

**THE WORKS. IN NINE
VOLUMES. VOLUME III. A
PRACTICAL TREATISE UPON
CHRISTIAN PERFECTION**

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The Works. In Nine Volumes. Volume III. A Practical Treatise upon Christian Perfection by William Law

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WILLIAM LAW

**THE WORKS. IN NINE
VOLUMES. VOLUME III. A
PRACTICAL TREATISE UPON
CHRISTIAN PERFECTION**

THE
WORKS
Of the REVEREND
WILLIAM LAW, M.A.,

Sometime Fellow of *Emmanuel*
College, *Cambridge*.

In Nine Volumes.

Volume III.

A PRACTICAL TREATISE upon
Christian Perfection.

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Prefatory Advertisement.

A Practical Treatise upon *Christian Perfection.*

THIS Treatise is WILLIAM LAW's fourth Work in the Order of Publication; published in the year 1726, when he was about forty years of age.

MR. WALTON records a Tradition to the effect that shortly after the publication of the 'Christian Perfection,' when *William Law* was one day waiting 'in the Shop of his Publisher, in *London*, a person, habited as a Gentleman's servant, accosted him, inquiring if he were the Rev. Mr. *Law*; and being answered in the affirmative, placed a letter in his hands and departed. Upon opening the letter, it was found to contain a Bank-note for £1,000 from some anonymous individual.' *Walton* suggests that 'if this anecdote be true,' it was probably with this donation that *William Law* endowed the Girls' School in his Native place of King's Cliffe: and it is equally probable that the publication of this excellent Treatise procured him the appointment of Tutor in the *Gibbon* family.

In the course of *William Law's* controversial writings his mind may have become impressed with the importance of setting forth in a practical manner the True Profession of Christianity, as the best method of further refuting erroneous doctrines and opinions; such as he had already felt called upon in the defence of True Christianity to expose—hence this Treatise.

The 'Christian Perfection' has exercised an immense influence over the lives of many of its readers; and it may indeed be regarded as a Practical Guide to Christianity. It is the first Work of *William Law's* which really, as a Beacon, directs the Wayfarer through the strait gate into that narrow way.

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with its pitfalls and manifold difficulties which he knew so well, and along which he himself has passed. The popularity of this Work has however been exceeded by that of the 'Serious Call,' which was *William Law's* next work; but is for the most part merely the 'Christian Perfection' reduced into a Formula or System of Religion, with Rules for Devotion, appointed Hours for, and Subjects of, Prayer. Hence the extreme but unmerited, popularity of the 'Serious Call' far beyond *William Law's* other writings—for 'Man is a bundle 'of Habits,' and the majority of even religious people, from want of sufficient earnestness, require to be led and instructed by 'Rules' at every step, as if they were mentally and spiritually blind.

It is in the 'Christian Perfection' that the following sentence respecting the Light of Revelation occurs: which, in the infinite comprehensiveness of its idea, is amongst the most beautiful that *William Law* ever wrote:

'This Light (of Revelation) has dispersed all the Anxiety of 'Man's vain Conjectures. It has brought him acquainted with 'God; and, by adding Heaven to Earth and Eternity to Time, 'has opened such a glorious View of Things as makes Man, even 'in his present Condition, full of a Peace of God which passes all 'Understanding.'

G. B. M.

A
PRACTICAL
TREATISE
UPON
CHRISTIAN
PERFECTION.

By *WILLIAM LAW*, M. A.

*Not as though I had already attained,
either were already perfect.*

Phil. iii. 12.

LONDON:
Printed for WILLIAM and JOHN INNYS,
at the West-End of *St. Paul's*. 1726.

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