

## "LET US DRAW NEAR."

*"Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from a consciousness of evil, and our bodies sprinkled with pure water." – Heb. 10:22.*

NOT TO SINNERS is this invitation addressed. The invitation to them is a very different one, vis., – Repent, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus obtain the remission of your sins, and then you will be in the attitude to receive the invitation, Draw near to God. The Apostle is addressing those who have already believed unto justification, receiving to themselves the benefits of the Lord's promise, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." (Verse 17.) The Apostle is addressing the brethren, and not sinners, and urges them, saying, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness [courage, confidence, privilege] to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way,...let us draw near."

The Apostle's words carry our attention to Israel's Tabernacle in the wilderness, and the spiritual things which it illustrated. The Court, entered through the gate, signified the state or condition of the justified, who must pass the Altar representing Christ's sacrifice for sins; secondly, approach the Laver of water for cleansing from defilements; and then be ready to pass under the first Vail into the apartment of the Tabernacle called "The Holy." This "Holy" apartment represented the state or condition of God's *consecrated* people (typified by Israel's priests) while yet in the flesh, and had its Golden Candlestick for their enlightenment, its table of Shewbread, representing their privilege of fellowship with God, – drawing near to him in prayer, praise and communion. The next step beyond the "Holy" was the "Most Holy," representing heaven itself; but this could be entered only from the "Holy" and by passing under the Second Vail, which represented the actual death of the priest, even as the First Vail represented the reckoned death or consecration. The Apostle has this same thought in

mind when elsewhere he mentions the consecrated Royal Priesthood as "seated together with Christ in heavenly places" – in the heavenly condition, the condition represented by the first apartment or "Holy" of the Tabernacle and of the Temple.

### **PRIVILEGES OF THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD.**

It is in reference to this proposition to advance from the "Court" condition of justification into the "Holy" or heavenly or spirit-begotten condition, reached through consecration (and the closest possible approach to God) that the Apostle urges, "Let us draw near." His language implies that there may properly be a diffidence on our part in respect to this privilege. We might properly hesitate to expect to have communion, fellowship, close approach to the great Creator, realizing that by nature we are imperfect, "children of wrath, even as others," and that in whatever degree we differ from others and are accounted worthy of such a privilege of drawing near to God, it is not on account of personal worth on our part, but on account of God's grace bestowed upon us through Jesus our Lord. The Apostle therefore speaks to believers in an encouraging voice: "Let us draw near;" let us have courage to draw near; let us have faith in God, who has made us such gracious arrangements and promises.

The Apostle intimates that a close approach to God cannot be effected, except we have first a "full assurance of faith." Only those who trust the Lord implicitly, "as a little child" (Luke 18:17) would trust **[R2671 : page 228]** its earthly parent, can expect to progress and to have the courage, the confidence, necessary to approach God in this very intimate manner; and the desire to draw nearer and nearer to God must be in the justified believer's heart, else he will never go on and attain to this his privilege. And this desire to draw near to God is a manifestation of our hunger and thirst after righteousness, which the Lord expects to see before he fulfils to such his engagement that they shall be filled, satisfied. – Matt. 5:6.

Satisfaction will not be attained fully in the present life, tho the believer who progresses and draws nearer and nearer to God will have more and more of this satisfaction to the end of his journey in the present life, receiving the full measure of satisfaction in righteousness and perfection on the other side the veil. Similarly, in our drawing near to God, we may continue to draw nearer and nearer to him, as we obtain deeper experience in his grace, growing also in knowledge and love in the present life; but the full attainment of our privilege of drawing near to God will not be reached until we shall have passed the Second Vail – passed through death, and been changed from human to spirit beings, and have entered into heaven itself, the perfect heavenly condition. There and then we shall be fully at one with the heavenly Father and with our Lord Jesus, having drawn near to the full extent of the invitation and to the full of the opportunities granted us in the new and living way, the narrow way to life, consecrated for us, through the vail, by our Lord's death as our ransom price.

There are, however, certain conditions specified as necessary to progress along these lines. As no one can draw near to God except by attaining a "full assurance of faith," neither can he have a full assurance of faith unless he have his "heart sprinkled from a consciousness of evil," for, as the Apostle elsewhere declares, "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart." (1 John 3:20.) We may be sure that if our course as new creatures is condemned by our own consciences it would also be condemned by God. Whoever, therefore, would make progress in drawing near to God must seek continually to have "a conscience void of offence toward God and man" (Acts 24:16); – a conscience that is clear, that can say, I am striving to do that which would be pleasing to God, in harmony with my covenant of self-sacrifice, and I am striving to do that which would be approved also by righteous men. Nothing short of this is at all permissible in those who have consecrated themselves to be royal priests, to offer themselves as living sacrifices in the Lord's service, and to draw near to him in the name and under the merit of the great High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.

## **HAVING OUR HEARTS SPRINKLED.**

How very much is implied in this expression, "Having our hearts sprinkled from a consciousness of evil"! It not only means that we are to avoid sin, and to take heed that the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts are acceptable to the Lord, but it means additionally that our hearts, having covenanted self-sacrifice, shall be able to look up to the Lord confidently and realize his blessing and approval, because of the honest, earnest efforts on our part to comply with the terms of our consecration. But since we cannot fully comply with the terms ourselves, it is requisite that we shall apply to ourselves by faith the merit of the precious blood of Christ, the blood of sprinkling, the blood of consecration, and that we shall realize that our acceptance is only in the Beloved One.

## **WASHED WITH PURE WATER.**

The expression, "Having our bodies washed with pure water," figuratively represents the continued process of "cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the reverence of the Lord," as elsewhere enjoined by the Apostle. (2 Cor. 7:1.) By nature we are all imperfect, sullied, more or less depraved; and our devotion to the Lord is manifested, first, by our full acceptance and full assurance of faith in the merits of Christ's sacrifice; and secondly, by our earnest efforts to put away from our flesh, as we have already put away from our hearts, all things defiling and displeasing in the Lord's sight: that thus we may more and more become copies of his dear Son, our Lord. This "washing of water through the Word" is elsewhere represented (Eph. 5:26) in a similar manner as being a part of the duty and privilege of all of the Lord's people throughout the remainder of their earthly lives. And we can see how beautiful is the illustration here used, that the Word of God, like water, is purifying, cleansing; as the Apostle declares, speaking of the Christian's good hopes in the precious promises once delivered to the

saints, "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he [who called him] is pure." – 1 John 3:3.

As it is necessary to a thorough cleansing of our natural bodies that we should wash with "*pure* water," so much the more is it necessary to this cleansing of which the Apostle speaks, the cleansing of our moral characters, that we should have the *pure* water of divine truth, and not the muddy and polluted teachings of the Adversary, or of those whom he has blinded. And as we look about us upon the many streams of Babylon – the various sectarian theologies which profess to be the truth – we find that altho there is something [R2671 : page 229] of truth in them all, yet it is sadly befouled and wholly incapable of cleansing their votaries from filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, – wholly incapable of perfecting them in holiness of the kind which the Lord requires. For instance, false ideas of God and of his character and his plan are incentives to those who so believe to copy these misrepresentations and perversions of justice and love, and are well calculated to develop in the devotees of such a theory a low standard of character, because the low standard which they set for themselves and other fellow-mortals is really higher than that which they ascribe to the Creator.

How important, then, is the truth, and how much meaning we find in our dear Redeemer's prayer to the Father on our behalf, – "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth." Let us not attempt to sanctify ourselves through any other washing than this; let us not be satisfied with anything short of the "pure water," the pure Word of God, the pure truth.

**"YE ARE COMPLETE IN HIM." – Col. 2:10.**

Now view the class described by the Apostle: they are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus accepted with the Father through the Beloved One. More than this, to them has been opened up the narrow way to life, consecrated, made possible, through the sacrifice offered by our great High Priest. They are invited to become under-priests,

sharers both of the sufferings, and also later on, if faithful, sharers of the glories of Jesus, the Chief Priest of this order. As a means of attaining the glorious end of their calling they are to cleanse themselves from defilement, and for their use in this respect the Word of God has been provided: it is at once a *mirror* to show them their blemishes, and *water* wherewith to cleanse themselves – the stimulus for the correction of life being the exceeding great and precious promises set before them in the Scriptures. Their hearts, justified by faith, and honest before God, are fully consecrated to him and to his service, and are to be so kept continually – by obedience to the best of their knowledge and opportunities, and by the blood of sprinkling which covers unintentional errors and failures. This is the class that is called to be associated with the Lord in his Kingdom; they are styled his Brethren, the Royal Priesthood, the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, and various other names representing their near and dear relationship to the heavenly Father: and all of these who are faithful to the end of the race-course are to be made partakers of the divine nature, with its glory, honor and immortality.

But let us not deceive ourselves in this matter of having hearts that do not condemn us; let us remember that our covenant was unto sacrifice and not unto self-preservation; that it was a covenant to lay our all upon the altar – time, influence, means of every kind; and that we agreed with our Lord that we would reckon this our reasonable service. Do our hearts condemn us in this matter, or do they justify us? Do we feel that we are doing all in our power to serve the Lord and his truth and our brethren? If so, let us rejoice, and let us continue in the same way, patiently hoping for the glorious results promised to the faithful. But if our hearts condemn us, let us not be discouraged; but on the contrary remember that this is a part of the cleansing of the flesh and of the spirit necessary to our preparation for the Kingdom, and let us afresh bind our sacrifices to the altar (Psa. 118:27), and be more and more zealous in expending our little all in the service of him who loved us and who bought us with his own precious blood. Thus doing, it will be our privilege day by day to draw nearer and nearer to the "Most

Holy," and thus finishing our course with joy we shall have share in the first resurrection, awaking in our Lord's likeness. – 2 Cor. 5:14,15; Rom. 6:5; 1 John 3:2; Psa. 17:15. [R2678 : page 229]

### **UNTO HIM BELONGETH ALL.**

"Just why I suffer loss  
I can not know;  
I only know my Father  
Wills it so.  
He leads in paths I cannot understand;  
But all the way I know is wisely planned.

"My life is only mine  
That I may use  
The gifts he lendeth me  
As he may choose;  
And if in love some boon he doth recall,  
I know that unto him belongeth all.

"I am his child, and I  
Can safely trust;  
He loves me, and I know  
That he is just;  
Within his love I can securely rest,  
Assured that what he does for me is best."

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