

The Way of Truth

Vol. 79

“Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”

No. 1

THOUGHT FOR THE NEW YEAR:
“THE POWER OF
SPOKEN WORDS”

JANUARY/FEBRUARY
2021

SOME THINGS WE HAVE IN COMMON

ONE THING this present pandemic has done is to give the family of man a common enemy. At least in this one thing we all want the same thing: for this disease to be driven into oblivion and destroyed. It has caused havoc in our lives. It has even affected the church, taking some of our loved ones, hindering our gathering together, and generally causing grief and pain. It has hit us here at *The Way of Truth* causing our staff to be quarantined and forcing us to combine the January and February issues of 2021. But, thank God, He brought us through and allowed this work to continue.

God created a world of diversity. He did not just create the rose, but species of all kinds of flora and fauna. There are animals of all sizes and natures. The landscape shows the Creator's imagination through mountains, woods, rivers, oceans, etc. Even when it comes to man, there is great diversity. There are no two fingerprints the same. Every human being is unique.

But rather than amplifying our diversity, in this editorial I would like to emphasize what we have in common. There is comfort in the ways people are the same. This is especially true in the family of God. Christians have many things in common, which ought to bring us closer together and provide a foundation for hope and unity.

First of all, we have a *common experience with Christ*. I John 5:1 says, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him." What a powerful verse of scripture! Every born-again Christian has the same experience of sins forgiven. We have it in common. Every single child of God has experienced conviction, godly sorrow, repentance, regeneration, and were born again and translated out of the power of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son. Having experienced the self-same experience, we not only love God, but we love everyone else whom God has saved!

We, as Christians, have a *common Savior*. Acts 4:12 proclaims, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." If a person is truly saved, he has the same Savior as every other Christian, namely Jesus Christ! He tasted death, not only for me, but for every man. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9). A common Savior! As I Corinthians 8:6 says, "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

This means that *the salvation we have received from the Savior is common to all Christians*. In Jude 3 we read, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly

contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." The "common salvation" does not mean something insignificant, rather it means every Christian has this salvation in common with every other Christian.

We must contend for *the faith that is common to the saints*. To Titus the apostle Paul writes, "To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour." And he writes in Ephesians 4:1-6, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

We could also say that every true Christian *has a common church*. "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47). Jesus said in Matthew 16, "I will build My church." He is not building a multiplicity of churches! He is building one and every saved soul was and is added to it, whether he knows it or not!

There is one Bible, thus *one common basis for biblical doctrine*. God is not the author of confusion. Since there is one common theme that flows from the Bible, we are to teach and believe the same thing. I Corinthians 1:10, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." Of course, we have different convictions, but those should not be taught as doctrine. However, when it comes to the cardinal doctrines of the Bible, we should hold these as common to all men everywhere.

Another thing all Christians have in common is a *desire to strive for the faith of the gospel with all other saints of God*. 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." There is a *common striving against sin*. Hebrews 12:4, "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin."

There is also a *common love for one another*. Paul said in Romans 5:5, "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." John 13:34 says, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." A common love does not mean our love is not valuable, it meanseveryone who is born of God has this love. It is

ABOUT THE COVER

On our cover is a view of Hunts Mesa Navajo tribal majesty place near Monument Valley, Arizona. The gospel is for all people. Pray for this ministry as we endeavor to send the tuth of God's Word to the uttermost part of the world!

THE WAY OF TRUTH

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Vol. 79 January/February 2021 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

Our telephone number is 301-739-2980

Our fax number is 301-739-7173

Our e-mail address is truth@fred.net

Visit our website at www.wayoftruth.org

common to us all. Philippians 2:2, "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." This common love binds our hearts together!

We have a *common adversary*. I Peter 5:8, 9, proclaims, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." We are not to be at odds with one another. We have one common enemy which we need to focus on. Satan's attacks are common to each child of God. Temptations are common to us all. I Corinthians 10:13 points out, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

This leads to *common victory*. I John 5:4, "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 15:57).

Finally, all Christians have a *common destination*! "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." II Timothy 4:8 says the crown that awaits is for ALL that love His appearing. "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the

Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

With so much in common, we should realize we are not alone. Whether it be combating COVID-19, or resisting temptations, or facing the devil in a fiery trial, remember, others have gone before you facing the same enemy, "whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."

Having these truths implanted deeply in our hearts, the reality of the beauty of true Christianity is made manifest in this simple statement: "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it" (I Corinthians 12:26). †

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 #1179 Tempered Together—Rebecca Bland
- ___ CD #1180 Leaning on Jesus—G. E. Tyler
- ___ CD #1181 Keep That Which Is Committed—Brian Richards
- ___ CD #1186 Forsaken—Doug Shenberger
- ___ CD #1187 Our Thoughts Toward God—Brian Richards
- ___ CD #1188 God's Faithfulness Cannot Fail—G. E. Tyler
- ___ CD #1189 Scriptures and Songs of Christ's Birth

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THE POETRY PAGE

Ushering in 2021

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Author Unknown

I do not know, I cannot see
What God's kind hand prepares for me,
Nor can my glance pierce through the haze
Which covers all my future ways;
But yet I know that o'er it all
Rules He who notes the sparrow's fall.

I know the Hand that hath me fed
And through the year my feet hath led;
I know the everlasting arm
That hath upheld and kept from harm.
I trust Him as my God and Guide
And know that He will still provide.

So at the opening of the year,
I banish care and doubt and fear,
And clasping His kind hand, essay
To walk with God from day to day,
Trusting in Him who hath me fed,
Walking with Him who hath me led.

Farewell, Old Year, with goodness crowned.
A hand divine hath set thy bound.
Welcome the New Year, which shall bring
Fresh blessings from my God and King.
The Old we leave without a tear,
The New we hail without a fear.

ANOTHER CHANCE

A. H. Smith

Let's start the New Year in a different way,
A way that's good and clean,
A way where God can speak to us,
And a way of the redeemed.
A New Year is another chance,
To make His children see,
What joy and peace He would bestow,
If we would bow our knee.
So let's try with Jesus' help,
To do the will of Him,
Who gave His all on Calvary,
To save us all from sin.

ONE LIFE Edward M. Brandt

One life for Christ is all I have,
One life for Him so dear,
One life for doing all I can
With every passing year.

One life to live for Christ my Lord,
One life to do my part,
One life to give my all
With all my soul and heart.

One life for Christ in all I do,
One life to show my worth,
One life to glorify His name
And prove my second birth.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Ollen O. Craig

If the Holy Spirit leads the way
You will never go astray.
For He knows the mind of God
And will show you the path to trod.

The Holy Spirit will comfort me,
Whatever my problems and trials may be.
If I love and stay close to Him,
He will keep me from every sin.

Though sometimes the night seems dark and long,
The Spirit within will keep me strong.
He'll see me through what e're betide
If I keep walking close to His side.

GOD'S WILL FOR US

Anonymous

Just to be tender, just to be true;
Just to be glad the whole day through;
Just to be merciful, just to be mild;
Just to be trustful as a child;
Just to be gentle and kind and sweet;
Just to be helpful with willing feet;
Just to be cheery when things go wrong;
Just to drive sadness away with a song,
Whether the hour is dark or bright;
Just to be loyal to God and right;
Just to believe that God knows best;
Just in His promise ever to rest;
Just to let love be our daily key;
This is God's will for you and me. †

THE POWER OF SPOKEN WORDS

Message by Bro. Doug Shenberger, delivered 10/04/20



I HAVE ENTITLED our thoughts this morning, “The Power of Spoken Words.” As a beginning text of scripture, I’d like to refer to Proverbs, chapter 18, verse 21: “Death and life are in the power of the tongue.” There are other verses we will be referring to, Lord willing, throughout the message that speak to the power of our words. It is a sobering thought to think that death and life would be in the power of the tongue. Sometimes we think of that as the power of physical instruments or a lot of other things.

In thinking about the thought of the power of our spoken words, I would like for us to just think about what we can do with the words that we say. I heard someone say one time that there are several types of people in the world, and one type of people is that they’re “adders.” They *add* things. When you come in contact with them, they add something to you. They add a little bit of encouragement, a little bit of strength, a little bit of life, and a little bit of hope. They add something. You all know people like that. They’re easy to talk to. They bring something to you. You go away just feeling a little bit more energized, a little bit more encouraged, and a little bit better. You have a little more hope and a little more desire to accomplish something; to do something. That’s a powerful personality and a powerful ability to be able to add something to people.

There are other people who are “subtracters.” When you talk to them, they just *take a little bit* from you. A little bit of your energy is gone. You feel a little bit more depressed, a little bit more hopeless, a little bit sadder, and a little bit weaker. That’s just the reality of life. Obviously, you’ve met people like that.

There are some people who go beyond adders and subtracters. They’re “multipliers.” They just *multiply* things in your life. They do powerful things for you. They help you to grow. They help you to be better. They bring people together. They don’t just encourage you, but they bring people together. They give life to others in a way that causes them to give life, hope, and encouragement to others. Multipliers are a very powerful force. To be able to a multiplier is a wonderful thing.

The last one is, “dividers.” They go beyond the subtracters and *divide* people. They drive people apart and separate people. They bring division and foster hurts. That’s a sad reality.

Whichever four of those you want to talk about, most of the work and accomplishment, good or bad, is done through words. It’s done through the things that we say. We say sometimes that “actions speak louder than words” and that’s a true statement, but when it comes to what we’re talking about right here and now, it’s mostly done through the words that we say and the way we say them. When we think about that, it helps us to just get a little bit of a vision or a sense of the power of the words that we say, or even the lack of

words that we say. Failure to speak words. The Bible says, “A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.” Sometimes the words that we speak or fail to speak are very powerful things.

We’d like to talk about the power of words that we speak or fail to speak in the message this morning. I’d like to refer to Numbers 6:22-27: “And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them.”

I’d like to look at that passage of scripture in a little bit of detail for a few minutes. The Lord came to Moses and He gave him this specific message for the priest Aaron, and his sons. The Lord said to Moses, “There’s something I need you to tell Aaron to tell the people. On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them [This is something you’re to say to them], ‘The Lord bless thee.’” Just those words are a powerful thing—to be able to tell people, “The Lord bless you.” Think about that! I mean that’s something people could say frivolously or without thought, but if you thoughtfully say to someone, “The Lord bless you,” it’s setting a whole tone for your verbal interaction. It acknowledges that the Lord is capable of blessing. It acknowledges His position, His ability, and the need for a spiritual blessing for something from God. When we say, “The Lord bless you,” it acknowledges Him, and it asks for a blessing from the One who is above all and the One who is capable of giving that blessing.

“The Lord bless thee, and keep thee.” The thought of being kept by God is a powerful thought. If you read Jesus’ prayer, one of the things He mentions several times is “keep them; keep them safe in the midst of an evil and a perverse world; keep them safe in danger and problems.” That was His heart’s desire. He wanted His disciples to be kept safe. “The Lord bless thee, and keep thee.” He’s capable of keeping us safe, keeping us from evil, and keeping us as His children. So if we say “the Lord bless thee, and keep thee” to someone and think about the priest saying that to the Israelitish people, that’s a special statement. It’s a powerful statement. I would recommend to everyone here to take the time and read over those verses, and if you can’t commit them to memory exactly, commit them into your heart, because they really tell you something about how you can bless someone with your spoken words.

The text goes on to say, “The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee.” That’s a very beautiful thought. Whenever we think of a face

shining, we think of happiness, we think of pleasure, we think of approval and blessing. We have pleased someone. That person is happy with us and paying attention to us. Think of God's face shining upon us. We all need His face shining upon us. In reality, we all have a desire or something in our hearts that's intended to need the experience of the Lord's face shining upon us.

Verse 26 of our text (Numbers 6): "The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee [to pay attention to you, be aware of you, watch over you], and give thee peace." The power of spoken words and spoken blessings is something that I'm afraid we've lost sight of, and we don't necessarily feel the need of as much as we should, and we aren't aware of what power is there.

There's a reason why the Lord said to Moses to have Aaron and his sons speak those words to the children of Israel. Was it just to make them feel good about things? Was it just to put them in a better frame of mind? It's because the Lord knew that there was power in those words. This is a pattern we can look at and realize that here's something that the Lord wants to be placed upon people, and how we need to do that. We need to acknowledge God, call upon Him, His capability, and we need to have something in our hearts to bless people.

If we think about blessings, we sometimes think about Esau. We know how Esau lost his birthright by exchanging it for some food. But then, he had his blessing stolen. When he lost that blessing, he regarded that as a very great loss. That's what caused him to say he was going to kill his brother. He regarded that theft more seriously than the loss of his birthright. I know that was a different age, and we could say, "Well, that was a different time and blessing," but I believe that the power we have to bless people is something that is very often overlooked. I'll have more to say about that a little later.

This guideline and example here in Numbers is something that I don't think we should look at and say, "Well, that was something that God intended and did with the children of Israel, it was in the Old Testament, and it's not applicable today." I believe blessings have just as much power today as they did in that day and age.

One of the questions that might come to mind, if we think about the need of blessing someone, is: who should we bless? How do we know if that person is worthy of being blessed? Are you worthy of being blessed? Do you have to be worthy to be blessed?

First, who should we bless? We should bless the people that we come in contact with. I think we should bless the people we come in contact with in our lives the most, the most. Those that we're closest to should get the most blessing from us. We should probably start with our spouses. We should bless them. It's a powerful thing, I believe, to bless your spouse. If you tell your spouse for the first time before you leave in the morning, "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee, and make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee, to lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace," your spouse might look at you a little strange. That might not be the exact wording that you would use, but

it shows the thought and idea that you would take the time to offer someone a blessing.

"The Lord bless you today. The Lord give you strength to do what you have to do. The Lord give you the encouragement to go through these hard times. The Lord smile upon you today. That's my prayer and desire for you." Do you think those are powerless words? I don't think so. I think they're spoken words of blessings. Many times we just got out of the habit or we've never had the habit of thinking of blessing people.

We can't go into a lot of detail on individual things this morning, but maybe just as important as that is, I believe, we need to bless our children. Sometimes we think we just need to train and discipline our children, which is true and necessary, but you know, blessings are one of the real keys to obedience. Blessings are one of the real keys to the heart ties in a relationship that allows you to lead. Blessings change people's behavior. People are a lot more likely in life to live up to the best of what you think of them. If you want a good outcome, then they are to live up to that potential by you telling them how bad they are. That's a powerful truth that isn't easy to do a lot of times. As we see bad things, or see things that are wrong, we want to fix them. We want to tell people and our children how much they've failed. A lot of times that is not the best way to get the outcome we want.

We should bless our brethren, the people we come in contact with. The people we fellowship with need to be blessed by us. They need to be encouraged and touched by our words. Words of blessing, words of hope, words of encouragement, and words that are thoughtful.

We need to bless God. The Bible tells us to bless God, to bless His name and praise Him.

Is there anyone else that we need to bless? We need to bless our enemies. How do you know they're worthy of being blessed? Let's go ahead and read Romans, chapter 12, verse 14: "Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not." Now, if you're living a Christian life and you're doing the right thing, and someone is persecuting you, then that person is obviously wrong, right? That person has to be wrong if they are persecuting you.

What do you do about that person who is persecuting you? You can ignore that person, you can say harsh things about them, and tell other people how bad they are, but how do you bless them? The Bible says here, "Bless them which persecute you." Now, you automatically have an emotional response about that person. That person is persecuting you, offending you, and hurting you. Persecution involves all of those things. That person is doing something that's making your life worse and uncomfortable. Maybe your reputation is being torn down or something else. The Bible says "to bless them." What does that mean to you?

Well, I would say it means that you need to give that person a blessing. Maybe you don't tell them to their face, but you can bless that person to God. If you don't know what to say, I would say go back and let's read Numbers, chapter 6. Think about that person who is persecuting you. Can you say, "The Lord bless you and keep you, and make His face to shine upon you,

and be gracious unto you, and lift up His countenance unto you, and give you peace”? Can you say that to your persecutor? Can you pray to God to bless that person who is persecuting you? That’s what our verse says—“Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.”

There are a couple of things that are going to happen, I believe, but for us the most important thing is: if we can bring ourselves to the place where we honestly pray to God from our hearts to bless that person and say, “Bless that person, Lord, with understanding, with wisdom; help them, Lord, and just prosper them,” it’s going to change the way you look at the situation. It’s going to empower you to deal with the situation. I believe that. When we bless people, there’s power in that. It’s not necessarily something that is easy to do, but it is something the Bible tells us to do. It’s not something that we should just do casually. That’s not blessing someone. You have to do something to bless someone. You have to invest something of yourself to bless someone. You have to give something to really bless someone. It’s not just a form you go through.

How do we bless people? How do we do it? One way is: we need to pray blessings on people. We need to pray for people that the Lord will bless them. Speak their name aloud before the Lord and ask Him to bless them. Ask Him to bless our spouses, our children, our co-workers, our church family, our enemies. Just speak blessings before the Lord upon them.

We need to bless people directly whenever we have the opportunity. There is something good about most people. There’s something you can bless a person about. There’s some qualities that a person has. There is something you can focus on that’s good. If you don’t have any other pattern to follow, follow the pattern the Lord gave us, the pattern He gave for the priest to bless the people. Jesus prayed some of those same thoughts when He prayed for His disciples. He was asking God to bless, to keep, to guide, to do good.

What are some of the reasons why we should bless others? I believe that it gives powerful results. It works! If you think about it, the principle of blessing goes along with sowing and reaping. You give blessing to accomplish something, to change something—to change your heart, to be able to find forgiveness, to be able to find peace. You’ll change the other person because you’ve blessed them. You’ve invested something in them. It’s far more likely to change them than it is to tell them what’s wrong. So you *get* as a result of what you give. To the degree you bless, to that degree you’re going to reap the results of blessing.

I could give you a few examples. You could tell a person, “You never come to see me.” Has anyone ever said that to you? Well, the most likely result of that is: maybe you’ll guilt someone into coming to seeing you one time. The most likely result of that is, they’re going to say, “Well, that’s true. I don’t know when I’ll be able to.” They might not say it out loud, but that’s the effect a lot of times that you have. Let’s look at a different way you could approach it. You could go to someone and say, “You know, every time you come to see me, it is just a blessing to me. I pray to the Lord that He will bless you for your generosity and the love that you express

by finding the time to come and visit me. I ask the Lord that He would just reward you for that, and that He would make His face to shine upon you.” Now, which of those two things would be more likely to get someone to come to see you? If you’re honest and you realize that if that’s the true heart, not just the words that you say, you will see that it goes back to what I said at the beginning about being adders or subtracters. When those similar words come out of your heart, your attitude, you’re going to get a result somewhere, along the line, of the attitude you had going into it.

You can also look at the example of someone that says to somebody, “You don’t care about others. You only care about yourself.” Well, that might be true, and a problem someone has, but a lot of times you’ll be better off to say, “My prayer for you is that the Lord will bless you with a loving and caring heart, that His face will shine more and more upon you as you learn to give and care about others.” If you say one of those two things to a child or to a young person, generally speaking, they’re going to be far more likely to live up to the best than they are going to be to become the best, because of the negative or hurtful things that you say.

I’d like to take a few minutes to look into James, chapter 3. I could read this whole chapter as it is so much along the line of the power of the tongue and our spoken words, but there are a few verses I’d like to mention. These verses talk about putting bits in the horses’ mouths and it controls the direction of their whole body, and how a great ship is controlled by just a small rudder. Verses 5-12: “Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.”

When we think of the power of the tongue, James said it very powerfully and clearly. It’s a powerful thing. The words that we speak have great power and influence. When James said in verse 9, “Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God,” he went on to say, “these things ought not so to be.” We can’t bless God and curse His creation. I don’t think that means or has to mean that you’re going around using profane language about people. It’s pronouncing things against people, saying things against people, rather than saying things that would help and bless and build them up. It’s subtracting, it’s dividing. Those types of thoughts and expressions of our words are very damaging. “Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and

cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.”

We are to bless. If we’re going to bless God, we need to bless people. We need to bless the people in our lives, the people around us. We need to decide which one it’s going to be. We don’t want to try to do both. We don’t want blessing and cursing coming out of the same mouth. There’s power in spoken blessings. If you think you can say words and they don’t have an impact, and it doesn’t matter, that is just not true. The words that we speak are the foundation of who we are. The Bible tells us, “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” Does that make you feel good about what you’ve said lately? That’s something to think about. Think back about some of the things you’ve said. They came out of your heart. Sometimes that can be a little bit concerning.

Our text of scripture said, “Death and life are in the power of the tongue.” This is absolutely true in a lot of situations. If not physical life, spiritual life and death are certainly often in the power of our tongue; not only our own, but potentially other people, the people we come in contact with. If we bless them, what difference would it make in their lives? That’s something we have to choose to do. We have to choose to bless people. Generally speaking, really blessing people is something we have to make some choices to do.

If you have a relationship problem with someone in your life, whether you’re a Christian or not, you’re going to be far better off in trying to fix that problem by blessing that person, rather than listing for them every day all the things they’ve done wrong. You’re going to change their behavior way more by blessing than you are by cursing.

Do you have someone who hurts you, someone that disrespects you? Bless them. Are you willing to bless them? If someone comes to your mind, are you willing to bless them? It’s a dangerous thing to say *no* to that question, because the Bible clearly says “to bless them that persecute you.” Pray God’s blessing upon them. Look for opportunities to speak out their name before God and ask Him to bless them. If you think they have a fault in a certain area, ask Him to bless them to overcome that. Give them peace. Speak a blessing directly to them whenever you have an opportunity.

Bless your children. It’s an opportunity that you’ll have for a short time. You have more opportunity in those formative early years to bless your children and make a difference in their lives than you will any other person in the world. The blessings that you place upon them are almost like a prophecy to them. There’s something that opens their eyes to potential and hope in life. Bless your children. I think we could all do that some more. Bless our spouses so that we might be encouraging to one another to move forward and become the best that we can be.

May the Lord bless you today. May the Lord make His face to shine upon you. I want the Lord’s face to shine upon me. I can pray and ask that the Lord would smile upon me and my life, but it’s precious to have someone to tell you that, and to pray that prayer and to speak those blessings upon you.

One of the things that is needful for us to be able to bless other people is: humility. It’s hard for a proud person to bless people. So if you’re sitting here thinking, *All of that sounds pretty good, Bro. Doug, but I’ll let other people try that. I’m not going to do that, I think you need to think about the level of pride that you have.*

Blessing people isn’t something that’s just some obscure idea. This is an expression of the Lord’s heart, His desire for the family of man, and for His people especially, that they would be blessed and bless one another. If we’re willing to die to ourselves and our own pride, and we’re willing to see the power of God working in our lives and in people’s lives around us in a greater way, let’s give them a blessing. Let’s bless their lives. Let’s bless God. Let’s bless our enemies.

The world needs to be blessed. The world is hurting. The world is in danger and in a pitiful shape. We want to see God bless. I want to see people’s lives changed. I want to see people come to know Jesus Christ. I want to see people empowered in a greater way. I want to see people overcome trials and discouragement and all the things the devil would bring upon them. We need to be blessed. We need to bless one another and the Lord will indeed bless us. †



This month’s Young People’s Page ties in with the preceding full-length sermon.

Our Words

By Sis. Andrea Williams,
Craigsville, West Virginia

IN TODAY’S world, there isn’t much thought given to one’s words. In fact, many will speak in any tone and without regard to which words are being said.

However, God’s Word tells us that we will be held accountable for all of our words. Matthew 12:36, 37 says, “But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” With that thought, our words are powerful. Our words can bring us closer to God, or worse, drive us away from God.

Words That Bring Us Closer

Words that can bring us closer to God are those that are full of blessings. In Proverbs 16:24, we read, “Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.” As one goes throughout the day, it is important to speak about things that are true and righteous. This simple action builds our Christian character and more importantly, our testimony to the

world. Our words are represented in what we believe as true. In addition, our words are what people will listen to and watch out for, carefully examining our way of life and checking it against the words we release from our mouth. Sometimes not speaking any words is more powerful than saying regretful words. It is a valuable skill to learn to be quiet. Psalm 46:10 states, “Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.” Also, speaking gratitude is a wonderful practice. Daniel spoke in Daniel 2:23, “I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee: for thou hast now made known unto us the king’s matter.” We know Daniel experienced many hardships throughout his life as well as being victorious in trials. In this verse, he expresses deep gratitude toward God, which becomes a wonderful example for us to speak gratitude.

Words That Drive Us Away

When I was growing up, I was taught to be careful not to say “by-words.” By-words are defined in *Thesaurus.com* as “side doors to profanity.” By-words, besides being senseless sayings, can lead one to using profane words. II Timothy 2:16 says, “But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.”

What are some examples of these by-words? Probably the most popular phrase used today is OMG—which stands for “Oh, my Gosh.” Clearly it stands for something much worse, and the use of this phrase still makes me uncomfortable. Exodus 20:7 is where we find the Ten Commandments. The third commandment is, “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.” We are not to use God’s name as a curse word. We are not to use His name lightly. If we study who God is, we understand a bit more why this is such a grave sin. God is holy, sovereign, unchangeable, omnipotent, omniscient, faithful, patient, and merciful. Best of all: He is our Savior, Redeemer, and He can be our best friend! How could we talk about our best friend in such a careless, reckless manner? There are many other words that could be considered by-words. Let us give careful consideration to every word that we say. Proverbs 21:23, “Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.”

There is so much more that could be said of words. It’s been said that our words are like a rudder on a ship. The mouth is a small piece of the whole person, but it represents so much of that person. Careful and watchful practice of our words is not an option, it is a necessity. There is great reward in watching our words. As we learn to really practice watching our words, we can become more aware of spiritual things. Our desire needs to be to draw closer to God. II Corinthians 7:1, “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” Our words represent how God is working in our lives; they can draw us closer to or drive us away from God. Let us strive to draw closer to our heavenly Father. †



**LET NOT YOUR
HEART BE
TROUBLED**

Radio Message by Bro. Greg Tyler
(aired 1/5/97)

WE WANT to look into the Word of God, for the Word of God is the foundation for a happy life in this time world. We’re going to turn to the fourteenth chapter of St. John. John, chapter 14, beginning with verse 1: “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.” I want to entitle my thoughts, “Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled.”

We’re living in a troubled world, and the reason why the world is troubled is because of sin. Sin is abounding on every hand. Sin causes trouble, heartache, and every evil and wicked work. But I think it’s a wonderful thing that in the midst of this world of darkness, in the midst of this troubled world, we can have peace and contentment, and we can be happy. Jesus said unto His disciples, “Let not your heart be troubled.”

One reason why there is so much unhappiness and why people are so troubled today is because they have no foundation to build their lives on. They’re simply going with the tide—in and out—up and down. Nothing is solid underneath them, nothing firm; but Friends, if you have Jesus Christ as your Savior, if you’re endeavoring to live your life according to His words, if you’re seeking His face daily for guidance and direction, if you let the meditations of your heart and the words of your mouth be acceptable before Him, then you have a strong foundation to build your life upon. Though the world be troubled around you, and even though things happen

in your life that are troubling, in Christ you can have peace and joy. In Christ we have what our heart and life need. This is why Jesus came, in part: to destroy the work of the devil, which is sin.

When sin is destroyed in your life, and Christ is reigning in your heart, then you have an inner strength. You have an inner power that will enable you to keep from being troubled, come what may. The secret is to keep your eyes on Jesus. He said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me."

There comes a sense of strength with faith in Christ. There comes a sense of inner well-being that enables an individual to face the trials of life with victory. But you know, if we're not careful, we'll take our eyes off Jesus and on to our troubles. As a parent, I know what it's like to see your children do things that grieve you. These things are troubling. If we're not careful, we'll allow the troubling things around us to sap us of our spiritual strength. We need at those times to get on our knees and seek Christ. Seek the higher ground.

I remember reading in the Bible where the disciples were out on the sea, and there came Jesus walking on the sea. It was stormy and the sea were troubled, but Jesus stood tall upon the waves. Peter was a type of man who was kinda impulsive, and he said, "Lord, if that be you out there, let me come to you." Jesus called Peter to come out on the sea with Him. Peter did walk upon the sea. Certainly, I believe that. Peter walked as Jesus did. As long as Peter kept his eyes on Jesus, he was not troubled. As long as he kept his eyes on Jesus, he had the power to walk on the sea; but the storm was raging around him, and soon he began to look at the waves and realized the danger that he was in. He took his eyes off Jesus and began to look upon the things that were going around him. The Bible says, "He began to sink." He cried out, "Lord, help me," and Jesus did reach out to him and lifted him up. Friends, I believe that example in the Bible is symbolic of our own lives. If we get our eyes off Jesus and on to the troubles around us, we, too, as Peter will begin to sink.

We have a song in our church hymnal written by Dale Oldham. It's entitled, "Let Me See Jesus Only"—

*Dead to every worldly pleasure,
Dead indeed to sin am I;
But alive to Christ my Savior,
Daily to him I'm drawing nigh.*

*Let me see Jesus only,
Jesus only, Jesus only,
Let me see Jesus only,
Only he can satisfy.*

*Let me strive not for the riches
Of this earth that soon decay;
From the world I've turn to Jesus
And his more abundant way.*

*Storms in fury beat around me,
Tempests oft my bark assail;
But my Pilot's name is Jesus,
He will calm the wildest gale.*

*When I face death's chilly river,
When upon its brink I stand,
I shall fearless be if Jesus
Leads me gently by the hand.*

If we're going to keep from being troubled, if we're going to have peace in this troubled world, we need to keep our eyes on Christ, His holiness, His purity, His greatness, His might, His power, and His grace that is sufficient for our every need.

Jesus was underneath the deck, and the disciples at one time were out on the deck, and the storm did brew on the Sea of Galilee. The disciples were fearful for their lives, and they cried out, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" Jesus stepped out on to the deck and said, "Peace, be still," and there was a great calm.

Friend, if your life is troubled, if the cares of life have overwhelmed you, if sin has taken you low, I point you to Jesus Christ. He is still the Master of the sea. He is still the great and mighty Son of God. His words are still powerful if you will call upon Him. If you yield to Him, He will speak unto your life, "Peace, be still." I assure you that if you will let Him have His way in your life, you will experience a great calm.

Jesus said that He went to prepare a place for us that where He went, we may go also. Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. If we want to go to heaven when we die, we need to make preparation here and now. That preparation is not only believing in Christ with our word and with our tongue, but in believing in Him in deed and in truth, by yielding our life to Him, and letting Him direct our path. Heaven is worth it all, but we must prepare for ourselves, or rather, let Christ prepare us for that life beyond. Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me."

I believe the reason the world is so troubled is because Christ has been left out. When we took the Bible out of our public schools, there was only one direction to go, and that was down. We need a foundation. We need a strength and power beneath us. That power can only be found in Jesus Christ.

These words have been a comfort to me many times during my Christian experience, and even now, I feel the everlasting arms of Jesus beneath me, holding me up in this troubled world. Sometimes I seem to forget and allow the cares of life to get my attention, but then I cry as the Psalmist did, "When my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I." I have always found Jesus to be there, waiting to comfort me, to cheer me, and to help me to cease from trouble.

The apostle Paul said, "You who are troubled rest with us." There is soul rest and peace to be found in Christ. It is yours, My Friend, if you'll but seek His proffered grace. †

**"And to you who are troubled rest with us,
when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from
heaven with his mighty angels."**

—II Thessalonians 1:7.

WINNING A CROWN

By the late C. W. Naylor



Part XXIX

Subconscious Mental Effect

THE SUBCONSCIOUS mind is that part of the mind that works without our knowing it, or being conscious of its activity. It is the subconscious mind that works out most of the problems of life for us. Our minds may be likened to a factory of two rooms. In one we stand and look about and see what is going on, but we know nothing of what is going on in the other, until a truck load of the finished product is run out into our sight. Many of the thoughts that seem to come to our minds from nowhere in particular come from the subconscious mind. They are projected into the conscious mind from it, and it seems as though they just struck our minds somehow, and we know not their source, unless we know of the subconscious action of our minds. Sometimes we get to thinking over a subject, and then our attention is called away, and we forget it. A few days later the thought all worked out to a conclusion presents itself to our minds. The subconscious mind has seized upon the thought that was in the conscious mind and has kept working upon it until it has solved it to its satisfaction, and then it presents the result of its action to the conscious mind.

Sometimes our minds are suddenly filled with thoughts that bring joy and an uplift to the soul. These often result from something that has been taken into the subconscious mind and there wrought upon and finally turned back suddenly into the conscious mind. The opposite also is true. Oftentimes gloomy thoughts and feelings suddenly come upon us and we have no idea whence they come, when, in reality, some thought that was in our mind days or weeks before went into the subconscious mind and there worked, and now it comes out in a flood of gloom. Many seasons of gloominess and trial have their development in the subconscious mind, and the spiritual effect is only the reaction from the subconscious mind. Every time you allow yourself to think over dark and discouraging things, you are in danger of the thoughts sinking into your subconscious mind and coming out later on in a flood of discouragement. It is probable that the greater part of our spiritual trouble comes from either physical or spiritual reaction, Satan having nothing whatever to do with it. If we know of these reactions and treat them as reactions, we shall not feel that there is something wrong in our souls when we feel bad spiritually.

External Influences

We are often strongly influenced by the persons around us. We may be either encouraged or discouraged by them. We sometimes come into contact with those who are melancholy or under deep trial or discouragement, and their feelings react on us to produce unpleasant results. We feel ourselves depressed in spirit, or we may become deeply tried by partaking of the influence

resting on them, in just the same way as we become uplifted and encouraged by a person who is full of sunshine and good cheer. We need to recognize the probability of this influence of others working upon us. We need to guard ourselves against yielding to such influence, except where the influence is good, any more than it is possible to avoid.

Natural conditions, such as the weather, climate, scenery, etc., often affect our feelings very strongly. Bright, sunny weather often reacts upon us to make us cheerful and happy; dark, gloomy weather has a tendency to depress our spirits. Unpleasant surroundings or uncongenial employment often affects us for ill, causing homesickness, gloominess, and like feelings.

Besides those influences already mentioned, there are direct spiritual influences that work upon us. God, by His Spirit, often strongly influences us. His influence is always for good; it always uplifts and helps and brightens. He often manifests Himself to us when we are not expecting it. Sometimes during physical suffering or other distress He comes to us with such sweetness and blessedness that we are quite lifted above our affliction. He can make us joyful in all our tribulations. Just in our time of need His Spirit is with us. He comforts and helps and cheers; in fact, He is all and in all to us.

We are also subject to other spiritual influences. Evil spirits abound. Sometimes heavy depressions suddenly settle down upon us; heavy clouds obscure our sky, and we know no reason why they should. Fiery and unexpected temptations come upon us. Sometimes we are conscious that such are the direct influence of evil agents. These experiences are not indications that we are not right in our souls, and we should not question ourselves wrongly at such times. We may feel these influences very keenly. We may have hand-to-hand combat with demons in the spiritual element. We may sometimes be hard pressed. At such times we should resist steadfastly in the faith. We should hold fast our confidence in ourselves and in God, and expect to have power from God to overcome. Satan has power to affect our feelings very strongly, and also power to put thoughts into our minds; and he often takes advantage of this power. Sometimes we realize that we have two kinds of feelings simultaneously, one superficial and the other deeper, and that there is a conflict between these feelings. Sometimes profane or impure thoughts will be impressed upon our minds, and if we do not understand their source, we may be greatly troubled over them. There may sometimes be feelings of resentment toward God or a feeling of purposes that are quite out of harmony with the Christian life or experience. Sometimes souls having this experience are horrified and think themselves in a deplorable condition; when, in reality, these things come directly from Satan, and not from themselves at all. They do not spring from the heart, but are from an external influence. Underneath these feelings are the true feelings and purposes of the soul. These deeper and better feelings show the real state and condition of the heart. We should not condemn ourselves because Satan imposes such feelings or thoughts upon us. If we will simply resist them and assert in our souls that we will not accept them nor

have anything to do with them, we may overcome them and be none the worse for them, although the experience may be rather trying to our souls while we are passing through it.

Being subject, as we are, to all these influences, we ought not to suppose that all our difficulties are soul difficulties. The thing to do is to keep our hearts open before God; to keep our purposes and lives pure; to live by faith, not by our feelings; to judge ourselves, not by our emotions or the influences brought to bear upon us, but by the inmost purposes of our hearts. If the reader will carefully study the facts already enumerated and get hold of them until he understands them for himself, they will be of the greatest value to him in the Christian life.

Meddling with the Scales

No matter how accurate and reliable a set of scales may be, if they are meddled with they may be made inaccurate and undependable. If we were weighing coal and the scales were out of balance a few pounds, it would not matter so much; but if we were weighing diamonds or gold, a very little variation would amount to a great deal. The more valuable that which we weigh, the more necessary it is that the scales be properly adjusted and accurate to a high degree. When it comes to a standard of weighing the human soul, that should be the most accurate of all standards. When it comes to judging ourselves, it is important that we have a right standard of judgment. That right standard God furnishes in His Word. It will weigh us accurately if we take it as it is; but if we misinterpret it or turn it out of its natural course and meaning, we may judge ourselves very wrongly by it. What we need to do is to be absolutely fair with ourselves. We must not allow ourselves to be prejudiced either in our favor or against ourselves. If our standard of judgment is so low that it permits us to be impure in heart and purposes and to do things that are wrong in the sight of God, that standard is evil for us, and we are not just to ourselves. If we have too high a standard and require more of ourselves than is just and right, again we do ourselves an injury.

We must learn to be fair to ourselves. We must require of ourselves all that we ought to require, but nothing more than that. In many lives the ideal is far too low, and consequently the life is too low. In other cases, the ideal is too high and is entirely out of reach and can never be attained. We should have high ideals, but these ideals should be practicable and should not overlook the facts of human life. They should always be balanced by common sense. We should not live in a spiritual dreamland; for in practice we shall ever have to face the cold facts of life. These facts, not our dreams and imaginations, are what we must adjust ourselves to. If we have too high a standard, we shall always be coming short of it and condemning ourselves. A high ideal, if not too high, is a strong incentive to progress; but when it is made the standard by which we judge our present attainment, it tends to discourage us and becomes a real barrier to our progress. We can never attain to our ideals because they will ever grow as we grow, and they will continue to be in advance of us no matter how fast we grow. We must have a practicable, not an ideal, standard of judgment.

Making someone else our standard has its dangers. We cannot see another's inner life. We know nothing of his conflicts or his secret faults. We can see only the external manifestations. We do know our own inner life but we can know theirs only as we judge it from outward appearance. God wants each of us to judge himself by His Word, not by any other standard, and He does not want us to judge ourselves by an ideal beyond our reach.

People often make a serious mistake in comparing themselves with someone of a different temperament. It is very common to suppose that if a person makes many demonstrations in religion, he has a great deal of religion, and that if he is very quiet, he has no religion to speak of. I traveled for a number of years in the gospel work with a minister whose temperament was decidedly emotional and who would sometimes become very demonstrative, leaping and shouting, and manifesting his feelings very plainly. I was of a rather unemotional temperament. I had powerful emotions sometimes, but it was not my disposition to give vent to them. People therefore judged that he had a much better experience than I had, and oftentimes I heard people remark that they wished that they had an experience like his. No one ever seemed to wish that about me. No one seemed to covet in the least an experience like mine. They all wanted one like his, because they thought he was so happy. We both had the same salvation and served the same God. The difference was a difference of temperament.

Salvation is not a thing of temperament, though manifestation is. To make our feelings and emotions a standard, is to make our temperament the standard. Those of other temperaments will differ from us. They cannot and will not have the same experience so far as feelings and emotions are concerned. Great havoc has been caused by unwise preaching on these points. Preachers often relate their experiences, telling how happy they were and what wonderful emotions they had when they were converted. Others, hearing them, are led to suppose that if they too obtain salvation they will have these same emotions; so when they seek salvation, they seek these emotions. If they are of a different temperament, they do not experience them, and as a result they find it very difficult to suppose that they are saved at all. The preaching that emotion is ever a sign of salvation, in the sense that we can base our hope of God's favor and heaven upon it, is a serious error. Faith is the fundamental. Believing in God is what counts. Emotion is a superficial thing. It is not a reliable evidence, and when people are taught to look upon their feelings as evidences, they do not get a settled experience, an experience that will take them through hard places when their feelings subside. A man's religion does not consist in the joy that he has nor in the amount of noise he makes, but in the attitude of his heart toward God.

Preaching should never go beyond the bounds of common sense. We should never let our enthusiasm run away with our judgment. When feelings are preached, the strong-nerved preacher will preach a strong-nerved gospel, and the weak-nerved one will preach a weak-nerved gospel. The first will make no allowance for

those who have weak nerves and who suffer the trials incident to their nervous condition; so he is likely to be the cause of bringing them into severe trials and conflicts. He has no idea of how things look and are to them. The other makes allowance for the infirmities of the weak and preaches his own experience. The strong-nerved persons who hear him know that his experience is not like theirs, and they think that he is lowering the standard. The thing to do is to preach the Word. We may use our experiences to illustrate the things that we preach, but we ought to make it clear that experiences differ widely in many respects and that we should never judge one another by our experiences, nor should we expect our experiences to correspond fully with that of someone else.

The effect of too high a standard is always to discourage. We should have a proper standard, but not an ideal standard. We ought to require nothing of ourselves or others beyond a practical and common-sense Christian life. Sometimes the standard of a sanctified life is placed altogether too high, being out of reach. I once heard a sermon that left the impression on me that the preacher felt thus: "I am up here and a few others are up here, but the most of you are down there, and you know that you are down there, and you are going to have a very hard time to get up here if you ever do succeed." The effect of that sermon was very discouraging, but it is far from the only one of the sort that has been preached. Many souls have been crushed by such preaching.

Many times I have heard the experience of sanctification described as such an ideal state that I knew the preacher himself nor anyone else had ever attained to such a state and never would in this life. Sanctification means the purification of our natures, but it does not mean the perfecting of our human faculties. It does not mean that we are automatically perfect in patience or kindness nor that we are in a state where our emotions will always be sweet and ideal. It does not mean that we shall never have a feeling of impatience or anger. Anger comes from the violation of our sense of justice. There are two forms of anger. One is vindictive anger, which causes one to have feelings of resentment and vengeance, and which would feel pleased at the suffering of the offender. This is sinful anger. The other is that indignation which arises from a sense of the evil nature of the act or thing, and which does not excite vindictive feelings toward the object. Christ was angry when He reproved the Pharisees (Mark 3:5), and justly so, for their wicked conduct was such as could not but excite His indignation. The Bible speaks of God's indignation, His anger, His wrath, His fury, etc., but we know that nevertheless He is holy. In fact, it was this very quality of holiness that caused Him to be angry with wickedness. The stronger our sense of justice and our love of holiness, the stronger will be the sense of disapprobation that evil-doing will excite in us.

The Bible nowhere teaches us that a sanctified man will never be angry. Instead it teaches what he should do when angry. "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath" (Ephesians 4:26). One of the requirements of a bishop is that he should be holy, and another is that he should not be "soon angry"

(Titus 1:7), that is, he was to be a man who possessed proper self-control. I am not arguing in favor of getting angry, but simply to show that if a person does become angry, it does not necessarily prove that his heart is impure. We need to guard very carefully all our natural faculties and control them so that they do not lead us into sin. Sanctification makes us much more equable in temper than we were before, so that many things that angered us before do not have that effect upon us now.

That anger which comes from an ugly temper or from wounded pride is not a mark of the Christian. This sort of thing and the love of God will not abide in the same heart. When the grace of God comes in, that kind of anger goes out to stay. The love of God softens our hearts and our natures, and the more of His love and power there is in us, the more kind and tender and affectionate we are. When we are filled with the fullness of God in entire sanctification, it brings to us a calmness and quietness and self-control that helps us to preserve moderation in all our ways. The mere feeling of displeasure or anger that now arises in the modified form that it does manifest itself in the Christian, is not sinful in its nature. Sometimes people say they are tempted to be angry. They might as well say they are tempted to be joyful or sad or thankful. Anger is an involuntary emotion. We cannot be tempted to be angry, but the temptation is to *do* or *say* something wrong when we are angry.

Do not condemn yourself as not being sanctified just because you sometimes feel these emotions that some idealists say that you will not feel. Judge yourself by the Bible and common sense. Some say that anger comes from depravity. If so, from whence does it come in the animal? Depravity in man affects it to make it vindictive. Then, and not until then, does it become sinful. The more of God we have in us, the more like God we shall be in these feelings and the more perfect will be both our temper and our conduct.

We ought to have the tame standard of judgment for ourselves that we have for others. There are those who have a lower standard for themselves and excuse in themselves that which they could not and would not excuse in someone else. They are ready to condemn others for doing the very same things that they themselves do or things that involve the same principle. They find no excuse for others, but only condemnation, but they have a ready excuse for themselves whenever they are guilty of a like thing. Others go to the opposite extreme. They have a higher standard for themselves than they have for anyone else. They can excuse others for doing what they themselves would not feel clear in doing. They condemn themselves for things that they would not condemn others for. They can find excuses for others, but none for themselves. By adopting either of these courses, we do wrong to ourselves. God has the same standard for judging all people, and he desires that we have the same standard for judging ourselves. The standard we set for others is more likely to be correct than the one we set for ourselves. If the standard we set for ourselves is not a proper standard by which to judge others, it is not the proper one by which to judge ourselves. There is a true and just standard. Let

us seek that and apply it to our own lives and the lives of others. The true standard is neither too high nor too low.

The standard by which God judges us is flexible, that is, He holds us responsible only for what we know; hence the greater the light, the greater the responsibility of the person. Others will never be judged by our light nor we by theirs. It is only when persons have the same degree of light and when the circumstances are alike that the same standard is applicable to two or more individuals. But where light and circumstances are the same on any point, all must be judged by the same rule; and what is right for one is right for all, and what is wrong for one is wrong for all.

Sometimes people act as prosecutors, witnesses, judge, and jury to secure their own condemnation. Their consciences are so sensitive that they are ready to condemn themselves for various slight and trivial things—things that God pays no attention to at all and that they should not trouble themselves about. It is unwise to be always questioning our lives down to the minutest details. If our purpose is to serve God and we act upon that purpose, we need not watch ourselves so closely. It will be natural for us to do right. We shall feel disposed to do right, shall want to do right, and will do right. We need not spy upon ourselves and play the detective upon ourselves all the time. The Christian life is a natural life. Just live naturally. Do not feel all the time as though you were going to do something wrong. Do not treat yourself like a suspected criminal. God wants you free from all this care. He wants you free from all such fear. He wants you to have confidence that you are going to please Him, and to act with the assurance that confidence brings. Get away from the idea that you must watch yourself so closely to prevent yourself from doing wrong. We must, of course, watch our conduct and not be careless and indifferent, but living the Christian life is not like trying to walk on a wire. It does not require any strain or struggle to keep balanced. No, the Christian path is broad enough for us to set our feet down squarely and to walk with ease and comfort. If Christ lives in us, will He not live out His life in us as naturally as He lived it out in His own fleshly body here in this world. Trust yourself to Him and have confidence that He will work out in you the things that are well pleasing in His sight. Someone has said, “Do your best and trust the rest.” There is much wisdom in that saying. Think it over until you get what it means and then put it in practice in your life. Do not all the time be trying to do what you cannot do and what you have never succeeded in doing and never will succeed in doing. “It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure”; therefore just let Him will and do in your life and trust Him to do it.

Overvaluing or depreciating ourselves and our work is another unwise thing. Whichever we do will turn out bad. It is not true humility to be always criticizing and undervaluing ourselves. If we do a thing, it is neither better nor worse than if someone else had done it, and we should not so regard it. Let us not have a double standard, one for ourselves and one for others, but let us have the same standard for all, and let that be a just

and right standard, one that God’s approval will rest upon. Then we may live satisfactory lives and have the blessing and approval of God upon us. The Bible and good common sense—that is the true and only standard by which we must be judged. †

BIBLE LESSON OF THE MONTH

PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN LIVING

LIVING FOR CHRIST IN OUR HOME

(Attitude of Husband and Wife to Each Other)

Scriptures: Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 3:19; Genesis 2:23, 24; Proverbs 5:18; Ephesians 5:25; I Peter 3:7; Proverbs 31:27; I Corinthians 7:10; I Peter 3:1.

Ephesians 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

Colossians 3:19 Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.

Genesis 2:23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

Proverbs 5:18 Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.

I Peter 3:7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

Proverbs 31:27 She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.

I Corinthians 7:10 And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband.

I Peter 3:1 Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives.

Memory Verse: For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.—Ephesians 5:31.

Aim: To show what God expects of those who take the marriage vows.

INTRODUCTION

IT HAS been truthfully said that no nation can be better than its homes. If the structure of the individual home is on a tottering foundation, the nation also is in an insecure position. If we then, as a nation, would be strong and endure, we all must look well to the state of our homes. Over and over it has been proven that the following of the instructions to fathers and mothers, wives and husbands in the Word of God is the only guarantee of peace and happiness. Therefore, we must set before our people, with great clearness and

persistence, the Bible standards. To do this involves some difficulty, since modern teachers go so far as to deny that there is a God who has the right to set forth laws for human conduct. We know better, so let us take up our task with courage and with the purpose of conquering for Jesus.

MEDITATIONS

GOD'S LEADERSHIP—Ephesians 5:23—Is the head—Many women have rebelled against God's law to their own destruction, at the same time generating confusion in their own homes and blighting the lives of them with whom they associate. As there must be a duly appointed and recognized power and authority in every society of men, so must there be in the home. God has declared that the man shall be the head in the institution of the home. His authority is as supreme in his family as Christ's is in His church. If the husband is what he should be, the wife (if she is what she should be) will not object to the leadership of the husband in the home.

THE HUSBAND'S PART—Colossians 3:19—Be not bitter—Daily association, as is the experience of the husband and wife in the home, is certain to draw out any differences that may exist. If each party insists on having his own way, friction is certain to result. Oftentimes the counsel and advice of the wife in the operation of the affairs of life are very valuable and can with great profit be followed; but if the wife does show lack of wisdom in managing the home affairs, the husband is still to manifest love and refuse to give any place to bitterness. Bitterness on the part of either is certain to injure the peace of the home.

HOME ORDAINED OF GOD—Genesis 2:23—Taken out of Man—The marvelous wisdom of God was manifested in His creation of man and woman and in His institution of the home. Every child has the right to be reared in a home atmosphere that is charged with love and tender consideration. From under the arm of Adam was taken a rib which God shaped into the woman, whom He again put back under the arm of Adam for him to protect. **Verse 24—Leave his father and mother**—God has ordained that when a man and woman take their vows of fidelity one to another, they at once start a new home. It is a mystery how God can make one flesh of two, yet it is so because God says so. He does not design that the union ever be dissolved, till death.

LOVE CONFINED TO ONE—Proverbs 5:18—Rejoice with—Humanity has great capacity for the expression of emotion. Man craves companionship and love. God has designed that an outlet be provided for this emotion; thus He said in I Corinthians 7:2, "Let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband." It is perfectly legitimate for every man to satisfy his desire to love in the wife that God has given him, but it is an abomination in God's sight for a man to make any approaches to any woman other than his wife.

DEGREE OF LOVE IN THE HOME—Ephesians 5:25—Love your wives—The measure of love that Christ displayed for His church was great and defies

measure. He gladly laid down His life for her. That is the kind of love that God requires of a man toward his wife. If a man is not willing to lay down his life for his wife, he does not deserve a wife.

HONOR WHERE HONOR IS DUE—I Peter 3:7—Honor unto the wife—With God there is no respect of persons; there is neither male nor female. In order to establish a new home, a woman must forsake all and cast her entire lot with that of her husband, even to the extent of taking his name. She deserves honor for doing this with the greatest regard that the husband can show. Such pleases God and opens the way for the blessings of God.

THE WIFE DOING HER PART—Proverbs 31:27—Bread of idleness—Idleness in the life of anyone is dangerous and must be avoided. In order for Christ to be honored in the home, the wife must diligently look after the affairs of the house. The children must not be idlers, but each must bear his part of the duties of the home.

HOME MUST NOT BE BROKEN UP—I Corinthians 7:10—Let not the wife depart—Women have sought and obtained, in our day, a great deal of what they call "liberty." One of their liberties is to work in factories or elsewhere, making their own way, often obtaining divorces that they may marry one who has gained their affection where they were employed. This, God condemns. Terrible will be the penalty the woman will pay who breaks this command.

CHRIST REQUIRES FAITHFULNESS—I Peter 3:1—Be in subjection—By the wife's living according to God's will, there is a better chance to win the husband to God's cause. There will be discomfort and persecution, but this is the Christian's inheritance; and though the flesh may cry out for deliverance from it and desertion may become a temptation, still the Lord says, "Let not the wife depart from her husband." The same goes for the husband; let him not depart from his wife.

CONCLUSION

Great suffering comes into the lives of the unfortunate men and women who do not live for Christ in the home. How carefully God has laid down His plan for the lives of men in the Word of God! But, oh, how little people know about this! How long men have tried in themselves to solve their problems, only to fail, generation after generation! It is the duty of every Christian first to live the Bible life in the home, and then to seek to enlighten other precious souls so they may know the joy of a happy home.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. What is the man's place in the home?
2. What is the wife's place?
3. What will be the result of heart of bitterness in a wife or husband?
4. What is the right of every child who is brought into the world?
5. Why should a man honor his wife? How?
6. What is the woman's part in the operation of a successful home? †

UNITY OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Message by Bro. Donovan Darby, Jamaica, delivered 7/7/13



THE SUBJECT of the message is entitled, "Unity of God's People." The text is taken from Psalm 133—"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

The meaning of the word *unity* is: "state of being one, or oneness." It also carries the thought of "singleness; concord; harmony; accord." If we have unity, we are going to have harmony among us as brethren.

There are two unities taught in the Scriptures: *the unity of the Spirit* and *the unity of the faith*. The unity of the Spirit is "the Holy Spirit dwelling in the hearts of the believers that unites them together." The unity of the faith is "seeing alike; accepting and standing for the teachings of Christ as they are taught." In St. John, chapter 17, Jesus prayed that His disciples may be one.

In the wilderness, God gave Moses a pattern to build the tabernacle. The boards that were used on the tabernacle symbolizes or represents the saints today in this gospel dispensation. There were hooks that were used to keep the boards together, and the hooks represent the Holy Spirit, which unites the saints together.

There is great religious confusion in the world. This great religious confusion is responsible for millions being lost, and it is standing in the way of millions. There are those who believe that God is working through the world's great religions. Friends, God is not working with the world's great religions. If anyone is working to bring the world's great religions together, it is not God but Satan. We are told that God is not the Author of confusion. We find that in I Corinthians 14:33.

There is no division in the Godhead. God expects us as His saints to have unity. Why shouldn't we have unity? Are we not of the same family, have the same Father, reading the same Bible, and being led by the same Holy Spirit? So why shouldn't we as the people of God have unity?

There are hundreds of human religions, and each one of these religions has a doctrine, other than the doctrine of Christ. Christ has a doctrine. The Holy Spirit has never caused division among God's people. If division arose among God's people, it was caused through an unclean spirit.

How important is unity? Unity is very important. Why do we need unity? We need unity because the church is in the earth with a mission to take the gospel to a lost and dying world. When we are unified, we will get the task done more effectively and quickly. So unity among God's people is very important.

Now, let's go to the text—Psalm 133. Here David said, "Behold [look], how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" David knew the importance of unity. He knew that it was good for brethren to dwell together in unity. He goes on to describe what it is like: "It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;

As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." Christ is our High Priest. He made the ultimate sacrifice once and for all. The ointment here represents the Holy Spirit. So this description shows us how important unity is. It is very important.

A human religion may produce a union, but not unity. The religion of Christ produces unity. Friends, what we have is real and precious. It is something for us to cherish, to hold on to because it is precious. There is a bond between us brethren, as saints of God, because God has put His divine love in our hearts for each other. Let me tell you, Friends, no power from hell can rend us from this bond. There is a bond there. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren" (I John 3:14). So God puts His divine love in our hearts for each other. This causes us to have unity.

There is an evil force in this world that wants to rend us from each other, to separate us from each other, and to bring division among God's people. It is something for us to keep our eyes open for, because we have an enemy called the devil that wants to destroy the people of God. He not only wants to destroy God's people, but he wants to bring division among us to hinder the cause of Christ. There's an evil force that is working to cause differences among God's people. Good is the absence of all evil. How beautiful it is when we can have unity! When unity prevails, it's a beautiful picture.

The songwriter says—

Christians all should dwell together in the bonds of peace,

All the clashing of opinions, all the strife should cease;

*Let divisions be forsaken, all the holy join in one,
And the will of God in all be done.*

That is what we need today. We need to have unity.

The early morning church had unity. Jesus told the disciples that they should tarry in Jerusalem. While there, they were in the upper room. The Bible says, "They were all with one accord in one place." So because they were in one accord, this gave the Holy Spirit access to work. They were opened up to the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit came, they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. They were all in one accord. There wasn't any quarrel there to solve. There wasn't any division. They were in one accord.

The Bible speaks of the early morning saints being of one Spirit. They were of one heart and one soul. Isn't that beautiful? They didn't say, "Well, it's necessary to have different groups since we have different nations."

They didn't think it necessary. The Greeks were there. The Gentiles and the Hebrews were there, but they didn't think it necessary to split themselves into different groups because they were of different nations and nationalities. No, they were one.

Friends, the blood of Jesus Christ makes us one. God does not look on our color of skin. He doesn't look at race or nationality. He sees us as one. How beautiful it is when white and black and every nation can be together to worship God and have fellowship with each other! It is a beautiful picture. There's no color in the Church of God. We are all one. We should not allow our race nor the texture of our skin to separate us from each other. Jesus came into the world to break down the middle wall of partition. When Jesus comes into our hearts, He breaks down that wall. He puts a union in our hearts one for another. He binds us together, and no power of hell can rend us from each other. We need to look on some things as God sees them. We are God's people and we should be one.

Paul wrote to the Corinthian saints. There was division among them, and Paul wrote to them. I'll read I Corinthians 1:10. This is one of the things Paul said to them—"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

God wants us to have unity. We need to have unity in speaking and preaching the same thing. We are commanded to preach the Word. We should preach "thus saith the Lord." We're not sent to preach our opinions or to preach our convictions. We are sent to preach the Word. If we have an opinion, we need to share it as an opinion. We should not bind it or teach it as a doctrine because it is our opinion.

We are told that Philip went down to the city of Samaria. Acts 8:5, "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them." Philip did not preach his ideas. He did not preach his opinions. He preached Christ unto them. Who is Christ? Christ is the anointed One. He's the One Philip preached about to the Samaritans.

We're going to give an account for every message that we preach. One thing that is said over the pulpit can turn off a soul. That soul might never come back in the hearing of the Church of God.

Friends, the Church of God has a standard. We need not to add nor to subtract from it. The Church of God has a standard and the standard must be kept where it belongs. Where there is no law, there is no transgression; for if there is not a given law on a subject, or on a certain thing, and someone does it, he or she does not commit sin. What we preach and teach should be taught by the Word of God. It should be backed up by the Word of God.

God told Ezekiel, "Thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me." So the preacher expects to receive his message from the Lord. If the preacher receives his message from the Lord, it is not the preacher's message, but it is the Lord's message. It is still wrong to disobey the preaching of a true man of God, because it is not his words. It is God's Word. Back

in the Old Testament times, the people would select a watchman and place him on the walls of Zion. When he is placed on the wall, he has a duty to do. He's expected to watch and to blow the trumpet to warn the people.

God is the One, according to His will, who sets the members each in place in the Church of God. He is the One who sets the watchman on the walls of Zion. When God sets the watchman on the walls of Zion, He expects him to watch and to warn the people. God is not foolish to set a blind man on the wall to watch, or a man who doesn't have good vision. God's ministers have good vision. They are not blind. "Where there is no vision, the people perish." Since the watchman is on the wall, he can see around the plain and on the outside, more than the people can see down below. So this tells me, to a great extent, that the people's safety depends on the watchman. That's why the Word of God says, "Obey them that have the rule over you, for they watch for your souls."

The instruction of a true minister can be followed. Many times people disobey the instruction of a true man of God, and they meet disappointment. It has happened. Let me tell you something, Friends, the highest authority in a local assembly is the pastor. God deals with the pastor more than anyone else in the congregation, because God has set him over the congregation. God set him there to watch. Yes, we are to preach to those on the outside, but we have to preach to those in Zion as well. They also need to be warned.

God would have His people so unified that when people come among us, they will see unity. There is a lot of division in this world today. This division is separating the people and driving them away. I want to say this: I admire the humility of the brethren here in Hagerstown. We're not in competition. We're not trying to preach better than another person. We need to do the will of God as He would have us to do.

None of us is worthy of God's goodness and salvation. None of us is worthy of being a part of God's family. This is a blessing and a privilege from almighty God. I don't know how thankful you are that you are saved, but I am very thankful that I've been redeemed from my sins. It is something worth more than gold and more than this world has to offer. I know we are on the subject of unity, but when we die, we're not going to take anything with us. Have you seen any rich folks take their riches with them when they died? They didn't. Why? Because we came into this world with nothing, and we shall leave with nothing, materially speaking.

Salvation is the greatest treasure human spirits ever found. When God gave us salvation, He gave us His best. Let me tell you, Friends, Jesus is our salvation. You cannot have salvation without having Christ. It's impossible. While Simeon was in the temple at Jerusalem waiting for the consolation of Israel, he saw Mary coming in with Joseph, and when he took up Baby Jesus in his arms to dedicate Him, he looked up to heaven and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Jesus is our salvation. He is our deliverer. He is the King of kings and Lord of lords.

My Bible tells me, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." It doesn't matter, Friends, how far you go in sin, Jesus can restore you because He can save to the uttermost. He can take you off the broad way and put you on the narrow way. Oh, He can take you out of the family of the devil and place you into the family God! A songwriter wrote: "I am redeemed, but not with silver; I am bought, but not with gold; Bought with a price—the blood of Jesus, Precious price of love untold."

Another songwriter has written—
*A certain man of whom we read,
Who lived in days of old,
Though he was rich, he felt his need
Of something more than gold.*

*Oh, yes, my friend, there's something more,
Something more than gold:
To know your sins are all forgiv'n
Is something more than gold.*

Let me tell you something, we had an old account that was large and growing every day, but thank God, one night, or one day, we went unto the Keeper and settled it. When we settled it, it brought peace and joy to our hearts. It caused us to have a different perspective towards life. Oh, the sun was brighter! Oh, when the moon was rising, it looked more glorious to us!

When the Lord saved us, He saved us from the love of the world. We need to "let go, and let God." Let Him take control of us. 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."

Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," but we must go united. The world is already divided, and it takes a united church to win a divided world. Human religion is sending a negative message to the people of our nation. It is confusing and dividing the people. Now is the time for us as saints of God to cast in our lot and walk hand in hand, side by side carrying this gospel. If something arises among the people of God, it needs to be dealt with and gotten out of the way so that the work can go on smoothly. I have said before, and I'll say it again: we can learn from the early morning church. When there arose a problem in the early morning church, it was dealt with and put out of the way.

Do you know if you take the attitude of not forgiving your brother, you will shut yourself out of heaven? You cannot go to heaven with an unforgiving spirit. You cannot go to heaven with bitterness in your heart. You must get rid of it all before you leave this world. "Bro. Darby, you don't know what he did to me." Colossians 3:13, "If any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." Why should it seem hard to forgive our brother? We need to forgive one another.

Do you know we did more to Jesus than people do to us today? Do you know we were the ones who were to be crucified, who were to suffer that cruel death, but Jesus took it for us? When we came to Christ to be

forgiven of our sins, we were made justified. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1). It is as though we had never sinned. He pardoned us and set us free.

Do you know that our souls are worth more than this world? Our souls are so valuable. Our souls are more valuable than what this world has to offer. Our souls are our greatest possession. That's why Jesus asked the question, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" It's not possible for one to gain the whole world, but Jesus asked the question—"What shall it profit a man, if he shall [satisfy his desires], and lose his own soul?" There is no price we can pay as a ransom. Our souls are very precious.

Yes, God would have His people to be in unity. Again, unity is a beautiful picture. When we are unified, God will be pleased to work with us. We'll find the fire of God fall and souls would be convicted. We want to see the sick healed, but we must be in unity. We want to see demons cast out and the cripple walk. There are some fruit the Church of God should bear. Signs should be following the preaching, but the saints have to be in unity.

The songwriter says, "The church of God one body is, One Spirit dwells within; And all her members are redeemed, And triumph over sin." We believe those who are redeemed are a part of the family of God. It doesn't matter where they are. Once they've been redeemed, they're a part of the family of God.

Jesus said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." God is not pleased with His people being in a divided state. He wants His people to be one, to be saying the same thing, to be going in the same direction with the same purpose.

The Lord bless you. †

RADIO MAIL

The Way of Truth,

This is a letter of appreciation for your Sunday morning broadcast. I listen to your service every Sunday at 7:00 a.m. on 95.5 in eastern Kentucky. ... Please keep bringing us listeners the Word of God.

—J. C., Kentucky

VIEW OUR WORSHIP SERVICES LIVE!

As many of our readers know, we can be found on the internet at 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!



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

QUESTION: Proverbs 6:30 says, "Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry." What does that mean?

ANSWER: The verse says men do not despise a person for stealing when he does it because he is starving, but it does not say it is right to steal.

In ancient Israel they were to leave some grain in the fields and grapes on the vines, etc., for the very poor.

That is what Ruth was doing in the fields of Boaz—gleaning—picking up grain the reapers had dropped, and, possibly gathering in the corners of the field.

But when a person stole and was caught, he was required to restore it—sometimes more than what he stole. So stealing is not approved in this verse.

QUESTION: Please explain I Timothy 3:1 and I Corinthians 12:4-11. How can someone want such work?

ANSWER: In this verse—I Timothy 3:1—Paul is simply making a statement. We understand the word "bishop" in this verse to mean pastor, not someone who is over a group of preachers.

In I Corinthians 12:4-11, Paul is saying there are different spiritual gifts, but they are all given by the one Holy Spirit. Pastors may conduct their services a little different from another, but it is the same Lord.

In verse seven, Paul points out the gifts are not given for the profit of the one who receives it, but for the profit of the body of Christ.

From verse eight through verse ten, Paul names out some of the gifts: wisdom, knowledge, healing, miracles, prophecy or preaching, etc. In verse 11, Paul states that the Spirit is the giver of the gifts and He gives them "severally as he will."

How can anyone want such work? How can you want anything? You desire it! However, I would advise that we not demand any gift. We can desire it, but we should leave it up to the Lord and let Him have His way, for He knows what is best.

QUESTION: Why was it said God hardened the heart of Pharaoh before the exodus of the Israelites?

ANSWER: Because he lied to the children of Israel and opposed the will of God. God saw in this man what he was and He raised him to the position of leadership

to work His will. God DID NOT make him do what he did, he chose to do the things he did. To reject the will of God will cause anyone's heart to become harder.

QUESTION: Please explain Joshua 10:13. If a day is as a thousand years with the Lord, could it be either?

ANSWER: I don't think the statement, "A day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as a day" has anything to do with what happened in the valley of Ajalon.

Joshua and the children of Israel needed more daylight hours to defeat their enemies, and God "hearkened unto the voice of a man" (verse 14), and provided it for them.

Of course, our earth rotates around the sun, which gives us our year, and it turns on its axis, which gives us our 24 hour day; so as far as providing the needed light, "the sun stood still," however God did it.

QUESTION: Zion, as I understand, is the Church of God. Can any sinner be found there? If so, please explain Isaiah 33:14.

ANSWER: Zion is a term used for God's people, His church. However, in the Old Testament the word was used for a mountain, a city, as well as the people. It took more than being a literal Israelite, or citizen of a given city, to be a child of God. As Paul said, "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel" (Romans 9:6b).

There are no sinners in God's church! There are, however, many who profess to be Church of God who are not.

QUESTION: What is meant by "the gift of prophecy"?

ANSWER: In the Old Testament the prophet was one who received a message from the Lord and delivered it to the people. These prophets also, at times, told of future events. But the word *prophecy* is NOT to be limited to telling some future event.

Vine's Expository Dictionary says, "Prophecy is not necessarily, nor even primarily, fore-telling. It is the declaration of that which cannot be known by natural means, Matthew 26:68, it is the forth-telling of the will of God, whether with reference to past, the present, or the future." So preaching is one form of prophecy.

QUESTION: Where in the New Testament does it say that Jesus Christ received a tenth from His born-again followers?

ANSWER: Nowhere! Jesus Christ lived under the Old Covenant while laboring here on Earth. It was His death that caused the Old Covenant to expire and caused the New Covenant to come into existence. Under the Old Covenant the tithe was for the support of the Levitical tribe, which included the priest. Under the New Covenant the tithe is to support the work of the church, which would include the support of the ministry. †

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER



CLOSER THAN A BROTHER

A Bible Lesson by Sis. Rebecca Bland

"I wish I could see an angel," I said. "In Bible stories there were people that saw angels. Why don't we ever see angels?"

My younger sister, Twila, and I were visiting my mother's friend, Sister Janeen* and I was looking at a Bible story book I had borrowed from her bookshelf. In one of the pictures in the book, two angels were speaking with Abraham. The angels looked like ordinary men, but I knew from reading the story that they were really angels.

"Well," said Sister Janeen, "Jesus said that the angels of 'little ones' always behold the face of the Father in heaven. I think Jesus meant children when He said 'little ones,' and so all of you children have guardian angels that watch over you and protect you."

"I'm not very little anymore," I said to Sister Janeen. "I'm almost twelve years old. Do you think I still have a guardian angel?"

"Of course you do," said Sister Janeen.

"I wish I could see my guardian angel." I looked up at Sister Janeen. "Don't you wish you could see an angel?"

Sister Janeen didn't answer right away. Instead, she stared thoughtfully out the window, as if her eyes beheld a faraway memory.

"I think maybe I did see some angels once ... a long time ago," she said slowly.

"Tell us about it!" Twila and I begged.

"Well," said Sister Janeen slowly, "it's not something I talk about very often. But I will tell you the story since I see you are anxious to hear it."

I closed the Bible story book and laid it aside. Twila came to sit on the floor next to me. We could not wait for Sister Janeen to begin her story.

"I was a young mother at the time," said Sister Janeen. "My two little children were only toddlers. We had just moved to a town many miles away from my friends and family. Our little house was outside the town, back a lonely road near the woods.

"One day, just after we moved, I looked out the window and saw that the fire I had set to burn the trash in the barrel had somehow escaped and was burning wildly in a nearby brush pile.

"I ran outside, taking off my apron as I ran. I tried with all of my might to beat that fire out with my apron, but it had too big a head start on me.

"Oh no! I thought frantically. *What shall I do? I can't call anyone. We don't even have a telephone yet.* An abandoned car sat near our house where the former

owners had left it. The car probably still had gasoline in it. *What will happen if that old car catches fire?* I wondered. I beat at the flames with all of my might. Somehow I must save my home and children!

"At that moment I looked up to see two strong men pushing the old car away from the fire. They said nothing, but I saw them return with wide boards in their hands. They beat at the fire with those boards until it was out.

"I walked around the charred brush, amazed that the fire was really out.

"Relieved, but still shaking from fright, I turned to thank the men who had arrived just in time to save us. They were nowhere to be seen. The long country road that led to the highway was empty. I shook my head in disbelief. *How could those men have disappeared without a trace?* I wondered. *They didn't arrive in a car or truck. If they had walked away down the road, I would still see them. They hadn't had time to hide.*

"In time I came to believe that the men were really angels God had sent to rescue me from a dangerous situation."

Sister Janeen smiled at us. "I know God loves us," she said gently, "and I know He has mysterious ways of protecting His children."

Our wise saying this month comes from Proverbs 18:24, which says, "A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

It is a blessing to have friends and to be a friend to others. But no matter how much our friends may desire to help us, no friend is as loving and powerful as our Lord Jesus. If we belong to Him, we can call on Him at any time of the day or night, and from any place on Earth, and He will hear us. We may never see our guardian angels, but we can thank God that we are always surrounded by their protecting care.

*not her real name

Activity

Can you use the hints below to name Bible characters that saw angels?

1. He saw angels ascending and descending on a ladder to heaven.
2. He was told by an angel that God would use him to deliver the Israelites from the Midianites.
3. She was told by an angel that she would have a child that would deliver the Israelites from the Philistines.
4. They were told by angels that the Baby Jesus had been born in a stable and laid in a manger.
5. He was rescued from prison by an angel.

Answer to Last Month's Activity

The king's name was Nebuchadnezzar. †

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right."—Ephesians 6:1.

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION AND HOLINESS ARE THE SAME

From: *Bible Proofs of the Second Work of Grace*

By D. S. Warner, Published in 1880

THESE TERMS, it is generally believed and taught, represent the same moral state. Let us endeavor to find their Scriptural meaning. Perfection is from *katartizo* and *teleios* in the Greek. The first of these terms is defined, by our standard lexicons on the New Testament, as follows: "To make perfect," "to put fully in order," "to make complete," "to furnish fully," "to refit and repair." This word is applied to Christian perfection in the following Scriptures: Luke 6:40, II Corinthians 13:9-11, Ephesians 4:12, I Thessalonians 3:10, Hebrews 13:21, I Peter 5:10.

Teleios is defined by "perfect, finished, complete, entire, without spot or blemish." *Teleios* is used to represent the advanced Christian state in the following instances: Matthew 5:48; 19:21; I Corinthians 2:6; II Corinthians 7:1; Galatians 3:3; Philippians 3:15; Colossians 1:28; 3:24; and 4:12; Hebrews 6:1; I John 2:5; 4:17, 18.

From the foregoing definitions and Scriptures, it is clearly seen that perfection, as applied to redeemed souls, denotes the complete moral restoration of man from the effects of the fall. Not physical, or mental restoration, for that will not be until the resurrection; but, as David says, "*He restoreth my soul.*" *Restore* means to bring back to its original condition. And as the fall of man effaced the image of God from the soul, and sent a current of depravity down through the entire race, the perfect restoration of the soul must, necessarily, reinstate its former purity, and Divine likeness.

Christian perfection is, therefore, in kind and not in degree. In other words, it is the perfection of our moral nature, and not the development or full growth of our powers. This position is well established in Hebrews 10:14, 15. "For by one offering he [Christ] hath perfected forever them that are sanctified: whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness unto us." The state of perfection, we are here told, is entered by the work of sanctification. And we read that Christ sanctifies the people with His own blood. Hebrews 13:12. And the "blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin." I John 1:7. Hence perfection is the *state* of being *free from sin*.

Observe that when Paul tells us that Christ has forever perfected them that are sanctified, he immediately adds, "whereof" (of which perfection) "the Holy Ghost is also a witness unto us."

Surely no one ever yet received the testimony of God's Spirit that he was perfect in degree; or had reached the summit of Christian growth, beyond which he could never become more wise, strong or fruitful. But thousands have received the Spirit's witness to perfect heart purity. It is generally believed that our moral and mental powers are susceptible of endless development.

But the Bible teaches a perfection, in this life, that can never be improved upon: "He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Conybeare and Howson render as follows: "By one offering he hath perfected forever the purification of them that are sanctified." Perfection, then, as attainable in this life, is confined to man's purity and what is necessarily therein included. Consistent with the Bible and universal experience, it cannot be otherwise defined. While our physical and mental defects remain until the resurrection, our moral nature alone is susceptible of perfection now, and that only in quality, leaving all the powers of the soul free to enlarge in magnitude. Being "made free from sin" and "renewed in the *image of God*," as first created, the soul cannot become more pure, and, is therefore "perfected forever." II Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 4:23, 24; 5:26, 27; Colossians 3:10.

Many stagger at the term *perfection*. They are forced to admit that it is promised and enjoined in the Bible: reorganized in ancient saints: and, in the plenitude of gospel grace, provided for all believers. Yet, as if to come short of the Divine will and profess less than the Bible standard, were a mark of true piety and meekness, they shrink from the thought of being made perfect in this life, as from blasphemy. There is no reason for this. Our kind, heavenly Father has placed nothing in His Word to thus terrify His children; nothing that they need be ashamed to profess; nothing, indeed, but what we should blush to come short of. All this reproach so generally attached, to a profession of perfection, grows out of the extravagant notions of what it is. But there certainly can be nothing wrong in receiving and professing this grace in its Bible sense.

How, then, does the "more sure word" define it? In Luke 6:40, we have this answer. "Every one that is perfect shall be as the Master." Christ commands us to be "perfect even as our Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matthew 5:48.

But to be like God and Christ in *every respect* would make us equally gods, and is, therefore impossible; hence, we turn to the Word again and ask, in what particular points of Divine resemblance does our perfection consist? "Thus saith the Lord," in answer.

1. It is in purity. "He that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as *he is pure*."

2. In holiness. "Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." "That we might be partakers of his holiness." II Corinthians 7:1; Hebrews 12:10.

3. It is perfection in love. "Herein is our love *made perfect*, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, for as he is, so are we in this world." I John 4:17.

Peter represents our perfection as "partaking of the Divine nature." As "God is love"—is perfectly pure and holy—the latter includes the other three elements.

I would add, that Christian perfection is a work divinely wrought in the heart. In enjoining this higher grace upon such as had not yet attained it, in the Ephesian church, Paul tells them to "put off the old man ... and put on the new man which, after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Ephesians 4:22-24. The "old man" evidently means the old fallen nature,

or inherited depravity; the new man, the pure "Divine nature," which, we are told, is "created after God." Now, creative power belongs to God alone, hence this new nature is the work of the Lord. The Hebrew Christians, after they had "come to Mount Zion the city of the living God, the Church of the First Born," received orders to "go on to perfection." Hebrews 6:1. Sanctification was designated as the point of its attainment. 10:14. And, at the close of the epistle, the Apostle offers this prayer for these brethren. "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead, our Lord Jesus: that great shepherd of the sheep, *through* the *blood* of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect" (Hebrews 13:20, 21a). This is conclusive. Perfection, as well as regeneration, is the work of God.

Thus we have briefly shown that perfection is a doctrine of the Bible and the privilege of every child of God. That it is perfection in kind and not degree; that it consists in the soul's likeness to God in purity, holiness, and unmixed or perfect love; and that it is God's prerogative to make us perfect.

I now proceed to examine the terms.

HOLINESS AND SANCTIFICATION

We take up these words conjointly, because they are both derived from *hagios* in the Greek, consequently mean the same thing. Both words are uniformly rendered *heiligung* in the German version.

The word *hagios*, in its several forms, occurs about two hundred and eighty-five times in the New Testament. It is rendered sanctify, twenty-six times; sanctification, five times; saints, sixty-six times; hallowed, twice; holy, holiness and holily, one hundred and eighty-six times.

Robinson's Lexicon of the New Testament defines it thus:

Hagios—First, "pure, clean;" second, "consecrated, sacred, holy; set apart from a common to a sacred use; belonging to God."

Hagiasmos—"sanctification, purity of heart and life; holiness."

Hagiotēs—"purity, holiness."

Smith and Barnum's Dictionary of the Bible defines sanctification—"properly a making holy, or the state of being holy; to make clean or holy; to set apart as sacred, to regard as holy."

Joseph Angus, D. D., in **Bible Hand Book**, page 172, gives the following:

"The idea of holiness, for which, in its Christian sense the heathen have no word, was suggested to the Jews by means of a special institution. All animals common to Palestine were divided into clean and unclean. From the clean one was chosen, without spot or blemish; a peculiar tribe selected from the other tribes was appointed to present it; the offering being first washed with clean water, and the priest himself undergoing a similar ablution. Neither the priest nor any of the people nor the victim, however, was deemed sufficiently holy to come into the Divine presence, but the offering was made without the holy place. The idea of the infinite purity of God was thus suggested to the mind of observers, and holiness in things created came to mean, under the law, purification for sacred uses,

and under the Gospel freedom from sin and the possession, by spiritual intelligences, of the Divine nature."

Holiness, in the Gospel, is understood by this biblical scholar to mean freedom from sin, and the possession of the Divine nature.

George Campbell, of Scotland, translator of the four Gospels says:

"In regard to the word *hagios*, its primitive signification appears to have been clean, first in the literal sense as denoting free from all filth, dirt or nastiness; second, as expressing what, according to the religious rituals was accounted clean. ... Again as things are made clean to prepare them for being used (and the more important the use, the more carefully they are cleansed), the term has been adopted to denote, thirdly, prepared, fitted, destined for a particular purpose. Fourthly, and more especially, consecrated or devoted to a religious use. Fifthly, to honor, to reverence, to hallow. Sixthly, and lastly, as outward and corporeal cleanness has, in all ages, and languages, been considered as an apt metaphor for moral purity, it denotes guiltless, irreproachable; which is, at present, among Christians, the most common acceptance of the word."

This learned Presbyterian agrees with the preceding writers, in making *hagios* primarily denote purity. Speaking of holiness in another place he says, "The exhortations to holiness, in the New Testament, are evidently to be understood of MORAL PURITY, and of that only."

J. McKnight, also of Scotland, a pious, learned translator of the New Testament epistles, defines as follows:

"Holy primarily signifies that which is clean, or free from defilement. Deuteronomy 23:14. 'Therefore shall thy camp be holy, that He see no unclean thing.'

"Holy and holiness often denote moral purity.

"To sanctify, to make holy, to hallow; in the writings of the Hebrews, signifies, to cleanse a thing from those defilements which render it unfit for sacred use."

John Winebrenner defines "*sanctification*, a perfect conformity of heart and life to the will of God."

Webster's Unabridged defines *sanctification*: First, "The act of sanctifying or making holy," or the state of being sanctified or made holy; the act of God's grace by which men are purified, or alienated from sin and the world, and exalted to supreme love to God; also the state of being thus purified or sanctified."

Second, "The act of consecrating or setting apart for a sacred purpose; consecration."

Holiness is therein defined about the same. The same author's **High School Dictionary** defines holiness by, "PURITY; FREEDOM FROM SIN; SANCTITY; PIETY."

Authorities might be multiplied, but I deem it unnecessary. "To the law and testimony" of the Lord, we must appeal after all; and what is not thereby sustained must fail; no matter who is in its favor. I have selected the above human authorities as among the most competent, and of different religious beliefs. They all point to perfect purity; "supreme love to God," and Godlikeness, as the primary meaning of *hagios*, or sanctification; and this is the Scriptural meaning generally.

In the Old Testament it is sometimes used in the sense of consecration but when applied to men, more commonly denotes moral purity. That its New Testament meaning is freedom from sin, as Joseph Angus and George Campbell have both declared, is very evident. In II Corinthians 7:1, we read:

“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

This is clear; perfect holiness is the result of cleansing, hence is purity.

“That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor.”—I Thessalonians 4:4. This denotes the state of purity in which all should keep themselves.

“For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.”—I Thessalonians 4:7.

The Apostle here makes holiness the opposite to uncleanness, which, of course, is cleanness or purity.

“The very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul and body be preserved blameless until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”—5:23.

The work of entire sanctification is here represented as imparting a blameless state, and the means of its constant preservation. Now, a blameless state, in the sight of a holy God, must necessarily imply absolute purity, or freedom from sin.

“If a man, therefore, *purge* himself from these he shall be a vessel unto honor, *sanctified*,” etc.—II Timothy 2:21.

Here again the sanctified state is secured by the purging or cleansing of the vessel, or member of God’s “great house,” the Church.

“For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, *sanctifieth* to the purifying of the flesh; How much more shall the blood of Christ purge your conscience?”—Hebrews 9:13, 14.

“If the legal cleansing, as here stated, is typical sanctification; then that which it is said to typify, i.e., our cleansing in the blood of Christ, is real sanctification. Or, in other words, Gospel sanctification is purification from all sin, ‘Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.’—Hebrews 13:12.”

These Scriptures are very conclusive, and well sustain the remark of George Campbell, that, “The exhortations to *holiness* in the New Testament are evidently to be understood of purity and of that only.”

As an adjective, *holy* qualifies the Spirit of God, i.e., “Holy Spirit” (in the common version more generally Holy Ghost), and, when applied to the righteous, it necessarily ascribes to them the same moral quality.

“But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye *holy* in all manner of conversation: because, it is written, be ye holy, for I am holy.”—I Peter 1:15.

The same word *holy* describes both the character of God, and the required purity of His children. And since our need of holiness is based upon the holiness of God, proclaimed in the same breath of inspiration, it were an utter confusion of language not to ascribe the same meaning to the word in both cases.

From the authorities quoted, and the testimony of inspiration, it must be clear, I think, to every candid mind that the perfect holiness, or entire sanctification required of us, is “purity of heart and life,” “freedom from sin,” “perfect in love,” and holy in nature; or what is equivalent to all these, “partakers of the Divine nature.”

I have been the more particular in fixing this point, because some have imagined that sanctification, when enjoined upon believers, only means consecration.

This view is anti-scriptural, and contrary to all human authority and experience.

I do not deny that *hagios* includes the idea of consecration.

First, Because, in connection with faith it is our part of the work, and an indispensable condition to the performance of the work, on the part of God,

Second, Because sanctification is not purity in the abstract, but purification for Divine use.

Hence, we are told, that Christ “gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”—Titus 2:14.

Purification, it is here seen, includes consecration; because we are thereby separated from sin and the world unto God. Because sanctification from sin is for the purpose of being set apart to the “Holy One,” it is not at all unnatural that the word should sometimes be used in this secondary, or *objective* meaning.

This, however, does not interfere with the truth established by the foregoing Scriptures, that *hagios*—holy or sanctified—“in the Gospel denotes freedom from sin and the possession by intelligent beings of the Divine nature.” This is the idea which the unbiased reading of God’s Word almost universally fixes in the mind. How extremely absurd the position recently taken by some teachers that entire sanctification, as enjoined upon believers, simply denotes consecration, when the Bible clearly points it out, as a work which God must do in us; as something which Christ does for the “*people with his own blood*,” as consisting in “cleansing from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.”

Some brethren with whom I am well acquainted, have always thus taught, until they came in contact with those who profess a personal realization of the blessed truth: when the enemy of their souls quickly turned them to advocate the above absurdity.

Growing into sanctification, is a still more fatal delusion of Satan. Every newborn soul, sooner or later, discovers a great want in his heart; is embarrassed with a man-fearing spirit, and pained with the consciousness of evil tendencies within. They groan after purity, and wonder why their heavenly Father seems to stint their soul so much.

These are now at Kadesh-barnea—the farthest point which the Israelites reached in their direct route from Egypt to the land of Canaan. Here they get to see some of the fruit of the land of perfect victory. Here, too, discouraging reports meet them; not of the land itself, for all admit that to be holy is a good thing; but the

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**CHRISTIAN PERFECTION AND HOLINESS
ARE THE SAME**

(continued from page 21)

majority think it impracticable. They see great giants—insurmountable difficulties in the way.

From the day of their conversion, grace had led them to hunger and pray for, and expect a better experience. A deeper work. A complete salvation from sin. But, having no Joshua to lead them into the desired rest of soul; and, because, as ancient Israel said, “our brethren (the spies) discouraged us,” they finally conclude that they must give up seeking a better experience, and become pure by growth.

Is it not astonishing that so many allow the devil to deceive them with such a self-evident delusion? To grow pure is a contradiction of terms. Growth is a process of addition—purification a subtraction—or a removal of all uncleanness.

Growth, in no instance, changes the nature of anything; it only increases its size, or degree; while cleansing is a process of diminishing. The first is natural and progressive, the second done at a stroke.

I hope, Dear Reader, you can see that the implanting of a new life and new nature, is one thing (done at regeneration); the removal of every obstruction and antagonism to that new nature another (accomplished by the blood of Christ in entire sanctification); and the growth of that plant still another thing.

The whole is analogous to the implanting of seed; the removal of all noxious seeds, roots and plants from the soil; and the growth of the plant. The first and second are instantaneous works, produced by an extrinsic agent; the last a gradual and natural process commenced in the first state; but greatly accelerated by the work of purging away the old nature, or inbred sin. The growth of the Christian graces will enable the believer to better control remaining depravity, but will never eject it from the heart.

A clear discrimination between purity and maturity, is necessary for an intelligent approach to God, for the blessing of entire sanctification. Most persons, in the merely justified state, are much confused on these two points. They identify them, or think them always cotaneous; hence they imagine that Christian perfection, or entire sanctification, precludes further growth. That is equivalent to saying that the removal of all weeds from a field is identical with the maturity, or immediately terminates the growth of the grain. This is strange reasoning, yet thousands rashly oppose the blessed work of holiness through such absurd notions.

The perfection, or entire sanctification of the “New Testament, is to be understood of moral purity, and that only.”

Including, of course, all its concomitant blessings. It is instantaneously wrought in the soul of believers by the Holy Spirit.

O, love, thou bottomless abyss,
My sin is swallowed up in thee,
Covered is my unrighteousness,
Nor bitter root remains in me;
Perfect now in the life of God—
Saved! yes saved in the cleansing blood. †
—Reprinted from the November 1992 issue

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