

# The Way of Truth

Vol. 78 "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." No. 1

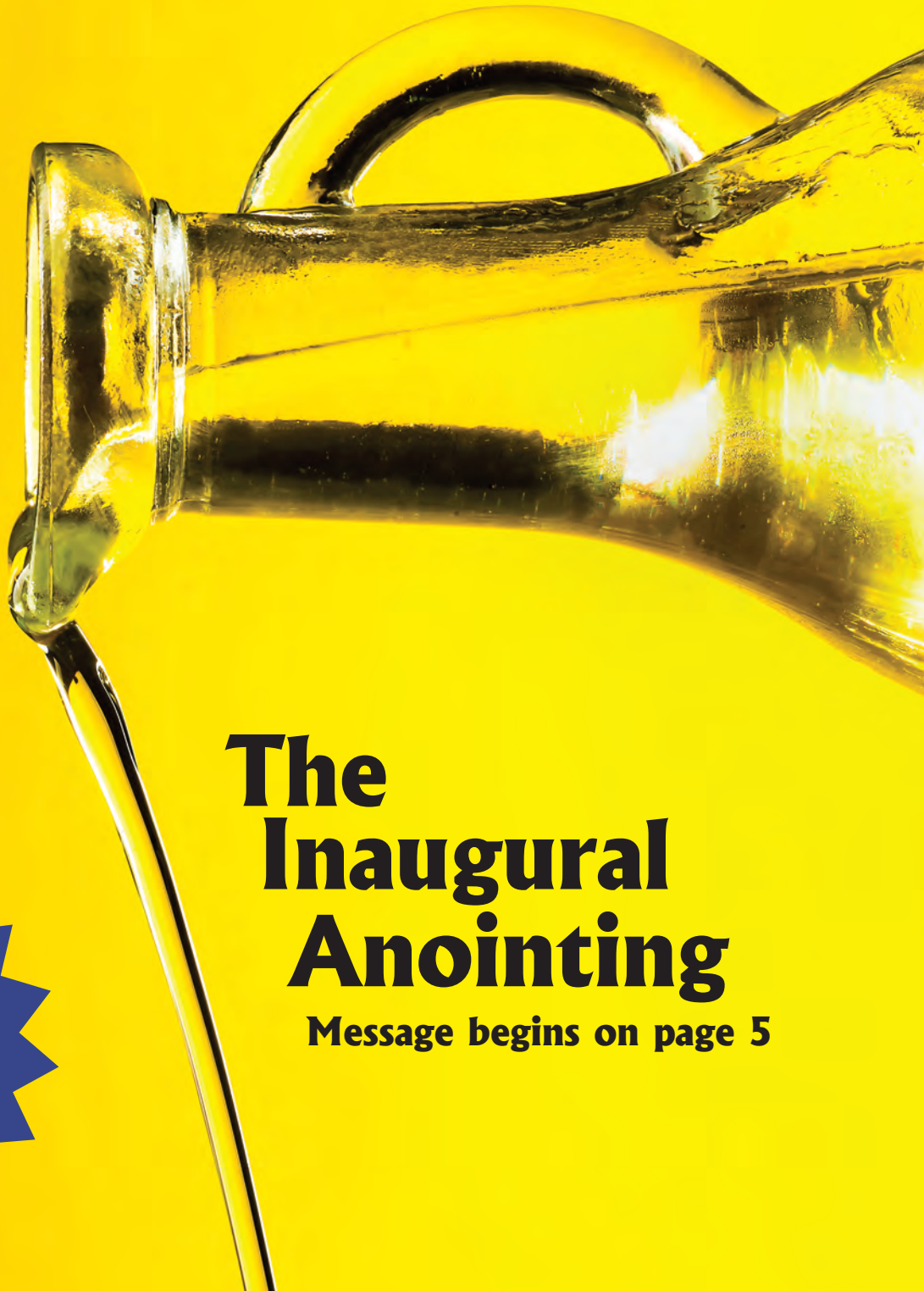
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2020


*Beginning  
our 78<sup>th</sup> year  
publishing  
the gospel of  
Christ!*

## The Inaugural Anointing

Message begins on page 5



## WHAT IS YOUR AMBITION FOR 2020?

 AS WE head into a brand new year, I would like our readers to consider the question, “What is your ambition for the new year?” I don’t give much credence to *new year’s resolutions* as such. However, the expiration of one calendar year and the ushering in of a new year does seem to be a good time to reflect on one’s goals and ambitions for the future.

*Ambition* means: “an earnest desire for some type of achievement and a willingness to strive for its attainment. To seek after earnestly; aspire to.”

Most people are consumed with selfish pursuits, worldly goals of monetary wealth, fame, power. These lead to disappointment even if they are partially achieved.

I would submit to the reader that true fulfillment is found in heavenly ambitions of spiritual growth and the goal of living a life pleasing to almighty God.

I came across the following quote: “Whenever we are faced with a crucial decision, our generation has been taught to ask, What’s in it for me? Will it give me pleasure? Profit? Security? Fulfillment? We are not necessarily opposed to God; we just fit Him in wherever He is able to help us. The idea that our wills should be subjected to His control, even when our personal ambitions are at stake, is not easy to accept. We can assent mentally to God’s control, but in practice, we might still spend our lives pleasing ourselves.”—Erwin W. Lutzer.

If your ambition for 2020 is to please the Lord, your will must be surrendered to the will of God. II Timothy 2:5 says, “And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.” In other words, if our ambition is to draw closer to God in the coming year, we are obligated to stay within the rules laid out in the Word of God. A priority in our lives must be Jesus’ admonition in Matthew 6:33, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

There is such a shortage in our world of people who are truly happy. This is because of misdirected ambitions of the masses. There is nothing wrong with the ambition to be happy. On the contrary, that should be everyone’s aspiration. But how to achieve that elusive goal is the missing pursuit in the lives of most people.

The ambition to be spiritually satisfied is necessary to the happiness of mankind. There is a place within humans that only Christ can fill. The soul is empty without Him. People try to fill the void with material things, worldly things to no avail.

The Bible says in John 7:37, “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.” He satisfies the soul with living water! There are rivers of pleasure that go untapped by the masses. “They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures” (Psalm 38:8).

If you are unsaved, Reader, it should be your ambition to repent and believe and experience the change that’s wrought by the touch of the Master’s hand. Make it your pursuit and ambition to start 2020 on the Lord’s side, fighting for Him instead of against Him!

Those of us who are saved should have the ambition to keep our experience—it is one thing to get saved, it is another to maintain that experience. Satan will do his worst to try to derail everyone of us, therefore we need to be aware of his tactics and aspire to stay true to God.

Our ambition should be to hunger after righteousness in 2020 according to the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:6, “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.”

Someone has said, “*The world needs men ... (and I might add women) who cannot be bought; whose word is their bond; who put character above wealth; who possess opinions and a will; who are larger than their vocations; who do not hesitate to take chances; who will not lose their individuality in a crowd; who will be as honest in small things as in great things; who will make no compromise with wrong; whose ambitions are not confined to their own selfish desires; who will not say they do it ‘because everybody else does it’; who are true to their friends through good report and evil report in adversity as well as in prosperity; who do not believe that shrewdness, cunning, and hardheadedness are the best qualities for winning success; who are not ashamed or afraid to stand for the truth when it is unpopular; who can say ‘no’ with emphasis, although all the rest of the world says ‘yes.’*”

We need to have the ambition to imitate Christ in the coming year; to be like Him and be a Christian indeed! Acts 11:26, “And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.” They were being mocked because they were imitating Christ.

*A father and his small son strolled down the street in Chicago past the place where a skyscraper was being constructed. Glancing up, they saw men at work on a high story of the building. “Father,” said the little boy, “What are those little boys doing up there?” “Those are not little boys, son. They’re grown men.” “But why do they look so small?” “Because they’re so high,” his father answered. After a pause the boy asked, “Then, Father, when they get to heaven there won’t be anything left of them, will there?” It’s so true. The nearer we come to Christ the less others see of us and the more they see of Christ.*

We must have the ambition to be filled with God’s Spirit and led by Him.

Someone has said, “*If we are full of pride and conceit and self-seeking and pleasure and the world, there is no room for the Spirit of God, and I believe many a man is praying to God to fill him when he is full already with something else.*”

We all should have the ambition to keep our tongues under control. I Peter 3:10, “For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile.”

# THE WAY OF TRUTH

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Vol. 78 January 2020 No. 1

*Devoted to the gospel of our loving Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave freely His life-blood, to save us from our many sins, to sanctify our fallen nature and to bring into one body all true believers, by whose stripes we are healed.*

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—Gregory E. Tyler, Editor

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It is necessary that we Christians have the ambition to work together with all God's people. There has been a special move in the last two years by the Holy Spirit to tear down walls of division that have separated saints for generations. We need to continue to allow God to move. It should be our ambition for 2020.

The Bible supports this ambition. Romans 15:30, "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me." Philippians 1:27, "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel."

Of course, we should have the ambition to stay true to the end—Philippians 3:12-14, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

May God bless us all as we look to 2020 with high ambitions to see God's kingdom advance. †

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**

**TO EACH ONE!**

## OUR SERVICES ON CD'S

CD's of our services are available for purchase. These are \$3.00 each; however, orders of 10 or more are only \$2.50 each, postage paid. Please write in the blank how many you would like to receive. Send check or money order to: The Way of Truth CD Ministry, P. O. Box 88, Hagerstown, MD 21741-0088 U.S.A.

- \_\_\_ CD #1082 The Death of Faith—Doug Shenberger
- \_\_\_ CD #1083 Into My Heart—Nancy Little
- \_\_\_ CD #1084 The Marriage Relationship—G. E. Tyler
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- \_\_\_ CD #1090 Because I Fear God—G. E. Tyler
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- \_\_\_ CD #1098 Higher Ground—Doug Shenberger
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- \_\_\_ CD #1101 Beating the Air—Rebecca Bland
- \_\_\_ CD #1102 Are You Hurting Inside?—G. E. Tyler
- \_\_\_ CD #1103 Put On Some Things—Brian Richards
- \_\_\_ CD #1104 Time To Remember—G. E. Tyler
- \_\_\_ CD #1105 A Promise Is a Promise—Paul Wilson †

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## THE POETRY PAGE

### THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW

F. W. Davis

How much have I done for the Master?  
How many lost souls have I won,  
Thru the year that has gone into history,  
And a new year for me has begun?  
I wonder if Jesus, my Savior,  
Is pleased with the number of men  
I spoke to about their salvation,  
And caused them to turn from their sin?

But the failures I made in the old year,  
I must never repeat in the new.  
For millions in sin still are dying,  
And laborers for Jesus are few.  
If I would press forward to victory,  
I cannot look back on the past,  
But ever march onward and upward,  
Till I shall see Jesus at last.

### NEW TIME

Author Unknown

Time is a treasure;  
How shall we use it?  
We can make useful,  
Or we can abuse it!

Only the Giver  
Can make our hearts wise,  
Teaching us daily  
The New Time to prize.

Time is a treasure,  
So view it, my soul!  
Keep all its spending  
'Neath watchful control.

Employ each moment  
In God's holy fear,  
And He will ensure thee  
A Happy New Year.

### A NEW YEAR'S PROMISE

Anonymous

Another year I enter  
Its history unknown;  
Oh, how my feet would tremble  
To tread its paths alone!  
But I have heard a whisper;  
I know I shall be blest;  
"My presence shall go with thee  
And I will give thee rest."

### NEW YEAR PRAYER

Edgar Daniel Kramer

As the Old Year seeks the shadows,  
That lie black beyond the hill,  
Where the summer twilight listened  
To a plaintive whippoorwill,  
My glad heart is softly praying,  
"Though I walk with joy or rue,  
Let me have the strength to labor  
At what God would have me do!"

While the bells fling jubilation  
Through the reaches of the skies  
In my heart a prayer is lifting,  
"Let me be both kind and wise,  
As I give myself for others,  
As I lean on them and share  
All the anguish and the burdens  
That their souls and flesh must bear!"

As the New Year comes with singing  
Through the wind-stripped orchard trees,  
Where ripe apples spilled their fragrance,  
Lo, I do not ask for ease,  
But my heart is humbly praying,  
"As I walk life's crowded way,  
God, let each tomorrow find me  
More like Jesus than today!"

### A NEW YEAR'S PRAYER

Christine Hazelwood

As this new year I now begin,  
A happy one I want to see;  
Help me, dear Lord, I humbly pray,  
To do the thing that pleases Thee.

I would but seek to do Thy will  
And truly walk with Thee each day.  
Make me attentive to Thy voice,  
And ever willing to obey.

I know not what the future holds;  
I know that thou art ever near  
To lead me safely o'er rough paths,  
So that my heart will know no fear.

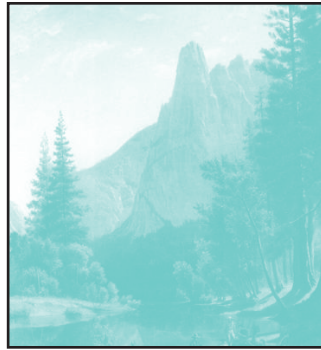
Wilt Thou stand by when all has failed?  
For Thou dost understand each test;  
Just draw me closer, Lord, to Thee,  
And grant someday eternal rest.

As there are others needing help,  
Who are distressed along the way;  
O grant them patience to wait on Thee,  
And courage and strength for ev'ry day. †

# GOD'S BEAUTIFUL PLAN

Radio Message  
by the late  
Bro. Alvin Craig

(aired 5/29/11)



unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard” (Psalm 19:1-3).

Do you know that the stars speak English, German, Spanish, Portuguese, etc.? The Psalmist said, “There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.” Regardless of who they are, regardless of what language they speak, when people look into the starry heavens, the heavens speak to them and tell them that there is indeed an almighty God. I remember seeing the stars as a boy living on the farm in North Carolina. The heavens were full of them. What an amazing sight it was! It was a beautiful sight indeed. So the earth is the Lord’s. It’s a beautiful world, and we thank God for the privilege of living in it.

As I mentioned earlier, God created man. Yes, He created Adam, and then He said, “It is not good that the man should be alone.” I’m sure all of us men will agree to that statement. He had created all those other things, and they were good. Now, God formed Eve, a woman, and brought her to Adam. God performed the first wedding ceremony. Adam and Eve became husband and wife. God said, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.” What a beautiful thing God ordained when He created Adam and Eve and gave them to be husband and wife! God intended it to be beautiful for all of His creation. It is sad indeed that there is so much trouble between so many husbands and wives today. Oh, the quarreling, the bickering, and the breaking up of homes today! That’s not God’s plan, no! God has a beautiful plan for the family of man.

After God created Adam and Eve, He said to them, “Befruitful, and multiply” (Genesis 1:28). That’s another beautiful thing! Whenever children are born into a family, what a beautiful thing it is! The Psalmist said in Psalm 139:14, “I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.” So, God formed Adam and Eve, and told them to “be fruitful and multiply,” and ordained family. What a beautiful thing it is whenever a father, a mother, and their children are living for God! They fear God and are keeping His commandments.

Do you know the Lord would not have compared His church to the family if it had not been a beautiful sight? His church is the most beautiful woman in the world. Yes, the church is the bride of Christ, and she’s the most beautiful woman that ever existed, but the next thing to it is the family. The beauty of the church is the family. God ordained for it to be a beautiful family, a happy family, a contented family. It is sad indeed that so many people have rejected God and His way. They are bringing upon themselves heartache, misery, and woe, because they have rejected God’s beautiful plan.

Again, God is the One who ordained marriage. It didn’t come through evolution, and finally people began to get married. God ordained marriage. “Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, ... She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life” (Proverbs 31:10-12). Psalm 127:3, “Lo, children are

**O**UR THOUGHTS for today’s broadcast are entitled, “God’s Beautiful Plan.” We will read from the book of Ecclesiastes, chapter 3, verses 1 and 2: “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted.” Now, verses 11-13: “He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end. I know that there is no good in them, but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life. And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God.”

*Beautiful*, in part, means, “having beauty; very pleasing to the eye, ear, mind, etc.; an exclamation of approval or pleasure.” Isn’t that beautiful?

Let us consider God’s beautiful creation for a few moments as we think of God’s beautiful plan. God made a beautiful world in which He has given us the privilege of living in. Man has done a lot to destroy a lot of things, but the world is still a beautiful place. There’s no question in my mind that God is the One who created this beautiful world in which we live. I realize that many people do not believe that, and they make fun of those who do believe it; but I read in the Scriptures (and, of course, that’s what I’m guided by), “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” God went on and created various things. He said, “It is good”; and then finally, He created man, which was indeed the crowning of His creation here on earth.

Let us look at this beautiful world in which God has made. Have you stopped to consider the beautiful red rose and the other colors of roses and other flowers? Have you stood and looked at the rippling brook as it wandered down through the fields? Have you ever stopped to look at the beautiful green grass on the hillsides where the cattle are eating and satisfying their hunger? Have you ever looked at the various variety of birds and the colors of them? Some of them are very beautiful indeed.

Have you, in the nighttime, looked up into the starry heavens and wondered at the great handiwork of almighty God? You know, the more that the Astrologers are finding out, the more convinced I become that God indeed created the heavens and the earth. They talk about the “big bang theory,” but we haven’t been told where that big mass came from. God created the heavens and the earth. “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day

an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward." Psalm 127:5, "Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them."

Now, we are talking about God's beautiful plan, but we cannot overlook the fact that sin entered into the world, and sin mars God's beautiful plan. Yes, sin mars God's beautiful plan. First of all, sin separates you from God. "But your [sins] have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you" (Isaiah 59:2). "For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). So sin mars God's beautiful plan. Sin is robbing you of spiritual life and of the peace that God intended for you to have. It brings selfishness and the "get spirit." The *get, get spirit* is so prevalent in the world today. People will do this and do that to get whatever they want to get, whether it is *by hook or crook*, as the saying is. So, sin brings greed, broken homes, wrecked lives, and death, both spiritually and physically.

God's beautiful plan to restore man is another thing that is beautiful. God saw sinful man and He had the plan before He ever created the world. God's beautiful plan to redeem mankind is indeed a beautiful plan. It restores man to the plane of holiness that God intended for him to have and to live.

God's beautiful plan involved the Lord Jesus Christ. An angel visited a young lady in Nazareth and He told her that she was to be the mother of the Lord Jesus Christ. She inquired as to how this could be, and the angel explained to her how it would be. Mary said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." So, it was that while they were in Nazareth and went down to Bethlehem, "the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger" (Luke 2:6, 7). Don't you imagine He was a beautiful baby? Yes, indeed, He was a beautiful baby.

Jesus came into this world and grew to manhood. He went about living a beautiful life and ministering to the needs of the people. He had compassion, love, and concern for the people. He went about doing good unto all men; but the religious people, especially those in Jerusalem, did not appreciate His preaching and His exposing them of their hypocrisy.

Jesus Christ gave His life so that we could have life. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). Dying on the cross was not a beautiful thing, but it was a part of God's overall beautiful plan to redeem man from the life of sin that he had chosen to live. Man is free to live a beautiful life. "For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation" (Psalm 149:4).

God's way is indeed a beautiful way. It is a holy way; it is a righteous way. You're not really living if you're not living for Christ and in Christ. Paul wrote to Titus, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:11, 12).

I mentioned earlier on the broadcast about fathers, mothers, and children. Let me go back to that thought, for we read in Ephesians, chapter 6, verse 1, "Children,

obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." Children, if you want to live a beautiful life, one of the things that is so essential and necessary is that you obey your parents. Of course, it is important that the parents be the kind of parents that God would have them to be, for we read again in Ephesians, chapter 6, verse 4, "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Some years ago, I was in a certain restaurant in Jacksonville, North Carolina, with my daughter and her husband. There was a couple who came in there with a child that was not well-behaved. Well, the manager finally came to them and asked them to take the child outside. The child was causing such a disturbance and acting so ugly. Another time, my wife and I were in a restaurant in Hickory, North Carolina, when a couple came in with two children. Their children were so well-behaved. As we were about to leave, my wife said to the waitress, "Will you please tell that couple how much we appreciated the fine conduct of their children?" What a difference! God ordained that families live beautiful lives. He has given us the plan in His Word. He has given us the instructions in His Word as to how we can bring that to past.

Death is an enemy. "It is appointed unto men once to die" (Hebrews 9:27). Yes, death is indeed an enemy. We read in I Corinthians 15:26, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

The resurrection is also a beautiful plan. Whenever we die and our bodies are laid beneath the sod, that is not the end. Absolutely not! That is not our final resting place. "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28, 29).

We read in I Corinthians 15:52-54, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." There will be a resurrection and our bodies will be changed. We will be given a spiritual body likened unto that of the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle John said, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Those who have lived a righteous and a godly life, and lived a beautiful life in this time world will go to be with the Lord forever.

Whenever we enter heaven, we will see something more beautiful than we have ever seen on this earth. When that time comes to past, we'll behold beauty such as we have never seen before. I thank God for the beautiful plan of redemption from sin and eternal life. The beautiful part about it is, everyone can have it. "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Revelation 22:17). Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." †



# THE INAUGURAL ANOINTING

2019 Hagerstown Convention Message by Bro. Mick Akers



**I**T IS GOOD to be where the saints of God are. It is good to serve God without an agenda of my own. Do you know what I mean? We shouldn't have an agenda of our own, other than worshipping God, listening to the services, and allowing the Spirit of God to reveal what He wants to reveal to us, and rejoice in His revealing to us. I want God to have His way in my life, don't you? That is a healthy desire. I don't care if you've been a Christian for one day, one year, ten years, or thirty years, allowing God to have His way in your life should be your desire. God is good. He is great.

I want to bring a few thoughts from a text of scripture in First John. I want to read it, set it aside for a moment, and then come back to it, as ministers often do. I John, chapter 2, starting with verse 21: "I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also. Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life. These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you." Our text of scripture: "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." These things that I expect, by the help of the Lord to speak on, I'm not preaching because I don't think that you don't know them. I just want to bring things to your remembrance and draw some things out of this that we can build on and use. I want to consider some thoughts on *anointing*.

I'd like for us to turn back to the Old Testament book of Exodus. I have some readings this morning. I feel like I don't have a lot to say, so I'm going to take my time and try to work through them, by the grace of God. I was thinking along the lines, Was Isaiah's or Ezekiel's message any more important than Jonah's or Nahum's? All those few messages in those books were just as important. Be they few or many, all that matters is that the messages were from God.

## THE ANOINTING OF OIL

The anointing of oil: Exodus 30:22-33, "Moreover the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Take thou also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh five hundred shekels, and of sweet cinnamon half so much, even two hundred and fifty shekels, and of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty shekels, And of cassia five hundred shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, and of oil olive an hin: And thou shalt make it an oil of holy oint-

ment, an ointment compound after the art of the apothecary: it shall be an holy anointing oil. And thou shalt anoint the tabernacle of the congregation therewith, and the ark of the testimony, And the table and all his vessels, and the candlestick and his vessels, and the altar of incense, And the altar of burnt offering with all his vessels, and the laver and his foot. And thou shalt sanctify them, that they may be most holy: whatsoever toucheth them shall be holy. And thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office. And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, This shall be an holy anointing oil unto me throughout your generations. Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured, neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it: it is holy, and it shall be holy unto you. Whosoever compoundeth any like it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his people." What a recipe! That was a special recipe, wasn't it?

This was a special oil. This wasn't just any oil. This was an anointing oil that was to be used in the tabernacle. As you heard me read, they were told to be jealous of this oil; to keep it close. This wasn't a perfume that they could use in their services, or use it there at the inaugural anointing and elsewhere. This oil was only for the house of God and only for the people of God. This wasn't going to be used anywhere else. If anyone was caught selling it, there were dire consequences to it. They would be cut off from the people if it meant by death. It was serious and holy to God, and He had a special purpose for it. It marked the instruments of God. Do you hear what I am saying? I want to draw some parallels this morning with this oil, but it's going to take me just a little bit to bring this.

I want us to consider that all the tabernacle was fabricated, all the tenons were set there, all the rings were made and laced into the curtains. The curtains were drawn open and all the instruments of the tabernacle—the laver—the table, etc., were all made and ready, but they needed an anointing. They were ready, but they weren't complete and ready for service until they had received an anointing. They were ready for service, but they weren't ready for God's service. They certainly could form their function, but they weren't ready until the priest had anointed them in accordance with what God told them to do. That oil was to anoint them, to mark them, and to set them apart. The smell of that oil was unique and set them apart. That's a very important point I want you to keep in mind.

This oil that was used to anoint the instruments of the tabernacle and the high priest in this inaugural anointing was unique. It had a blissful smell. It was special. It permeated everything. Have you ever had

any outdoor furniture? One of the ways to preserve it is to take oil, put it on a rag, and rub it on the wood. It preserves it. It takes care of it. So, there is really no stretch of the imagination to recognize that this oil, once it had been spread out in abundance was everywhere. When the priest was anointed, it didn't just stay on his head, did it? We know from Psalm 133 that when Aaron was anointed, the oil ran down upon his beard and down into his vesture and garments. It was a sweet smell. Once he had been anointed with that oil, no one could get away from the smell of it. That's not a bad thing, because this oil smelled really good. The goodness and sweetness of it was shared by everybody that came in to offer sacrifices. Everyone! It was to the benefit of the entire congregation. The smell of that oil permeated the temple and was enjoyed by all. That's the point I was trying to make with the wood. Oil permeates the wood and goes down deep inside of it. It just doesn't lay on the surface. It goes down deep and preserves the wood so that it can withstand the elements of the weather. That is just the nature of oil and what it does.

They produced a lot of oil under divine command. Why did they produce so much of it? They used so much of it there. They didn't just pour a little bit on, a little dab here and there. We use little bottles of oil when we anoint someone. We just touch the forehead. They used a lot of it. It was all over everything. I want you to get an understanding of how the oil was used, how it was composed and used in the temple.

### **THE PRESENCE OF GOD**

I want you to consider something else. After all was in order, and they had set up the tabernacle the way God had told them to do, and they had anointed the priest and everything in the tabernacle with oil, listen to what happened. You can turn to Exodus, chapter 40. I'm just going to read a few verses here. After they had burnt the offerings and things of that nature, "Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. [So much so that] Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys: But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up." Think about that!

After all the things in the tabernacle were set in divine order and ready for use, it was a working temple. There was work that went on there for its use. After all was set up and the oil was distributed as it was, and the sacrifices were offered, then the divine presence of God came down on the tabernacle in a marked and glorious way. It was a witness to them.

### **THE POURING OUT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Now, that Old Testament oil was not to be dispersed or poured out on the flesh. Well, there's another type of ointment that is to be poured out on the flesh. Do you know what I'm talking about? I'm talking about the Spirit of God. Turn with me to the book of Acts. You've heard these scriptures this week already, but before I read them, let me give just a little background

so you can understand where I'm trying to draw my thoughts this morning. Jesus had told His disciples to tarry in Jerusalem so that they could be endued with power from on high. The church was there. They were ready to do God's work, but they weren't fully ready until they had an anointing. Another way we could say it is, "The Inaugural Anointing." The first inaugural anointing was the one that we read about there in Exodus, but this one was not one of oil, not of material. This was a spiritual anointing that was required before they were fully prepared to do the work of God. They needed it in their lives, didn't they? They were caught up with a lot of doubts and wondering what was going on there different times without this anointing. But there was something poured out on them and it was prophesied by Joel.

Peter is explaining it as to what they were seeing there on the day of Pentecost. He said in Acts 2:16-21: "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and notable day of the Lord come: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Listen, they needed that anointing. They needed to wait for it. They needed it so that they could do the work of God, to be up and functioning as God has intended His church to be. That's an important point for us to recognize this morning.

God intends for His church, not just as a whole, but every individual, every lively stone, every part of the temple to be anointed by the Spirit of God. You need it. The Bible tells us that it is the will of God that we should be sanctified, that God's Spirit should come and anoint us and dwell in our hearts. Isn't that true? I'll get to some of that in just a little bit.

There was a marked difference after Pentecost than before Pentecost. If you read the Bible, you'll see the difference. They were able to speak with such great boldness, where they were able to stand in the face of adversaries and speak truth to them. That took boldness. That took something that they didn't have before. Peter himself denied Christ. He didn't want to have anything to do with Him at the judgment scene, did he? No. He was timid. He lacked something. He lacked spiritual fortitude. This is something that only the Spirit of God can give the Christian: spiritual fortitude, divine strength from above. That's wonderful. They needed it, and we need it, Saints, in all of our lives. Everyone of us need the permeation of the Spirit in all things.

### **THE EARLY MORNING CHURCH**

The early morning church was permeated by the Spirit of God. The Spirit permeated every aspect of their lives, didn't it? Every aspect; not the material. It wasn't material. It permeated every aspect of their lives in the same way that oil permeated every part of the



tabernacle. It permeated every part of the priest's vestments. It got down deep, and no doubt he even had it right on his skin, right down close. That's the same way that the Spirit permeates the human heart and the reflects of it was shown there in the early morning church. Listen to what it says in Acts 2:42-47: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." That's the effects of the Spirit. It permeated every aspect of it.

Look at the effects of the anointing of the Spirit on the early morning church: sold their possessions and used them for church work, gave to those who had need, had all things common, and continued daily with one accord. They recognized that they were in a moment where the Spirit of God was working. It was a special time. Those material things that they were hanging on to didn't matter to them. They recognized that they were in a special time. Those things really didn't matter while God's Spirit was stirring and working in such a special way. They laid those things aside. They sacrificed them on the altar. That's what they really did. They counted them as dross. They counted them as dung. It didn't matter about those things at all. They wanted to help the kingdom of God progress. They laid all those things aside. It affected their very thinking about material things. That's what the Spirit of God does. It changes the way you think. It changes the seat of your affection.

### **THIS ANOINTING PRODUCES UNITY**

How sweet to be in one accord! We know something about that, don't we? Again, I'm not telling you these things because you're not doing them, or because you don't know, but I'm talking about the anointing of the Spirit and what it does. If we could just get a greater glimpse of it, we could push a little bit more and do a little bit more. I've learned in this convention that I can do a little bit more. God wants just a little bit more from me. I think that's healthy to consider. If you're at a place in your Christian walk where you think, "Oh, I've done about all I can do, I'm just going to coast it right on in," that's not healthy. You know that.

Let me tell you more of what you know. "They did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." What an alignment of priorities! You know, sometimes I feel like I'm being pulled in about three or four different directions. Do you ever feel that way? Well, they were so moved by what the Spirit of God had for them that they aligned their eyes as one. They had singleness of heart. They had a single passion for God's work, for the saving of souls, and for the building of His church.

I tell you, we want to have that singleness of heart; one divine purpose in whatever the Spirit of God wants

us to do. I could sit up here and pontificate about what great things all of us should be doing, but really, it comes down to you and your relationship with God and you being obedient to what the Spirit of God tells you. We're shepherds, pastors. We're not drivers. It comes down to you. Every individual bears a responsibility in this. Everyone there in the early morning church had a responsibility to do it, and they did what they felt God required of them. They did what God instructed them to do in their hearts. I really think that's a vital point of difference that we should recognize. God spoke to them in their hearts.

I'm so glad for the one-on-one communication that we have with God. We pray. We send our communication up, but how does He send it back down? Through His Spirit. Whether talking in your heart, through the Word, through a song, or through the preaching of a message, God sends communication to you. I hope that you believe God communicates with you. Well, with that communication comes responsibility of obedience. That's the difference that anointing made to the early morning church.

How does this affect us as individuals? Well, I've already touched on some of the points. It does affect us. One point that I want to get across this morning is that what I'm talking about here is for you, the individual, not just the church as a whole. I must confess that for a long time I read those scriptures in the chapter of Acts and received a broad vision. We only get a certain amount of information in the Word of God, and so we think in broad terms because of what it says here. But really, where it makes the most impact is, is if we will stop looking at it from the broad level at 10,000 feet and bring it down right in front of us. Bro. David said, "Nose to nose, face to face," thus bringing it down to where we live. So it is important for you to be anointed. I know many of you have been sanctified and you've been anointed. Some of you are not anointed. I'm not saying that in condemnation. I'm simply saying that you have been justified but not sanctified. This is just reality; but I said earlier, it's the will of God that you be sanctified.

### **THE ANOINTING OF SANCTIFICATION**

What does *sanctification* mean to you? God wants it for you. You can put it away and say, "Well, that's what God wants for the church," and you can relieve that off you just a little bit, but really, God wants it for you. There's a reason God wants it for you. I'll try to bring a short explanation. When you're justified, your sins have been forgiven, but in your heart there is still a symptom of the sickness of sin. It's what is called native depravity, the carnal nature, the result of Adam's fall. We phrase it in different ways, but really, it is the carnal nature that's in the heart.

Once you get saved, God is with you. Don't get me wrong, but when you are sanctified, the carnal nature is removed. It is burned out; purged. It is cleansed, and then the holy anointing comes in. The Spirit of God comes and takes His rightful place on the throne of your heart. Your whole nature changes. There is a definite change. You get a divine nature, a holy anointing from on high. That's the will of God for every saved individual. In the same way that there was a powerful

witness at the tabernacle, and a powerful witness to the community there that we read about in Acts, there's a powerful witness in your heart, too. There was a definite divine change that happened. You're no longer carnal. You no longer have carnal desires. They're removed. You've been sanctified. At that moment, you're fully prepared for divine service. You've reached the highest level of preparation that God has for you. You need that, Saints; you need that, Young People; you need that, Justified One.

### **A SACRIFICE IS REQUIRED**

There are people who have gotten saved and have been saved for a while, but if you mention to them about sanctification, or even about baptism, you'll hear them say, "Well, I don't know if I'm ready for that yet." Why? There's something in the way. That's that carnal nature speaking. There's something in the way. That carnal nature is trying to hang on. Did you hear me? I'm telling you, the longer you wait, and you are not obedient to the divine will of God to be sanctified, the more danger you are in returning back to sinful ways. Honestly, what can happen, you can bring carnality into the midst of the congregation. That's not good. The selfishness is still there. The desire to have one's way is still there. The lack of being easily entreated and not wanting to reconcile could still be there. Those things ought not to be, because you're not prepared in that state to do a true service for God. As a matter of fact, that hinders. It gets in the way, in your way, in the way of the saints, and in the way of the ministry who are trying to minister to the saints. It gets in the way. You have to die out to all of this. Dying out is something that only you can make the determination to do. You should want it if you're a Christian, because you should want what God wants. You need to make the consecration to do that. Consider the idea of consecration.

Romans 12:1, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." It's reasonable, but there are some things that have to die. There are some things that need to be sacrificed; there are some things that need to be laid on the altar. When they were laid on the altar, what did they do with them? They burned them up. They got rid of them. They didn't put them down on the altar and take them right back and walk away. If you don't make that consecration in order to be sanctified, then you'll take those things you say you're sacrificing right back out with you. Those things ought not to be. You have to leave them there.

I told God some things when I was sanctified. I didn't get sanctified at an altar as others have done. Where I was saved isn't so relevant at the moment. I know we're talking now about sanctification and not justification. When I came home, I was saved, but there was that carnal nature in me that I only wanted so much of God. I know that sounds hard to explain, but I only wanted so much. For a good year after I came home, I came only on Sunday mornings. That's all I wanted. We all usually find a way to do what we want to do.

One day I was considering some things. I was at home and I was having a conversation in my heart with

God. I was thinking about what I was doing. Was that enough? It came to the point where it just wasn't enough. The relief of having my sins forgiven had sort of worn off. I was thankful to be saved, but the initial bliss of it had worn off me. I recognized that I was just going through some motions and I didn't want to continue doing that. I was talking to God as I was walking in my yard. I sat down amongst the trees and was thinking about those things. I began to talk to God. I told Him that I wanted more of Him and I was willing to give up whatever I needed to give up. I was willing to do whatever it was that He wanted me to do. Those things that I understood at the moment and those things I didn't understand that would be in the future, I needed to give up. I was putting those things on the altar, really. That was what I was doing. I had come to the altar and began to lay out the things that were in my heart. What I was doing, I was dying. I was laying those things out there, and I asked God to truly sanctify me, to make me a vessel useful for His service. That's what He did! The Spirit of God came down in a marked way to me at that moment. It was sweet and special and real. It is still real!

I know everybody does not have the same experience of sanctification that I had, so if you can't relate to what I said, don't let the devil beat you up about it. I'm talking about me at that moment. That anointing power came down on me. Now, I have to say, at that moment I had no idea what God was going to require of me. I certainly didn't expect to be here nor in Patton, Pennsylvania; but I told God some things, and I meant them. You know, that's real victory right there. Moving forward from that moment to this moment, I've been a different individual. There's a sustaining power to get past things, to be more patient with people, and to show more love. God's Spirit filled my heart and permeated every part of me. He has shown Himself in all my actions. It does that with every individual. The Spirit of God is not just isolated to my heart.

We must be properly anointed to be prepared to complete the tasks at hand. As the oil worked its way through every piece of clothing and instrument in the tabernacle, so must the Spirit of God be allowed into the very fabric of our personalities, our attitudes, our actions, our interactions with one another, our desires, our goals, our plans, our relationships, even *every* part of our lives! Every part! Everything in your heart must be laid there and opened up to God for His direction. There's a difference. What a blessing it is to my family that I am a sanctified individual!

Do you know what Paul said? "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." I hope that I'm bringing profit. I know you, as sanctified individuals, are desiring to bring profit to the kingdom of God, to be used by the kingdom of God. Dear Justified One, that is what you're missing out on. You're missing out on power that you need to maintain a victorious experience of salvation. Sanctification is real! You need this second work of grace. You need it in your life. You need it to be victorious.

### **THE ANOINTING EXPERIENCE**

Let me turn back now to First John. I John 2:27, "But the anointing which ye have received of him abi-

deth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.” They were facing some opposition. They were facing some seducing doctrines and some seducing things that were trying to needle their way into the service of God and into the truth. John told the congregation there to deal with these things. I’m interpreting what I read there: “I want you to think back to your original anointing. That anointing that you have is sufficient to help you through these things. The Spirit of God working in and through you is sufficient to help you through these difficult times.”

To you, who are sanctified, I want you to recall your anointing experience. I want you to recall it. Do you remember what you told God? Am I the only one? I hope not. Do you remember what you told God you would do when you made your consecration to Him? I remember the zeal that I had. Do you remember that zeal? Does it burn within you when you think about it? Do you remember having that desire to see more done for the kingdom of God? What did you want to do?

One of the things that I appreciate about sanctification that I want you to consider is: when the Spirit of God reveals truth to you. When you see a doctrine, a biblical point and your eyes have been enlightened, it makes it real, doesn’t it? You can hear about it time after time, you can read about it in every book, but there’s a difference when the Spirit of God reveals it to you. That’s what the oil does. It reveals it to you. This is real, Saints!

You know, we have some wrong ideas about how to reach the unsaved. What do I mean by that? There are assumptions that you are making, and I have made that ought not to be. I’ll give you an example. It is somewhat generalization, truthfully. You older ones grew up in a time where most people believed in God. Most of you are under the assumption that though your children were raised in the truth, they have a good knowledge of it. That’s not true. I’m talking about your unsaved children now. We make those assumptions that they want what we have. When they want religion, they’re going to want what we’re living. That’s not true, either, because many of them are looking for something, but they don’t want this. We need to understand how to reach them.

We need the Spirit of God to help us to understand how to talk to individuals. Some people have made some assumptions, and we talk to people in a certain way, but they don’t want to hear us. We just aggravate them. We can’t base the way we operate on false assumptions. What we need is a good understanding that can only be given by the Spirit of God and how to reach these people as individuals. Every one of them is different. Every one of them has their own experiences and ideas. Every one of them has their own ideas. Every one of them has been influenced by someone or something. They haven’t all had the same experience, so if we’re not careful, we’ll just put them in a box and say, “You’re the unsaved. We’re trying to reach you. Hear our message,” and we’re just throwing water on an oil fire.

## CONCLUSION

We need spiritual power with God as it is revealed to us. We need the Holy Spirit. We need a closer walk with God, and listen to His voice saying, “This is the way, walk ye in it.” I don’t think that is just to get to salvation. I think we’re listening to that spiritual voice in our heart and mind all of our lives.

Let’s take bold steps in faith as God’s Spirit will direct us. We need to see miracles. We need to see the gifts working in a greater way. All these things we need to know must be shown by and through the Spirit of God; and so I remind you of your anointing when you were sanctified, and what you told God. Maybe you even made a promise to Him. Whatever commitments you made to God, don’t let them grow cold. Keep those now, and be an instrument ready for the service of God. Be ready! Remember your anointing. I know you want to know how to deal with these issues that we’ve been talking about—problems, witnessing, winning souls, seeing greater manifestations of the Spirit in general, then I remind you of your inaugural anointing (when you were sanctified).

May the Lord bless you all. †

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**Please pray for this ministry!**





Dear Young People,

Blessings to you! We are a blessed people! To know God's way and His love is a great privilege! I exhort you to be mindful that you show His love to those around you. It is our calling to do so. It is God's will that ALL be saved and know Him. He depends on us to be a light

for Him and to make His love REAL to those who do not know Him. What a responsibility! There are souls at stake ... we mustn't be satisfied with our own salvation but strive to win all we can to our blessed Lord. May God bless you all as you reach out to others!

This month we have a testimony from a precious sister here in our local congregation, Sis. Desiree Myers. She is a wonderful example of a young Christian lady. May the Lord bless her for sharing her story with you.

May the Lord give you all grace and peace in abundance.

—Sis. Crystal Gossard

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## My Testimony

Desiree Myers

**I** WAS BORN and raised by Christian parents in Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania. I grew up going to church just about every time the doors were open (Sundays and Wednesdays). One Thursday evening I crawled onto my earthly father's lap and he led me in accepting the Creator of the universe into my heart. That was August 26, 2004. I don't really know how much I truly understood at that point; I do know that I understood that I had sinned, that I needed a Savior, and that I didn't ever want to leave Him.



Fast forward to February 2010. My grandfather, friend, and mentor was diagnosed with leukemia. His example of faith is still admirable and inspiring to me. I cried out to God in the months that my grandpa was given to live. I begged and pleaded for God to change the diagnosis. I drew close to God during that time. However, a few months after my grandpa's death in September 2010, my heart turned bitter toward the things of God. I played the "Christian thing" off by going through the motions (attending church, singing the songs, and attempting to pray). I can look back on this stage of my life and see God surrounding every situation despite me ignoring Him.

Let me say, God is faithful! There were numerous situations and people that realigned my thinking over that next year or so and continually pointed me to God's goodness. God was constantly drawing me to Himself. My hardened heart became moldable once again and I had a greater understanding of God's love, God's grace, and the fruit of the Spirit. For the first time, I felt God's

presence actually in me! I no longer had to care about loving too much (I actually had a fear of not loving others enough). I didn't have to worry about what others thought of me; I knew full well that I was bought with the blood of Christ, that I was adopted and loved by Him. I received over time: peace, patience, and kindness.

Upon graduating from high school, I took some time off, and after that time decided to pursue an associate degree in human services. That decision was made after reading and meditating on Psalm 82:3. My mission became to love the "forgotten" of society. I landed a full-time job working at an assisted living facility, part time in the memory care unit. I transitioned to another facility but continued to work memory care. I do believe God has revealed more about Himself in those three and a half years that I worked in memory care than in the span of my life prior. He has given me a greater view of how valuable life is and how exciting eternity with Him will be. I will admit there were times of insecurity, fear, and what I felt at times failure in the past couple of years of my life. God constantly reminds me of what I call my life verse: "For God hath not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (II Timothy 1:7). We live in a sin-infested world and there will for sure be trials and temptations. There will be times when we doubt or question, but my prayer is, "Thy will be done." I might not understand; He might call me to hard things ... but He never leaves me alone. My God is good, my God is faithful!

In the midst of all the happenings of life, God saw fit to introduce me to the Church of God in Hagerstown, Maryland. The church I had been attending often preached only feel good messages and sin-you-must doctrine. My heart was searching for full truth and for real church. Over the span of a couple of years, God was working more deeply in my heart to fully understand true joy. I had times when I attended the Church of God and other times when I distanced myself for various reasons. Toward the end of 2018, God was making me so uncomfortable with my current understanding of Himself and His church that I started regularly attending church in Hagerstown. God didn't stop there, because I felt His leading to move from my home in Pennsylvania to Hagerstown. It was the hardest decision I have ever made, but one of the best! I don't know what God has next for my life, but I know it will be good and it will be astounding if I include Him in all aspects! God is always working even when we, with human eyes, can't see it.

I hope my testimony has been an encouragement to at least one. Allow God to forever and always be first in your heart; He has the best life in store for you, on earth and in heaven. And again, I say ... my God is good, and my God is faithful! †

Young People,

This is your page. Send in your testimony or admonition to be shared with other young people around the world. Our address: The Way of Truth, Young People's Editor, P. O. Box 88, Hagerstown, MD 21741.

# WINNING A CROWN

By the late C. W. Naylor



## Part XVII

### Sin

#### Explanation of Old Testament Texts

**T**HE DISTINCTION of the various kinds of sin already made will help us to explain some texts in the Old Testament that point out man as a sinner all through his life. It is a mistake to bring them over to New Testament times and apply them to the New Testament standard of life. They were meant for the Old Testament and its standard of life and sin, and have no relation whatever to the New. Such texts as "There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Ecclesiastes 7:20) and "There is no man that sinneth not" (I Kings 8:46), ought never to be applied to the question of sin as it relates to us today. Few men besides the priests were acquainted with the law sufficiently to know when they were doing some things forbidden by it. There were few copies of the law outside of the temple and the synagogues. Certain ones said contemptuously in the time of Christ, "This people who knoweth not the law are cursed." They were likely to commit sins of ignorance at any time; especially were they likely to violate the ceremonial law or to be contaminated by some uncleanness. Not only did they have to make atonement for themselves every now and then as individuals, but atonement had to be made on the great Day of Atonement every year for the whole nation. These and similar texts must be understood as relating to their time and situation.

David said: "I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found" (Psalm 32:5, 6). I used to wonder why the godly were the ones who confessed their sins and asked for forgiveness, but since getting a clear view of Old Testament sins, I understand. It was natural that those who had a conscience toward God should be the ones most likely to confess their sins and to pray for forgiveness. Those who were less conscientious and less godly would be inclined to be indifferent if they did violate some of the commands of God. They would not be so careful to keep the ceremonial law, and infractions of it would not mean so much to them as to the godly; the godly would pray, while the others would not.

We turn now to the New Testament, and in it we shall find a simpler and truer standard.

#### Sin Under the New Testament

Sin is dealt with in the New Testament from a different angle from that from which it is viewed in the Old Testament. In the New Testament sin is not considered from the absolute standpoint. Sin is imputed only on the principles of justice. A man is imputed guilty only when he sins in a manner that makes him fully

responsible for the act. A thing is not imputed as sin simply because it is an infraction of a perfect moral standard; various modifying circumstances are considered and each given its due weight. The New Testament does not recognize any ceremonial sin. It defines sin as moral evil, and that alone. It does not classify meats and animals as clean and unclean, nor regard any form of disease as rendering one spiritually unclean. It takes no note of uncleanness except uncleanness of the moral faculties and of the acts that flow from such moral uncleanness. Ceremonial sin has no place whatever in the gospel economy. In the Old Testament there was a remedy provided, so that those who became unclean or sinned ceremonially might be cleansed; but under the new covenant we find no such provision made for such cleansing. The only ceremonial cleansing found in the New Testament is baptism, and that is "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh" nor any ceremonial uncleanness, but has its reference distinctly and altogether to moral impurity.

In the New Testament there is no such thing as accidental sin nor unwitting sin. Its definition of sin includes nothing of this kind. It is quite true that many present-day teachers do include such in their definition of sin, but this is incorrect and out of harmony with the teachings of the Scripture. Under the gospel, nothing but moral evil, that is, that which involves the moral nature of man, is sin. To be guilty of a moral evil, man's moral faculties must be involved.

#### Definition of Moral Evil

A moral evil is any act or attitude that disrupts or disturbs the moral relation of moral beings or that sets up antagonism between them. All moral creatures naturally have certain rights and privileges, such as the right to have life, liberty, happiness, to possess what is theirs, etc.; and the moral relation of such beings is such that all these rights and privileges of each individual can be maintained undisturbed. Anything that encroaches on the moral rights of another, whether that other be God or a fellow being, is sin. Whenever we willfully wrong our fellow man in anything, we sin against him and also against God. The normal state of all moral beings is one of moral correspondence and harmonious relation, so that the full rights of each is conserved and the highest happiness and good of all maintained. Sin is a thing of relation. It is not a question of the intrinsic value of the act ... when there is no change of relation, there can be no sin. If we were to blaspheme God, it would be sin, because it would be doing Him an injustice and robbing Him of the respect and reverence due Him, and would create a discordant relation, for which we would be to blame.

#### What Gives Quality to Action

The moral quality of an act does not depend upon its wisdom, its timeliness, nor its success. In the responsible, moral sense, quality never lies in the act itself considered alone, nor in the results that flow from it. Acts that are identical may, and often do, differ greatly in moral significance. We must invariably go back of the act to find its quality. Sin lies always in the will, and never in the act. It is intent that gives moral value to an act; it is intent only that can make the act morally good or bad. Whatever is done with pure intent cannot

be a moral wrong; whatever is done with a wrong purpose cannot be morally good, no matter what it may be. This fact is clearly stated in Romans 14:5, 6—"One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks." Here we find people doing exactly opposite things, but in each case the intent is to please the Lord. One regards the day because he believes the Lord is pleased that he should do so; the other disregards it because he feels that God does not desire him to regard it. One "eateth to the Lord," that is, he gives God thanks and receives with appreciative heart the meat as being from the Lord; the other "eateth not," since he feels that God desires him not to do so; he abstains with the purpose of pleasing God. Here is proof absolute that the quality of the act depends, not upon the nature of the act itself, but upon the intent back of it.

The man who looks to lust is as truly guilty as if the deed were done. The doing or not doing of the act does not change the moral value of the intent. If I purpose in my heart to do that which is wrong, I am guilty though the act is never committed. Circumstances may prevent my performing the act, but they cannot render me innocent. If I plan to commit murder and then fail in some way or have no opportunity to carry out my evil designs, I am nevertheless a murderer. There is a difference, however, between the sinful intent and the finished act: there is guilt in both cases, but the finished act involves others and affects them in a way that a mere intent cannot. Therefore, in this sense it is worse to do sin than it is merely to will to do it. He who plans murder but does not commit the deed does not have upon his conscience the blood of the victim, neither is the person deprived of his life, neither is the community shocked by a terrible crime. Guilt there is, to be sure, and it differs not in quality but only in degree from that which comes from the completed act.

Since, therefore, the New Testament judges the intent instead of the act, there can be no such thing as accidental sin. Sin is ever willful; hence nothing can be sin except that which involves the will in a wrong way, but when the will becomes so involved, there is sin whether the purpose ever becomes translated into act or not.

#### **What Gives Quality to Intent**

The child desires to do things and does them and knows no reason why he should not do so. The enlightened person desires to do and does even though he knows a good reason why he should not do so. The one is innocent, the other guilty. Both transgress, but only one is imputed guilty. It is knowledge that gives quality to intent. The acts of a child can possess no moral quality, for there is no knowledge, which alone supplies the data for choice. His relation with God is passive and his acts, no matter what they are, do not affect it. The relation of the adult is active so far only as his knowledge goes, but thus far it is affected wholly by the acts or choices of his will, and every act into which

choice enters affects that relation; but accident, things done in delirium or sleep, or through misapprehension, cannot affect him morally, since they do not involve the will or choice in a morally wrong way.

These truths are clearly set forth in the New Testament. Paul says, "By the law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20). Again, he says, "I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet" (chapter 7:7). In verse 13 it is clearly shown that knowledge brings guilt. He says, "That sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." In chapter 4:15 he says, "Where no law is, there is no transgression," and in chapter 5:13 he says, "But sin is not imputed when there is no law." In other words, a person can be responsible for his acts and become guilty thereby only as he has knowledge of the quality of those acts. It is knowledge of the righteous principles involved that brings him to the place where he can intelligently act as a moral being, where he can choose between right and wrong in a manner to make him responsible for that choice. Paul says that "without the law sin was dead," that is, powerless. He continues, "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died" (Romans 7:9). The coming of the commandment means the coming of it to his understanding. He became enlightened by the commandment, and that changed his relations entirely. Through the coming of the commandment, sin, which had been dead, or powerless, revived, and the "I," who had been "alive without the law," died because of the knowledge that the law brought him. He says elsewhere, "The strength of sin is the law" (I Corinthians 15:56). The law gave a knowledge of the moral quality of acts and of purposes; gave a standard of right and wrong. Responsibility to that standard became immediate. This responsibility gave sin its opportunity. The child chooses to do many things in his unenlightened state that are in themselves violations of the moral law, but sin is not imputed to him, since he is not in a position to choose from moral considerations. He considers only his desires. He can consider nothing else, for he knows nothing else. Until he is enlightened, there can be no quality in choice; but as soon as he becomes enlightened, choice at once has quality, and his purposes then become either good or bad. †

#### **VIEW OUR WORSHIP SERVICES LIVE!**

As many of our readers know, we can be found on the internet at [www.wayoftruth.org](http://www.wayoftruth.org) where in addition to reading past issues and other information, you can view our general services every Sunday LIVE at 10:40 A.M. and 6:00 P.M. E.S.T. Enjoy Spirit-filled singing and preaching. Also, our mid-week service at 7:00 P.M. Wednesdays is aired live. There is a chatroom where you can interact with us and share your prayer requests. Tune in and worship with us!



# THE CHILDREN'S CORNER



## A WARM HEART OF LOVE

A Bible Lesson by Sis. Rebecca Bland

“How are you feeling?” my mother asked me. “Your cough sounds terrible.”

“Not much better,” I told her. I had been fighting a bad case of bronchitis that seemed to get worse each day.

“Well, if you want my opinion, I think you ought to stay home from class this evening,” she said. “Going out in this freezing weather is bound to make you feel worse.”

I was tempted to take mother’s advice, but I was a young college student who took learning very seriously. I had never yet missed a class.

“My lab partner and I have an experiment to check on,” I explained. “If we don’t get good data from it, our project will be ruined.”

“Well, can’t you let your lab partner check on the experiment?” my mother asked. “Isn’t that what partners are for?”

I frowned. “Yes,” I said slowly. “But sometimes my partner doesn’t show up. If one of us doesn’t keep the project going, we’ll both get a failing grade.”

My mother sighed. “I’m not going to tell you what to do,” she said. “The decision is up to you. But the car’s going to be awfully cold when you leave the lab to come back home.”

I knew my mother was right. But at that point I was more worried about my grades than about my health. “I’ll dress up real warm,” I told her. She pursed her lips but did not answer.

It took me longer than usual to get dressed for class. I was tired, and my chest hurt. At last I came downstairs from my room and headed for the coat closet. As I walked through the kitchen, I was startled to see my mother sitting at the table, wearing her heavy coat. A pile of blankets was stacked neatly in front of her.

“Where are you going?” I asked her.

“If you’re bound and determined to go to class, I’ll drive you,” she said.

“But where will you go while I’m doing my lab work?” I asked her.

“I’ll sit in the car,” she said, indicating the pile of blankets. “Come on. Let’s get going, or you’ll be late.”

We rode in silence the ten miles from our house to school; I was too miserable to talk. After Mom pulled into a parking space at the college, I got out of the car and fought my way through the biting wind, up the hill to the science building.

My partner was not in the lab, and so my work took twice as long as it should have. The whole time I worked, I thought of my mother sitting in the cold car, most likely shivering even though she was bundled in blankets. I knew she would not waste gas running the car so she could have the benefit of its heater.

An hour and a half later, I made my way back down the hill from the science building to the parking lot.

“All done?” my mother asked me.

I nodded, too tired to speak. My mother handed me the blankets. “Put these around you,” she said as she started the car.

As my mother drove us home through the darkness, I thought about the love that had prompted her to sit shivering in a cold car just so I could finish the work I felt I had to do. This was the same mother that had put up with my childish slamming of doors when I was angry with her decisions. This was the same mother that had patiently waited for me to finish the dishes after I had played around in the dishwasher for an hour. This was the same mother who had worked multiplication problems with me night after night, reproving me when I lost my temper and crumpled my homework sheets.

My mother could have remembered the times when I disappointed her by my selfish behavior, and she could have let me drive myself to college in the dark, cold night. Instead, her love covered my past mistakes like a warm blanket, and her actions proved how much she cared about me.

Our wise saying this month comes from Proverbs 10:12, which says, “Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.” In this case, the word *sins* means “faults” or “annoyances.” No one is perfect. All of us have faults and shortcomings. We all annoy others from time to time. But how good it feels when others overlook our faults and treat us with kindness! As our Bible verse tells us, kindness covers all manner of annoyances; on the other hand, hatred stirs up trouble.

Children, when you are tempted to be unkind to someone who has annoyed you, remember that Jesus was kind, even to His enemies. Jesus is our loving Example, and we must always be kind to others if we want to be like Him.

### Activity

Here are some verses about showing kindness to others. Can you match the first part of the Bible verse to its ending?

- |  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. “Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, | a. do ye even so to them.”      |
| 2. “Do good to them that hate you,                 | b. give him bread to eat.”      |
| 3. “Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, | c. and pray for them ...”       |
| 4. “If thine enemy be hungry,                      | d. turn to him the other also.” |

### Answer to Last Month’s Activity

1. “Children, obey your parents in all **things**: for this is well **pleasing** unto the Lord” (Colossians 3:20).
2. “**Honour** thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be **long** upon the **land** which the Lord thy God giveth thee” (Exodus 20:12).
3. “Children, obey your **parents** in the Lord: for this is **right**” (Ephesians 6:1).
4. “My son, hear the **instruction** of thy father, and forsake not the **law** of thy mother” (Proverbs 1:8). †

# Strive Together for the Work's Sake

2019 Hagerstown Convention Message by Bro. Doug Koerner



**I**T IS GOOD to be back in camp meeting and in service again this evening. It has often been mentioned that it's like a taste of heaven. I believe that to be true. It's a wonderful comfort to be with the saints of like-mindedness. We don't deal with the things of the world, the attitudes, the problems as we are here enjoying camp meeting.

Bro. Gregor mentioned the other night, "One of the things we can thank God for is we have gotten rid of sin." There is peace in our souls since our sins are gone.

Thank God for the opportunity to handle the Word of God. Whether you're saved, whether you're not saved, whether you're young or old, or even to the ministry, my thoughts for the night is that every single one of us will have a better vision of this work. I'm not talking about Hagerstown, so to speak. I'm talking about the work of the gospel of Jesus Christ. That's one of my goals tonight.

We will start off by opening up our Bibles to Philipians, chapter 1. We will begin with verse 21—Paul says, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith; That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again. Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel."

I like how our theme is displayed behind me and also the scripture verses on the side. I know the theme has been mentioned many times in our preliminaries and in the preaching of the Word, but again it says, "Striving Together for the Faith of the Gospel." I want you to consider that thought for a moment for yourselves. When Bro. Greg comes up with a thought and presents it in a letter to the ministry, we read it, and no doubt we have read those verses many times; but when they're a part of the theme and we want to emphasize them, we stop and dig in a little deeper into what those verses really mean. That's the purpose here this week. I believe this week we're desiring to see unity. Unity is important.

## WHY IS UNITY IMPORTANT?

This might be somewhat of a foolish question, but why is unity important? Why would it be so important when we get along well and have good conversations? The reason that unity is important is because we have an enemy of the soul that is doing his very best to destroy it. He doesn't want to destroy unity among the

church alone, but he wants to do it between husbands and wives, children and parents, between siblings, and others. He wants to destroy unity. He hates unity. That's why the word *strive* has been mentioned many times. It takes some work, some effort, and putting forth to have unity.

I want to reword our theme, "Striving Together for the Faith of the Gospel," a little bit to make, as it were, a little clearer: "Working Together for the Benefit of the Gospel of Jesus Christ." That's our goal. Our mission is to work together for the benefit of this gospel that Jesus Christ gave to His disciples and have given to us. They often preached, "It's not me; it's Christ. Let me tell you what Christ has shown us. We want to benefit the gospel of Jesus Christ."

We sang the song, "The Kingdom of Peace" this morning, and the second verse says: *There's a scene of its grandness before me* [I want to go a little bit slow with this. I want this to sink in. Do you see that scene? Do you have a vision of the kingdom of God and the importance of it?], *Of its greatness there can be no end; It is joy, it is peace, it is glory, In my heart, how these riches do blend!*

There are two types of people here this evening: saved and unsaved. Jesus said in Matthew 12:30, "He that is not with me is against me." Our desire is to help you to get an understanding of this. If you're not saved, you're not in this striving. You're not in this particular battle of the gospel to help it. Jesus Christ said, "If you're not in this battle with the gospel, you're hindering the work." I know that's difficult to say sometimes. It's difficult to hear sometimes, but it is to try to get us to understand how important this work is. There is no work on the face of this earth that is any more important than the gospel of Jesus Christ. God wants you to be a part of it. He desires for you to get on board the Old Ship of Zion and start working on the benefits of it.

## THESE ARE UNUSUAL TIMES

We are living in unusual times today. It seems like the more unusual, or out of the norm things are, the more they're accepted. We are against the world. As saints of God, we are in a tide flow against the world. I can be out on a boat, and I can know without looking at the tide chart whether the tide is going in or coming out. If I'm running a boat with the tide, that boat just runs smoothly along. I can tell it's moving smoothly, but if I turn around and go the other way, I can feel the resistance. As saints of God, we're constantly in that resistance flow. We're constantly against the world, against the enemy, and he's doing his best to work with the saints, the ministry, to bring us to a stop. Isaiah 5:20 says, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness;

that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!” As I’ve already mentioned, the more unusual things are, the more they’re accepted.

I believe the enemy is doing his best to influence us as saints who work in the church to relax, to let down some standards, to let up on some things, because there is so much out there in the world that people are doing that it’s affecting us. I believe sometimes the spirit of the world is affecting the church. I can say that for myself. It affects me. There are some things that I see today that I never saw when I was in school. Today, it’s normal. I’m accustomed to it because it’s everywhere. Laws are being passed. Governments are pushing things.

### STRIVING TOGETHER

Paul told the saints of Philippi to “stand fast, stand firm, stay true, stay on the old landmarks; don’t deviate from them.” I thank God for the Word of God. God said, “I change not.” The Word of God is not going to change. Two thousand years ago it was written in the Gospels. If it goes to 10,000 years, it’s still not going to change. Now, the world wants to change it, but it’s not going to change. “... stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.”

At the beginning of the camp meeting, Bro. Ralph gave us a long list of dictionary words relating to the word *strive*. *Strive*: “to make great efforts to achieve or to obtain something.” Again, I want to go slow because I want that word to sink in. We can go over it easily, but think on it. It says, “to make *great* efforts to achieve or to obtain something.” Everyone of us must strive together for the faith of the gospel. That needs to be our desire, our work.

We are in a warfare. The Bible has called it “the battle of Armageddon.” This battle is not a literal battle, but it’s a battle against righteousness and unrighteousness. We read earlier, “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil.” The Bible says that our weapons are not carnal, but today, you’re in a battle for your soul, whether saved or not. If you’re saved this evening, I don’t believe I have to explain to you how you’re in a battle.

Matthew 25 says that there were ten virgins. How many of those virgins did the Bible say slumbered and slept? 8, 10? They all did. Does that exempt you and me? The Bible says, “Let us not be weary in well doing.” The Bible is full of warnings to get ready, to be prepared, and to be on our guard. We must strive to do those things. If we’re saved, we’re in a battle. We’re in a warfare. We have to constantly keep the forefront up.

I have told you before that I’ve always enjoyed having dogs. I enjoy training them from time to time. I’ve had some puppies. If you’ve ever had a new puppy and tried to put that puppy on a leash, he will go crazy. The first time he’s put on a leash, he will roll over, pull, jerk, and bite that leash. That puppy will do anything he can, but he can’t get away. I want to say this kindly: if you’re not saved, the enemy of your soul has you on his tether. You may pull and jerk and tug and pick, but you will not get away. If you have a puppy, after a while he will give up and learn to walk with you. If you’re not saved tonight, you’re walking with the enemy of the

soul. That’s what the Bible says. If you’re not saved, the enemy has you on his tether; a leash. I’ve had big dogs on a leash, and if they saw a squirrel or a rabbit run across the road, they wanted to go after it. They wanted to take off, but I held them tightly. They wanted to go another way, but I wouldn’t let them.

Loved Ones, if you’re not saved, you may want to go God’s way, but the devil won’t let you go. The devil will keep you right there, but I thank God for the gospel. There’s power in the Word of God, and that power in the Word of God can break that tether. If you will surrender yourself to Jesus Christ, He can break that tether, and you can be free from the enemy of the soul. You can get into the warfare of the gospel of Jesus Christ and help us to strive together for the faith of the gospel.

I thank God that I’m saved. I thank God for salvation. I thank God that one day I found the Pearl of Great Price. The joy of our lives is Jesus. Jesus told of people who came to Him and they wanted to be followers of His. “I want to follow you, Jesus.” He said, “OK, but you have to take up your cross and strive. Pick up your cross and follow me. You have to strive and put forth effort.” We have a cross to bear. That’s why Paul said that we need to strive. We need to work; to press toward that mark.

### FOR THE WORK’S SAKE

We’ll go back to Philippians. I want to bring my main thought from these verses: Philippians 1:23, 24, “For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.” We must strive together for the faith of the gospel! Paul said, “Strive Together for the Work’s Sake.” That’s what I want to bring to your attention.

Having a desire and a longing for the gospel of Jesus Christ is to strive together for the work’s sake, for the benefit and purpose of the gospel going forward. It’s not you and me. This is much larger than you and me. This is much larger than the ministry. It is striving together for the work’s sake. Sometimes we have to get ourselves out of the way. That’s a part of striving together for unity. Our ideas and thoughts need to be out of the way so we can work with the ministry in supporting the Word of God.

Isaiah, chapter 55, verses 8 and 9 says, “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” I trust you have an understanding that God’s ways are far higher than we can think. We can’t even fathom of how great heaven is going to be, because we put everything in this literal world. We can’t imagine not having days and weeks as we have here. We can’t fathom not sleeping. We won’t be physical. God’s thoughts are not our thoughts and ways, so we can only work with the gospel under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Let’s go over to John, chapter 14. We will begin with verse 8: “Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me,



Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." I want to look at that thought in verse 11, where Jesus says, "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake."

We need to have an understanding of the Church of God and the purpose of Jesus' ministry and work for the work's sake. Put your best in it for the work's sake. So the question to you is, What do you believe? Every one of us believes something. We either believe Jesus Christ and the gospel or something else. You may say, "Well, I don't believe anything." A lot of people are in hell tonight because they didn't believe in Christ. A lot of people say, "Well, I'm not going to take a stand one way or the other. I'm going to be neutral." They can't be neutral. The Bible says that they can't be. Jesus said, "What are you going to do with my Son?"

### **WE NEED A VISION**

We need to have a vision of the kingdom of God. We can strive and work together for the very work's sake, but I want to look at the sacrifice Paul mentioned in Philippians 1:23. He said, "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better." He is really saying here, "I'm in a difficult decision." Verse 24: "Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." I want to draw a picture of Paul's concern for the work's sake, his concern for the gospel and for the souls of men. A lot of us know what Paul had been through. He was shipwrecked, put in prison, and was in other situations, but he said here, "It's better for me to go home and be with Christ." If somebody walked in here tonight and said, "There's a train outside and the next stop is heaven," who would get up and go? We may be real tempted to go, but there's still a work. Paul wanted to be with Christ, but he said in verse 24, "Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." Paul realized the benefit of the work's sake—to help, to encourage, to edify, to build up.

I said earlier, this is the greatest work this side of eternity. If you're unsaved, our desire is that you will get in the work. Get started. Be a part of the work. Be a part of the moving force towards the gospel of Jesus Christ. "Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." Do you and I have a vision of the kingdom of God? "There's a scene of its grandness before me." I hope you have a vision of the work's sake. I hope you have a vision of the purpose of the gospel. Revelation 21:2 says, "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." We must have a desire to build up, to edify the living Church of God. What is your desire? Paul wanted to go, but Christ wanted him to stay here and to do a work.

### **THE MINISTRY NEEDS TO BE STRIVING**

I want to look at this and break it down a little bit here. Are we striving? Beginning with the ministry: we have to keep striving. We have to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit. I believe God gives us a greater blessing in bringing the Word of God. I haven't been a pastor for too long. I had to get to know some things, but I believe God has really put a burden on my heart for souls and for this gospel. Sometimes we preach and we see no movement of souls so it causes us to go deeper. "Lord, help us to have a greater burden; help us to dig deeper into the Word of God." There are divisions all over the place. "Lord, help us to have a desire to work together." When Mom and Dad are not together, the children know it; when Mom and Dad are fighting and having problems, the children know it. When the ministry is fighting, the saints know it. The ministry has to strive to keep unity with one another and to keep the saints encouraged. We have to do those things.

I believe God has a ministry, an ordained ministry. Saints, you need to pray for us. You need to pray for your pastor and for the ministry that they'll preach the truth. There are some things that are being preached out there that are false doctrines. God is going to hold every minister accountable for what is being preached to the people. If I preach something false to you and you die and go to hell, I'm going to be held accountable. It's a very serious thing. You need to pray for your pastor and for the ministry that they will preach the truth and are sincere with your soul. You need to honor your minister.

Do you have a vision of the high calling. Let's go to Isaiah, chapter 6, verses 1-5: "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."

### **HAS GOD SPOKEN TO YOUR HEART?**

Has God shown Himself to you? You know, in 1981, I sat in a revival service and God spoke to my heart. He showed me some things. What a blessing that was to my life! It took me a little bit of time to finally yield to Him, but I can remember when I did. I ask you tonight, if you're not saved, has God spoken to your heart? If you can sit here and the Spirit of God doesn't talk to your heart, and you leave and say, "What are they talking about?" I would be concerned. Isaiah said, "Woe is me! I am a man of unclean lips. I see this glory that God has there, but woe is me!" What kind of a vision do you have? Verses 6-8: "Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and

thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send?" There is not one person in here who is not valuable to God and to His church.

I trust that there are some young people here who have a desire to go deeper into the things of God. Every single soul is important. Do we feel a tug in our hearts? "I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me." Every single soul in here should have the desire, "Here am I, Lord." It doesn't mean He will send you across the world, but "Here am I, Lord; use me." God knows what abilities you have and don't have. Trust me, speaking publicly wasn't an ability that I had, but I yielded myself to God.

### AN INVITATION

I am asking every soul, saved and unsaved, do you have a vision? Do you have God dealing with you? "Here am I, Lord; use me." Young People, allow God to use you. Allow Him to work in your heart. The Lord said, "Whom shall I send?"

There's a song in our songbook which says—

*I cannot be idle, soon time will be o'er,  
And reaping be ended for aye;  
I'll gather the lost from the byways of sin  
To walk in the beautiful way.*

*Then away to the work I will go,  
And join in the reaping of grain,  
And back from the harvest with beautiful sheaves  
I'll come with rejoicing again.*

There's not a minister on this platform that God hasn't raised up. If you have a desire the same way, regardless of what your abilities are, God can use you, but you have to be willing. Paul said, "It is better to stay and work together for the faith of the gospel than to go on home."

We all have to strive together; not only the ministers, but the saints. It's not all on the ministry. If somebody on this side isn't speaking to somebody on that side, the Bible says to get that out of the way. You need to get that cleared away. The saints need to do that so they can strive together. Some of you have been saved a long time. You need to be an example to those who are coming up. Saying little things can be an encouragement to young people.

Let's go to II Timothy 1:5—"When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also." Some of your family members were influences in the church. Be a follower of those influences. Be an example to your children. Be an example to the young people coming up. Encourage them. Be examples of working together for the gospel.

There are those who were pillars in the church that have gone on. They stayed faithful. They strived for the gospel. They became older and were used in the church. As ministers get older and not able, the younger ministers will have to take over. Don't ever think, "I can't be a Bro. Junior." Today, you may not be, but yield yourself to God and say, "Here am I, Lord; use me."

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If you're saved tonight, my desire for you is to go deeper. If you're not saved, get on the Old Ship of Zion. See the vision of the gospel of Jesus Christ and have a desire. Paul said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." Paul couldn't say that because he started two days before saying so. It was a process.

One of the blessings of having a funeral is having saints who died in the faith. Looking at their lives, they were faithful down through the years. They were in their place. By the grace of God, we all want to be the same way. If the Lord doesn't come in our lifetime, and we all live out our years, by the grace of God we want to be faithful. Unsaved, you have to get started.

### CONCLUSION

My last scripture is Psalm 133:1—"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" We can say "amen." It's been good and pleasant to be here this week. It's pleasant to be among the saints of God and have love for one another. I trust you have that desire. You can't enjoy that unless you surrender your life to Jesus Christ. Paul said, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for [the saints]."

Do you have a vision of the church? Do you have a vision for the kingdom of God? I encourage you to get on board. I encourage you to start out. If you've already started out, I encourage you to stay faithful.

May the Lord bless you. †

### OUT OF BOX 88

*Greetings,*

*We appreciate The Way of Truth magazine every month. Thanks so much. Just a note in sending an offering for the Lord's work. May God bless everyone there.*

—J. & H. G., Missouri

*Pastor Tyler and Staff at the Way of Truth,*

*I certainly do appreciate the magazine and Sunday school literature you sent my way. It was a treat to get it all from you there and I'm very much interested in continuing receiving your magazine. ... I have been encouraged by what I have read so far.*

*Thank you and may the Lord's richest blessings be upon you and all the saints and family of God at the Way of Truth.*

—D. C., Washington State

*Dear Church of God,*

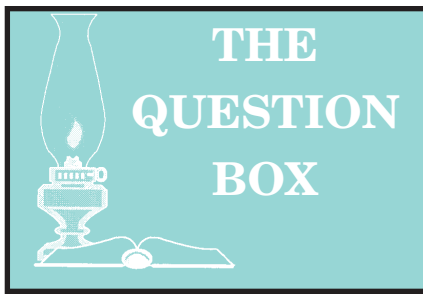
*Thank you for spreading the Word of God throughout the world. In this day and age, it's always refreshing to hear the real truth.*

—W. S., Ohio

*Dear People of God,*

*Thanks so much for your ministry—radio, and The Way of Truth. Your ministry is such a blessing; and as a nation and a people who need God more and more, as we see the evil happening and see in the news—television and newspapers—how much our world is in need of God in our hearts!*

—L. W., Virginia †



**Editor's Note:** The following questions and answers in this issue are taken from *The Way of Truth Question and Answer Book*, 1946-2001.

**Q**UESTION: Please explain Revelation 20:8. Who are those Gog and Magog which are like sands of the sea that shall try to wage war? Are they spirits?

**A**NSWER: Some who believe in a literal battle of Armageddon would have us believe this has reference to Russia, but this verse speaks of the combined forces of all false religion that are arrayed against the true Church of God. The battle is not a literal battle, for God's people would not engage in such a battle. Neither will Jesus Christ come riding on a white horse cutting people's heads off. All false religion is empowered by false spirits, but they work through people.

When I say Christians will not engage in a literal war, that is not to say those who are blinded by false religion will not try to kill Christians.

**Q**UESTION: Please explain Isaiah 2:4.

**A**NSWER: In answering this question, I would ask you to read from verse one. We are told in verse two that Isaiah was speaking of the "last days," or in other words, the last age of time, which is the New Covenant age. "The Lord's house" is the Church of God, and the expression, "all nations shall flow unto it," simply means, as Peter explains, "In every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him (Acts 10:5).

Verse three again speaks of the "house" of God, which Paul declares in I Timothy 3:15 to be the "church of the living God." In verse four we see the results of true salvation; hatred, malice and war is taken out of the heart and the love of God put in its place.

**Q**UESTION: Why wasn't Aaron punished for making the golden calf while others were killed for worshipping it?

**A**NSWER: We read about this in Exodus 32. If you carefully read the scriptures that follow, I think it is safe to say the people were not killed because they worshiped the golden calf. God was of a mind to consume them (verse 10), but Moses besought the Lord in their behalf (verses 11-13), and the Lord spared the people. It was after Moses came down off the mount that he "stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him." Aaron was a "son" of Levi and he, doubtless, took his stand with Moses. There were many who would not take their

stand for the Lord, and it was these that Moses ordered to be killed. The number was about three thousand. After this, Moses told the people they had sinned, and that he would "go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin" (verse 30).

**Q**UESTION: God made us and knows all things we have in mind. Why does He allow us to do evil, as He has power in all things?

**A**NSWER: It is true God knows all things and He has all power, but He made us "free moral agents"; that is, He made us with the ability of choosing. He did not make us machines or robots! He gave man a law with the responsibility of choosing whether he would obey or disobey. That is why we must suffer the consequences if we make the wrong choice. We prove our love for God when we choose to do right. Only those who truly love Him are serving Him.

**Q**UESTION: Rebekah devised the method by which Jacob received the blessing which should have gone to Esau from their father Isaac. Do you think that the Lord had His approval on Rebekah's suggestion?

**A**NSWER: No, I do not. I do not believe God would have had Jacob lie to and deceive his father. I believe God had His own plan and that Rebekah interfered in that plan.

**Q**UESTION: Mark 16:18. Explain what is meant by "taking up serpents, and drinking any deadly thing."

**A**NSWER: The Bible clearly teaches us it is wrong to tempt God. Jesus pointed this out to Satan when he tried to get Jesus to jump off the pinnacle of the temple (Matthew 4:7). To intentionally pick up a poisonous snake or drink some poison would be tempting God. Of course, the word *serpent* is used symbolically in some scriptures, and some teach that Jesus simply meant He would give us power over these "spiritual serpents," i.e., the power of the devil. My understanding is that if someone accidentally did either of these two things, faith in God would give him power over them, and they would not harm him. Paul's experience on the island of Melita (Acts 28) is given as an example of this. The Scriptures do not say that Paul picked up the viper with the sticks, though he might have. (I don't think the viper would have been comfortable in the fire, and it does appear someone, if not Paul, may have laid him there with the sticks.) Nevertheless, the bite did not harm Paul, and you note Paul did not play with it or try to pet it; he "shook off the beast into the fire" no doubt in an effort to kill it.

**Q**UESTION: Please explain Acts 7:37—"This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear."

**A**NSWER: This statement is part of the powerful sermon Stephen preached to those who disputed with him—verse nine of chapter six—and he is pointing out that the people of Israel did not listen to Moses, nor regard him as they should, even though God had chosen to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt.



This is Moses that spoke of the coming of Jesus Christ who came, and who you have crucified, rejecting Him, refusing to listen to Him, just as your fathers refused Moses.

Adam Clarke quotes a Dr. Jortin as saying, "Let us search all the records of universal history and see if we can find a man who was so like Moses as Christ was, and *so like to Christ* as Moses was. If we cannot find such a one, then have we found HIM of who Moses in the law and the prophets did write to be Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God." †

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## WATER BAPTISM

By Bro. Richard Lehman

**B**APTISM is derived from the Greek word *baptize* meaning "to immerse." Never is sprinkling or pouring found in the Bible in relation to water baptism. Water baptism signifies a burial as well as a resurrection. So according to the example in the Bible, we should baptize the saved by fully immersing them in the water. It is an outward sign of an inward work, a testimony to the world of something that has happened within the heart. That "something" is a resurrection within your heart to a new life in Christ Jesus.

"Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead."—Colossians 2:12.

"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."—I Peter 3:21.

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."—Romans 6:4.

Jesus died on the cross for us, and spiritually took our sins to the grave. He took our punishment upon Him, in our place. But He also had the power of God to be resurrected again. So He not only has the power to take away our sins, He also has the power to resurrect our hearts to a new life, free from the old life of sin. Through faith in Christ, one who is saved becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus!

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."—II Corinthians 5:17.

Again, baptism is part of our testimony to a new life in Christ Jesus. We are buried in the water to symbolize the death of our old life of sin. And we are brought up out of the water to symbolize the new resurrected life we now have in Christ Jesus. We are testifying to what the Lord has already done in our hearts!

"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."—Romans 10:10.

Who are true candidates for water baptism? Only the saved. The command to be baptized is prefaced by the word *repent*.

"And saying, repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. And this same John had his raiment of camel's hair and a leather girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all region around about Jordan, And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance."—Matthew 3:2-8.

Very religious people came to be baptized, but John the Baptist told them that they were not ready. They first needed to repent of their sins and forsake them. And they needed to prove this to everyone by a new life that they would be living; a life that would include more than outward religion, but that would show they have a new heart, and one that had been completely changed.

Peter preached the same message to the many religious Jews on the day of Pentecost: "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."—Acts 2:37, 38.

One of Jesus' final commandments to the apostles and disciples was for them to preach the gospel and to baptize those who believe.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—Matthew 28:19.

And so this was exactly what they did on the day of Pentecost. "Then they that had gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."—Acts 2:41.

The household of Cornelius was baptized after receiving the Holy Ghost. "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?"—Acts 10:47.

Anyone who has been saved should get baptized when the opportunity arises.

Nowhere in the Bible is there any foundation or teaching that sinners, infants, or unaccountable children should be baptized.

Finally, there are some things water baptism will not do:

- Baptism will not wash our sins away or make us a church member. Only the blood of Christ can wash away our sins, and by faith He does this for us when we repent of our sins and ask Him to forgive us.
- Baptism will not reserve for us a place in heaven.
- Baptism is not a channel of divine grace, and will do no supernatural work. Remember, it is an outward testimony, telling the world what Christ has already done for us in our hearts. †

## SANCTIFICATION

## THE MEANING OF SANCTIFICATION

**Scriptures:** Acts 19:1-6; Romans 12:1; Ephesians 1:13; I Thessalonians 5:23; Romans 5:1, 2; II Timothy 2:21.

Acts 19:1 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,

2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.

4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Ephesians 1:13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.

I Thessalonians 5:23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

II Timothy 2:21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

**Memory Verse:** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.—Romans 12:1.

**Aim:** To make clear the meaning of sanctification.

## INTRODUCTION

**T**HE dictionary meaning of *sanctification* is “the act of making holy or clean morally,” also “the act of setting apart for sacred use.” This act of making holy is the part of sanctification done by God in response to faith expressed in the human heart, and the setting apart for sacred use is the part done by man. Since man cannot be neutral but must be a servant of God or of the devil, would it not be much better to seek the experience of sanctification and become an unreserved disciple of Christ? Some want salvation for the one purpose of escaping the fires of hell, but no one can make progress in the kingdom of God if this is the only purpose in mind. God saves the soul for the glory of His

righteous name, and one of the sources of glory for Him is when the newly saved soul becomes a valiant soldier in the great warfare against the kingdom of Satan. No man is the soldier that he could be until he is sanctified. Therefore, sanctification is an absolute necessity to the newly born Christian.

## MEDITATIONS

**PAUL INSISTS ON SANCTIFICATION—Acts 19:1—Finding certain disciples—**These were souls born of the Spirit of God but not fully informed in regard to the divine plan. The soul that is born of the Spirit and is untainted by the powers of Satan is easily led into any truth God shines on his pathway. Paul built only after the divine pattern, and he who would not submit to the divine pattern was rejected.

**HOLY GHOST BAPTISM FOLLOWS REGENERATION—Acts 19:2—Since ye believed—**Believing on Christ in the heart results in justification, or regeneration. Paul's question was (to these men), “Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?” They had heard enough gospel to receive deliverance from sin, but the great doctrine of sanctification obtained in Holy Ghost baptism had never been presented to them, so they knew nothing of it. Thousands today know nothing of this doctrine because their leaders do not believe God's Word in regard to it and do not present it to them. What an effect error has in the hands of Satan in depriving the family of God of Holy Ghost power! Let us no longer hold our peace, but rather “shout it from the housetops.”

**THE FRUITS OF JOHN'S LABORS—Acts 19:3—John's baptism—**John the Baptist, although he was filled with the Holy Ghost, preached only a gospel of repentance as a means of entrance into the kingdom of God. These men had heard the message and had been baptized. Thus they had been regenerated.

**PAUL APPROVES JOHN'S MESSAGE—Acts 19:4—Verily baptized—**John baptized truly unto repentance, pointing all men to Christ, who would baptize with the Holy Ghost.

**HONEST HEARTS QUICK TO OBEY—Acts 19:5—When they heard—**Paul spoke at the command and in the power of the Holy Ghost. These who heard were visited by the same Spirit that caused Paul to speak, witnessing to the truth. Desiring more truth that they might walk in it, they at once accepted it. Too many men today have a loyalty to man and his creeds, doctrines, and traditions above loyalty to God and His truth; thus, they cannot have a true experience with God. When we hear, we at once should obey. **Verse 6—Laid his hands upon them—**There was no drawing back among these men. How easy it is for the Spirit to work when men are willing and obedient! In this account the Holy Ghost saw fit to impart both the gift of tongues and prophecy to them whom He baptized, but He does not always do this. He does all things after the counsel of His own will, never making a mistake.

**PAUL'S EARNEST ENTREATY—Romans 12:1—I beseech you—**Here is man's side of sanctification.

Service to God is not a forced service. It must be freely given by those who would be children of God. The thought contained in the words, *living sacrifice*, is that all the days that we live in God's service our lives must be sanctified to the service of God, being no longer subject to the pursuit of personal ambitions and whims. This is reasonable because the wisdom of God is so infinite, and ours is so limited. No man can order his own life to his eternal good; only God can do this.

**SEALED FOR HEAVEN—Ephesians 1:13—Ye were sealed**—If a Christian presents himself to God a living sacrifice in sincerity, the Holy Spirit, without fail, comes in and takes possession. The Spirit's presence in the human heart is most plainly known all over heaven and hell and makes itself known to the men of the earth. The sanctified man at once becomes a target of the fiery darts of Satan and a power in the hand of God for the advancement of His kingdom. Note again in this verse the fact is emphasized that the sealing by the Spirit follows the believing on the part of the Christian.

**A COMPLETE WORK—I Thessalonians 5:23—Sanctify you wholly**—Every part and faculty of the human being must be absolutely clean, and it is, after God sanctifies the soul. So it is evident that sanctification is not something we grow into. It is an instantaneous work performed by God upon the heart of the earnest and obedient seeker. The heart that is free from sin is a citizen of the heavenly kingdom and is destined for that realm of bliss.

**STANDING GRACE—Romans 5:1, 2**—Justification, through faith in Jesus, sets us at peace with God. Through the same blood that justified us, we also are sanctified, or we obtain this "grace wherein we stand." A justified person cannot, as a rule, exist very long as a Christian unless he goes on to sanctification, for the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit is what enables one to stand the severe storms of life and be victorious in them.

**LIVING THE LIFE—II Timothy 2:21—Purge himself**—It is not within the power of any man to cleanse himself from the stains of any sin or the element of sin received from his foreparents; but he can act by the imparted power of the Holy Ghost received in sanctification, in choosing the right in preference to the wrong as revealed by his knowledge of the will and Word of God. In this manner he purges himself of evil.

### CONCLUSION

Sanctification is a work done by the Holy Ghost, and of this we may be sure: it is always a complete work in every detail. The entirety of the soul is brought under the control of the Spirit, who in turn orders the conduct of the body; so the entirety of man is subject to the Spirit and will of God. God sanctifies only that which man has. If he has many talents, they are all sanctified; if he has only one, it is sanctified. If he has a temper, God sanctifies that. He does not take the temper away; but where the temper was previously used in evil escapades, it is now used in the holy war against evil. Jesus showed a temper when He upset the money changers'

tables in the temple and used a whip on the Jews. But this was a holy demonstration of temper. Paul declared that he died daily. This was after he was sanctified, but he was still human and had normal desires. Every desire was carefully examined in the light of the will and Word of God, and any desire that was not consistent with them was rejected.

### FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. Give the dictionary meaning of sanctification.
2. Who is in line for sanctification?
3. What is man's part in sanctification?
4. What is God's part?
5. What should be the attitude of a believer toward sanctification?
6. What happens to the temper of a man in sanctification?
7. What does it mean to be sealed by the Holy Ghost?
8. What does it mean to be sanctified wholly? †

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