;
Yea, with one voice, O world, though thou de-
niest,
Stand thou on that side, for on this am I.

F. W. H. Myers

PART 1

The Life



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1

Is It Scriptural?

No thoughtful person can question the fact that, for the most part, the Christian life, as it is generally lived, is not entirely a happy life. A keen observer once said to me, "You Christians seem to have a religion that makes you miserable. You are like a man with a headache. He does not want to get rid of his head, but it hurts him to keep it. You cannot expect outsiders to seek very earnestly for anything so uncomfortable." Then for the first time I saw, as in a flash, that the religion of Christ ought to be, and was meant to be, to its possessors, not something to make them miserable, but something to make them happy; and I began then and there to ask the Lord to show me the secret of a happy Christian life.

The Life

It is this secret, so far as I have learned it, that I shall try to tell in the following pages.

All of God's children, I am convinced, feel instinctively, in their moments of divine illumination, that a life of inward rest and outward victory is their inalienable birthright. Can you not remember, some of you, the shout of triumph your souls gave when you first became acquainted with the Lord Jesus, and had a glimpse of His mighty saving power? How sure you were of victory, then! How easy it seemed to be more than conquerors, through Him that loved you! Under the leadership of a Captain, who had never been foiled in battle, how could you dream of defeat? And yet, to many of you, how different has been your real experience! Your victories have been few and fleeting, your defeats many and disastrous. You have not lived as you feel children of God ought to live. You have had perhaps a clear understanding of doctrinal truths, but you have not come into possession of their life and power. You have rejoiced in your knowledge of the things revealed in the Scriptures, but have not had a living realization of the things themselves, consciously felt in the soul. Christ is believed in, talked about, and served, but He is not known as the soul's actual and very life, abiding there forever, and revealing Himself there continually in His beauty. You have found Jesus as your Saviour from the penalty of sin, but you have not found Him as your Saviour from its power. You have carefully studied the Holy Scriptures, and have gathered much precious truth therefrom, which you have trusted would feed and nourish your spiritual life, but in spite of it all, your souls are starving and dying within you, and you cry out in secret, again and again, for that bread and water of life which you see promised in the Scriptures to all

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believers. In the very depths of your hearts, you know that your experience is not a Scriptural experience; that, as an old writer said, your religion is “but a *talk* to what the early Christians enjoyed, possessed, and lived in.” And your hearts have sunk within you, as, day after day, and year after year, your early visions of triumph have seemed to grow more and more dim, and you have been forced to settle down to the conviction, that the best you can expect from your religion is a life of alternate failure and victory, one hour sinning, and the next repenting, and then beginning again, only to fail again, and again to repent.

But *is* this all? Had the Lord Jesus only this in his mind when He laid down His precious life to deliver you from your sore and cruel bondage to sin? Did He propose to Himself only this partial deliverance? Did He intend to leave you thus struggling under a weary consciousness of defeat and discouragement? Did He fear that a continuous victory would dishonor Him, and bring reproach on His name? When all those declarations were made concerning His coming, and the work He was to accomplish, did they mean only this that you have experienced? Was there a hidden reserve in each promise that was meant to deprive it of its complete fulfillment? Did “delivering us out of the hand of our enemies” mean that they should still have dominion over us? Did “enabling us always to triumph” mean that we were only to triumph sometimes? Did being made “more than conquerors through him that loved us” mean constant defeat and failure? Does being “saved to the uttermost” mean the meager salvation we see manifested among us now? Can we dream that the Saviour, who was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, could

possibly see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied in such Christian lives as fill the Church today? The Bible tells us that “for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil”; and can we imagine for a moment that this is beyond His power, and that He finds Himself unable to accomplish the thing He was manifested to do?

In the very outset, then, settle down on this one thing, that Jesus came to save you now, in this life, from the power and dominion of sin, and to make you more than conquerors through his power. If you doubt this, search your Bible, and collect together every announcement or declaration concerning the purposes and object of His death on the cross. You will be astonished to find how full they are. Everywhere and always, His work is said to be to deliver us from our sins, from our bondage, from our defilement; and not a hint is given, anywhere, that this deliverance was to be only the limited and partial one with which Christians so continually try to be satisfied.

Let me give you the teaching of Scripture on this subject. When the angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph in a dream, and announced the coming birth of the Saviour, he said, “And thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.”

When Zacharias was “filled with the Holy Ghost” at the birth of his son, and “prophesied,” he declared that God had visited His people in order to fulfil the promise and the oath He had made them; which promise was, “that he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.”

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When Peter was preaching in the porch of the temple to the wondering Jews, he said, "Unto you first, God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities."

When Paul was telling to the Ephesian Church the wondrous truth that Christ had so loved them as to give Himself for them, he went on to declare that His purpose in thus doing was "that he might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

When Paul was seeking to instruct Titus, his own son after the common faith, concerning the grace of God, he declared that the object of that grace was to teach us "that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world"; and adds, as the reason of this, that Christ "gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify us unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

When Peter was urging upon the Christians to whom he was writing a holy and Christlike walk, he tells them that "even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth"; and adds, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."

When Paul was contrasting in the Ephesians the walk suitable for a Christian with the walk of an unbeliever, he sets before them the truth in Jesus as being this, "that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which

is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

And when, in Romans 6, he was answering forever the question as to a child of God continuing in sin, and showing how utterly foreign it was to the whole spirit and aim of the salvation of Jesus, he brings up the fact of our judicial death and resurrection with Christ as an unanswerable argument for our practical deliverance from it, and says “God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life”; and adds, “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”

It is a fact sometimes overlooked that, in the declarations concerning the object of the death of Christ, far more mention is made of a present salvation from sin, than of a future salvation in a heaven beyond, showing plainly God’s estimate of the relative importance of these two things.

Dear Christians, will you receive the testimony of the Scripture on this matter? The same crucial questions that troubled the Church in Paul’s day are troubling it now: first, “Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?” and second, “Do we then make void the law through faith?” Shall our answer to these be Paul’s emphatic “God forbid,” and his triumphant assertions that, instead of making it void, “we establish the law”; and that “what the law could not do, in

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that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit?"

Can we, for a moment, suppose that the holy God, who hates sin in the sinner, is willing to tolerate it in the Christian, and that He has even arranged the plan of salvation in such a way as to make it impossible for those who are saved from the guilt of sin to find deliverance from its power?

As Dr. Chalmers well says, "Sin is that scandal which must be rooted out from the great spiritual household over which the Divinity rejoices. . . . Strange administration, indeed, for sin to be so hateful to God as to lay all who had incurred it under death, and yet, when readmitted into life, that sin should be permitted; and that what was before the object of destroying vengeance should now become the object of an upheld and protected toleration. Now that the penalty is taken off, think you it is possible that the unchangeable God has so given up His antipathy to sin as that man, ruined and redeemed man, may now perseveringly indulge, under the new arrangement, in that which under the old destroyed him? Does not the God who loved righteousness and hated iniquity six thousand years ago bear the same love to righteousness and hatred to iniquity still? . . . I now breathe the air of loving-kindness from heaven, and can walk before God in peace and graciousness; shall I again attempt the incompatible alliance of two principles so adverse as that of an approving God and a persevering sinner? How shall we, recovered from so awful a catastrophe, continue that which first involved us in it? The cross of Christ, by the same mighty and decisive stroke wherewith it moved the curse of

sin away from us, also surely moves away the power and the love of it from over us.”

And not Dr. Chalmers only, but many other holy men of his generation, and of our own, as well as of generations long past, have united in declaring that the redemption accomplished for us by our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross at Calvary is a redemption from the power of sin as well as from its guilt, and that He is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him.

A quaint old Quaker divine of the seventeenth century says: “There is nothing so contrary to God as sin, and God will not suffer sin always to rule His masterpiece, man. When we consider the infiniteness of God’s power for destroying that which is contrary to Him, who can believe that the devil must always stand and prevail? I believe it is inconsistent and disagreeable with true faith for people to be Christians and yet to believe that Christ, the eternal Son of God, to whom all power in heaven and earth is given, will suffer sin and the devil to have dominion over them.

“But you will say no man by all the power he hath can redeem himself, and no man can live without sin. We will say Amen to it. But if men tell us that when God’s power comes to help us and to redeem us out of sin, it cannot be effected, then this doctrine we cannot away with; nor I hope you neither.

“Would you approve of it if I should tell you that God puts forth His power to do such a thing, but the devil hinders Him? That it is impossible for God to do it, because the devil does not like it? That it is impossible that any one should be free from sin, because the devil hath got such a power in them that God cannot cast him out? This is lamentable doctrine, yet hath not this been preached? It doth in plain terms say,

though God doth interpose His power, it is impossible, because the devil hath so rooted sin in the nature of man. Is not man God's creature, and cannot He new make him, and cast sin out of him? If you say sin is deeply rooted in man, I say so, too; yet not so deeply rooted but Christ Jesus hath entered so deeply into the root of the nature of man, that He hath received power to destroy the devil and his works, and to recover and redeem man into righteousness and holiness. Or else it is false that "He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him." We must throw away the Bible if we say that it is impossible for God to deliver man out of sin.

"We know," he continues, "when our friends are in captivity, as in Turkey or elsewhere, we pay our money for their redemption; but we will not pay our money if they be kept in their fetters still. Would not any one think himself cheated to pay so much money for their redemption, and the bargain he made so that he shall be *said* to be redeemed, and be *called* a redeemed captive, but he must wear his fetters still? How long? As long as he hath a day to live. This is for bodies, but now I am speaking of souls. Christ must be made to me redemption, and rescue me from captivity. Am I a prisoner anywhere? Yes, verily, verily, he that committeth sin, saith Christ, he is a servant of sin, he is a slave of sin. If thou has sinned, thou art a slave, a captive that must be redeemed out of captivity. Who will pay a price for me? I am poor I have nothing; I cannot redeem myself: who will pay a price for me? There is One come who hath paid a price for me. That is well; that is good news; then I hope I shall come out of my captivity. What is His name? Is He called a Redeemer? So, then, I do expect the benefit of my redemption and that I shall go out of my captivity. No, say they, you must abide

in sin as long as you live. What! must we never be delivered? Must this crooked heart and perverse will always remain? Must I be a believer, and yet have no faith that reacheth to sanctification and holy living? Is there no mastery to be had, no getting victory over sin? Must it prevail over me as long as I live? What sort of a Redeemer, then, is this, or what benefit have I in this life, of my redemption?"

Similar extracts might be quoted from Marshall and Romaine, and many others, to show that this doctrine is no new one in the Church, however much it may have been lost sight of by the present generation of believers. It is the same old story that has filled with songs of triumph the daily lives of many saints of God, both Catholic and Protestant, throughout all ages; and it is now being sounded forth afresh to the unspeakable joy of weary and burdened souls.

Do not reject it, then, dear reader, until you have prayerfully searched the Scriptures to see whether these things be indeed so. Ask God to open the eyes of your understanding by His Spirit, that you may know "what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places." And when you have begun to have some faint glimpses of this power, learn to look away utterly from your own weakness, and, putting your case into His hands, trust Him to deliver you.

"When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses, and chariots, and a people more than thou, be not afraid of them: for the Lord thy God is with thee, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And it shall be, when ye are come nigh unto the battle, that the priest

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shall approach and speak unto the people, and shall say unto them, Hear, O Israel, ye approach this day unto battle against your enemies: let not your hearts faint, fear not, and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them; for the Lord your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies to save you.”

2

God's Side and Man's Side

Much misunderstanding arises, in reference to this subject of the life and walk of faith, from the fact that its two sides are not clearly seen. People are apt to think that there is only one side to it, and, dwelling exclusively upon the one they happen to see the most clearly, without even a thought of any other, it is no wonder that distorted views of the whole matter are the legitimate consequence.

Now, there are two very decided and distinct sides to this subject, and, like all other subjects, it cannot be fully understood unless both of these sides are kept constantly in view. I refer of course to God's side and man's side; or, in other words, to God's part in the work of sanctification, and man's part. These are very distinct and even contrasting, but, although

to a cursory observer they may sometimes so appear, they are not really contradictory.

At one time this was very strikingly illustrated to me. There were two teachers of this interior life holding meetings in the same place, at alternate hours. One spoke only of God's part in the work, and the other dealt exclusively upon man's part. They were both in perfect sympathy with each other, and realized fully that they were each teaching different sides of the same great truth; and this also was understood by a large proportion of their hearers. But with some of the hearers it was different, and one lady said to me in the greatest perplexity, "I cannot understand it at all. Here are two preachers undertaking to teach just the same truth, and yet to me they seem flatly to contradict each other." And I felt at the time that she expressed a puzzle that, very often, causes great difficulty in the minds of many honest inquirers after this truth.

Suppose two friends go to see some celebrated building, and return home to describe it. One has seen only the north side, and the other only the south. The first says: "The building was built in such a manner, and has such and such stories and ornaments." "Oh, no," says the other, interrupting him, "you are altogether mistaken; I saw the building, and it was built in quite a different manner, and its ornaments and stories were so and so." A lively dispute might follow upon the truth of the respective descriptions, until the two friends should discover that they had been describing different *sides* of the same building, and then all would be reconciled at once.

I would like to state, as clearly as I can, what I judge to be the two distinct sides in this matter; and to show how looking at one, without seeing the other, will be sure to create wrong impressions and view of the truth.

To state it in brief, I would say, that man's part is to trust, and God's part is to work; and it can be seen at a glance how these two parts contrast with each other, and yet are not necessarily contradictory. I mean this: there is a certain *work* to be accomplished. We are to be delivered from the power of sin, and are to be made perfect in every good work to do the will of God. "Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord," we are to be actually "changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." We are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds, that we may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. A real work is to be wrought in us and upon us. Besetting sins are to be conquered; evil habits are to be overcome; wrong dispositions and feelings are to be rooted out, and holy tempers and emotions are to be begotten. A positive transformation is to take place. So at least the Bible teaches. Now, somebody must do this. Either we must do it for ourselves, or another must do it for us. We have most of us tried to do it for ourselves at first, and have grievously failed; then we discover, from the Scriptures and from our own experience, that it is something we are unable to do, but that the Lord Jesus Christ has come on purpose to do it, and that He will do it for all who put themselves wholly into His hands and trust Him without reserve. Now, under these circumstances, what is the part of the believer, and what is the part of the Lord? Plainly the believer can do nothing but trust; while the Lord, in whom he trusts, actually does the work entrusted to Him. *Trusting* and *doing* are certainly contrasted things, often indeed contradictory; but are they contradictory in this case? Manifestly not, because it is two different parties that are concerned. If we should say of one

party in a transaction that he trusted his case to another, and yet attended to it himself, we should state a contradiction and an impossibility, but, when we say of two parties in a transaction that one trusts the other to do something, and that the other goes to work and does it, we are stating something that is perfectly simple and harmonious. When we say, therefore, that, in this higher life, man's part is to trust, and God's part is to do the thing entrusted to Him, we do not surely present any very difficult or puzzling problem.

The preacher who is speaking on man's part in the matter cannot speak of anything but surrender and trust, because this is positively all the man can do. We all agree about this. And yet such preachers are constantly criticized as though, in saying this, they had meant to imply there *was* no other part, and that therefore nothing but trusting is to be done. And the cry goes out that this doctrine of faith does away with all realities, that souls are just told to trust, and there is the end of it, and that they sit down thenceforward in a sort of religious easy-chair, dreaming away a life fruitless of any actual result. All this misapprehension arises, of course, from the fact that either the preacher has neglected to state, or the hearer has failed to hear the other side of the matter, which is that when we trust, the Lord works, and that a great deal is done, not by us, but by Him. Actual results are reached by our trusting, because our Lord undertakes the thing entrusted to Him, and accomplishes it. *We* do not do anything, but *He* does it, and it is all the more effectually done because of this. As soon as this is clearly seen, the difficulty as to the preaching of faith disappears entirely.

On the other hand, the preacher who dwells on God's part in the matter is criticized on a totally different ground.

He does not speak of trust, for the Lord's part is not to trust, but to work. The Lord's part is to *do* the thing entrusted to Him. He disciplines and trains by inward exercises and outward providences. He brings to bear upon us all the refining and purifying resources of His wisdom and His love. He makes everything in our lives and circumstances subservient to the one great purpose of causing us to grow in grace, and of conforming us, day by day and hour by hour, to the image of Christ. He carries us through a process of transformation, longer or shorter as our peculiar case may require, making actual and experimental the results for which we have trusted. We have dared, for instance, according to the command in Romans 6:11, by faith to reckon ourselves dead unto sin. The Lord makes this a reality and puts us to death by a thousand little mortifications and crosses to the natural man. Our reckoning is available only because God thus makes it real. And yet the preacher who dwells upon this practical side of the matter, and tells of God's processes for making faith's reckonings experimental realities, may be accused of contradicting the preaching of faith altogether, and of declaring only a process of gradual sanctification by works, and of setting before the soul an impossible and hopeless task.

Now, sanctification is both a step of faith, and a process of works. It is a step of surrender and trust on our part, and it is a process of development on God's part. By a step of faith we get into Christ; by a process we are made to "grow up into him in all things." By a step of faith we put ourselves into the hands of the Divine Potter; by a gradual process He makes us into a vessel unto His own honor, meet for His use, and prepared to every good work.

To illustrate this, suppose I were to describe to a person who was entirely ignorant of the subject the way in which a lump of clay is made into a beautiful vessel. I tell him first the part of the clay in the matter; and all I can say about this is that the clay is put into the potter's hands, and then lies passive there, submitting itself to all the turnings and overturnings of the potter's hands upon it. There is really nothing else to be said about the clay's part. But could my hearer argue from this that nothing else is done because I say that this is all the clay can do? If he is an intelligent hearer he will not dream of doing so, but will say, "I understand; this is what the clay must do. But what must the potter do?" "Ah," I answer, "now we come to the important part. The potter takes the clay thus abandoned to his working, and begins to mold and fashion it according to his own will. He kneads and works it; he tears it apart and presses it together again; he wets it and then suffers it to dry. Sometimes he works at it for hours together; sometimes he lays it aside for days, and does not touch it. And then, when by all these processes he has made it perfectly pliable in his hands, he proceeds to make it up into the vessel he has proposed. He turns it upon the wheel, planes it and smooths it, and dries it in the sun, bakes it in the oven, and finally turns it out of his workshop, a vessel to his honor and fit for his use."

Will my reader be likely now to say that I am contradicting myself, that a little while ago I had said the clay had nothing to do but to lie passive in the potter's hands, and that now I am putting upon it a great work, which it is not able to perform, and that to make itself into such a vessel is an impossible and hopeless undertaking? Surely not. For he will see that while before I was speaking of the clay's part in the matter,

I am now speaking of the potter's part, and that these two are necessarily contrasted, but not in the least contradictory, and that the clay is not expected to do the potter's work, but only to yield itself up to his working.

Nothing, it seems to me, could be clearer than the perfect harmony between these two *apparently* contradictory sorts of teaching.

What *can* be said about man's part in this great work but that he must continually surrender himself and continually trust? But when we come to God's side of the question, what is there that may not be said as to the manifold and wonderful ways, in which He accomplishes the work entrusted to Him? It is here that the growing comes in. The lump of clay could never grow into a beautiful vessel if it stayed in the clay pit for thousands of years; but when it is put into the hands of a skillful potter it grows rapidly, under his fashioning, into the vessel he intends it to be. And in the same way the soul, abandoned to the working of the Heavenly Potter, is made into a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use.

Having, therefore, taken the step of faith by which you have put yourself wholly and absolutely into His hands, you must now expect Him to begin to work. His way of accomplishing that which you have entrusted to Him may be different from your way; but He knows, and you must be satisfied.

I knew a lady who had entered into this life of faith with a great outpouring of the Spirit, and a wonderful flood of light and joy. She supposed, of course, this was a preparation for some great service, and expected to be put forth immediately into the Lord's harvest field. Instead of this, almost at once her husband lost all his money, and she was shut up in her own house to attend to all sorts of domestic duties, with no

time or strength left for any gospel work at all. She accepted the discipline, and yielded herself up as heartily to sweep, and dust, and bake and sew, as she would have done to preach, or pray, or write for the Lord. And the result was that, through this very training, He made her into a vessel "meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

Another lady, who had entered this life of faith under similar circumstances of wondrous blessing, and who also expected to be sent out to do some great work, was shut up with two peevish invalid children to nurse, and humor, and amuse all day long. Unlike the first one, this lady did not accept the training, but chafed and fretted, and finally rebelled, lost all her blessing, and went back into a state of sad coldness and misery. She had understood her part of trusting to begin with, but, not understanding the Divine process of accomplishing that for which she had trusted, she took herself out of the hands of the Heavenly Potter, and the vessel was marred on the wheel.

I believe many a vessel has been similarly marred by a want of understanding these things. The maturity of a Christian experience cannot be reached in a moment, but is the result of the work of God's Holy Spirit, who, by His energizing and transforming power, causes us to grow up into Christ in all things. And we cannot hope to reach this maturity in any way other than by yielding ourselves up, utterly and willingly, to His mighty working. But the sanctification the Scriptures urge, as a present experience upon all believers, does not consist in maturity of growth, but in purity of heart; and this may be as complete in the early as in our later experiences.

The lump of clay, from the moment it comes under the transforming hand of the potter is, during each day and each

hour of the process, just what the potter wants it to be at that hour or on that day, and therefore pleases him; but it is very far from being matured into the vessel he intends in the future to make it.

The little babe may be all that a babe could be, or ought to be, and may therefore perfectly please its mother; and yet it is very far from being what that mother would wish it to be when the years of maturity shall come.

The apple in June is a perfect apple for June; it is the best apple that June can produce: but it is very different from the apple in October, which is a perfected apple.

God's works are perfect in every stage of their growth. Man's works are never perfect until they are in every respect complete.

All that we claim, then, in this life of sanctification is that by an act of faith we put ourselves into the hands of the Lord, for Him to work in us all the good pleasure of His will, and then, by a continuous exercise of faith, keep ourselves there. This is our part in the matter. And when we do it, and while we do it, we are, in the Scripture sense, truly pleasing to God, although it may require years of training and discipline to mature us into a vessel that shall be in all respects to His honor, and fitted to every good work.

Our part is the trusting; it is His to accomplish the results. And when we do our part, He never fails to do His, for no one ever trusted in the Lord and was confounded. Do not be afraid, then, that, if you trust, or tell others to trust, the matter will end there. Trust is the beginning and the continuing foundation; but when we trust, the Lord works, and His work is the important part of the whole matter. And this explains that apparent paradox which puzzles so many. They say, "In

one breath you tell us to do nothing but trust, and in the next you tell us to do impossible things. How can you reconcile such contradictory statements?" They are to be reconciled, just as we reconcile the statements concerning a saw in a carpenter's shop when we say, at one moment, that the saw has sawn asunder a log, and the next moment declare that the carpenter has done it. The saw is the instrument used; the power that uses it is the carpenter's. And so we, yielding ourselves unto God, and our members as instruments of righteousness unto Him, find that He works in us to will and to do of His good pleasure, and we can say with Paul, "I labored; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

In the divine order, God's working depends upon our co-operation. Of our Lord it was declared that at a certain place He could do there no mighty work because of their unbelief. It was not that He would not, but He could not. I believe we often think of God that He will not, when the real truth is that He cannot. Just as the potter, however skilful, cannot make a beautiful vessel out of a lump of clay that is never put into his hands, so neither can God make out of me a vessel unto His honor unless I put myself into His hands. My part is the essential correlation of God's part in the matter of my salvation; and as God is *sure* to do His part all right, the vital thing for me is to find out what my part is, and then do it.

In this book, therefore, I shall of course dwell mostly upon man's side, as I am writing for human beings and in the hope of making it plain how we are to fulfill our part of this great work. But I wish it to be distinctly understood all through that, unless I believed with all my heart in God's effectual working on His side, not one word of this book would ever have been written.