

CHAPTER FIVE

A LIFE OF FAITH

The Bible discloses the proper course of a believer's life in the following verses: "But the righteous shall have life and live by faith" (Rom. 1:17); "the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God" (Gal. 2:20); and "we walk by faith, not by appearance" (2 Cor. 5:7). After reading these verses, we know that a believer lives by faith. Although we may be quick to understand this in our mind, we cannot easily experience it in our life.

A life of faith is entirely different from a life of feeling; in fact, the two are opposites. One who lives by feeling does God's will and sets his mind on the things in heaven only when he feels excited. As soon as the pleasant feeling ceases, everything else ceases with it. A life of faith is not this way. Having a life of faith is living by faith. Faith considers the One in whom it believes to be the mastermind, not the believer himself. Faith does not look at the situation it encounters, but at the One in whom it believes. Although everything around faith may change, if the One in whom it believes has not changed, faith continues on. Faith maintains a relationship with God. It does not depend on feeling; it depends on the God in whom it believes. Faith moves according to the One it believes, while feeling moves according to how it feels. Faith looks at God, but feeling looks at itself. God never changes; He is the same whether the day is cloudy or sunny. Hence, one who lives by faith is as unchanging as God. His living is the same in darkness or in light. The feeling of a believer constantly changes. Therefore, one who lives by his feeling inevitably leads a life of ups and downs.

God requires that His children not regard enjoyment or pleasure as their objective. He wants them to live only by faith in Him. Just as they run the spiritual course when they feel good, they should keep going when they feel miserable. Their attitude towards God should not vary according to how they feel. Although they sense dryness, tastelessness, and darkness, if they know that a certain matter is according to God's will, they should persist onward, trusting God. Often it seems that there is a rebellion in them. They feel sad, depressed, and discouraged to the point that they want to cease all the activities of their spiritual journey. However, knowing that the work in this spiritual journey must go on, they should ignore all contradictory feelings and continue to press onward. This is a life of faith, a life that does not care for feeling but for God's will. If one believes that a certain thing is God's will, even though he has no interest in it, he does it. A person who lives by feeling does things only according to his interest; a person who lives by faith does all of God's will whether or not it is enjoyable.

A life of feeling draws a person to live apart from God Himself by causing him to be satisfied after obtaining a certain amount of happiness. A life of faith causes a person to live by God and to be satisfied after obtaining God. Since he has already gained God, he is not made any happier because he feels happy, nor is he made bitter because he feels bitter. A life of feeling causes a believer to live for himself. A life of faith causes a person to live for God without leaving any room for the self-life. If the self is given a reason to be happy in one area, there is no living by faith in that area, only a living by feeling. Only pleasant feelings keep the self happy. A believer lives by his feeling because he has not committed his self-life to the cross. Therefore, he reserves a place for the self. He hopes that in his spiritual journey there will always be something to make the self happy.

The Christian life is a life of faith from beginning to end. We received a new life by faith. Therefore, we must continue by faith to live according to this new life. Faith is the

principle for the believer's life. The Christian life is nothing other than living by faith. While many believers acknowledge this principle, they seem to forget to apply it in their experience. They forget that living, acting, and hoping by their emotion and by their feeling of happiness is walking by sight and not by faith. What is a life of faith? A life of faith is a life that disregards feeling. In fact, a life of faith is completely contrary to a life of feeling. Therefore, if a believer wants to live by faith, he should not change his normal behavior and weep bitterly, thinking that he has lost his spiritual life, whenever he feels cold, dry, empty, and painful. We live by faith and not by happiness.

THE DEEPER WORK OF THE CROSS

We may think that the cross's most complete work is accomplished when we forsake outward, physical happiness and worldly pleasures. Little do we know that in God's work of eliminating our old creation, there remains an even deeper work of the cross for us. He wants us to die to His joy and live to His will. While we may feel happy because of Him and His closeness, rather than any fleshly or worldly matter, God's goal is not for us to enjoy His joy but to obey His will. The cross must work until only the will of God remains. If a believer desires the joy which God gives him but dislikes the suffering He gives, he has not gone through the deeper work of the cross.

There is a big difference between God's will and God's joy. God's will is present any time and any place because we see it in all of His arrangements. However, God's joy is not always present. It is experienced occasionally in certain situations. If a believer seeks after God's joy, he merely desires that part of God's will which makes him happy; he does not desire the entire will of God. When God makes him happy, he obeys His will; when God causes him to suffer, he resists His will. If the believer takes God's will as his life, he obeys no matter how God causes him to feel because he recognizes God's arrangement both in happiness and in sorrow.

During the initial stage of a believer's spiritual life, God allows him to enjoy His joy. However, God withdraws the sensation of joy as the believer advances in life because this is profitable to him. He knows that if the believer continues to seek and enjoy this kind of joy for a considerable length of time, he will not live by every word that proceeds out of God's mouth. Rather, he will live by the words which make him happy. He lives in the comfort of God and not in the God of comfort. Therefore, God must withdraw all the joyous sensations so that he will live wholly by Him.

At the start of a spiritual journey, when a believer suffers for the Lord, the Lord will comfort him and cause him to sense His presence, see His smiling face, feel His love, and perceive His care in the hope that the believer will not become weary or be discouraged. At this time, if the believer knows the will of God and does it, God will fill his heart with joy as he is doing His will. In spite of the price he has paid for the Lord, God will make him feel that the joy he has received is ten thousand times better than what he has lost. Therefore, he is pleased to do God's will. However, God also sees a danger in this. A believer, who has received comfort and joy after suffering for the Lord and doing His will in the past, may strive for just comfort and joy when he has to suffer again for Him or do His will. As soon as he begins to once again suffer for the Lord or do His will, he may expect the Lord's comfort and joy to help him. Hence, the believer may suffer for the Lord and do the will of God merely for the sake of obtaining a reward—comfort and joy—rather than for the sake of God Himself. Then if he does not have comfort and joy as a crutch, he will not be able to go on. If this is the case, God's will becomes inferior to the joy which He gives for obeying His will.

God knows that when He comforts a believer, he is very willing to suffer for Him; when God grants him happiness, he delights to do His will. However, God wants to know his motive. Is he suffering for the sake of the Lord or for the sake of receiving the comfort which comes with the suffering? Is he doing God's will because it is His will or because by doing it, he is made happy? Therefore, when he has advanced somewhat in his spiritual journey, God will withdraw all such comfort and happiness. Thus the believer no longer feels God's comfort when he is suffering for Him. Without the comfort, it is a suffering not only outwardly, but inwardly as well. When he is doing God's will, he has not the slightest interest. He feels dry and pleasureless. Now God will know why the believer suffers for Him and does His will. God is asking him, "If you do not receive any of My comfort, can you bear it simply because you are bearing it for My sake? Are you willing to do something because it is My will even though it does not interest you at all? When you feel pained, tasteless, and dry, can you work for Me because this is My work? When I send you physical suffering, unaccompanied by any soothing feeling, will you gladly accept it because it is given by Me?"

This is a practical cross. Through this the Lord reveals to us whether we are living for Him by faith or whether we are living for ourselves by feeling. Often we hear people say, "I live for Christ." What does this mean? Many believers think that living for the Lord is just working for Him or loving Him. Far from it. Living for the Lord is living for His will, for His interest, and for His kingdom. In this kind of life there is nothing for the self. There is no room reserved for our own comfort, joy, and glory. We are not allowed to do God's will if we are merely after comfort and happiness. We are not allowed to retreat, cease obeying, or delay our obeying just because we feel pained, uninterested, and discouraged. It does not mean that whenever the body is suffering for the Lord, the suffering is for His sake. Many times, even though the body is suffering, the heart is still full of joy. If we live for the Lord, we continue to press onward, not only when we suffer bodily, but even when our heart suffers pain and is absolutely unwilling. The believer must know that living for the Lord means not leaving any place for the self but willingly delivering the self fully to death. One who can ignore himself and gladly receive all things from the Lord, even when things are dark, dry, tasteless, or in disarray, is one who lives for the Lord.

If we live by our emotion, we do God's will only when we feel happy. If we live by faith, we see that we obey the Lord in all matters. Many times, we are clear that a particular matter is according to God's will. However, we do not have the slightest interest in it and even as we do it, we feel dry. We do not feel the Lord's pleasure, blessing, or strengthening. On the contrary, we feel as though we are walking through the valley of the shadow of death because of our fight with the enemy. Under this circumstance, unless we press on by faith, we will surely flee to Tarshish. Alas, not even mentioning the believers who do not do the will of God today, many who do His will do only that which interests them! How many believers do only that part of God's will which suits the desire of their emotion!

Let us ask again, "What is a life of faith?" A life of faith is a life that lives by faith in God under all circumstances. Job said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him!" (Job 13:15). This is faith. Since we once believed in God, loved God, and trusted God, no matter where He puts us or how He ill-treats us, and even if He causes us to go through the refining fire so that we would suffer both physically and emotionally, yet we will believe in Him, love Him, and trust Him! Most of the believers today only expect to suffer pain in their bodies, while having peace in their hearts. But who would refuse even the comfort to their hearts because they believe in God? This is the highest life.

Who can still delight in God's will without being discouraged and still commit himself to God when he feels that God has rejected him and even feels that God hates him and wants to slay him? We should know that God does not treat us this way. However, many believers who have advanced in their spiritual journey have the experience of seemingly being rejected by God. When we feel this way, does our faith in God remain unchanged? When the people were going to hang John Bunyan, the author of *Pilgrim's Progress*, he said, "If God does not intervene, I shall leap into eternity in blindness, come heaven, come hell." This was a hero of faith! When we feel discouraged, are we able to say, "O God, even if You should forsake me, I will still trust in You"? Emotion begins to doubt when it senses darkness, but faith clings to God even in death.

How few of the believers have arrived at this stage! How our flesh is opposed to a life that gives no room to self but only to God! Since by nature we dislike taking the cross, many believers remain at a standstill in their spiritual journey. They always want to reserve some happiness for their own enjoyment. To lose their all in the Lord, including that which causes the self to be happy, is truly a death too deep and a cross too heavy! They can be wholly consecrated to the Lord, suffer for Him, or even pay a price to do His will, but they find it difficult to abandon that little feeling which gives pleasure to the self. They treasure a small amount of comfort and allow the spiritual life to rest in such a petty feeling. If they have the courage to willingly deliver themselves into God's fiery furnace, without the slightest feeling of self-pity or self-love, they will advance in their spiritual journey by leaps and bounds! However, believers are still regulated by their natural life because they think that what they see and feel is reliable. They do not have the courage, faith, and aggressiveness to explore those areas which they neither feel nor see in order to discover the paths that have not been trodden by those who were before them. They have reached the place where the boundary has been drawn. A little loss or a little gain becomes the cause of their sorrow or joy, and they no longer aim to go any higher or deeper. They are limited by their petty self.

If a believer realizes that God wants him to live by faith, he would not often utter sounds of murmurings and sighings, nor breed thoughts of discontent. If he is willing to accept the feeling of dryness which God has given him and regard everything from God as good, how quickly his natural life will be dealt with by the cross! Ignorance and unwillingness, however, hinder the believer. Otherwise, these experiences of dryness would become the very cross to practically deal with his soul-life, enabling him to truly live in the spirit. What a pity that many believers accomplish nothing in their lifetimes except the pursuit of a little feeling of happiness. But faithful believers—those who have been brought by God into a real life of spirituality—lead a life that is so much of God! When they recall their experiences, they realize that God's arrangement has, indeed, been right, because without their experiences, it would have been difficult to lose their soul-life. The need today is for believers to fully commit themselves into the hand of God without caring about how they feel.

However, this does not mean that henceforth we will become persons without joy. "Joy in the Holy Spirit" is the greatest blessing in God's kingdom. Moreover, the fruit of the Spirit is joy. What does this mean? It means that although we have lost the feeling of happiness, the joy which we receive out of a pure faith will not be quenched. This is deeper than feeling. By becoming spiritual, we lose our former desire to focus on pleasing the self, and we no longer pursue happiness with zeal as we once did; but peace and joy in the spirit, which come out of faith, are always present.

ACCORDING TO THE SPIRIT

If a believer wants to walk according to the spirit, he must renounce a life of feeling. One who walks according to the spirit must walk by faith. To walk according to the spirit is to renounce the pleasant feeling which the flesh holds on to, demands, and desires, which the believer regards as crutches and security in all his activity. When a believer walks according to the spirit, he does not fear the absence of any supportive feeling or the presence of any opposing feeling. Once his faith weakens, however, and he does not walk according to the spirit, he will seek things which he can see, feel, and touch to support him. Whenever the spiritual life is weak, feeling will replace intuition in taking the lead. A believer who lives by his feeling will come to realize that he was after a pleasant feeling in the beginning. Eventually, he will seek the help of the world. If you cannot reject the pleasant effect of feeling, it will lead you to rely on the world. Feeling must have the world as its resting place. Therefore, emotional believers often resort to their own ways, seeking help from men. To be led by the spirit more than anything else requires faith because the intuition's leading is often contrary to one's feeling. Those without faith cannot go on. Soulsh believers simply cease to serve God the moment they feel discouraged. However, believers who live according to faith do not wait until they are excited to work; rather, they ask God to increase the strength of their spirit so that they can overcome the sense of discouragement.

A LIFE OF THE WILL

This life of faith may be called a life of the will. Faith is not mindful of emotion. Therefore, during periods of dryness it comes forth through the decision of the will and wants to walk according to the will of God. Although the believer may not feel that he should obey God, nevertheless, he wants to obey Him. Here we see two kinds of Christians: one who lives by feeling and the other who lives by the will (referring to the renewed will). The believer who lives by feeling obeys God only when he gets help from feeling, that is, when he feels happy. On the other hand, the believer who lives by the will obeys God whatever the environment and feeling. Our will expresses the opinion of our true self, whereas our feeling is just a reaction to an outward stimulus. Hence, a believer who does the will of God only when he feels happy is not of much value to God, because he is stirred by God's joy to do God's will and not by his sincerity. If he is willing and resolves to do God's will even when he does not feel any amount of happiness or pleasant sensation to help him go on, God considers this truly valuable because it comes out of the believer's sincerity. It is an indication that he respects and surrenders to God, not caring or living for himself. This is the difference between a spiritual believer and a soulsh one. A soulsh believer obeys God only when what he feels is sufficient to satisfy his desire. This gives the self primary consideration. A spiritual believer is fully in union with God in his renewed will. He obeys God's arrangement; even though he does not receive any external help, he remains steadfast.

What is there to boast of if we obey God to the end while we feel physically and emotionally comfortable? What is there to boast of if we obey the Lord while we are receiving God's comfort in our suffering? It is valuable to God when we suffer and do not feel His comfort, love, help, presence, and joy and yet still decide to obey Him and do His will.

Many believers do not know that living by the spirit is living by the will that is in union with God. (A will that is not in union with God is unreliable and does not last. Only a will that has fully surrendered to God's will wants what the Spirit wants.) They have heard other believers telling them what a joy it is to obey the Lord and suffer for Him. Because they desire this kind of life, they also consecrate themselves fully to the Lord with the

hope of obtaining this "higher" life. Truly, after their consecration, they have many experiences of the Lord's nearness and love. Therefore, they think they have obtained what they wanted. But shortly afterwards, all these pleasant experiences become history.

Believers suffer endless pains thinking that they have lost their spiritual life because they do not know that the manifestation of a true spiritual life does not depend on the feeling but on the will. However, now that they really do not feel anything, they must determine if their heart of consecration has changed. Has their desire to do God's will changed? Has their willingness to suffer for the Lord at any cost changed? Has their sincere willingness to do any work and go any place for God changed? If these have not changed, their spiritual life has not regressed at all. If these have changed, their spiritual life has truly regressed.

If a believer has indeed gone backwards, it is not because he has lost his happiness, but because his will is not as willing to obey God as before. And if he has indeed progressed, it is not because he now has many wonderful feelings which he never had before, but because his will is in deeper union with God; he is more willing to do His will and more sympathetic to His will. The standard of a true spiritual life lies in how much our will is in union with God's will. It is not determined by our good or bad feelings. Even when we feel good, without a heart which unconditionally obeys God, our spiritual life is at its lowest level. Even when we feel dry, if there is the willingness to obey God unto death, our spiritual life is at its highest level. The spiritual life is measured by the will because the will expresses what our "self" is. If the will has already surrendered to God, it means that our "self" has surrendered to God and is no longer the master. Our self and spiritual life stand in opposition to each other. When the self is demolished, the spiritual life will surely grow. When the self remains strong, the spiritual life will surely suffer loss. Hence, we can know a person's life just by looking at his will. However, the same is not true of the feeling because when the emotion has the most wonderful feeling, the believer can still be full of self—wanting to entertain and please the self.

Therefore, a believer who sincerely seeks progress should not be deceived into thinking that his feeling is his life, eagerly cherishing a feeling of happiness. Instead, he should ascertain whether or not his will has been fully surrendered to God. It makes no difference whether he feels happy or not. God wants us to live by faith. He may want to see us living simply by faith and being satisfied simply by doing His will without the consolation of our feeling for a long time. Are we willing? We should be happy because we have done the will of God, not because we feel happy. His will should suffice to make us happy.

MAN'S DUTY

When a believer is regulated by a life of feeling, he neglects his duty towards others. A life of feeling has self as the center. Therefore, it cannot be concerned with the needs of others. A believer must have the faith and the will to carry out his duty. Responsibility has no regard for feeling. Our duty towards others is fixed. Our duty towards our work is also fixed. These cannot change according to how we feel. A duty must be performed according to principles; it cannot change according to how we feel.

When a believer merely understands a truth in his feeling, he will not carry out his duty. He is so happy during his time of fellowship with the Lord; therefore, he is desirous of such times. When a believer has experienced the happiness of a pleasant feeling, his greatest temptation is to be alone with the Lord to enjoy this happiness throughout the

day, without taking care of all the other things around him. He dislikes his work because temptations and difficulties in his work are inevitable. He feels that he is so holy and victorious when he is face to face with the Lord. However, once he performs his daily duties, he finds himself just as defeated and filthy as before. Therefore, he wants to escape from his duties in the hope of being able to stay in the Lord's presence so that he can be holy and victorious for a long time. He considers his duties as worldly things which he, as a holy and victorious person, should not be concerned with. He is very desirous of a time and place to have fellowship with the Lord, but he detests his duties because they frustrate his happiness. He does not care for the need and welfare of others because he seeks after a time and place to fellowship with the Lord. Parents who bear this attitude fail to take good care of their children; likewise, slaves fail to serve their master faithfully. To them these things are worldly, and it is all right not to care about them since they are seeking after something more spiritual.

The reason for this is that the believer is not yet living by faith. Therefore, he is still after "self-nourishment." Since he is not yet fully in union with God, he can only commune with God at a particular time and in a particular place. He has not learned to look to the Lord by faith in all things and work together with Him. He still does not know how to be in union with the Lord in the trivial matters of daily living. His experiences of God have been confined solely to the feeling. Therefore, he loves to pitch a tent on the mountain and dwell with the Lord for a long time, but he does not want to come down from the mountain to cast the demons out.

Believers should know that the highest life of a Christian can never contradict the duties of his human living. When we read the Epistles to the Romans, Colossians, and Ephesians, we can see how a believer must fulfill his human duties. The highest life of a Christian is not expressed only at a particular time or a particular place. If so, this life would be rather ordinary. Instead, it can be fully expressed at any time and in any place. It makes no difference whether one is doing housework, preaching, or praying. The life of Christ can be manifested in every kind of activity.

All our dissatisfaction over our present position and all our reluctance to perform the duties associated with this position are the result of living by our emotion. We resist because the happiness we desire is not found in these things. However, our life is not for happiness. So why do we seek happiness? The life of feeling requires us to disregard our duties. The life of faith is not so. Our love for God does not require us to forsake our duties towards our friends and our enemies. If we are in union with God in all things, we know what our proper duties towards every person are and how to fulfill them.

DOING GOD'S WORK

To reject the emotional life and live wholly by faith is the most important requirement for doing God's work. Emotional believers are useless in God's hand. Those who live by their feeling know how to enjoy happiness but not how to work. They are not yet qualified to work. They are people who live for themselves; they have not lived for God. Only those who live for God can work for God. What does this mean? Does it mean that all the work of an emotional believer is not counted?

A believer must arrive at the state of living by faith before he can have the reality of working for God and truly be an instrument in His hand. Otherwise, his objective is to obtain happiness, whether physical or emotional. When he is unhappy, he wants to quit. He works for the feeling and quits for the feeling. His heart is full of self-love. When God

puts him to work in a field which is full of emotional and physical suffering, he feels sorry for himself and refuses to go on. The work of Jesus is a work of the cross; the work of a believer is also a work of the cross. What is there to be happy about? It would be very difficult for God to gain true workers if we do not deliver our emotion and self-love fully to death.

Today God needs a group of people to be His workers who are willing to follow Him to the end. Too many Christians can work for the Lord when the work is flourishing, when the work suits their interests, and when their feelings are not hurt. However, when the cross comes, demanding them to die and requiring them to hold on to God by faith, without the help of any good feelings, they refuse to go on. The work which is truly accomplished by God will definitely have results. However, can anyone, after receiving God's command to work for eight to ten years, faithfully continue on without seeing any result, just because it is God's command? How many Christians work simply because God commands them to do so? How many work for results? God needs believers of faith to work for Him because all His work has eternity in view. Because His work bears an eternal nature, it is difficult for those who live in time to perceive and understand. Those who live according to feeling cannot be included in this kind of work because there is nothing to please their feeling. If the death of the cross does not deeply deal with their self to the point that they do not keep anything for themselves, then as far as God's work is concerned, they can only follow the Lord to a certain point and no further. God needs men to work for Him who have been completely broken and who are willing to follow Him unto death.

FIGHTING AGAINST THE ENEMY

A believer who lives by his feeling is even less useful in spiritual warfare because spiritual warfare involves attacking the devil through prayer. This is certainly a work of self-denial. How great a suffering this is! There is nothing in this work that makes the self happy. Rather, it is a pouring out of one's self-life for the Body of Christ and for the kingdom of God. To resist and wrestle in the spirit is hard to bear! If the spirit bears an unspeakably heavy burden for God's sake, what is there to be happy about? If all our strength is directed against the evil spirits, how can that be enjoyable? This is a warfare of prayer. Yet for whom do we pray? It is not for ourselves but for God's work. This kind of prayer is for warfare. It is not as enjoyable as our usual emotional prayer. What is comfortable about travelling by prayer in our soul for the saints, destroying and establishing by prayer? Spiritual warfare does not cause the flesh to be happy unless we are fighting in our imagination.

When an emotional believer fights against Satan, he is easily defeated. When he attacks Satan by prayer, Satan uses his evil spirit to attack the believer's feeling. He makes the believer feel that warfare is hard and prayer is dry. When the believer feels sorrowful, tasteless, dark, and dry, he ceases to fight. Hence, an emotional believer cannot fight Satan. Satan only has to attack his feeling, and he will not be able to withstand. If the feeling has not gone through death, it gives Satan ground every time. Each time he opposes Satan, Satan only has to attack his feeling to defeat him. If we have not overcome our feeling, how do we expect to overcome Satan?

Therefore, spiritual warfare requires a person to have an attitude of death to his feeling and to live by faith alone. This kind of person is able to endure the pain of being alone. He is able to fight the enemy without seeking man's acceptance and companionship. He is able to go on in spite of any feeling of suffering. He does not care if he is dead or alive;

he only cares for how God leads. This kind of person bears no self-interest, aspiration, or preferences. He has already committed his self to death and fully lives for God. This kind of person does not blame or misunderstand God but loves all of God's ways. He can fill the breach. Although it seems that God has deserted him and that there is no one to help him, he can still face the opposition alone. This kind of person can be a prayer warrior to defeat Satan.

REST

When a believer has gone through all of the Lord's dealings, he will enter into a life of faith. This life of faith is none other than a true spiritual life. When a believer arrives at this stage, he will have a life of rest. The fire of the cross has already eliminated his greedy heart. He has learned his lesson. Now he knows that only God's will is of any value; whatever else he may naturally desire is not the highest, nor do they match the highest life. Now he is happy to lose everything. Whatever the Lord thinks should be withdrawn, he gladly allows the Lord's hand to take away. The sighing, bitterness, and sorrow produced from his hoping, seeking, pursuing, and struggling are gone. He knows that the highest life is to live for God and obey His will. Although he has lost everything, he is satisfied because God's will is accomplished. Although there is nothing for him to enjoy, he yields to the arranging hand of God. It matters not what he encounters as long as God is pleased. This is perfect rest; nothing outward can stir him.

Now the believer is living by the will (the will that is in union with God); his will is full of the strength of the spirit which rules over his emotion. His life is peaceful, steady, and at rest. The former life of ups and downs is gone. However, we should not take this to mean that he will never again be regulated by his emotion, because this kind of sinless perfection is not possible unless one enters heaven. However, if we compare his present condition to the past, we can say that he is at rest and steady. Even though the former confusion is definitely gone, he will occasionally be affected by his emotion. Therefore, he needs to watch and pray.

Neither should we think that it is no longer possible for him to feel happy or sad. There is not such a thing; unless our organ for emotion is destroyed, our feeling still remains. Our emotion will still feel sorrow, darkness, and dryness. However, all these only affect the outward man; it does not affect the inward man because there is a clear separation between our spirit and soul. Therefore, no matter how much the soul suffers outwardly or is confused, our spirit remains peaceful and secure as though nothing has happened.

When the believer's life reaches this stage of rest, he realizes that all the loss he suffered for the Lord before has been replaced. At this time, he has gained God. Hence, everything of God is also his. Now in God, he can properly enjoy the things which He withdrew before. At that time, God caused him to experience sorrow and hardship because his soul-life was the mastermind in all things. He had many loves and pursuits in himself; he even sought what was outside of God's will. This independent action had to be dealt with by God. Since he has lost the self and lost his soul-life, he can enjoy God's happiness in a proper position and within a proper boundary. Only now has he learned to have a proper relationship with God's happiness in God. The heart which fervently sought things for the self is dead. He accepts everything which he receives with thanksgiving. Whatever is not given to him, he does not demand just for the sake of happiness.

When believers have reached this stage, they are counted as having reached a pure stage. Pureness means that there is no mixture involved. Whatever is mixed is not pure. According to the Bible, impureness is filthy. When a believer has not yet reached this stage, he does not have a pure life. Why? Because there is mixture in his life. He lives for God, but he also lives for himself. He loves God, but he also loves himself. His intention is for God, but he also has selfish motives for his own glory, happiness, and comfort. This is a defiled life. He lives by faith, but he also lives by feeling; he walks according to the spirit, but he also walks according to the soul. Although the place which he reserves for himself is not big, it is enough to make his life impure. Only that which is pure is clean; anything mixed with a foreign object is defiled.

When a believer has gone through the thorough work of the cross, he arrives at a life of pureness. Everything is for God, everything is in God, and God is in everything. There is nothing for the self. Even the desire to make the self happy is gone. The self-love of the emotion has been put to death. His only objective in life is to do the will of God. As long as God is pleased, nothing else matters. His unique objective is to obey God; how he feels is not important. This is a pure life. Although God grants him peace, comfort, and joy, he no longer enjoys these things for the sake of satisfying his desire. He views all things in God. His soulish life has been terminated. God has given him a spiritual life that is pure, restful, real, and trusting. God destroyed him, but God also has established him. Everything soulish has been destroyed; everything spiritual has been established.