

1 Peter 1:23
(ESV)

23 since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God;

A Complaint

BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

There is a change—and I am poor;
Your love hath been, nor long ago,
A fountain at my fond heart's door,
Whose only business was to flow;
And flow it did; not taking heed
Of its own bounty, or my need.

What happy moments did I count!
Blest was I then all bliss above!
Now, for that consecrated fount
Of murmuring, sparkling, living love,
What have I? shall I dare to tell?
A comfortless and hidden well.

A well of love—it may be deep—
I trust it is,—and never dry:
What matter? if the waters sleep
In silence and obscurity.
—Such change, and at the very door
Of my fond heart, hath made me poor.

Westminster Confession of Faith (Chapter 13):

1. They, who are once **effectually called, and regenerated**, having a new heart, and a new spirit created in them, are **further sanctified really and personally**, through the **virtue of Christ's death and resurrection**, by his **Word and Spirit dwelling in them**: the **dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed**, and the several lusts thereof are more and more weakened and mortified, and they **more and more quickened and strengthened** in all saving graces, to the **practice of true holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord**.
2. This sanctification is **throughout, in the whole man**, yet imperfect in this life, there abiding still some remnants of corruption in every part; whence ariseth a continual and irreconcilable war, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.
3. In which war, although the remaining corruption, for a time, may much prevail; yet,

through the **continual supply of strength from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ**, the regenerate part doth overcome; and so, **the saints grow in grace, perfecting holiness in the fear of God**.

From Angus Fletcher:

“...a great deal of love's bliss comes from the pleasures of our own self-disclosures...”

“...our brain is rather egoistically swooning for itself: *I like myself more when I'm with you*”

“...as love deepens, the second part of the blueprint, the ‘stretch’, becomes less important. We no longer have to seduce our loved one with dazzle; we can simply confess our intimate secrets in all their humdrum ordinariness, and we'll still deepen our emotional bond. That's the real wonder of love: not needing anything more wondrous than ourselves”

John 15:5
(ESV)

5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

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(ESV)

23 since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God;

John 10:27-30
(ESV)

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

30 I and the Father are one.”

Colossians 1:9-14
(ESV)

9 And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may **be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,**

10 so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

11 being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy;

12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

13 He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,

14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Isaiah 55:7
(ESV)

7

let the wicked forsake his way,
and the unrighteous man his thoughts;
let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him,
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

Sinclair Ferguson

Are we looking "...inwardly for some kind of revelation that comes immediately into my mind from God? Or outwardly, to the mind of God revealed in scripture, praying I will be given the Spirit of illumination and wisdom to be able to apply it?"

Romans 3:21-26
(ESV)

The Righteousness of God Through Faith

21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—

22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction:

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.

26 It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Hebrews 11:6
(ESV)

6 And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

John Flavel's admonitions:

Get the true fear of God upon you hearts: be really afraid of offending him: God will not hide his mind from such a soul (Psa. 25:14), 'The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant.'

Study the word more, and the concerns and interests of the world less. The word is a light to your feet (Psa. 119:105), i.e. it hath a discovering and directive usefulness as to all the duties to be done and dangers to be avoided: it is the great oracle at which you are to enquirer. Treasure up its rules in your hearts, and you will walk safely (Psa. 119:11), 'Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.'

Reduce what you know into practice, and you shall know what is your duty to practice (John 7:17), 'If any man do his will, he shall know of the doctrine.' Psalm 111:10), "A good understanding have all they that do his commandments.'

Christian Maturity

Lesson 6

Handout

Pray for illumination and direction in the way that you should go; beg the Lord to guide you in straits, and that he would not suffer you to fall into sin. This was the holy practice of Ezra 8:21: 'Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river Ahvaz, that we might afflict ourselves enforce our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all of our substance.'

And this being done, *follow providence so far as it agrees with the word, and no further.*'

Ferguson, pp. 93-94.