

X.

**Adam Not Innocent, but Holy.**

“Created in righteousness and true holiness.”—*Ephes. iv. 24.*

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It remains, therefore, as of old, that “God created man good and after His own image, that is, in true righteousness and holiness, that he might rightly know God his Creator, heartily love Him, and live with Him in eternal happiness, and glorify and praise Him.” Or, as the Confession of Faith has it: “We believe that God created man, out of the dust of the earth, and made him and formed him after His own image and likeness, good and righteous and wholly capable in all things to will, agreeably to the will of God.”

Every representation which depreciates in the least this original righteousness must be opposed.

Adam’s righteousness lacked nothing. The idea that he was holy inasmuch as he had not sinned, and by constant development could increase his holiness, so that if he had not fallen he would have attained a still holier state, is incorrect, and betrays ignorance in this respect.

The difference between man in his original state and in the state of sin is similar to that between a healthy child and a sick man. Both must increase in strength. If the child remains what he is, he is not healthy. Health includes growth and increase of strength and development until maturity be attained. The same is true of the sick man; he can not remain the same. He must recover or grow worse. If he is to recover, he must gain in strength. So far both are the same.

But here the similarity ceases. Increase the strength of the sick at once, and he will be well, and what he should be. But add the full strength of the man to the child, and he will be *unnatural* and *abnormal*. For the present the child needs no more than he has. He lacks nothing at *any given moment*. To be a normal child in perfect health, he must be just what he is. But the sick person needs a great deal. In order to be healthy and normal he must *not* be what he is. The child, so far as health and strength are concerned, is *perfect*; but the sick person is very *imperfect* as regards health and strength. The condition of the child is *good*; that of the sick man is *not* good. And the former’s healthy growth is something entirely different from the latter’s improvement in health and strength.

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This shows how wrong it is to apply sanctification to Adam before the fall. Sanctification is inconceivable with reference to sinless man; foreign to the conception of a creature whom God calls *good*.

“Excellent,” says one; hence Adam was born in childlike innocence gradually to attain a higher moral development without sin; hence sanctification after all!

Certainly not. A believer's sanctification ceases when he dies. In death he dies to all sin. Sanctification is merely the process which partly or wholly eliminates sin from man. Wholly freed from sin he is holy, and it is impossible to make him holier than holy. Even for this reason it is absurd to apply sanctification to holy Adam. What need of washing that which is clean? Sanctification presupposes unholiness, and Adam was not unholy. Sin being absolutely absent, holiness lacks nothing, but is complete. Adam possessed the same complete holiness now possessed by the child of God in which he stands by faith, and by and by in actuality when through death he has absolutely died unto sin.

Yet in heaven God's children will not stand still—their joy and glory will ever increase, but not their holiness, which lacks nothing. And to be more holy than perfectly holy is impossible. Their development will consist in drinking ever more copiously from the life of God.

The same is true of sinless Adam; he *could not* be sanctified. Sanctification is healing, and a healthy person can not be healed. Sanctification is to rid one of poison, but poison can not be drawn from the hand that is not bitten. The idea of holy, holier, holiest is absurd. That which is *broken* is not whole, and that which is *whole* is not broken. Sanctification is to make whole, and since in Adam *nothing* was broken, there was nothing to be made whole. More whole than whole is unthinkable.

Yet altho holy, Adam did not remain what he was, he did not stand still without an aim in life. Take, *e.g.*, the difference between him and God's child. The latter possesses an unlosable treasure, but Adam's was losable, for he lost it. Not that he was less holy than the saint; for this has nothing to do with it.

Let us illustrate. Of two dishes, one is fine cut glass, hence breakable; the other coarse glass, but unbreakable. Is the latter now more whole than the former? Or can the former be made more whole? Of course not; its wholeness has nothing to do with its being breakable or not. Hence the fact that Adam's treasure was losable does not touch the question of holiness at all. Whether one is holy, or yet to be made holy, does not depend upon the losableness of the treasure, but upon its being lost or not.

How this holy development of Adam was to be effected we do not know. We may not inquire after things God has kept from us. As sinners we can no more conceive of such sinless development than of the unfolding of the heavenly glory of God's children.

Confining ourselves closely to Scripture, we know, *first*, that sinless man would not have died; *second*, that as a reward for his work he would have received eternal life, *i.e.*, being perfectly able from moment to moment to do God's will, he would always have desired and loved to do it; and for this he would have been rewarded continually with larger measures of the life and glory of God.

We compare the contrast between Adam's condition and ours to that between the royal child born possessor of vast treasures, and a child of poverty that must earn everything or

have another to earn it for him. The former lacks nothing, altho he has only toys to dispose of; for his father's whole estate is his. Growing up, he does not become richer, for his treasures remain the same; but he becomes more conscious of them. So Adam's treasures would never have increased, for all things were his; only as his life gradually unfolded would he have had more conscious enjoyment of his riches.

Hence original righteousness does not refer to Adam's *degree of development*, nor to his *condition*, but to his state; and that was *perfectly good*.

All those unscriptural notions of Adam's increase in holiness spring from the unscriptural ideas which men, tempted by pantheistic heresies, have formed of *holiness*.

"Be ye then perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," does not mean that you, boastful man, puffed up by philosophic madness, must become like *God*. A *creature* you will remain even in your highest glory. And in that glory the consciousness that you are *nothing* and God is *all* will be cause of your most fervent adoration and deepest delight. No, Christ's word simply means, "*Be whole*," even as your Father in heaven is whole and complete. Saying that an earthen vessel must be as whole and sound as a porcelain vase does not mean that it must become *like* that vase. The former costs but a few cents; the latter is paid for with gold. It only means that as the vase is whole *as a vase*, so must the earthen vessel be whole *as an earthen vessel*.

Hence Christ's word means: There are rents in your being; the edges are chipped; you are injured and damaged by sin. This must not be so. There may be no break in your being, nor should defect mar your completeness. Behold, as your Father in heaven is unbroken, so must you be wholly sound, unbroken, and perfect. That is, as God remained perfect as *God*, so must you remain whole and complete as *man*, a *creature* in the hand of your *Creator*.

But generally it is not so understood. The current view is as follows: The *first* step in holiness is conflict with sin. *Second*, sin becomes weak. *Third*, sin is almost overcome. *Fourth*, sin is *entirely* cast out. Then only, the *higher* sanctification sets in, and the whole ladder is being climbed; higher and higher, ever more holy, until holiness reaches the clouds.

Of course, those who accept these fancies can not think of Adam otherwise than as created on a low plane of holiness and called to attain higher sanctification. But if there is but one sanctification, *i.e.*, *dying to sin* and *making* the broken nature *whole*, then higher sanctification regarding Adam is out of the question. To Adam's holiness nothing can be added. He would have known his Creator, heartily loved Him; and lived with Him in eternal happiness to glorify and praise Him, in ever-increasing consciousness; but all this would not have added anything to his righteousness and holiness. To suppose this would betray a lack of understanding concerning holiness. Thus love is confounded with holiness; righteousness with life; state with condition; word with being; and the very foundations are wrenched from their place.



Yea, worse. Souls are severed from Jesus. For he that fails to understand original righteousness can *not* understand how Christ is given us of God for righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. He desires Jesus most assuredly. But how? “Jesus finds the sinner sick and perishing by the wayside. He puts him on His animal, and takes him to the inn, where He pays for him until he is restored.” Hence always the same representation as tho, after being redeemed, one must still seek for a righteousness and holiness which by constant progress will only gradually be attained.

If this is correct then Christ is not our righteousness, sanctification, nor redemption; at the most, He is a Friend supporting and strengthening us in our efforts to attain righteousness and holiness. No; if the Church is to glory once more in the comforting and blessed confession that in Christ it *possesses* now absolute righteousness, holiness, and redemption, it must first begin by understanding original righteousness, *i.e.*, that Adam can *not* love, can *not* live in blessed fellowship with God, except he be first *perfectly righteous* and *completely holy*.



**Second Chapter**

**THE SINNER TO BE WROUGHT UPON.**

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