



The Guest of The Soul

Chapter 5 – A PERFECT-HEARTED PEOPLE

God is looking for people whose hearts are perfect towards Him a perfected-hearted people; so there is a kind of perfection required of His people by God.

A friend of mine asked me some time ago whether I believed in and taught perfection. I replied that that depended upon what he meant by the term "perfection."

If he meant absolute perfection, I did not; nor did I believe in the possession by men of angelic perfection; nor yet in their realizing such perfection as Adam must have originally possessed.

God alone is absolutely perfect in all His attributes, and to such perfection we can never hope to attain. Then there is a perfection possessed by the angels, which we shall never have in this world. Adam also had certain perfections of body and mind which are out of our reach.

There is, however, a perfection which we are given to understand God requires in us. It is a perfection not of head but of heart; not of knowledge, but of goodness, of humility of love, of faith. Such a perfection God desires us to have, and such a perfection we may have.

In saying this I cannot be accused of being a crank or a fanatic, for I am proclaiming only the plain, simple truth as it is revealed in God's word, and we ought to desire to rise up to all the privileges God has conferred upon us.

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect," said Jesus (Matt. v. 48). What sort of perfection is this which we are to possess? God is a Spirit; we are simply men and women. And further, "No man hath seen God at any time" (John i. 18). How then are we to know what that perfection is which He requires of us – a perfection which it is possible for men and women to manifest? In this, Jesus is our pattern. It is true that no man hath seen God at any time," but the only begotten Son He hath declared Him" (John i. 18) – that is, manifested the



Father's nature and perfections in a human life which we can see and understand.

This perfection of heart, of purity, of goodness, was seen in Jesus in several particulars, and in these we are to follow His example.

First: We are to be perfectly submitted to God. We are to come to the place where we no longer fight against God's will; where we do not complain, nor talk back, nor resist, but yield in perfect submission to all His will.

In the terrible General Slocum disaster in New York Harbour some years ago, almost all the mothers and children of one church lost their lives. The next Sunday the bereaved fathers and husbands came to the church, and the pastor, who had lost his whole family, rose and said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord "(Job i. 21). These men were perfectly submissive to God in their hearts, and they did not fail God in the hour of their suffering and trial, and fight against His providences.

It is possible to be submitted to God in this way. We may not understand God's providences, but we can say "Amen" to them from our hearts.

Second: Like Jesus, we may perfectly trust God. We may possess a confidence in God that holds out in ways which we do not understand, like the confidence that a very little child has in its parents; that will trust with all the heart. Job was rich, prosperous and happy. Then trouble came. He was afflicted, he lost his children, he lost his property, and his herds were carried off by marauders.

And what did Job do? He did not complain and blame God, but said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." And when his backslidden wife advised him to curse God and die, Job defended God's way and said, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" And "in all this did not Job sin with his lips" (Job ii. 10).



Then his friends tried to shake his confidence, and Job – afflicted, full of pain, poor, and bereaved of his children – seemed to be forsaken by God; but he looked up from his ash heap and exclaimed, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him" (Job xiii. 15).

It is always so with the perfect-hearted man. I want my friends to trust me, and if they failed to do so when I was out of their sight it would break my heart. So God wants us to trust Him where we cannot see Him. Paul and Silas, on one of their missionary journeys, were arrested and placed in one of those loathsome Roman prisons – in the inmost, wet, slimy, foul dungeon – with the wounds on their backs from the scourging they had just received gaping wide, and with their feet in the stocks. But they did not worry and complain and determine to go home when they were released. They sang and praised the Lord.

That is the kind of spirit God wants His people to possess; a spirit that will rejoice with a perfect trust in Him under adversity.

Third: God desires His people to be perfect in love; to love Him perfectly. We are not expected to love God with the heart of an archangel, for we are only poor humble men with limited power to love, but God does expect us to love with all our hearts – with all our power to love.

The little child is to love with all its power; and as the powers develop and grow, our love is to develop and grow apace with our power to love; but we are always to love with all the heart.

Fourth: There must be perfect loyalty. Love is not an emotion – a happy feeling; it is not something on the surface; it is a deep principle, revealing itself in perfect loyalty to God.

What constitutes a perfect son or a perfect wife? Here is a big, ignorant young man. He could not shine in a drawing room. He is hard-working, rough, uncultured, and awkward, and in the eyes of the world is a most imperfect man. But he has a dear old mother whom he loves. He works to give her his meagre wages at the end of the week; he carries up the coal; and when his day's work is done he comes home to cheer his old mother with his presence. He does all he can



to make her latter days comfortable and happy.

Now he is a very imperfect man, but his mother would tell you with pride, "He is my perfect son." What makes him a perfect son? Perfect loyalty to his old mother.

So a man has a perfect heart when it beats in perfect loyalty to God – wholly yielded up to fulfil all His purposes. He may be very imperfect as a man, and his imperfections may be apparent to everyone; he may blunder and make many mistakes; he may be ignorant and uncultured – yet God looks down and counts him a perfect-hearted man. When God sees a heart perfect in loyalty to Him, He overlooks many mistakes and blunders of the head.

Fifth: God also requires of us perfect obedience. Our performance may not always be perfect, but our spirit may be perfect.

My little boy, with his heart beating high to help his papa and do what I want him to do, goes into the garden to pull the weeds from among the vegetables; but he comes to the corn, and he doesn't know the difference between corn and weeds, and while pulling up the weeds he also pulls up my corn.

When I come home he runs to me, with eyes dancing, bursting to tell me how he has helped me by weeding the garden. I go out and find that, while he has weeded the garden, he has also pulled up my sweet corn. But I see that he has done it with a heart full of desire to please his father, and that the trouble has not been with his heart, but with his ignorant little head; and, seeing his perfect little heart, I press him to my breast and call him my little man. This is the kind of perfection God wants in us – perfect obedience of the heart.

God's eyes are in all parts of the earth, seeking for men with hearts perfect toward Him, in submission, in trust, in love, in obedience; and when He finds such a man He reveals Himself to Him and shows Himself on behalf of that man.

Now let me ask you, what kind of heart have you? Have you submitted to Him? Have you



consecrated yourself wholly to Him? Have you put all your powers at His disposal? Have you let Him have all His way with you? How anger and pride and selfishness and uncleanness must grieve Him! The perfect-hearted man has put all these things away.

How can I put away these things that seem to be a part of my very being? How can I change the colour of my eyes or add a cubit to my stature? I cannot! Work as I will, I shall always fail to change my moral nature. But God can. It is His work.

If we go down before Him in complete humility and say, "Lord, I am willing to have my heart changed. Though it may mean that I shall be despised and hated and persecuted, I will take up my cross; I will crucify myself. I am willing that my selfishness and pride and hate and uncleanness shall be taken from me, and that Thou shalt reign in me and create in me a clean heart, perfect in its love, submission, loyalty, trust, and obedience" – if we will say that to Him, He will answer our prayer today, now, this moment, if we will but believe.