

The Fullness of the Blessing, How Obtained? -- Devotement -- Consecration -- Faith

by Bishop W. F. Mallalieu

The sermon emphasizes the importance of devotement, consecration, and faith in seeking the fullness of the blessing, which includes experiencing God's presence and fullness in one's life, receiving spiritual growth and maturity, and being empowered to serve God and others effectively.

Scripture: Isaiah 1:18, John 14:1, John 14:13, Romans 12:1, 2 Corinthians 6:14

Topics: "Consecration", "Sanctification"

Description

Bishop W. F. Mallalieu preaches about the importance of consecration and devotement to God, emphasizing the need to give up worldly desires and fully surrender to God's will. He highlights the necessity of separating from the world, abandoning sinful ways, and striving for holiness in all aspects of life. The sermon underscores the significance of faith in claiming God's promises, especially in seeking full salvation and sanctification through Jesus Christ. Bishop Mallalieu encourages believers to trust in God's timing and to persist in prayer, seeking the cleansing and empowering work of the Holy Spirit.

Transcript

O glorious hope of perfect love!
It lifts me up to things above;
It bears on eagles' wings;
It gives my ravished soul a taste,
And makes me for some moments feast
With Jesus, priests and kings.
Rejoicing now in earnest hope,
I stand, and from the mountain-top
See all the land below:

Rivers of milk and honey rise,
And all the fruits of paradise
In endless plenty grow.
A land of corn, and wine, and oil,
Favored with God's peculiar smile,
With every blessing blest;
There dwells the Lord our Righteousness,
And keeps his own in perfect peace,
And everlasting rest.
O that I might at once go up;
No more on this side Jordan stop,
But now the land possess;
This moment end my legal years,
Sorrows sins, and doubts and fears,
A howling wilderness!
-- Charles Wesley.

Answer that gracious end in me,
For which thy precious life was given;
Redeem from all iniquity;
Restore and make me meet for heaven!
Unless thou purge my every stain,
Thy suffering and my faith are vain.
Didst thou not in the flesh appear,
Sin to condemn, and man to save?
That perfect love might cast out fear?
That I thy mind in me might have?
In holiness show forth thy praise,

And serve thee all my spotless days?

-- Charles Wesley.

Prisoners of hope, lift up your heads!

The day of liberty draws near;

Jesus, who on the serpent treads,

Shall soon in your behalf appear:

The Lord will to his temple come;

Prepare your hearts to make him room.

You all shall find, whom in his word

Himself hath caused to put your trust,

The Father of our dying Lord

Is ever to his promise just;

Faithful, if we our sins confess,

To cleanse from all unrighteousness.

-- Charles Wesley.

Father, I dare believe

Thee merciful and true:

Thou wilt my guilty soul forgive,

My fallen soul renew.

Come, then, for Jesus' sake,

And bid my heart be clean;

An end of all my troubles make,

An end of all my sin.

I will, through grace, I will,

I do return to thee;

Take, empty it, O Lord, and fill

My heart with purity!

For power I feebly pray:
Thy kingdom now restore,
To-day, while it is called today,
And I shall sin no more.
I can not wash my heart,
But by believing thee,
And waiting for thy blood to impart
The spotless purity:
While at thy cross I lie,
Jesus, thy grace bestow.
Now thy all-cleansing blood apply
And I am white as snow.

-- Charles Wesley.

But is it possible that I
Should live and sin no more?
Lord, if on thee I dare rely,
The faith shall bring the power.
On me that faith divine bestow,
Which doth the mountain move;
And all my spotless life shall show
The omnipotence of love.

-- Charles Wesley.

Who, then, is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord? -- Chron. xxix, 5.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. -- Rom. xii, 1, 2.

THERE are two very important words which are frequently employed deserving the consideration of all who would seek the fullness of the blessing. The words are devotement and consecration. The latter is the

more comprehensive, and means giving up and giving to. When the soldier enlists in the service of his country he consecrates himself to that service. But in doing so it is clearly apparent that he, first of all, gives up many things that may be very dear to him. To say nothing of the quiet security and comfort of the life of a citizen which he certainly must forego, he must also abandon his business, his hope of attaining wealth; he must say farewell to his friends; he must, if a husband and father, part with wife and children. All this is involved in the idea of consecration. But beyond this he must surrender his own will to that of another; he must employ all his powers of body and mind to execute the orders given him; he must accept hardship, and face danger, and, if need be, die for his country. All this is involved in the consecration he has made.

In much the same way the one seeking for full salvation must devote himself, must consecrate himself to the service of God. Not that he has been unconsecrated in his justified state; but, following the enlightenment of the Spirit and the conviction of need, there must be a revision and renewal of personal consecration. This will mean the consecration of all we have and all we may hope for in the future. All is given to God. All we know, and all we do not know, are his. There is no reservation in thought, or word, or deed. It is free, glad, complete, irrevocable; and the language not of the lips only but of the heart will be:

If so poor a worm as I

May to thy great glory live,

All my actions sanctify,

All my words and thoughts receive;

Claim me for thy service, claim

All I have, and all I am.

Take my soul and body's powers;

Take my memory, mind, and will;

All my goods, and all my hours;

All I know and all I feel;

All I think, or speak, or do;

Take my heart, but make it new.

Now, O God, thine own I am,

Now I give thee back thine own;

Freedom, friends, and health, and fame,

Consecrate to thee alone:

Thine I live, thrice happy I;

Happier still if thine I die.

-- Charles Wesley.

Certainly, there must be a giving up of all that is wrong; not to do this would be disloyalty. There must be the abandonment of all that is doubtful; not to do this would be to tempt the tempter. We can not be worldlings, and at the same time expect the fullness of the blessing. We can not serve two masters; we can not serve God and mammon. There is a line of demarcation that separates the world from the people of God. Worldly people may, through education and association and the prayers of the saints and the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit, come very near the line; while some Christians, yielding to worldly influences and declining in their religious life, may come very near the line, so that there seems to be but very little difference observable between some Christians and some worldly people. What every real follower of Jesus should strive after is to keep as far away from the dividing line as possible; keep as far as possible on the heaven side of every question. "He that is not with me is against me," is the eternal protest of the Son of God against worldliness and frivolity. The soul that would meet with the highest success in the Christian life must not indulge in the follies of the age in which he lives. There is not an honest and well-instructed professor of religion that does not know that indulgence in these things is altogether incompatible with the reasonable hope of realizing the highest attainments in the life of faith. The aspiring soul must lay aside, not only the "besetting sins," but all sorts of weights and clogs and fetters that can in any way hinder in the laudable effort to rise to the most exalted plane of holy living. Why not give heed to the words to the Apostle Paul:

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. -- 2 Cor. vi, 14-18.

There must be a separation from the world; the consecration that is made must be made with the full consent of the affections and the will. Self-sacrifice, self-denial, self-abnegation, must be uttermost. There must be but one thought, and that the devotement of all that we ever call my or mine to the service of God and humanity.

When all this is done we may take constant and ever-increasing comfort in the assurance that nothing will be required but what will be for the best good of humanity, for our own supremest advantage, and for God's greatest glory. Why, then, should not the consecration be instantly made?

Would aught on earth my wishes share?

Though dear as life the idol be,

The idol from my breast I tear,

Resolved to seek my all in thee.

Whate'er I fondly counted mine,

To thee, my Lord, I here restore;

Gladly I all for thee resign;

Give me thyself, I ask no more.

-- Charles Wesley.

We must never lose sight of the fact that consecration is not so much a matter of emotion and feeling as it is of intellect and will. Let the sensibilities of one's nature have full play, but be careful that the intellect takes a careful survey of all that is involved, and when duty and privilege alike require a complete consecration, then the supreme faculty, that enables us to settle all moral questions intelligently, and in the fear of God, comes into play, and knowing what we ought to do, the will decides and the work is done.

Is there a thing beneath the sun,

That strives with thee my heart to share?

Ah, tear it thence, and reign alone,

The Lord of every motion there;

Then shall my heart from earth be free,

When it hath found repose in thee.

O hide this self from me, that I

No more, but Christ in me, may live;

My vile affections crucify,

Nor let one darling lust survive!

In all things nothing may I see,

Nothing desire or seek but thee.

-- Tr. by John Wesley.

Faith is essential in every effort to rise in the Divine life. No promise found in the Bible will avail unless it is claimed by faith. Appropriating faith can only be exercised when the conditions connected with the promise have been met. The experience of conversion came as the result of faith. In seeking for the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel, the exercise of faith is the last act of the soul that hungers and thirsts for all that God has to grant. Well may we turn to John Wesley, whose teachings are adapted to the needs of the present day as perfectly as they were to those of the times in which he lived. Would that all Christian people were more familiar with his teachings! Surely it will be profitable carefully to ponder the quotations that are here subjoined:

To Miss Ritchie, 1782:

That point, entire salvation from inbred sin, can hardly ever be insisted upon, either in preaching or prayer, without a particular blessing. Honest Isaac Brown firmly believes this doctrine that we are to be saved from all sin in this life. But I wish when opportunity serves, you would encourage him 1. To preach Christian

perfection constantly strongly and explicitly; 2. Explicitly to assert and prove that it may be received now; and 3 (which indeed is implied therein) That it is to be received by simple faith. -- Wesley's Works, Vol. VII, p. 181.

Inquiring (in 1761) how it was that in all these parts we have so few witnesses of full salvation, I constantly receive one and the same answer: "We see now we sought it by our works; we thought it was to come gradually; we never expected it to come in a moment, by simple faith, in the very same manner as we received justification." What wonder is it, then, that you have been fighting all these years as one that beateth the air. -- Wesley's Works, Vol. VII, p. 377.

By justification we are saved from the guilt of sin, and restored to the favor of God; by sanctification we are saved from the power and root of sin, and restored to the image of God. All experience, as well as Scripture, shows this salvation to be both instantaneous and gradual. It begins the moment we are justified, in the holy, humble, gentle patient love of God and man. It gradually increases from that moment, as "a grain of mustard-seed, which, at first, is the least of all seeds," but afterwards puts forth large branches, and becomes a great tree; till, in another instant, the heart is cleansed from all sin, and filled with pure love of God and man. -- Wesley's Sermons, Vol. II, p. 236.

I have continually testified (for these five-and-twenty years) in private and public, that we are sanctified as well as justified by faith. And, indeed, the one of those great truths does exceedingly illustrate the other. EXACTLY AS WE ARE JUSTIFIED BY FAITH, SO ARE WE SANCTIFIED BY FAITH. -- Wesley's Works, Vol. I, p. 338.

Many years since, I saw that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. I began by following after it, and inciting all with whom I had any intercourse to do the same. Ten years after, God gave me a clearer view than I had before of the way to attain it; namely, by faith in the Son of God. And immediately I declared to all, "We are saved from sin, we are made holy by faith." This I testified in private, in public, in print, and God confirmed it by a thousand witnesses. -- Wesley's Journal, Vol. VII, p. 38.

What salvation is it, which is through this faith?

1. And first, whatever else it imply, it is a present salvation. It is something attainable, yea, actually attained on earth, by those who are partakers of this faith. For thus saith the apostle to the believers at Ephesus, and in them to the believers of all ages, not ye shall be (though that also is true), but ye are saved through faith.

2. Ye are saved (to comprise all in one word) from sin. This is the salvation which is through faith. This is that great salvation foretold by the angel, before God brought his first-begotten into the world: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." And neither here, nor in other parts of the Holy Writ, is there any limitation or restriction, All his people, or as it is elsewhere expressed, "all that believe in him," he will save from all their sins; from original and actual, past and present sin "of the flesh and of the spirit." Through faith that is in him they are saved both from the guilt and from the power of it. -- Wesley's Sermons, Vol. I, p. 15.

As to manner, I believe this perfection is always wrought in the soul by a simple act of faith; consequently in an instant ... Look for it every day, every hour, every moment. Why not this hour -- this moment? Certainly you may look for it now, if you believe it is by faith. And by this token you may surely know whether you seek it by faith or by works. If by works, you want something to be done first before you are

sanctified. You think I must be or do thus or thus. Then you are seeking it by works unto this day. If you seek it by faith you expect it as you are and if, as you are, then expect it now. It is important to observe that there is an inseparable connection between these three points -- expect it by faith, expect it as you are, and expect it now. TO DENY ONE IS TO DENY THEM ALL. -- Wesley's Sermons, Vol. I, p. 391.

Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ whom God hath given to be the propitiation for thy sins, and thou shalt be saved, first from the guilt of sin, having redemption through his blood; then from the power, which shall have no more dominion over thee; and then from the root of it, into the whole image of God." -- Wesley's Sermons, Vol. II, p. 405.

Sanctification, too, "is not of works, lest any man should boast." "It is the gift of God," and is to be received by plain, simple faith. Suppose you are now laboring to "abstain from all appearance of evil," "zealous of good works," and walking diligently and carefully in all the ordinances of God; there is then only one point remaining: the voice of God to your soul is, "Believe, and be saved." First, believe that God has promised to save you from all sin, and to fill you with all holiness; secondly, believe that he is able thus "to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him;" thirdly, believe that he is willing, as well as able, to save you to the uttermost; to purify you from all sin, and fill up all your heart with love. Believe, fourthly, that he is not only able, but willing to do it now! Not when you come to die; not at any distant time; not tomorrow, but today. He will then enable you to believe, it is done, according to his Word: and then "patience shall have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." -- Wesley's Sermons, Vol. II, p. 224.

But what is that faith whereby we are sanctified? saved from sin, and perfected in love? It is a Divine evidence and conviction, first, that God hath promised it in the Holy Scripture. Till we are thoroughly satisfied of this, there is no moving one step farther.

It is a Divine evidence and conviction, secondly, that what God hath promised he is able to perform. Admitting, therefore, that "with men it is impossible" to "bring a clean thing out of an unclean," to purify the heart from all sin, and to fill it with all holiness; yet this creates no difficulty in the case, seeing "with God all things are possible."

It is, thirdly, a Divine evidence and conviction that he is able and willing to do it now. And why not? Is not a moment to him the same as a thousand years? He can not want more time to accomplish whatever is his will. And he can not want or stay for any more worthiness or fitness in the persons he is pleased to honor. We may, therefore, boldly say, at any one point of time, "Now is the day of salvation!" "Today, if ye will hear his voice harden not your hearts." "Behold, all things are now ready, come unto the marriage!"

To this confidence, that God is both able and willing to sanctify us now, there needs to be added one thing more, a Divine evidence and conviction that he doeth it. In that hour it is done, God says to the inmost soul, "According to thy faith be it unto thee!" Then the soul is pure from every spot of sin; it is clean "from all unrighteousness." The believer then experiences the deep meaning of those solemn words, "If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." -- Wesley's Sermons, Vol. I, p. 390.

All things are possible to him

That can in Jesus' name believe:

Lord, I no more thy truth blaspheme,
Thy truth I lovingly receive;
I can, I do believe in thee;
All things are possible to me.
The most impossible of all
Is, that I e'er from sin should cease;
Yet shall it be, I know it shall;
Jesus, look to thy faithfulness!
If nothing is too hard for thee,
All things are possible to me.
Though earth and hell the word gainsay,
The word of God can never fail;
The Lamb shall take my sins away;
'Tis certain, though impossible:
The thing impossible shall be;
All things are possible to me.
-- Charles Wesley.

While thus looking for the blessing of full salvation, let no one mark out the way in which God shall reveal himself as the One who hears and answers prayer. It may be that it is necessary to try one's faith, and so the answer to prayer does not instantly come, but let no one despair. Hold on to the promise, and let God do as he will. He knows best what is most helpful to those who seek his grace. Jesus sometimes delayed his answer to the prayers made to him for help. And sometimes his way was not the way the human mind had marked out for him. The God who knows us far better than we know ourselves will make no mistake. When we have done our part, and complied with all the conditions, then all we have to do is to wait and rest until we feel and know that the Everlasting Arms are underneath us, and the eternal God is our refuge, and the cleansing blood and the baptism of fire have come upon us, and we have found the uttermost salvation. But we must never forget that our prayers should be addressed to the Father in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Savior. Jesus says:

And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it. And I will pray the Father, and he shall send you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth. -- John xiv, 13-17.

So, we may take some specific promise, some promise to which our hearts turn, some promise that covers all our needs, and then claim its fulfillment in the name of our ascended Lord and Advocate, and

the work will be done for us and in us that will cleanse, and inspire, and endue with power from on high.

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