

Living in the Heavenly Realms

by
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The Scriptures quoted are from the New King James Version of the Bible unless otherwise noted. Italics have been added for emphasis and bracketed comments inserted for clarification. The reader is encouraged to use their own Bible as their original source of truth. But at least be like the Bereans. “These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.” (Acts 17:11)

Forward

Jesus gave His Great Commission just prior to His ascension to the Father. He instructed us to “make disciples” of all the nations by “teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” (Matt. 28:19-20) There was to be nothing left out. Disciples would need to learn how to live by the spiritual principles He taught. It is the only way to further the true kingdom of God. Unfortunately, we seldom hear in this day a thorough discussion of the biblical principles needed for living in the kingdom of God. This book fills in the gaps that tragically are missing and have kept the body of Christ on the natural plane.

The following paragraph was discovered in the introduction to a book of compiled letters written by John Fletcher. The book, *Christ Manifested*, was edited by David R. Smith. Having recently read a draft of *Living in the Heavenly Realms*, I immediately knew the statement was destined to be used again. Because Mr. Smith’s thoughts are so closely related to the material in this book, and the sentiment is so applicable, it appeared as a providence from God. Therefore, his statement is quoted with thanksgiving to the Lord and a real sense of responsibility for proclaiming God’s truth to this and future generations.

If the reader, having ploughed his way through every argument here presented, comes to the last page unmoved—without any desire to voice his own “amen”—he should ask himself if he is but an unbeliever; however unpleasant a fact this may seem to be, it is likely to be true. The pure spirituality of the author’s reasoning, and the over-whelming presentation of the biblical case, suggest that his opinion is not at fault. Opposition to such a display of divine truth can only be equated with unbelief...despite any statements to the contrary. If a man is “born-again of the Spirit of God” he is no longer earth-bound and essentially materialistic; he is just as aware of the things of the Lord as he is of the things of man. If they do nothing else, these pages may shake some people, who have only a profession of faith now, into realizing that one can *know* Him, whom to know is life everlasting.

It was to the Jews who believed in Jesus that He said, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:31-32) In other words, it is not enough to simply believe that Jesus is the Christ. It is absolutely essential to surrender to all His truth. And so, with these serious thoughts as a fulcrum, I exhort every reader to give their utmost care in studying the following lessons. If you will do so prayerfully and humbly, you will come to “know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

In closing, I am compelled to provide a sincere note of gratitude to the author. It was under his tutelage and patient guidance that my spirit rose to it’s lost estate, “in the Heavenlies.”

Joe Mydock

Introduction

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. (Eph. 1:3)

Every Christian has inherited untold riches in Christ. As a child of the King and a joint heir with Christ he or she is spiritually wealthy. But many believers do not bear the marks of this spiritual affluence. Their conversation and conduct give the impression of being spiritually impoverished. Their responses to difficult trials do not reflect the Son's overcoming life. While they may be reconciled to God through His blood, they are not sharing with Him in the fullness of His life. (Rom. 5:10; Eph. 3:19)

Christians will often acknowledge the discrepancy between the great promises found in the Scriptures and what is actually taking place in their own hearts. And yet there is a tendency to remain indifferent and self-satisfied with their current spiritual state. They end up expending their time and resources trying to find happiness from this world rather than seriously seeking out the heavenly life promised to them by God. It has left both themselves and the church in a spiritually depressed state.

We have written to help earnest souls discover how to share with Christ in the spiritual life He possesses in the heavenly realms. The reader may notice many traces of spiritual insights from other writers. A number were gleaned from a book entitled *Life on the Highest Plane*. (It was written by Ruth Paxson and published by Moody Press in 1928) The thoughts have been compiled for the benefit of helping eternal souls find the heavenly blessings now available in Christ rather than with any intent to provide a scholarly work of man's wisdom. All real truth has its source in God. And He insists we do everything within our power to shout it from the rooftops.

The reader needs to be prepared for a serious Bible study. It is not bedtime reading. We also suggest reading the book more than once. Do not be concerned if a principle is not fully understood the first time through. But once you have this overview, go back and prayerfully examine these truths. This diligence will lead you into everlasting blessings.

We have tried to explain in detail how to find an abundant entrance into the kingdom of God where everyone enjoys a consistent source of "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." (Rom 14:17) An extensive use of God's Word has been included to support the teachings. The intent is to build Christians up in their faith. Yes, there is a "good fight of faith" that needs to take place. (1 Tim. 6:12) Those who will surrender in faith to all revealed truth can depend on God to lift them spiritually into a heavenly form of life that cannot even be conceived by the natural mind. (1 Cor. 2:9-10; Eph. 1:3)

Because these teachings may sound like strange doctrine, it seemed appropriate to introduce the material with some thoughts from a respected theologian. Daniel Steele (1824-1914) was both a pastor and an educator. He taught in several Christian schools. In 1872 he became the first president of Syracuse University. In his later years he was a professor of systematic theology at Boston University. He also wrote numerous books. The following material is from *Milestone Papers*. It comes from a chapter entitled, "In the Heavens." He provides an excellent description of the life we are referring to in this book. Although God never intended for His called-out children to experience long delays

in entering into His life of promise, we need to note that Daniel Steele served the Lord for twenty-eight years before he entered into the heavenly life he describes in this report.

Following the customs of tourists in foreign lands, I give you a description of the country in which I have happily sojourned nearly five years. I must confess that I have more than a traveler's interest in this land, since I have become a naturalized citizen, and have settled down in it for life.

This country was named by one Paul, a daring explorer who flourished at the beginning of the Christian era, and who, like the writer, became so enamored of its charms that he ever after made it his permanent abode. It so closely resembled heaven that he took that term and transformed it into an adjective noun, "The Heavens," and wrote it down on his chart as the new country...

Some recent travelers...either driven by severe storms from the ordinary track of voyagers...or, more likely still, through the guidance of Paul's pilot...have found this earthly paradise, and, assuming the right of original discoverers, they have christened it "The Higher Life."...

My great surprise, after entering this Eden and feasting on its sweetness, was at the sparseness of its population. For the land is exceedingly broad and fruitful, capable of sustaining with its abundance all the millions who are moistening the unwilling earth with their sweat, and compelling it to yield them a scanty sustenance. Why do they not migrate to these healthy climes? This question I have been pondering... At last I think that I have got at the truth of the matter. The false report has been industriously circulated through all the world that Paul's discovery was an optical illusion...

Now, it so happens that the great real-estate owner, or "ruler of the darkness of the world," who boasts, with too much truth, that he possesses all the kingdoms of this world and their glory, keeps this falsehood going...lest the truth should be believed, and his tenants should emigrate to this Eden world... This wily despot dislikes to see his dominions depopulated to colonize Paul's "Heavens." And so he is ever busy denying that any such place exists on the face of the whole earth...

Another reason for the sparse population is that, of the few who do believe that this land is a reality and no myth, a large number are deterred from entering by reason of the narrow channel through which they must force their way, and they are afraid that in entering "The Heavens" they will lose too much of their idolized earthly life. This narrow pass is "The Way of Holiness." Hear Paul: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, *who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in The Heavens in Christ...* that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." Holiness is the only gate into this blessed region, which many are afraid to enter.

But you are hungering for a description of the country itself. As its name indicates, The Heavens includes heaven. The glorified Jesus, according to Ephesians 1:20, is at the right hand of God in the

Heavenlies... In 3:10, “principalities and power,” or spiritual intelligences of a higher order, are located in “The Heavenlies.” But in 1:3, Paul speaks of believers being in The Heavenlies. And in 2:6, they are sitting “together in The Heavenlies in Christ Jesus,” with the “sitting” implying permanence of abode... Heaven laps over upon the earth. A segment of earth has been annexed to heaven....

This is nothing less than a high and serene Christian experience, in which the gracious Jesus manifests Himself to the...believer, and he enjoys constant communion with the glorified Head of the Church through the Holy Spirit, which makes him “a habitation of God.”

The Heavenlies is that region called by Bunyan the land of Beulah, “clear out of sight of Doubting Castle,” in the very suburbs of heaven, where the shining ones walk, and the gates of the celestial city are in full view, and the sun shines day and night all the year. Jesus had this land in view when He said He would send the Comforter to His disciples, who would abide forever, and that the Son of God would manifest Himself unto them, and the Father and the Son would make their permanent abode with them. (John 14)

The doctrine, that believing souls, still living in this world, may dwell in The Heavenlies, is confirmed by Dean Alford, who puts such souls into heaven itself. “Materially, we are yet in the body; but in the Spirit, we are in heaven—only waiting for the redemption of the body to be entirely and literally there.”

Stier, on Ephesians 1:3, says: “The blessing with which God has blessed us consists and expands in all blessing of the Spirit—then brings in heaven, the heavenly state in us, and us in it... He, [Christ] Himself, who is set and exalted into heaven, comes by the Spirit down into us, so that He is in us and we in Him of a truth, and thereby, and in so far, we are with Him in heaven.”...

[Jesus lived with the Father in the heavenly realms while walking in this world. And He now expects His disciples to walk as He did. In the same way the Father could “dwell in” the Son and “walked in” Him, He now wants to “dwell in” us and “walk in” us. (2 Cor. 6:16) Jesus said, “If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man *who is in heaven*.” (John 3:12-13) The Son was sharing with His Father in the eternal life that resides in the heavenly realms while walking in this world. (1 John 1:2-3) And in this Gospel dispensation we are to walk as He did by sharing in the same life. “At that day you will know that I am in My Father {in the heavenly realms}, and you in Me, and I in you.” (John 14:20)]

Do Christians know that they need not die to know what heaven is, and that it is their glorious privilege to dwell there by dwelling in Christ, the perfect Savior?

But in Paul’s last mention of The Heavenlies (Eph. 6:12), he seems to dash all our theorizing into pieces by introducing infernal principalities

and power and wicked spirits, and by representing that there is a grand wrestling match going on there between these grimy fellows and the white-robed saints. How is this? Does not this spoil the beauty and mar the joys of the place?...

Good old Bengel [1687-1752], who is styled by John Wesley “that great light of the Christian world,” here comes to our aid with a spiritual insight truly marvelous, and a hermeneutic gift almost divine. He says, “Even enemies, but as captives, may be in a royal palace...” When Jesus ascended “he led captivity captive.” All who have risen and ascended with Him...dwell where Satan is a captive... [The devil has no power over those who are living in the heavenly realms.] This is because they are “strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man.”

While all dwellers amid the Earthlies are exposed to the devouring mouth of the roaring lion who runs at large there, those who live “Where dwells the Lord our Righteousness,” are kept “In perfect peace and everlasting rest;” for He has conquered Satan for them since He Himself triumphed over him openly...

We have included additional insight from Daniel Steele’s testimony and teachings in the appendix. Our one purpose and desire is to help earnest souls find their way through the arid wilderness and into this heavenly life of promise.

We will begin with a Scriptural examination of what God has purposed to do. The Pearl of Great Price is the kingdom of God. This kingdom is also known as the kingdom of heaven. Even though it is a kingdom that exists in the heavenly realms, it can now be fully established within the heart. Our heavenly Father has purposed to make each one of His called-out children partakers with the Son in the Kingdom-life He established in bodily form so that we may all live as one with each other in the heavenly realms. The work of the church is to build believers up in their faith so they will take the necessary steps to receive this heavenly Pearl. Once the Son has been permitted to fully establish His eternal Kingdom-life within the heart it becomes possible to reveal the life of holy love He shares with the Father. (John 17:22-23, 26; 1 John 2:5-6)

We will also spend some time distinguishing between walking by the flesh and walking by the Spirit. The only way to walk with God in the heavenly realms and actually partake of the spiritual blessings found in the Son’s life is by walking in His Spirit.

Yes, there is a Higher Life now available to every Christian. The same resurrection power that raised the Son into the heavenly realms is now able to raise the spirit of His followers into His heavenly Kingdom-life. His indwelling Presence is what enables us to fulfill by nature the teaching He presented in His Sermon on the Mount. Our prayer is that the church today will come to see the glorious privileges now available through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when He raised him from the dead and seated him...in the heavenly realms... (Eph. 1:18-20 NIV)

Life in the Heavenly Realms

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love...made us alive together with Christ...and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. (Eph. 2:4-6)

If then you were raised with Christ {through the new birth}, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died {to the world}, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (Col. 3:1-3)

The first Adam was made to be a partaker of the eternal life of God. Referred to as Glory (Jer. 2:11-13), there was an ever-flowing fountain of divine life rising out of his inner being. He was enabled to manifest God's image of holy love in everything he did. He shared in this heavenly life moment by moment as he walked in the Spirit.

We can discover how the first Adam was originally intended to live by learning how Jesus lived as the Second Adam. The Son came to reestablish the Spirit-filled and Spirit-directed form of life that Adam lost. We can learn what needs to be avoided by examining where the first Adam went wrong and learn how God intended for man to live by studying how the Second Adam walked in this world.

The first Adam fell away from life in the heavenly realms when he chose to live by his own desires rather than by the leading of the Spirit. When we look at the fundamental cause, we will find that Adam separated himself from God when he turned from a Spirit-directed way of life to be led by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life. (1 John 2:15-17) God withdrew His eternal life from the temple of Adam's body when he tried to use a worldly means to find his spiritual fulfillment. It is idolatry in God's sight. "For if you live according to the flesh," which implies living by your own will and desires, "you will die." (Rom. 8:13) This spiritual principle has never changed. Adam died spiritually when he began directing his own steps in a way that sought out *spiritual* fulfillment from a source other than the Tree of Life.

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world {which involves looking to the world for spiritual fulfillment}, the love of the Father is not in him. (1 John 2:15)

In which you once walked according to the course of this world...fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath {separated from the life of God}, just as the others. (Eph. 2:2-3)

God expects His children to be led by the guidance of His Spirit rather than by the desires of their flesh and mind. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God." (Rom. 8:14) These Spirit-led children of God receive their spiritual life directly from God as they walk in His Spirit.

My sheep hear My voice...and they follow Me {by walking in the Spirit}. And I give them eternal life {the life from heaven}... (John 10:27)

God provided His human children with a freedom of will. It gives them the capacity to choose their source of life. Similar to the choice Adam had in the beginning, we now have an opportunity to choose between eating of a supernatural food that comes from

heaven or eating of an earthly food that has its source in this world. Adam's choice to turn to the temporal realm for his spiritual sustenance is what separated his soul from the "eternal life" of God. And this same separation occurs today when God's human children attempt to develop their spiritual life by feeding on earthly things.

If then you were raised with Christ {through the new birth}, seek those things which are above, where Christ is... Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. (Col. 3:1-2)

God's work of redeeming man from his fallen state has two parts. The first thing He must do is separate the believer from the old worldly form of life. The second part is to lead the believer into the spiritual state where everyone receives their spiritual life directly from the Son by walking in His Spirit. Those who will choose to walk by the Holy Spirit while looking to Christ alone for their spiritual sustenance will find that He fills their inner being with His everlasting life.

And do not be conformed to {the self-directed ways of} this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind {learning to live by the Spirit}, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (Rom. 12:2)

I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me {for life in the heavenly realms by walking in the Spirit} shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. (John 6:35)

As the living Father sent Me, and I live {in the eternal life} because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live {in the same life} because of Me. This is the bread which came down from heaven...He who eats this bread {sustains themselves spiritually on this life that comes down from heaven} will live forever. (John 6:57-58)

And this is the testimony: that God has given us {access to} eternal life, and this {heavenly} life is in His Son. (1 John 5:11)

The temporal food that is used to sustain the soul is referred to as the "food" that perishes. It does not last. While "things" are able to satisfy the soul for a season, the results are short-lived. It is not long before this earthly form of spiritual life begins to die. You will find that it rises up and then falls again based on current circumstances.

The salvation provided by Jesus Christ makes it possible to once again become a partaker with God in "the power of an endless life." (Heb. 7:16) The heavenly blessings residing within the Son's spiritual life can now be revealed within our inner being by His Spirit. (Eph. 1:3) These blessings, because they come directly from the Spirit of God, are not cut off or lost when going through unpleasant circumstances.

The Spirit, as we walk in Him, uses His divine power to consistently reveal within our inner being the heavenly life that is shared between the Father and the Son. This eternal Kingdom-life consists of "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." (Rom. 14:17)

He {the Spirit} will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine {taking from the eternal life found in the heavenly realms} and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine {the divine life shared with the Father} and make it known to you. (John 16:15 NIV)

No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared {in the heavenly realms} for those who love him—but God has revealed it to us {as a spiritual life within our inner being} by his Spirit. (1 Cor. 2:9-10 NIV)

The heavenly life that Jesus provides to those who live through His Spirit truly satisfies the soul. It eliminates the necessity of expending time and resources trying to find happiness through a selfish pursuit of earthly things. The Son, through a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit, comes to provide a deep sense of inward fulfillment. This work of satisfying the soul is what “does away with” the old self-seeking nature and the need to live by the desires of the flesh. (Rom. 6:6) He sets us “free indeed” to live for His purposes. (John 8:36) And because His life is everlasting (or never-dying), it is unnecessary to look back to the temporal things of this world for our spiritual support.

Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, *which the Son of Man will give you*, because God the Father has set His seal on Him. (John 6:27)

Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters... Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and *let your soul delight itself in abundance*. (Isa. 55:1-2)

Rivers of Living Water

The Son of God specifically came to provide access to what the Scriptures refer to as “rivers” of Living Water. This never-ending life is now flowing from under the Son’s throne. Even though Christ is in the heavenly realms at the right hand of His Father, He can also establish His throne of power within the human heart. Those who make a conscious choice to live by His Spirit can rely on Him to set up His everlasting kingdom within their heart. And once this glorious salvation has been worked out in fullness, His pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, will begin to consistently flow out of the inner being and rise up into a display of His eternal life of holy love.

If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me {by the Spirit into the heavenly realms} and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. (John 7:37-38)

If then you were raised with Christ {through the new birth}, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things of the earth. (Col. 3:1-2)

And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. (Rev. 22:1)

But whoever drinks the water I give him *will never thirst*. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life {Gk. *aionios zoe*}. (John 4:14 NIV)

And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life {Gk. *aionios zoe*}, and this life {*zoe*} is in His Son. (1 John 5:11)

Christ has made it possible to share with Him in His ever-flowing “eternal life.” This *life of promise* is much more than a life with an eternal existence. It is a very special *quality of life*. God wants to share the firstfruits of this life with His children today. We

now have access through faith to the spiritual blessings residing within Him. The objective is to take hold of this heavenly life through faith.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing {providing access to this life} in the heavenly places in Christ. (Eph. 1:3)

And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life. (1 John 2:25)

And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. (1 John 5:11)

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called... (1 Tim. 6:12)

Let us now ask you: Have you found this everlasting supply of divine life from above? We are now speaking of “rivers” of Living Water. This life is “much more” than the periodic wells of refreshment that God supplies to His children while taking them through the arid wilderness on their way to the life of promise. “As the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow *rivers of living water*.”

It is a glorious thing to be born of the Spirit and reconciled to God. But it is “much more” glorious to enter into the life of promise where the Lord begins to reign with power on His throne within the heart. It is then that His pure river of divine life begins to ceaselessly flow from under His throne and rise up into a display of the “eternal life” that Adam lost. (John 4:14)

For if by the one man’s offense death {the loss of eternal life} reigned through the one {Adam}, *much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life* {the eternal “zoe” of God} through the One, Jesus Christ. (Rom. 5:17)

I will come to you... Because I live {in the heavenly Kingdom-life} you will live also {in the same life}. At that day {when you are filled to overflowing with the Spirit} you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. (John 14:18-20)

If you are still living in a dry and arid land where there are only periodic times of refreshing from the Lord, you are not yet in the life of promise. While these “touches” from the Lord in the wilderness can be a real blessing to the soul, there is a much better life in the heavenly realms. But this life of promise will never be found if you keep looking back to the temporal world for your spiritual sustenance. God wants to be your “all in all.” He is now waiting for you to take your eyes off earthly things and begin looking to Him in the heavenly realms to be your source of everlasting life.

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is... Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. (Col. 3:1-2)

Testing Ourselves with the Scriptures

We often think we are doing quite well when we compare ourselves with others. But those who are “measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.” (2 Cor 10:12) The only way to truly locate ourselves in our spiritual journey is by determining how we are doing in comparison to what the Scriptures promise. Many have fallen short of this heavenly life because they did not

sincerely seek out the fullness of the promise. Every Christian needs to press forward in their faith until they have come to know in personal experience a fullness of Christ's life dwelling within their hearts.

That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith...that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Eph. 3:17, 19)

There is often a tension when we compare the provisions already provided through Christ and what individual believers actually possess through faith. In effect, *all things are now ready*. (Luke 14:17) The banquet feast has been prepared. The Father and the Son can now dwell within the heart (John 14:23) and dine with us. (Rev. 3:20) Christ has already provided access to this full salvation. Every spiritual blessing within His heavenly life can now be imparted to the soul through a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit. But not every believer has appropriated this life of promise through their faith.

The following Scriptures reveal how Christians have a responsibility for laying hold of Christ's heavenly life. We should also note that it is impossible to arrive at this goal while trying to live by law. The calling is too high. The Lord has established an eternal Kingdom-life in bodily form that needs to be received through a yielded and dependent faith. While the way into resurrection life will entail some suffering as we follow Christ through the cross, let us keep in mind that His heavenly life will be found after the old earthly form of life has been lost. Today, in this age of fulfillment, is when we are to begin sharing with the Son in the power of His "endless life."

There arises another Priest who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life...for the law made nothing perfect {in holy love}... (Heb. 7:16, 19)

Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection... (Heb. 6:1)

Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel." (Mark 1:14-15)

And when they had preached the gospel {of the kingdom of God} to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God." (Acts 14:21-22)

The law and the prophets {living by the letter of the law} were until John {the Baptist}. Since that time {since the beginning of the New Testament dispensation} the kingdom of God {the heavenly Kingdom-life} has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it. (Luke 16:16)

The kingdom of God does not come with observation {in the physical realm}; nor will they {ever} say, "See here!" or "See there!" For indeed, the kingdom of God is {to be established} within you. (Luke 17:20-21)

For the kingdom of God is...righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 14:17)

Therefore it {the heavenly life of promise} is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all... (Rom. 4:16)

Here is where it is helpful to study the Old Testament types. For example, in the Old Testament God gave the land of promise to His called-out people long before they ever

possessed it. The land was their possession. But they did not actually enjoy the blessings of “the land flowing with milk and honey” until they had pressed in through faith.

In a similar sense, Christ has provided a full salvation to everyone who believes. He has prepared an eternal Kingdom-life in bodily form. He has already accomplished His part in making this heavenly life available to every believer. (Eph. 1:3) He refers to this life of promise as the Pearl of Great Price. (Matt. 13:45-46) But not every believer has been prepared to “sell all” from their old self-originated form of life in order to buy it.

And of His fullness we have all received {we all have access to His heavenly life}, and grace for grace. For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth {the reality of divine life} came through Jesus Christ. (John 1:16-17)

And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. (1 John 5:11)

Walking with God

God planned to have many children who shared with Him in His spiritual image. He intended to fill the temple of the human body with His Glory. He laid the foundation for this shared existence in the very beginning when He breathed the eternal life into Adam. God was able to “dwell in” Adam and “walk in” him during the time when Adam was still walking by the Spirit. His body was literally a temple of the living God.

Adam fell from this heavenly life in God when he chose to live by his own will according to his own desires. Once the vessel was no longer fully consecrated to God for His use, the Spirit of God could no longer dwell in the temple. The Lord cannot “dwell in” and “walk in” someone while they are going their own way. This is a spiritual principle that must be learned before it is possible to share with God in the reality of the eternal life that Adam lost. His pure river of divine life can only well up into a display of His life of holy love as we walk by His Spirit.

Can two walk together, unless they are agreed? (Amos 3:3)

For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, *I will dwell in them, and walk in them* {as in the beginning}... Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing {anything that is not wholly devoted to the Lord}; and I will receive you {into the heavenly life of promise} (2 Cor 6:16-17 KJV)

For if you live according to the flesh {if you go on living by your own will and desires after receiving the Spirit} you will die {spiritually}... For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. (Rom. 8:13-14)

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. (Gal. 5:16)

The New Testament is all about restoring this relationship where we walk in union with God. “If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” (Gal. 5:25) It permits the Lord to “dwell in” and “walk in” each of His disciples. It enables Him to manifest His life and will through the members of His body. This is how we enter into the life of promise and come to an inward knowledge of His eternal life.

And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life. (1 John 2:25)

And this is eternal life {the life that comes from heaven}, *that they may know You*, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent... And *the glory which You* {the Father} *gave Me* {the Son} *I have given them* {to fill the temple of their body}, that they may be one just as We are one {sharing in the same life}: I in them, and You in Me... (John 17:3, 22-23)

God began to teach in the Old Testament about the necessity of preparing a temple that He could fill with His Glory. He revealed how man had an important and active role in what needed to be done. There were preparations that needed to be carried out according to His specifications. The New Testament reveals how our body was to be His real temple. We therefore find the apostle Paul instructing Christians to prepare the temple of their body so that God could “dwell in” them and “walk in” them. (2 Cor. 6:17) This is the true life of promise. He wants to fill our body with His life of holy love.

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (2 Cor. 7:1)

That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you {may}...*know* {in personal experience} the love of Christ which passes knowledge; *that you may be filled with all the fullness of God*. (Eph. 3:17, 19)

This “filling” of the vessel does not imply we are filled with the infinite God. We become like a cup that is filled to overflowing with water from an infinite ocean. While the water in the cup has the same quality as the water in the vast ocean, it does not have the same capacity. It is in this sense that the vessel of our body may be filled to overflowing with God’s life of pure and holy love—the love that “passes knowledge.” (Eph. 3:17)

God is {divine} love, and he who abides in {divine} love abides in God, and God in him. Love has been perfected among us in this...because as He is, so are we in this world. (1 John 4:16-17)

As it relates to man, the Greek term used for the word “perfect” does not imply absolute perfection. Christian perfection, as revealed in the Bible, refers to the complete consecration that permits God to fill the vessel with His life of holy love. We become perfect in God’s sight when the vessel is fully yielded to Him so He is able to use it to display His life and works. It is a state where we can say with the apostle Paul, “It is no longer I who live, *but Christ lives in me*.” (Gal. 2:20) His life of holy love then flows through us. We can therefore say that Christian perfection is not so much what we know intellectually or what we do through our efforts, but what we permit God to do through us as we die to our own will and ways. “It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.”

We should also note that the vessel is expandable. The mind, which is greatly hindered in its fallen state, has much room for growth. And God, Who is infinite in light, is always working to increase the light of our understanding. It is as we continue to yield in faith to all increasing light, looking to Christ to be the source of our life, that we can expect to grow with ever-increasing glory.

But we all {who walk in the Spirit}, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image *from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord*. (2 Cor. 3:18)

A Display of Life from Heaven

The life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us. (1 John 1:2)

If I have told you earthly things {by speaking on the natural plane} and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man *who is in heaven*. (John 3:12-13)

The Son, while living as a human being, revealed how the life and glory of God is to be revealed in bodily form. He proved how a human body can potentially reveal a measure of the eternal life. (1 John 1:2) He also revealed how man is to live in the heavenly realms, receiving life from above, while walking in this world.

Jesus came as the Second Adam to reestablish the heavenly form of life that was lost by the first Adam. He set the example by living in total dependence upon the leading of the Holy Spirit. In contrast to the first Adam who lost the eternal life by turning to self-will, the will of the Father was at the center of everything the Son did. He said, “My food {the means for sustaining the eternal life within the soul} is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.” (John 4:34) He came, He lived, He died, that His Father’s will might be done on earth as it is done in Heaven.

Responding to the will of His Father was the unalterable rule in how Jesus walked on earth. Self-will had no place in His life. He walked at all times in the way of the cross. The meaning of this *way of the cross* may be summed up in His simple words, “Not My will, but Yours be done.” There was never a moment when the Son was not living by the Holy Spirit in His Father’s will.

Jesus then instructed His disciples to follow Him in His way of the cross. It implies that we must choose to die to our own will and ways so we may walk by the Spirit as He did. If we are to truly follow Him, we will need to learn from the example He set while living in bodily form.

And He said to them {to His parents at the age of twelve}, “Why did you seek Me? *Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?*” (Luke 2:49)

For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. (John 6:38)

I can of Myself do nothing. {Nothing Jesus did was self-originated.} As I hear {from the Spirit}, I judge {make decisions and act}; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me. (John 5:30)

For I have not spoken on My own... Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me {through the Spirit}, so I speak. (John 12:49-50)

And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father {in His eternal life} has not left Me alone {as occurred with the first Adam}, for I always do those things that please Him. (John 8:28-29)

{Thus} The life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you *that eternal life* {the heavenly life revealed in bodily form} which was with the Father and was manifested to us. (1 John 1:2)

Christ, the perfect Pattern, was absolutely dependent upon His Father. Self-trust had no place in His life. Nothing He did was self-originated. He meant it literally when He said, “I can of Myself do nothing.” (John 5:30) Living as Adam should have lived, the Son received everything from His Father, never ceasing to respond to the still small voice of the Holy Spirit. The Father remained the source of everything He did. His thoughts, His words, His works, were those of His Father. He therefore said, “He who has seen Me has seen the Father...the Father who dwells in Me does the works. (John 14:9-11)

The Son of Man, after living as One who was sent to fulfill His Father’s purposes, then said, “As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” (John 20:21) His true disciples recognize the necessity of fully surrendering to this same Spirit-directed and Spirit-empowered way of life. If the Son could not do anything on His own, but was required to live as a vessel of the life of His Father, we can see how we will need to live as a vessel of His life and will if we intend to walk as He did. It implies dying to our old self-originated form of life and permitting Him to manifest the “light” of His divine life through us in the same way the Father manifested the eternal life through Him.

In Him was life {Gr. *zoe*}, and the life was the light of men. (John 1:4)

He who follows Me {by walking in this same way of the cross} shall not walk in darkness, but have the {same} light of {*zoe*} life. (John 8:12)

For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again {to become the source of their life}. (2 Cor. 5:14-15)

I have come that they may have {*zoe*} life, and have it to the full. (John 10:10 NIV)

Satan is the one who first chose to have an independent form of life. In order to have his own glory he would need to live independently of God and do his own works. He then introduced the same form of life to Adam. It was Adam’s choice to take this course of independence that separated him from the eternal life of God. Along with Satan, he too fell from the eternal life in the heavenly realms.

The Son came to reestablish the form of life that God intended for man to possess. He did so by never doing anything that was self-originated. He revealed how man was not intended to have an independent life of His own. The God of heaven planned to be the source of everything that takes place in His universe.

The Son, as the Second Adam, permitted the Father to “dwell in” Him and “walk in” Him just as God lived through the first Adam in the beginning. Once He had reestablished this God-ordained way of life, He instructed His disciples to follow Him. He now expects each of His disciples to die to their old independent form of life and begin walking by His Spirit. This is what enables Him to “dwell in” and “walk in” them. He then begins to share with them in the same eternal life He shares with His Father.

For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, *I will dwell in them, and walk in them...* (2 Cor 6:16 KJV)

My sheep hear My voice...and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life... (John 10:27)

At that day you will know that I am in My Father {sharing with Him in the eternal life}, and you in Me {sharing in the same life}, and I in you {manifesting the light of life to the world}. (John 14:20)

As the Son lived to display the Glory of His Father, we are expected to live for the sole purpose of revealing the Son's life and Glory. Those who will fully reverse Adam's course by choosing to turn away from a self-directed way of life to live by the Spirit will become filled with God's glory.

And the glory which You {the Father} gave Me {the Son} I have given them {providing access to the eternal life of the Father}, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me. (John 17:22-23)

For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity {the shared life of the Trinity} lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ {so you too may partake of this shared life in the Trinity}, who is the head over every power and authority. (Col. 2:9-10 NIV)

That you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory... (Eph. 3:19-20)

God has made some exceedingly great and precious promises in the Scriptures. The mind cannot even comprehend what God has prepared in the heavenly realms for those who love Him. (1 Cor. 2:9) And yet, the Spirit can begin revealing the firstfruits of this glorious life from heaven within our inner being. (v. 10) "He {the Spirit} will bring glory to me {the Son} by taking from what is mine and making it known to you." (John 16:14)

We cannot afford to limit God with our human wisdom. He expects us to believe in His Word and yield to His revealed truth. There are "many" foolish people who have been turning away from the source of God's Glory in order to have a few independent years of living for personal pleasures in this world! May we all turn back from this folly before it is too late!

"But My people have changed their Glory {the eternal life from above} for what does not profit. Be astonished, O heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid; Be very desolate," says the Lord. "For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water." (Jer. 2:11-13)

The Spirit of God has the needed power to raise our spirit above the oppressive darkness that covers this world. God intends for us to consistently dwell in the Son's eternal "light of life." (John 4:14; 8:12; 10:10) And yet, many Christians will insist He cannot do it. The reason they do not find this heavenly life is because they exchange the Glory of God for what does not profit. Those who remain on the natural plane, trying to find their life from this world, end up with a religion of mere words. It remains powerless. May our readers reject these human opinions and choose to believe God. "Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar." (Rom. 3:4)

Growing in Grace

We are attempting to avoid limiting with our words what God is able to do. But we also want to avoid leaving a wrong impression about what it means to share with the Lord in the fullness of His life. Fallen man, even after being filled with the Spirit and

becoming like God in holy love, remains limited by the principles of growth. There will always be a need to seek out more light. We will examine this truth by considering how “Jesus increased in wisdom and stature” from a very young age. (Luke 2:52) He continued to grow spiritually even though He was always filled with the “light of life.”

As we have said, the human vessel is expandable. It can contain more of God’s glory as it yields to increasing light. Jesus, from a very young age, began to consistently grow in knowledge and wisdom as He was taught and led by the Holy Spirit. By the age of twelve He was not only fully committed to His Father’s business, He was also speaking with spiritual wisdom that far surpassed the wisdom of the religious leaders of His day. Jesus had an unhindered start in this matter of learning to walk in the Spirit. Nothing was ever permitted to hinder Him from growing in the eternal life of His Father.

With these thoughts in mind, we can see how a man born in sin (living by the willful ways of this world) and later converted to this Spirit-directed way of life will continue to fall behind the glory that Jesus revealed. There is no possible way to catch up. And yet, every child of God is expected to be filled with a measure of God’s glory and continue to grow from “glory to glory” as Jesus did.

The function of the church is to reveal this heavenly Pearl before the eyes of the world. Each member of Christ’s body needs to enter into the Son’s eternal Kingdom-life so that others may see what His salvation is intended to do. It is much easier to lead people through the cross once they have observed His resurrection life. They are more prepared to “sell all” from their old self-life once they can see what it buys.

Again, *the kingdom of heaven* {the eternal Kingdom-life} is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it. (Matt. 13:45-46)

It is not enough to simply see the heavenly Pearl. There is still the matter of selling “all” in order to buy it. But once this life of promise is truly in view, it becomes easier to respond to every leading of the Holy Spirit. The subject of how to enter into this heavenly life will be discussed more thoroughly in a later chapter.

There are many who believe that it is impossible to walk as Jesus did because of their own limited power. They insist He lived by His divine power as God and they only have their fleshly human strength. To help clarify this matter, it will be helpful to provide some insight from G.T. Bustin. The apostle Paul explains in Philippians 2:7 how Christ emptied Himself of His own glory to live as a man in the vessel of a human body. It was through this vessel that His Father manifested the eternal life from heaven. With these thoughts in mind, G. T. Bustin says:

Some of the greatest thrills of my life have been when it was revealed to me clearly, being emphatically based upon the Word of God, that our Lord Jesus Christ came to this earth specially as Man... He lived His life on earth as Man, the type of man God planned for all men. He lived, He labored, He suffered, was tempted, did all His mighty works as Man, thus fulfilling His mission on earth as Man by the indwelling presence and power of the same blessed Spirit whom He has made available to every child of God. Let us not think at all that Christ lived His life on earth as God, and that the best we can do is to live as nearly right as possible while we dwell in mortal flesh, yet can do no more than strive and struggle to measure up to God’s ideal for us... Jesus came not only to give us a

human example as to how we should live, but gave His life in sacrifice for us that we might be forgiven, regenerated, and wholly sanctified by the same blessed Spirit who dwelt in Him and empowered Him to overcome all the temptations of the enemy.

The Nature of the Son's Kingdom-Life

It is because the Father's eternal life was in the Son's mortal body that He was able to reveal so wonderfully the nature of God's holy love. Although He was despised, persecuted, rejected and finally crucified by the very ones He came to save, we never see one trace of bitterness, malice or revenge. He was reviled, and yet there was no retaliation from Him. He suffered unjustly without making any threats. He even prayed for His murderers while hanging on the Cross in severe pain.

We should note that Jesus did speak quite harshly to the so-called "spiritual leaders" who were leading God's people astray. But we must remember that He never said or did anything on His own. All His actions originated in the Father. The Father was expressing His anger at these religious leaders for refusing to respond to the light of truth after it was so clearly revealed before their eyes through the life of Jesus. But Jesus never displayed selfish anger. He continued to walk as a silent Lamb being led to the slaughter regardless of what people did to Him.

Truly, the Son set before our eyes the perfect Pattern of a Spirit-filled life on the highest plane. Some say He emptied Himself of everything but love. In reality, however, He emptied Himself even of the divine love He possessed in heaven. Everything He did had its source in the Father. Living as a mere vessel of His Father's life, He revealed how it is possible to display the eternal life of holy love from heaven while walking in a mortal body.

And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me...that the love with which You loved Me {perfect love} may be in them, and I in them. (John 17:22-23, 26)

God has purposed to reveal this same life of holy love through each of His children. The only way to be saved from the fallen nature is to fully surrender the vessel of the body to God so He may fill it with the Son's "light of life." This is how we become like Him in holy love. Again, we do not make ourselves like Jesus. There is no place for self-sufficiency even when it comes to living in righteousness. We are to yield to all light and then look to the Son to be the source of our life. We are dependent upon Him to reveal His life and glory through our mortal bodies.

For we are the circumcision {those who have had the self-originated flesh-life removed}, who worship God in the Spirit {live in the Spirit}, rejoice in Christ Jesus {for what He is doing through our lives}, and have no confidence in the flesh. (Phil. 3:3)

We must walk as Jesus did in holy love if we are to stand before God with boldness in the Day of Judgment. We enter into this life by living through the Son. We live as a mere vessel that He may use to express His life and will. It enables us to become partakers of His divine nature and manifest His life of holy love in everything we do.

In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him...

Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. (1 John 4:16-17)

Just as He chose us in Him {to live through Him} before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. (Eph. 1:4)

For to this you were called {to be like Him in holy love in this world}, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, *that you should follow His steps*...who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously. (1 Pet. 2:21, 23)

But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, *that you may be sons of your Father in heaven* {revealing His spiritual life and image}... Therefore you shall be perfect {in holy love}, just as your Father in heaven is perfect. (Matt. 5:44-45, 48)

The form of life that Jesus has described here in His Sermon on the Mount is too high for human beings to carry out in their own strength. It depicts the nature of love that resides within His eternal kingdom. And yet, Christ insists that we obey all His teachings. This helps us to see how important it is to become a partaker of the Kingdom-life of holy love He established in “bodily form.” (Col. 2:9-10) It is His life of holy love filling our heart and manifesting His divine nature that becomes “the fulfillment of the law.” (Rom. 13:10) We are then enabled to do by nature what the law requires.

Many Christians set out to make themselves like God in holy love. Because the new birth puts within their heart a hunger and thirst after true righteousness, they try their best to become like Jesus. They try to conform to His way of life through their own efforts under law. But it is impossible to achieve this goal through the strength of the flesh. There is a very significant difference between trying to copy the life of Jesus and learning how to live through Him.

There arises another Priest who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life... For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment {the old way of living by the letter of the law} because of its weakness and unprofitableness, for the law made nothing perfect {in holy love} (Heb. 7:15-19)

For what the law could not do {make us like God in holy love} in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son {so we might live through Him}...that the righteous requirements of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh {in our own strength} but according to the Spirit. (Rom. 8:3-4)

Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life {the eternal life from heaven}, truly righteousness would have been by the law. But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ {His eternal Kingdom-life} might be given to those who believe.

But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. (Gal. 3:21-23)

Therefore it {the heavenly life of promise} is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all... (Rom. 4:16)

The Father planned from the beginning for His human children to be “conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” (Rom. 8:29) Becoming like Him in love is the objective of our faith. “This is My commandment, that you love one another *as I have loved you.*” (John 15:12) “As I have loved you” is the required standard. But this standard of love cannot be reached by trying to conform ourselves to the letter of the law. Not only is He the perfect Pattern, He is also the source of the life we are required to display.

Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. (2 Cor. 3:5-6)

I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father {to share in this eternal life of holy love} except through Me. (John 14:6)

The Word of God is constantly making statements that exceed what the human mind is able to comprehend. But that should not bother the children of faith. While “no mind has conceived what God has prepared {in the heavenly realms} for those who love Him...God has revealed it to us by His Spirit.” (1 Cor. 2:9-10) The work of faith is to believe in the Scriptures, yield the heart to what is taught, and then look to Christ to supply the life that makes it possible to fulfill what is required.

That Christ {with His life of holy love} may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you...{may} know {in personal experience} the love of Christ which passes knowledge {and is beyond your capacity to develop}; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Eph. 4:17, 19)

A Description of the Divine Nature

It will be helpful to look more closely at how God changes our very nature when He fills the heart with His life of holy love. First Corinthians Thirteen describes the love of God that “passes knowledge.” It reveals how God’s divine love is able to fulfill all the righteous requirements of the law. Not only does it provide the positive traits of the divine nature, it also eliminates the negative traits of the carnal nature.

“Love suffers long”—it removes all impatience.

“Love is kind”—it leaves no room for unkindness.

“Love does not envy”—all jealousy and resentment is banished.

“Love does not parade itself”—boasting and self-assertion disappear.

“Is not puffed up”—the prideful desire for honor finds no place in the heart.

“Does not behave rudely”—disrespect and foolishness is eliminated.

“Does not seek its own”—selfishness and self-seeking completely dies.

“Is not provoked”—self-centered anger and fleshly wrath will not be seen.

“Thinks no evil”—brooding over wrongs and uncharitable feelings are gone.

“Bears all things”—it does away with a complaining spirit.

“Believes all things”—there is no mistrust within the heart to ruin fellowship.

“Hopes all things”—despair, anxiety and despondency vanish!

The objective of the Christian faith is to be filled with Christ's Spirit of love. It is not so much what we do, but what we permit the Lord to do through us as we live by His Spirit. The fruit of His Spirit, which includes every one of the attributes residing within His divine love, is to flow out of our heart as "rivers" of Living Water. As Paul has stated, God's love "never fails." (1 Cor. 13:8) And this divine love will never fail to flow out of our heart when we are truly walking in His Spirit. This is the perfect love that needs to be possessed if we are to stand before the Lord with boldness on the Day of Judgment. (1 John 4:17)

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. (Gal. 5:22-24)

For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth. (Eph. 5:9)

At this point it will be helpful to also explain how to receive "credited" righteousness while seeking out the fullness of the Son's Kingdom-life of promise. God used Abraham to provide this example. (Rom. 4:20-22) There are two requirements. First, there must be enough faith in God to respond to the leading of His Spirit. Abraham could not have received the promise if he had not responded to God's word. Secondly, he remained "fully convinced" that God would do what He had promised. Everyone who is responding to all revealed truth and is convinced that God can do everything He has promised can know they are walking in credited righteousness while waiting for the fulfillment of the promise.

No one should expect to receive either the credit or the promise while resisting what God has purposed to do. It is possible to receive God's grace "in vain." (2 Cor. 6:1) The Lord will not reveal His heavenly life within individuals who have resisted becoming like Him in holy love. Jesus has only promised to manifest Himself to those who have fully submitted to His teachings. (John 14:21)

The spiritual man lives according to the Pattern that Jesus established. Not only has he turned from self-will to walk by the Spirit, he becomes an expression of the Father's life of holy love by living through the Son. Because his life has truly become hidden with Christ in God, to him "to live is Christ." (Phil. 1:21)

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things above, where Christ is... For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (Col. 3:1-3)

Life in the Trinity

I and My Father are one (John 10:30)

And the glory {the life shared in the Trinity} which You {the Father} gave Me {the Son} I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one {sharing in the same life and will}: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one...that the love with which You loved Me {perfect love} may be in them, and I in them. (John 17:22-23, 26)

The Scriptures reveal how there are three Persons in the Godhead. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit all coexist in the Trinity. Each member shares in the same divine life and will. They are never divided or contrary to each other because they possess a nature of perfect love. Perfect love chooses to surrender its independence in order to live for the good of the whole. In contrast to the independent and self-seeking nature that naturally leads to strife and division, a heavenly harmony exists in the life of the Trinity.

Jesus revealed perfect love by choosing to live by His Father's will rather than His own. He could have potentially lived by an independent will because He said, "Not My will, but yours be done." But to live independently of the Father would have been contrary to the nature of perfect love. He described this nature when He said, "I lay down My life... No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself." (John 10:17-18)

The eternal life that Jesus received from His Father is "*zoe*" in the Greek. The Greek word for physical life is "*bios*." But Jesus did not say He was laying down either His "*zoe*" or His "*bios*." He would eventually die to His "*bios*" on the cross. But He uses the Greek word "*psuche*" when He speaks of laying down His life while living as a man. This is a reference to laying down all self-sufficiency. While He had life in Himself as God, He needed to lay down this self-originated form of life in order to live as a man. There is no place for self-sufficiency in humanity.

Once we understand this principle, it is easier to recognize what we must lose if we are to follow Christ into the heavenly realms. There needs to be a real death to the old self-originated and self-sufficient form of life before it is possible to be "filled" with the eternal life that Adam lost. The same "*psuche*" that Jesus chose to lay down must be lost.

If anyone desires to come after Me {into the heavenly realms}, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life {*psuche*} will lose it {His soul}, but whoever loses his life {*psuche*} for My sake will find it {the shared life in the Trinity}. (Matt. 16:24-25)

As we have seen, the members of the Trinity lay down their independence in order to live in perfect harmony with each other. We cannot share in this eternal life until we have died to our independent and self-sufficient form of life. This old "*psuche*" form of life, where man lives as God in independence and self-sufficiency, will need to be lost before it is possible to be lifted by the power of God into the heavenly realms.

Jesus desires to share His nature of perfect love with each of the members of His body. Every believer has access to "the glory" that He received from the Father. By choosing to lay down our independent life we have an opportunity to share in the divine life of love that He shares with the Father. He came to make us perfect in one. These are

His words: “I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one...that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”

Since Jesus needed to lay down His independent life and will in order to remain in harmony with the Father, we should see the necessity of following the same course if we want to share in the same life. Many are called out by God, but they are not chosen to enter into this shared life in the Trinity because they fail to respond to Christ’s instructions. They refuse to follow Him in His way of the cross. Because they insist on keeping their independent life and will, they actually become enemies of His way of the cross. They would rather live by their own worldly desires rather than enter into the heavenly realms where everyone shares with God in His eternal life.

For many are called {out from the world through the new birth}, but few are chosen {to enter into the life of promise}. (Matt. 22:14)

For many walk {many of those who are called out by God}, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ {His way of dying to the independent and self-sufficient form of life}: whose end is destruction...who set their mind on earthly things. For our citizenship {our place of life} is in heaven {where we are to share in the life of the Trinity}... (Phil. 3:18)

For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection. (Rom. 6:5)

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is... Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died {to the independent *psuche* form of life}, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (Col. 3:1-3)

There is no place for independence in the kingdom of heaven. Everyone lays down their independent will so they may live in the good and perfect will of God. (Rom. 12:1-2) We receive our opportunity to enter into this shared life by choosing to deny the old *psuche* form of life and following Christ through the cross.

Living as Slaves of God

How can we know we are filled to overflowing with the Son’s heavenly life? Our inner nature becomes like His divine nature. He reveals Himself as the Lamb within our heart. This lamb-like spirit puts within our inner being a new nature that does away with all independence and self-will—the body of sin.

Understanding original sin does not need to be a complicated doctrine. The whole problem with our fallen nature is that it wants to live for itself. It is naturally independent and self-sufficient. Everyone has inherited this fallen form of life from Adam. And this is what needs to die before we can share with the Son in His heavenly life and begin to truly live for God.

For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death {dying to the old independent form of life with its self-will}, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man {the old independent form of life} was crucified with Him, that the body of sin {with its self-will} might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin {bound to the old willful nature}. For he who has died has been freed from sin. {There is no independence in death.} Now if

we died with Christ {to the “*psuche*” life}, we believe that we shall also live with Him {in the shared life of the Trinity}, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. {He now has an everlasting life to share with His followers.}... For the death that He died, He died to sin {self-will} once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. {This Lamb-like submissiveness is what He shares with those who have chosen to die to their independent will.}... But now having been set free from sin, *and having become slaves of God* {to live for His will alone}, *you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.* (Rom. 6:5-10, 22)

Slaves do not have any rights of their own. They do not live by their own will. But there is a difference between the slaves of this world and the “slaves of God.” Those who share with God in His eternal life within the Trinity truly enjoy living by His Spirit. Perfect love destroys the independent nature. This is the bliss of heaven. Not only does it provide the soul with a deep sense of peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, it provides a real sense of inward liberty as the inner spirit is lifted higher and higher into the life of heaven.

Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we {as we live by the Spirit}...are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory {being lifted ever higher into the spiritual life of heaven}, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. (2 Cor. 3:17-18)

That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him...in the heavenly realms. (Eph. 1:19-20 NIV)

Everyone in heaven has died to their independent will. They share in the life of the Trinity where God’s good and perfect will rules over everything. And praise be to the Presence of the Lord, there is no sense of confinement in the heavenly realms. Heaven is a place of delight, pleasure and harmony. And when this life of heaven enters the eternal soul it becomes the paradise of God. Where the Lord’s Kingdom-life has been established within the heart—a life where His “will” rules supreme—there is an ever-conscious presence of His “righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” (Rom. 14:17)

It is not possible to find a deep and lasting rest within the soul until we have ceased from our own works and have permitted Christ to reign within our heart. Here is the place where the paradise of God needs to be established. F. B. Meyer in his book, *The Present Tenses of the Blessed Life*, helps us to see the Lord’s purpose in establishing His undivided kingdom within us.

Ah! the devil’s lie has been but too successful in leading men to think that Christ’s reign means misery and privation. It is because they have believed it that so many have excluded themselves from it altogether; or have submitted only a part of their being...giving Him the environs, whilst they reserve the citadel, the Zion, for themselves...

You have only to open the gates to Him, and He will subdue all authority and power; He will bring every thought into captivity... Remember He is omnipotent—omnipotent to conquer; omnipotent to keep; omnipotent to reign. Life then shall become one long Hallelujah, growing deeper and sweeter as the years roll on. No event will disturb or

perplex, because in each incident we shall see the result of our King's appointment...

We noted earlier how there is only one divine will in the life of the Trinity. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit remain in perfect harmony with each other because perfect love always lays down its own rights for the good of the whole. With this thought in mind, we can better understand why fallen man must die to Satan's independent way of life. It was self-will that separated Adam and his lineage from the eternal life of God—the one source of all goodness. And if we intend to reverse this course and enter back into the eternal life we must choose to enter into the Spirit-directed way of life that God planned for His children from the beginning.

This is what the Lord says: “Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths {of a Spirit-directed way of life}, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls. But you said, ‘We will not walk in it.’ ” (Jer. 6:16)

John Wesley once preached a sermon on “Self-Denial.” His thoughts need to be heard in this day. The central premise of this Biblical doctrine is related to the necessity of denying our own will so that we may live by the Spirit and come into harmony with the life and will of God. Choosing to live by personal desires, rather than by the leading of the Holy Spirit, is what separates the spirit and the soul from the eternal life of God.

...Those who take nature [the desires of the flesh] as their guide, abhor the thought of self-denial. But even those who have experienced grace in their hearts are no friend to this grand doctrine of Christianity. Some are totally ignorant of it, as if it were not even in the Bible...

But what is self-denial? In what ways are we to deny ourselves? And why is this necessary? “I answer, the will of God is the supreme, unalterable rule for every intelligent creature; equally binding every angel in heaven and every man upon earth. Nor can it be otherwise: this is the natural necessary result of the relation between creatures and their Creator. *But if the will of God be our one rule of action in everything great and small, it follows by undeniable consequence that we are not to do our own will in anything.*”

Satan had one purpose in turning to a self-originated form of life. He wanted to have his own glory. It was by choosing to live independently of God and by exalting himself through his own works that he could be in a place to have his own honor. He then fostered this evil way of life on humanity. The reason why people refuse to take Christ's way of the cross is because they prefer to direct their own steps. They want to live independently of God so they may do their own works and have their own glory. But it is a form of life that God will never permit to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Is there any wonder why it is so necessary to deny and die to this corrupt form of life? The earthly wisdom that leads to independence, self-will and self-seeking can never be permitted into the kingdom of heaven. Jesus condemned this form of life by rejecting it. (Rom. 8:3) And we must choose to follow Him if we hope to share with Him in His life.

Living in the Age of Fulfillment

The shared life we have been speaking about within the Godhead was not available to anyone in the Old Testament dispensation. From the time that Adam lost this heavenly

life until Christ died and was glorified, no one could be filled with His life from heaven. Although the saints of old could live by the Spirit, none of them received this “much more” of salvation. It was promised in the Old Testament, but everyone had to wait for the New Testament age of fulfillment before entering into the reality of the Promise.

Then the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Sovereign Lord, *when I show myself holy through you before their eyes...* I will save you from all your uncleanness... (Ezk. 36:23, 29 NIV)

And all these {the greatest saints of the Old Testament}, having obtained a good testimony through faith, *did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us* {in this New Testament age of fulfillment}, *that they should not be made perfect* {in holy love} *apart from us.* (Heb. 11:39-40)

Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and *the glories that would follow.* (1 Peter 1:10-11 NIV)

He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, *that He might fill all things.* (Eph. 4:10)

That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith...that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Eph. 3:17, 19)

The Son’s suffering and death on the cross removed the barrier that God established when Adam chose to live independently of Him. The veil was rent. Those who will now reverse Adam’s course have an opportunity to share with the Son in the glory that resides within the life of the Trinity. The believer who will choose to lay down his or her independent form of life can begin to eat of a heavenly food that sustains the eternal life within the soul. They will be able to say with Jesus, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent me, and to finish His work.” (John 4:34) As they begin to share with Christ in His heavenly life they are enabled to enter into “the glories” that have followed His sufferings.

I will come to you... At that day you will know that I am in My Father {sharing in the life of the Trinity}, and you in Me {sharing in the same heavenly life}, and I in you {manifesting this eternal light of life in the world}. (John 14:18, 20)

And of His fullness we have all received {we all have access to this shared life in the Trinity}, and grace for grace. For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth {the reality of life from heaven} came through Jesus Christ. (John 1:16-17)

The Son will one day come back to the whole world in His full glory. But we must not overlook the fact that He has been coming back to individual believers for the last two thousand years. This should help us to see the necessity of giving the more earnest heed to this great salvation that is now available because of Christ’s sufferings.

Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away... How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him...? (Heb. 2:1, 3)

The Wisdom Found in Perfect Love

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. (Jam. 3:17)

The “wisdom” that permeates the kingdom of heaven enables everyone to live as one with God and each other. Everyone in God’s kingdom becomes peaceable and gentle. They are always willing to yield and are full of mercy. They live without any partiality and without hypocrisy. And most significantly, this divine nature is pure. It is not mixed with contrary traits. James refers to it as the “wisdom that is from above.”

The Son is to become our “wisdom.” “But in Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God.” (1 Cor. 1:30) This wisdom from above cannot be worked out through human efforts. We are now referring to a divine nature that enables us to become like God in His life of holy love. In effect, “the wisdom that is from above” is to become an innate part of our inner nature as we abide in Christ. Only in this way can we all live in perfect harmony with God and each other.

I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit {from the divine nature}; for without Me you can do nothing... By this My Father is glorified {made known to the world}, that you bear much fruit {from His life of perfect love}; so you will be My disciples. (John 15:5, 8)

That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us {sharing in the same life and nature}, that the world may believe that You sent Me {to be the source of life from heaven}... I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one... (John 17:21, 23)

God created human children to bear the fruit of His image of heavenly love. Those who abide in Christ will naturally manifest the heavenly wisdom that comes from His divine nature. “But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.” Those who do not bear this divine fruit are not yet fully abiding in the life of Christ. “For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth.” (Eph. 5:9)

There is another form of wisdom. It is self-seeking and self-exalting in nature. It is referred to as “earthly” wisdom. Because this wisdom was introduced to the world by the devil, it is also called “demonic,” or “devilish,” or “of the devil.” It is certainly a form of “wisdom” that must be avoided. “This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy {with its source in self-exaltation} and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.” (Jam. 3:15-16)

It is this latter form of wisdom that has spread carnal darkness throughout the world. The “whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one” because all worldly-minded people are living by the wisdom that leads to self-seeking and self-exaltation. (1 John 5:19) Like the devil, they want to live for themselves and have their own honor and glory.

True believers in Jesus Christ reject this worldly wisdom. The “gospel of the kingdom of God” is a promise to provide fallen man with the “wisdom from above.” Christ came

to establish His eternal Kingdom-life of holy love within our heart so we may all share with Him in His divine nature.

Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.” (Mark 1:14-15)

Christ came to save us from the demonic wisdom that leads to an independent form of life with its self-exalting and self-seeking nature. Those who are truly seeking out His full salvation will begin to recognize every sign of this inward corruption. It will be seen as an enemy within the heart. They will therefore go to war against it until Zion is fully established. On the other hand, those who choose to live by this earthly and demonic wisdom should expect the Spirit to eventually leave them on their own.

For if you live according to the flesh {according to your own desires after receiving the Spirit} you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body {the old self-exalting and self-seeking form of life}, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. (Rom. 8:13-14)

God... “will render to each one according to his deeds” {according to which of these two forms of wisdom they chose}: eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality {the heavenly life that comes from God}; *but to those who are self-seeking* and do not obey truth {as revealed through Jesus Christ}...indignation and wrath. (Rom. 2:5-8)

We know that Jesus did not live for Himself. Perfect love actually prefers to lay down its own rights to live for the good of others. Another aspect of this love is that it sacrifices itself in order to maintain unity and harmony. Although there will be conflict between light and darkness, the true “light” that has its source in the eternal life of the Son is always ready to suffer loss rather than become caught up in disputes and contentions. Again, this heavenly wisdom is “peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits.”

This nature of perfect love became quite evident in the life of Jesus during His final hours as a man. He continued to display this wisdom found in perfect love while going through His trials on the way to the cross. He did not try to defend Himself. He knew it would only lead to more dissension, contention and disputing. These carnal actions are contrary to the very nature of life in the Trinity. Because this heavenly wisdom is so contrary to the wisdom of this world, worldly-minded people become amazed when they see how *perfect love* is willing to suffer in silence, even when it is being falsely accused and condemned. Here, then, is the nature that every Christian will need to possess if they hope to stand before the Lord with boldness on the Day of Judgment. (1 John 4:17)

And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing. Then Pilot said to Him, “Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?” But He answered him not one word, so that *the governor marveled greatly* {over His nature}. (Matt. 27:12-14)

Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world... (Phil. 2:14-15)

But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes {contending over words}, knowing that they generate strife. And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition... (2 Tim 2:23-25)

If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds *and destitute of the truth* {as revealed through Jesus}. (1 Tim. 6:3-5)

Manifesting the life of perfect love that is found within the Trinity is far above the capability of the fallen nature. Since the mind cannot even conceive of this life in the heavenly realms, we are totally dependent upon the Spirit of God to reveal this divine nature within our inner being.

We will find that the New Testament is filled with requirements that cannot be reached by living under law. The law is able to reveal the requirement, but we must turn to Christ in faith to receive the heavenly life that will enable us to do by nature what the law requires. (Rom. 8:3-4) We need the Living Word within us. "Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all." (Rom. 4:16)

The One Means for Attaining Unity

Men who attempt to work out unity, including ecclesiastical unity, through their human wisdom will continue to fall short of God's requirements. They will inevitably become caught up in "disputes and arguments over words." It naturally occurs when people are still living in their own sufficiency. The remains of independence and self-will within the heart will generate strife and division.

Consequently, these human works that seek to produce unity will never make people "perfect in one." The unity that God requires has its source in being filled with His life of holy love. There must be a complete surrender of the independent will before the believer can be filled with "the glory" of God and share in the unity that exists in the life of the Trinity.

Christians must start out by choosing to live as God requires. But the goal can only be achieved by living through the Son. After acknowledging truth, and then yielding the whole being to God's requirements, we are to look to Christ in faith to become the source of our life. His life alone has the power to fulfill the Kingdom-standards revealed in His Sermon on the Mount.

But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, *that you may be sons of your Father in heaven* {revealing His life and nature of love}... Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect {in holy love}. (Matt. 5:44-45, 48)

Dissensions, contentions and disputing can only take place when people are refusing to lay down their independent will. God insists that everyone becomes like-minded by sharing with Him in His life of holy love. He will never permit the old independent form of life to enter into His eternal kingdom. It would spread carnal darkness throughout heaven, as it has done in this world.

Fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love {sharing in the love that originates in the Trinity}, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself {sacrificing self to live for the good of the whole body}. (Phil. 2:2-3)

All dissensions, contentions and disputing come from “the sin” of self-will. It is missing God’s mark. “*Do all things without complaining and disputing*, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God...” And because everyone has access to this heavenly life, God can hold individuals accountable when they refuse to give the vessel of their body to God so He may fill it with His glory. This is the only way we can ever hope to walk as Jesus did, and become one with the Father and with each other.

But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him.

By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked. (1 John 2:5-6)

It is God’s purpose to have an eternal kingdom where everyone lives in complete harmony with Him and with each other. Some of the early Christians provided an example of what “great grace” is able to do. They received what the Son asked for in His high priestly prayer. Those who were filled with His Spirit became “one” with each other.

Now the multitude of those who believed were of *one heart and one soul*; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own... And *great grace was upon them all*. (Acts 4:32-33)

Now may the God of patience and comfort {the one you know through the new birth} grant you to be like-minded toward one another {perfecting your hearts in holy love}, according to Christ Jesus {the love that is in Him}, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. 15:5-6)

“The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.” (Titus 2:11) Because this grace goes out to all men, people will sense that it is right to live together in love. It leads people to come together into groups with similar minds. But forming groups based on a certain philosophical belief does not change the inner nature. The Pharisees are an example of how even highly religious people can come together with certain beliefs and continue to clash both within the group and with other groups. Everyone with an independent will tends to dispute with others who have an independent will. It reveals a nature that is contrary to the divine love found in the eternal kingdom of God.

Much of the church is being formed on this same basis. It is nothing more than human minds attempting to establish ecclesiastical unity based on mere words. It is the reason why we still see disputes, contentions and divisions occurring. It reveals religion on the natural plane where people still live by their independent will rather than by the Spirit. Those who live in a self-originated form of life will naturally manifest the works of the flesh.

For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men {living by the wisdom of this world}? For when one says, “I am of Paul,” and another, “I am of Apollos,” are you not carnal {living by earthly wisdom}? (1 Cor. 3:3-4)

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are...contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions...and the like... (Gal. 5:19-20)

Those who think they are “right” merely because they are following a certain doctrine, even if it is the teachings of the apostle Paul, are missing the true mark of Christ. It is the reason they still reveal these carnal traits. Those who have become spiritual no longer contend over doctrines. They know that life in the Trinity goes far beyond believing in certain words. “For the kingdom of God is not in word but in power.” (1 Cor. 4:20) The oneness of nature that exists in the kingdom of God is something that needs to be imparted within the inner being by the power of God.

Unfortunately, most of those who are called out by God through a work of His grace are still resisting Christ’s way of the cross. The Spirit does not lift them into this promised life on the highest plane because they are unwilling to die to their own will and self-sufficiency. It is the reason we seldom see a multitude of Christians living together with “one heart and one soul” in holy love.

Permitting Grace to Work

The apostle Paul recognized how there were members of the Corinthian church who were resisting this greater work of God’s grace. Their nature remained contrary to the Son’s life of holy love. He identified the problem by the “contentions” taking place among them. He was concerned they might end up receiving God’s grace “in vain.”

While grace works to lead people into the Son’s “light of life,” it can be resisted. Grace can only have an effective working when the heart is fully yielded to all revealed truth. The Son has only promised to manifest His life within those who have surrendered to Him and have proven themselves to be yielded to the wisdom that comes down from above. (John 8:12; 14:21; Jam. 1:12) We therefore find the apostle Paul pleading with the carnal Corinthians to fully yield to this glorious work of salvation.

Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but *that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment*. For...there are contentions among you. (1 Cor. 1:10-11)

We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain... {“Great grace” enables everyone to live with “one heart and one soul.”} Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation {the day to become like Christ in holy love}... O Corinthians! We have spoken openly to you, our heart is wide open. You are not restricted {from entering into this life of promise} by us, but you are restricted by your own affections. (2 Cor. 6:1-2, 11-12)

Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you {with His life of holy love}—unless, of course, you fail the test? (2 Cor. 13:5 NIV)

We can now begin to understand why it is so important to pursue this life of holy love. We need to find Christ’s Kingdom-life so we may live in harmony with each other. To fall short of the love that perfects the heart in holiness is to fall short of “the grace of God.”

Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: *looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God.* (Heb. 12:14-15)

I will come to you... Because I live {in the life of the Trinity}, you will live also {in the same heavenly life}. At that day {when you are sharing in this perfect love} you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. (John 14:18, 20)

Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is {in holy love}, so are we in this world. (1 John 4:17)

Today is the day to become like God in holy love. Those who insist on living according to their selfish desires are holding onto a form of life that would ruin heaven. It naturally produces the works of the flesh. And God will not permit this carnal darkness to ruin His eternal kingdom.

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are...contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissension...and the like...*those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.* {This nature is not fit to enter into the life of the Trinity.} (Gal. 5:19-21)

John Wesley said that Christians are on the wrong course if their emphasis is on anything other than becoming more like God in holy love. The Pharisees proved how the highest standards of outward holiness become meaningless if the inner nature remains contrary to God's nature of love. We show ourselves to be the true disciples of Jesus Christ by walking in love as He did.

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another {with divine love}; *as I have loved you...* {Divine love is the standard.} By this all will know that you are My disciples... (John 13:34-35)

Love does no harm to a neighbor {even with offensive words}; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. (Rom. 13:10)

It does little good to be like the Pharisees. They were willing to diligently study the Scriptures and conform to certain holy practices. But they were unwilling to die to their independent will and receive the "light of life" that Jesus came to give to those who follow Him through the cross. (John 8:12) Because they chose to have an independent life and will, rather than walk in the Spirit, they could not share in the life of the Trinity.

You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life {the life that comes from God}; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me {through the cross} that you may have life {the shared life of the Trinity}. (John 5:39-40)

It is the Spirit who gives life {He imparts the eternal life of holy love within the soul}; the flesh {the dead works of trying to make ourselves right} profits nothing. (John 6:63)

For the fruit of the Spirit is in *all goodness, righteousness, and truth.* (Eph. 5:9)

By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. (John 15:8)

Larry Smith, in his book, *When Steeples are Falling*, speaks of how holiness and love must go together. As we have said, the unity of life within the Trinity (true holiness)

exists because each member of the Trinity is perfect in love. This divine love is willing to sacrifice itself to insure that harmonious fellowship remains and God's life is revealed. We find this statement in a chapter entitled "Holiness or Heaven Lose." (The book is published by Revivalist Press in cooperation with Schmul Publishing Co.)

True religion is holiness, and true holiness is love! For whatever the technical definitions and distinctions, in personal Christian experience love and holiness are really all the same. [John Wesley said] "Religion we conceive to be no other than love...as the fountain of all the goodness we have received and of all we ever hope to enjoy." Wesley was merely echoing the Great Commandment delivered by his divine Master...

Understood thus as the very pith and core of authentic Christian life, holiness [holy love] is both the moral quality which transforms us and also *the pattern of life which we must pursue.*

Joined mystically to our risen Lord whom we love above all else; renewed by His life-giving grace; and made "partakers" of His "divine nature," all Christians are clearly "called unto holiness" as it was so exquisitely displayed in His winsome life. Simply and sublimely, to be holy is to be like Jesus. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."

The Mind of Christ

All the conflict that takes place in this world has its source in the independent human will. Christ's mind, which was reflected in His way of life, was revealed in how He emptied Himself of His own glory to become the lowest of servants without reserving any rights to an independent will. He sacrificed Himself and His will for the good of the eternal kingdom of heaven. He then received all His instructions from His Father in heaven. He continued to reveal a lamb-like submissiveness. There was no resistance to the leading of the Holy Spirit regardless of where it led.

Those who receive His life into their heart through faith can expect to share with Him in the same life of holy love. This heavenly life destroys the independent will—the source of "the body of sin." (Rom. 6:6) It does away with the works of the flesh, such as "contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions...and the like..." (Gal. 5:20-21)

This should help to explain why Paul was so concerned when he learned how people in the Corinthian church were still caught up in "contentions." They were revealing a fallen form of life that is contrary to Christ's Spirit. And we know that "those who practice such things {contentions} will not inherit the kingdom of God." (Gal. 5:19-21)

This same divisive spirit can be found in churches today. It even occurs among people who insist they are holy. It reveals how deceived the mind can be in this matter of being saved by the indwelling life of Jesus Christ. (Rom. 5:10)

Indeed, there will be "many" who are turned away on the great Day of Judgment because they did not choose to share with Christ in His nature of love. Even though they have performed many "great works" in His name, and have worked hard to conform to outward standards of holiness, they remain like the Pharisees. He will say that He does not know them because their inner nature remained contrary to His nature of holy love (Matt. 7:21-23)

We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain... Behold, now is the accepted time: behold, now is the day of salvation. (2 Cor. 6:1-2)

Christ has only one spiritual body. And it has nothing to do with the organizational structures that people put together based on their belief in words. Every believer in the true body of Christ has begun to drink of the same spiritual life—the Living Water that is now flowing directly from Him. If you have not yet received a new nature that leads you to lay down your own life and will for the good of your brethren, including the carnal brothers or sisters who may have offended you, you are not yet living through Christ's Spirit.

For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one {spiritual} body {making us all one in nature}—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. (1 Cor 12:13-14)

By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us His Spirit {of holy love}. (1 John 4:13)

By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. (1 John 3:16)

Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. For even Christ did not please Himself... (Rom. 15:2-3)

Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ {if you have any relationship with Him at all}, if any comfort of love {if you are sharing with Him in some measure of His love}, if any fellowship of the Spirit {where you understand the unity of the Spirit}... fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit {by insisting on having your own way}, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. (Phil. 2:1-3)

Christ has come to make us like Himself in holy love in order to fit us for heaven. No other nature could live in harmony with the shared life of the Trinity. We can therefore say that today is the day to be saved from the old independent and self-seeking form of life that naturally produces strife and contentions. May we all learn this truth before it is too late!

God...“will render to each one according to his deeds”...*to those who are self-seeking* and do not obey the truth {as revealed through Jesus}...indignation and wrath. (Rom. 2:5-8)

But whoever keeps His word {by yielding to all revealed truth}, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. (1 John 2:5)

Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you {with His life of holy love}?—unless indeed you are disqualified. (2 Cor. 13:5)

Overcoming the Natural Man by the Cross

Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. (Col. 3:2)

But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Cor 2:14)

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. (1 Cor. 1:18)

The natural man cannot see beyond the natural plane of life. He relates everything to the here and now. The gospel message sounds foolish to him because it speaks of dying to this world in order to receive life from above through the power of God. These spiritual truths will sound like a foreign language to his thought processes.

Everyone who is born of the Spirit “overcomes the world.” (1 John 5:4) They know that God is real and He is able to work supernaturally within the heart of man. But even these children of faith do not always learn how to walk in the power of the Spirit. Many of them continue to live on a natural plane of life in their own strength.

The Galatians are an example of Christians living on the natural plane. After receiving the gift of the Spirit, we find them attempting to work out their Christian life in the strength of the flesh. Their self-sufficient spirit was actually separating them from the resurrection power of the Holy Spirit. They simply did not understand Christ’s way of the cross—the way of perfecting God’s power through the weakness of dependent faith.

O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? {Paul revealed before their eyes Christ’s way of being raised by the power of God after being crucified in weakness.}... Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect {in holy love} by the flesh {by your own strength}? Have you suffered so many things {to break your self-sufficient spirit} in vain—if indeed it was in vain? (Gal. 3:1-3)

Adam’s lineage, from the day that he lost the Spirit, was deprived of the Presence and power of the Spirit. Fallen man was left on his own to live in his own strength. It became natural for him to live in a self-originated form of life based on earthly wisdom. It is a way of life that has been deeply ingrained into everyone’s thought processes. Even earnest Christians, like the Galatians, find themselves naturally going back to their old habit of living by the strength of the flesh.

In contrast, the apostle Paul spoke of revealing before their eyes how to live in the Spirit’s power. He displayed the way of Christ crucified, which is the way of the cross. It is the way of dying to the strength of the flesh and perfecting God’s power through dependent and trusting faith.

Paul came with the same message to the Corinthians. He “preached Christ crucified.” (1 Cor. 1:23) He wanted these Christians to understand the true meaning of the cross. He sought to reveal before their eyes how the power of the Spirit is perfected through the weakness of dependent faith. When he was no longer living out from himself, but was

walking by faith in the Son of God, the Spirit was able to manifest the life and works of Christ through Him.

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live {nothing is done through the fleshly strength of the old man}, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God (Gal. 2:20)

And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” (2 Cor. 12:9)

The way of “Christ crucified” will not make sense until there has been a very deep change in how we think. It will be necessary to become like dependent little children. “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted {are changed in how you think} and become as {dependent and trusting} little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt. 18:3) This renewing of the mind turns us away from the way of living by fleshly human strength to the way of receiving life from the Son “through faith.” Only in this way is it possible to put on His heavenly life.

That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts *through faith*...that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Eph. 3:16-19)

If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus...*be renewed in the spirit of your mind*...{so you may} put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. (Eph. 4:21, 23-24)

The Wisdom of the Cross and Suffering

The way of the cross depicts suffering and a slow death. The cross is a spiritual type that helps reveal spiritual principles. The Father led the Son through the cross. The Son then instructed everyone to follow Him. Those who choose to follow Him will know from His example that His way of the cross will entail some suffering. The old independent and self-sufficient form of life does not die easily. Dying to the strength of the natural man can be slow and painful.

Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin {he dies to the old self-originated form of life}, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lust of men, but for the will of God. (1 Pet. 4:1-2)

Natural man lives by his own strength according to his own will and desires. He lives independently of God. And wherever there is independence, there is also self-sufficiency. God does away with the independent life by destroying the self-sufficient spirit. This is what Paul was attempting to communicate to the self-sufficient Galatians when he said, “Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?” (Gal. 3:3) God cannot permit anyone to live by the strength of the flesh in the heavenly realms. He insists that everyone live through His Spirit so “that no flesh should glory in His presence.” (1 Cor. 1:29)

“Not by {fleshly} might nor by power, but by My Spirit,” says the Lord of hosts. (Zech. 4:6)

Those who truly obey Jesus by choosing to follow Him through the cross can expect to be “scourged.” Most of the strength was taken out of Jesus by the scourging He received before He ever arrived at the cross. The flesh-life does not die easily. God therefore scourges us beforehand, taking away much of our strength, so we are ready to die to the ways of the flesh when we arrive at the cross. We should also note that He only scourges those who have submitted to His way of the cross. These children of faith who respond to His teachings are the ones He loves.

He who has My commandments and keeps them {by taking the way of the cross}, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, *and I will love him* and manifest Myself to him. (John 14:21)

*For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives {into His heavenly life}...for our profit {to do away with the old independent and self-sufficient spirit}, that we may be partakers of His holiness {as we live through His Spirit}. Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, *afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness* {the eternal Kingdom-life} to those who have been trained by it. (Heb. 12:6, 10-11)*

For the kingdom of God is...righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 14:17)

The earnest soul who has surrendered his whole being to serve the Lord often wonders why he suddenly finds himself going through deep trials and scourgings. But we must remember that this is exactly what occurred to Jesus after He had chosen to go through the cross. Once He had made His decision in the Garden of Gethsemane, everything was taken out of His hands. The providential hand of His Father then worked out the severe trials, the scourging and the final death on the cross.

God knows that this dying to the flesh-life cannot be worked out through the flesh. No one can nail himself to the cross. And so those who truly choose to follow Christ through the cross can expect to go through some fiery trials and scourging to take away their self-sufficient spirit. When their spirit is broken and they have no strength left in themselves they will be prepared to live through the Son by faith and begin enjoying His life in the heavenly realms.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 5:3)

As another example, the Lord comes in His holiness as a refiner’s fire to do away with the part of the “flesh” that is contrary to His way of life. Even earnest souls will tend to think they have been abandoned by the Lord during this process. The presence of His holiness overwhelms and consumes everything that is contrary to Him. He comes in a special way as a refiner and purifier. Although the believer may not understand what the Lord is working out, those who hold on will come out of this fiery trial in a purified state, which will then enable the Lord to “fill” the temple with His “glory.”

And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple {in this strange work as a consuming fire}... But who can endure {in the flesh} the day of His coming? And who can stand {with a self-sufficient spirit} when He appears? For He is like a refiner’s fire... He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi {representing those who have fully consecrated themselves to His

service}, *and purge them* as gold and silver, that they may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness. (Mal. 3:1-3)

Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's suffering {while passing through this dark night of the soul}, that when His glory is revealed {when He fills the temple of your body with His glory}, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. (1 Pet. 4:12-13)

I will come to you... At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. (John 14:18, 20)

Teaching Christ Crucified

We are expected to “make disciples of all the nations” by “teaching them to observe all things” that Christ commanded. (Matt. 28:19-20) But this central truth about following Christ through the cross is seldom taught in this day. It is the reason why there are so few Christians who have found His life in the heavenly realms.

Many of those who are called out by God end up turning back when the Spirit begins to take them through difficult trials. Without anyone to teach them what to expect, and to reveal the heavenly Pearl received on the other side of the cross, they do not endure to the end. What we need is many more witnesses of His resurrection life. Someone needs to show them that this heavenly Pearl is worth the price that must be paid.

Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you {into His heavenly Kingdom-life} in due time... But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, *after you have suffered a while* {in dying out to the flesh-life}, *perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.* (1 Pet. 5:6, 10)

There is a natural tendency to ask God to relieve people of their suffering. He is often asked to “touch” them so they may feel better. But these prayers are being made without any discernment of God's wisdom—the wisdom of the cross. It reveals how most Christians are still living on the natural plane. They think in terms of improving a person's spiritual life by improving their circumstances. Until Christian leaders can begin to understand the way of “Christ crucified,” and actually teach these principles of the cross, many will fail to recognize what God is attempting to work out through suffering.

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience {producing a trusting and dependent faith in God}. But let patience have its perfect work {through these continuing trials}, that you may be perfect and complete {learning to live by the Spirit alone}, lacking nothing. (Jam. 1:2-4)

My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord... (Jam. 5:10-11)

Can you begin to see why those who are still living by human wisdom on the natural plane of life have such a difficult time understanding spiritual truths? God has truly turned the ways of this world upside down. The cross will need an opportunity to do a deep work within the heart before the believer will be prepared to live by God's wisdom.

For the message of the cross {the way of weakness and dependent faith} is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved {from the independent and self-sufficient form of life} it is the power of God. For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent..." But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty...and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence. (1 Cor. 1:18-19, 27-29)

So the last will be first, and the first last. *For many are called, but few chosen.* (Matt. 20:16)

For he who is least among you all will be great {in the kingdom of God}. (Luke 9:48)

There are only two basic ways to live in this world. One is self-exalting and one is self-emptying. Because these two different ways are so radically different, they are easily distinguished. Unfortunately, the heart is deceitful above all things. And even God's called-out children can remain blinded to the truth. It is the reason why so "few" of the "many" are being "chosen" by God to be lifted into the Son's life in the heavenly realms.

Can you see how needful it is to examine the heart? Do you have a new nature that prefers to be the "least" and the "last"? If the old "pride of life" is still residing within your heart and causing you to enjoy being "first" and "great" in the eyes of men, you are in serious trouble. It will lead you, in spite of what you profess, to live by an earthly and demonic wisdom that is unfit for heaven. (Jam. 3:15-16)

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who...made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant {a slave}...He humbled Himself...to the point of death... Therefore God also has highly exalted Him... (Phil. 2:5-9)

Today is the day of salvation. Every called-out child of God needs to come to that place where God may lift them spiritually into the heavenly realms. It will entail following Christ in His downward course through the cross. Simply stated, the way up is down.

Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it will remain alone {separated from the life of the Trinity}. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life {the old "psuche" life} in this world will keep it {the soul} for eternal life. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me {through the cross}; and where I am {in the heavenly realms} there My servant will be also. (John 12:24-26)

Paul preached the gospel, but "not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect." (1 Cor. 1:17) He went on to say, "And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, *that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.*" (1 Cor. 2:4-5)

But there are few today who seem to believe in this same gospel. Much of the preaching consists of wise and persuasive words. It results in a mere "fix-up" religion that can never lift anyone into the heavenly life of God. Very few are ever learning how to follow Christ through the cross and live in the resurrection power of His Spirit.

For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection. (Rom. 6:5)

The ultimate triumph of “Christ crucified” was revealed when He was raised to the highest position of power and authority after He had emptied Himself of His own glory, sank to the lowest place of servanthood, and had reached the place of absolute weakness on the cross. He was raised by the resurrection power of the Holy Spirit when He was in a state where all strength in the flesh had died. Do you understand this principle? You will need to learn it, because you cannot live on the natural plane in your own strength and also live in the heavenly realms through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Yes, God has graciously provided a means for being reconciled through the Son’s shed blood while seeking out His heavenly life. It is also possible to die “in the faith” while in the early stages of light and go to heaven, not having received the fullness of the promise in this world. (Heb. 11:39-40) But those who choose to live on the natural plane in the strength of the flesh are rejecting both Christ’s way of the cross and His resurrection power. It will keep their soul separated from the heavenly life of God. Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies it cannot be raised up with Christ and be honored by the Father. (John 12:24-26)

Christians are expected to take this way of the cross. They have the seed of life from heaven planted within their heart. But it cannot be multiplied until the covering of the natural man dies and disintegrates. It must be planted within the ground where everything from the old man is lost before the eternal Kingdom-life of God is able to rise up and begin to multiply itself.

L.E. Maxwell, in his book *Born Crucified*, has explained why there has been such little growth of the true kingdom of God. In closing this chapter, we ask our readers to seriously pray over these thoughts from a chapter entitled “The Cross and Fruitfulness.”

Certainly the great trouble with many of our orthodox churches is that they are like great grain containers, full of unplanted wheat which has become musty, and moldy, and befouled... If only each little grain had been rent asunder from its fellows, cast into the dark, wet earth, buried out of sight, and left alone to endure disintegration and death, what a harvest we would see!...

We appeal to those who are sick of the shallows and the shams, sick of doing dead things, “sick unto death” of a fruitless, barren existence. Oh barren soul, hear the word of the Lord: “That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die.” Is the reader trying to live the Christian life?—work for Christ?—bear fruit, etc.? You cannot live until you have died. Death precedes life. “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone.” J. Hudson Taylor...once said: “We know how the Lord Jesus became fruitful—not by bearing His cross merely, but by dying on it. Do we know much fellowship with Him in this?... There is only one Christ. Are you willing to abide in Him, and thus to bear much fruit?” Death is still the gateway to life, life from the dead, life multiplied, life manifold.

Identifying our Plane of Life

For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. (1 Cor. 1:26)

You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave... (Matt. 20:25-28)

However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, *nor of the rulers of this age* {who follow a self-exalting form of life}, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, *which none of the rulers of this age knew...* (1 Cor. 2:6-8)

We receive the life of God into our soul in direct proportion to the degree of light we have accepted into our heart. Many of those who enter into the church do not advance in the life of God because they do not earnestly pursue an understanding of His ways.

Christ, as the Living Word, expressed the truth through His life. He is also “the way, the truth, and the life.” (John 14:6) We must choose to yield to His way of life, which is the truth, before He is able to manifest Himself within our inner being. The Lord reveals Himself within the temple of our body in direct portion to how far we have gone in surrendering our whole being to His light of truth. (John 14:21)

This should help us to understand why God wants us to search out His ways and seek understanding. Only then are we in a place to surrender more deeply to the life that was in Christ and share more fully in the glory He receives from the Father. (John 14:20)

People who choose to live on the natural plane of life with its humanistic thought processes cannot relate to God’s spiritual wisdom. Christ’s way of life is in direct conflict with what the world highly values. The Son emptied himself of His glory and become nothing in self so that He would be in a position to be highly exalted by the power of God. In contrast, fallen man seeks to exalt himself through the power of the flesh. This is how the rulers of this age naturally live. They cannot be lifted spiritually by the power of God into His heavenly Kingdom-life because they are following the self-exalting ways of the devil.

Everyone is following one of these two ways. And because each one is in direct conflict with the other there will never be any question in God’s mind about which way we have taken. Yes, we can deceive ourselves. But God sees into the heart and He knows when people are seeking to exalt themselves. And He refuses to exalt anyone into His heavenly Presence until they have been emptied of the old self-exalting flesh-life.

Since today is the day of salvation, we must choose our course before it is too late. We need to follow Jesus if we hope to be honored by God and highly exalted into His spiritual life within the heavenly realms. Those who continue to yield to the spirit of the world and live by its value system are in serious trouble. “For what is highly esteemed

among men is an abomination in the sight of God.” (Luke 16:15) If you find that your spiritual life keeps dying it is probably because you are still attempting to exalt yourself.

“God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time. (1 Peter 5:5-6)

Many of God’s called-out people are never chosen to be lifted into the life of promise because they neglect to fully submit to His wisdom. They may believe they are following Jesus and His truth, but they do not fully follow His wisdom to its logical conclusion.

It will help to look at a simple example. In the kingdom of God the first shall be last and the last shall be first. And yet, where do we find Christians who are truly acting on this principle. Many are called out by God, but they do not enter into this wisdom from God. They do not permit their minds to be renewed to the ways of God’s kingdom.

So the last will be first, and the first last. *For many are called, but few chosen.* (Matt. 20:16)

Much of what takes place in the church today is motivated by the “pride of life.” Nothing brings greater joy to a carnal heart than to appear “great” in the eyes of man. But this form of life remains an abomination in the sight of God. “God has chosen...the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence.” (1 Cor. 1:27-29) We are actually leading souls to their destruction when we continue to encourage individuals to take honor for their works. Again, to follow the ways that are highly valued by men is an abomination in the sight of God.

There were many carnal Christians in the Corinthian church walking in these ways of the flesh. Paul could not speak to them about the deeper things of God. He was required to speak on the natural plane because they were incapable of understanding spiritual truths. “And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal...for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal. (1 Cor 3:1-3) Because these two ways of life are so different from each other, God’s spiritual truths were like a foreign language to these worldly-minded Christians.

Fallen man is separated from the heavenly life of God. It has left him in a depressed spiritual state. It is the reason he expends his days trying to lift himself spiritually. He naturally pursues his own gain as he lives on an earthly plane of life. And because this way of life is in conflict with Christ’s way of life, the Lord cannot “dwell in” and “walk in” him. (2 Cor. 6:16-7:1) “Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?” (Amos 3:3)

We therefore find the apostle Paul contrasting his life with that of the Corinthians. We find him speaking to them with sarcasm because they insist they are taking the way of “wisdom.” But Paul knew they would need to change their course and begin following Jesus if they were to avoid losing what spiritual life they had received from the Spirit.

You are already full {from pursuing your own gain}! You have reigned as kings without us {by following the self-exalting ways of this world}—and indeed I could wish you did reign {in the Kingdom-life by taking the lowest place}, that we also might reign with you {sharing in the power of Christ’s throne}! For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, *last*... We are weak, but you are strong! You are distinguished, but we are dishonored!... And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being defamed, we

entreat... I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you... Therefore I urge you, imitate me. (1 Cor. 4:8-16)

Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ. (1 Cor. 11:1)

Both Jesus, while living as the Second Adam, and the apostle Paul revealed the “light of life” from heaven. They both lived as true children of God. They did not expend their time pursuing their own gain.

Yes, Paul worked with his own hands. But he did not work for his own gain. He wanted to avoid being a burden on others. Love sacrifices itself in order to help others. It was not his purpose to lay up treasures in this world. He lived as a stranger and pilgrim because his place of life was in the heavenly realms with his Lord.

The apostle Paul understood that everyone follows one of two different ways. They choose to live by “the wisdom” from one of these two different realms of life. Earthly minded people live for “time” and the temporal pleasures of this world. These are the ones who will end up losing their eternal soul. The true followers of Jesus die to the ways of this world and begin living by the way of life found in His eternal kingdom.

For whoever desires to save his {psuche} life will lose it... For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?
(Matt. 16:25-26)

Beware of the Things of Men

Those who have their mind on “earthly things” and “think” according to the ways of this world will find that it obscures spiritual truths. This was the essence of Peter’s problem when Jesus said to him, “You are an offense to Me, *for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.*” (Matt. 16:23) Peter was still carnal at this stage in his spiritual journey. Because he was still living by the wisdom of this world, his thought processes were tied to the natural realm.

Carnal Christians are able to develop a religious relationship with the Lord and serve Him to some degree. But they remain like the first disciples before Pentecost. With their “confidence in the flesh” and their thoughts on what they can do in the natural realm, they tend to remain self-centered. In contrast, spiritual Christians, having lost all confidence in the flesh, cease from their own works and begin to live through the Spirit. This heavenly wisdom destroys the self-seeking and self-exalting nature.

For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit {live through the Spirit}, rejoice in Christ Jesus {for what He is doing through our lives} and have no confidence in the flesh. (Phil. 3:3)

Those who are still living by the flesh on the natural plane will have a tendency to look to the world and its things for their spiritual support. They are always looking for something new to please themselves. It can even include the things they choose to do in their service to God. Paul referred to it as their “place of life.”

In contrast, Spiritual Christians receive their spiritual support directly from God. Because they know that the true work of the kingdom is to draw others into the heavenly realms where everyone shares in the life of the Trinity, their lives do not revolve around what is taking place on the natural plane. “For our conversation {and our place of life} is in heaven...” (Phil. 3:20 KJV) Nothing in this world is able to compare with the life that spiritual Christians receive directly from God in the heavenly realms.

When carnal Christians are first taught about the necessity of “losing life” in order to “find life,” it sounds very strange to their natural thought processes. Simon Peter provides an example of how carnal disciples naturally think. He assumed that Christ’s kingdom would be like other earthly kingdoms. He was thinking in terms of how it would provide an opportunity to have more for himself in this world. Like the other earthly-minded disciples, he thought it would enable him to be exalted on the natural plane of life. Consequently, Christ’s way of the cross was “foolishness” to him.

We need to again note how it was Satan who fostered the self-seeking and self-exalting form of life on the world. This is the essence of his earthly or demonic wisdom. The maxim he promotes for “finding life” is directly opposed to Christ’s way of the Cross. While the Son instructs people to “deny self,” Satan encourages people to “save self.” Because Peter effectively said to Jesus, “Save thyself,” we are not surprised when Jesus responds to him as a man under the influence of Satan. “This {human} wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, *demonic*. For where envy {which comes from self-exaltation} and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. (Jam. 3:15-16) May we all submit to this truth before it is too late!

“Get behind Me, Satan {with that save thyself message}. You are an offense to Me, *for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.*” {Man naturally thinks in terms of saving himself. It is the only way to find life on the natural plane.} Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me {into the heavenly realms}, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.” (Matt. 16:23-24)

Peter did not yet have the spiritual mind of Christ. (1 Cor. 2:15-16; Phil. 2:5-9) He also reveals how carnal Christians will have a tendency to resist the ways of the Spirit and even insist that God must be wrong in what He states. Although it is done in ignorance, and can be forgiven, Jesus’ response to Peter shows displeasure. God expects His children to trust in Him and to respond to what He says even when the truth is not fully understood. He cannot save anyone from their fallen form of life until they have enough faith in Him to yield to everything He teaches.

He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me...and I will love him and manifest Myself {as an indwelling life} to him. (John 14:21)

Everyone who is still on the natural plane of life will have a tendency to set their own goals and seek to achieve their own greatness. Even when they insist they are following the Lord and serving Him to some degree, their actions will continue to come from self and be for self. As they live on an earthly plane of life, they will naturally sense a need to lift themselves spiritually. Self-exaltation can be seen in what they do.

The early disciples continued to live according to this human wisdom until the first Pentecost of the church when the Savior began His glorious work of perfecting the heart in holy love. Until then, Peter still had his mind on “the things of men.” Although he could be justified and “clean” in God’s sight (John 13:10; 15:3), he was still living in “darkness” when compared to the Son’s “light of life.” Jesus therefore instructed His disciples to deny this old form of life and surrender it to the cross so they would be in a position to be lifted by the Spirit into His heavenly life. The only way to be honored by God and find the Son’s heavenly Kingdom-life is to submit to His wisdom.

For...whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. (Matt. 16:25)

For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection. (Rom. 6:5)

Every called-out child of God will go through this same crisis. After choosing to become a disciple of Christ and being reconciled to God through His shed blood, there still comes a point when it is necessary to truly follow Jesus through the cross. There is no other way to share with Him in His life in the heavenly realms. The Spirit of the Lord provides this light to every believer and then leaves them to choose their course. We pray that our readers will obey Christ by choosing His way of the cross.

And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple... So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has {from the old self-originated form of life} cannot be My disciple. (Luke 14:27, 33)

Then Jesus said to them, “A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light {respond to all revealed truth}, lest darkness {the self-seeking and self-exalting form of life} overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light {and live in the heavenly realms}.” These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them. (John 12:35-36)

The Need to Avoid this World’s Value System

Carnal followers of Christ are effectively trying to serve two masters, Self and Christ. But, in reality, it cannot be done. “No one can serve two masters.”

The Pharisees are examples of this kind of service. They honestly believed they were serving God in holiness and righteousness. But self had remained at the center of all their activities. Jesus referred to them as being “self-indulgent” and “lovers of money.” Their inward motive for serving God was still related to serving self. They were still looking for some form of personal gain in the natural realm. They were resisting the “light of life” as revealed through Jesus. Consequently, their inner nature remained wrong.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of...*self-indulgence*. (Matt. 23:25)

“No one can serve two masters...” Now the Pharisees {being earthly minded}, *who were lovers of money*, also heard all these things, and they derided Him. And He said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves before men {using carnal and worldly thought processes}. *For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God*. (Luke 16:13-15)

Here is a clear statement of truth that we must not pass over lightly. Those who are still pursuing “things” that are highly valued by the people of this world need to be greatly concerned about their spiritual state. No one can afford to be “an abomination in the sight of God.”

Like the Pharisees, we have a tendency to develop “standards” that come from obscure passages in the Bible while overlooking this plainly stated standard of true holiness. It does little good to make ourselves look holy in our outward appearance if our minds have remained on earthly things. It always leads to idolatry in God’s sight.

For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction...*who set their mind on earthly things.* (Phil. 3:18-19)

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world {by attempting to find their fulfillment from the things of this world}, the love of the Father {His life of holy love} is not in him... And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides {in the heavenly life} forever. (1 John 2:15-16)

When Jesus said that His “light” would split families apart, it relates to this matter of which motto each individual would choose to follow. (Luke 12:49-52) We will either obey Jesus by denying ourselves or obey Satan by trying to save ourselves. These are the two basic philosophies of life. It involves the age old battle between God and Satan. The worldview is to live by self-will in order to serve self. The true Christian view is to overcome the world by dying to it and its self-willed way of life. Christians do not live for themselves. Everyone chooses one way or the other. Those who follow Jesus by living through His Spirit should therefore expect to run into conflict with family and friends.

For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again. (2 Cor 5:14-15)

Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus {by dying to the world and living through His Spirit} will suffer persecution. (2 Tim. 3:12)

If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household! Therefore do not fear them. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known. {God will eventually judge everyone based on which of these two ways they have taken.} (Matt. 10:25-26)

Jesus lost many of His disciples because they could not accept His truth. Although they were willing to follow Him during the time He was still reaching out to them on the natural plane of life, they turned away when He began to teach them about the necessity of living on a spiritual plane where everyone receives their life directly from God. (John 6:60-65) We pray that these teachings will not turn you away from the true Christ and back to an earthly religion. Consider carefully the response of the faithful disciples who continued to follow Jesus. They recognized how needful it was to press forward in their faith until they had found the eternal Kingdom-life of promise.

As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father {by living through Him}, so he who feeds on Me {finding their spiritual life by living through the Spirit} will live because of Me... This is the bread which came down from heaven... He who eats this bread {by sustaining himself on this heavenly life} will live forever...

Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, “This is a hard saying; who can understand {or accept} it?...”

From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. Then Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you also want to go away?”

But Simon Peter {although still carnal and not yet capable of relating to the eternal spiritual life that comes from heaven} answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. {You are the only One who can show us how to find this heavenly life.} Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ {the One who came to establish this eternal kingdom}, the Son of the living God. (John 6:66-69)

God is not offended by the fact that a man’s heart is still carnal and incapable of fully understanding His deeper truths. What offends Him is the resisting of His Word. Those who truly have faith in God will continue to follow the Lord as best they know how even when they do not fully understand His ways. They will trust in His Spirit to lead them into all truth. And, as Jesus’ true disciples eventually learned, they can depend on Him to lead them into His life of promise.

Those who have begun to follow Jesus wherever He leads should not become disheartened by the carnal traits that periodically rise out of their heart. The Lord knows what remains. He is the One who brings about the providences and the trials that are intended to expose the remains of this inner corruption. He will do whatever is necessary to lead His followers to the point where they are willing to pay the full price for the heavenly Pearl—His eternal Kingdom-life.

It is in this sense that the Church needs to be preparing Christ’s disciples to press into the kingdom of God—His eternal Kingdom-life of holy love. They must be prepared to die to the independent and self-sufficient ways of this world. No one can afford to remain on the natural plane of life. It is a very precarious place to live because it naturally keeps the mind on earthly things. (Phil. 3:18-20)

Pursuing Life on the Highest Plane

We know that every Christian starts out on the lower plane of life. But we must not permit this carnality to go on for a prolonged period of time. For example, Paul was concerned by what he found in the lives of the Corinthian Christians. They had been Christians long enough to have become spiritual adults. But they were still caught up in selfishness and contentions—behaving like “mere men.”

And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal... For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you {a self-seeking and self-exalting form of life that is contrary to divine love}, *are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?* (1 Cor. 3:1-3)

There was a similar letter written to the Hebrew Christians. While they should have been leading others into Christ’s life of holy love on the highest plane, they still needed someone to teach them the elementary principles of the Christian faith.

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God {the basic principles of Christ’s way of life}; and you have come to need milk and not solid food... (Heb. 5:12)

Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection {the Kingdom-life of holy love}... (Heb. 6:10)

Most of the teachings in the New Testament epistles were written to “babes in Christ.” They were addressed to Christians who had recently come out of the most

heathenistic societies. The lessons tend to deal with gross sins. This fact has led many modern Christians to believe they have become spiritual when they do not commit the same sinful acts. And yet many of Christ's deeper teachings are completely foreign to their understanding. These spiritual truths are ignored because they cannot be understood from their natural plane of life.

The Corinthians had received numerous spiritual gifts. Some would even say they were baptized in the Spirit. But the baptism with the Spirit is what immerses the heart into Christ's life of holy love and makes a person spiritual. And these "babes in Christ" remained "carnal." The fact that they were using their gifts to exalt themselves reveals how they were still acting like "mere men" with a self-seeking nature.

God created His human children to live in an exalted state. He never intended for human beings to live on an earthly plane of life. We were to be His sons and daughters by walking with Him in the heavenly realms. But after the "Fall," when the exalting power of the Holy Spirit was removed from the soul, fallen man began to walk on an earthly plane of life. The "prince of this world" and the "spirit of the world" have been teaching people to exalt themselves ever since that great "Fall" from life in the heavenly realms.

People are taught from a very young age to believe that if they are to become someone special they must set their own goals and work hard to accomplish their plans. The "spirit of the world" teaches them to believe that the devil's independent and self-sufficient way of life is both "innocent" and "right." The devil is still saying, "You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it {this independent way of life} your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (Gen. 3:5) These deceived souls are led to believe they can innocently make their own choice about what will be "right" or "wrong" for their life. And so they expend their lives setting their own goals and trying to lift themselves into a higher spiritual state. Some have effectively used this means to become strong and wise and highly esteemed among men. But this self-originated form of life is still an abomination in the sight of God. (Luke 16:15)

According to God's order, where He would be the source of everything, man was to live as a vessel of His life and works. He intended to dwell in us and walk in us through His Spirit. "For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, *I will dwell in them, and walk in them.*" (2 Cor 6:16) The Son, while living as the Second Adam, perfectly expressed this way of life. He never did anything out from Himself. Everything He did had its source in the Father. His spirit and soul could therefore remain filled with His Father's eternal life from heaven. "I do nothing of Myself... The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those thing that please Him." (John 8:28-29)

The Son lived in a spiritually exalted state within the heavenly realms while walking in this world. "No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man *who is* {present tense} *in heaven.*" (John 3:13) God intended for each of His children to walk in this same spiritually exalted state. Have you found this life in the heavenly realms? Or are you still living on the natural plane attempting to lift yourselves spiritually through your own works?

Jesus was highly honored by God and exalted to the highest place because He chose as a man to sink down to the lowest place of a servant and die to the independent form of life. (Rom. 6:10; Phil. 2:5-9) The Father was able to manifest His life and works through the Son because He never attempted to do His own works for His own glory. But a close examination of the life of "many" within the church today will reveal how they do not

believe that Jesus was right in living the way He did. They have chosen to follow the self-originated ways of the devil.

Much of what is taking place in the church today comes from the works of man rather than from the work of the Holy Spirit. The so-called “spiritual” development taking place has its source in psychology and is based on the humanistic principles of this world. It is a clear picture of fallen man attempting to use human means to help lift one another onto a higher spiritual plane. But it never works in the long run. The average up and down “spiritual life” of Christians today is almost cruelly self-revealing. God does not share His power and glory with people who are attempting to become something special so they may feel better about themselves.

But God has chosen...the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence. (1 Cor. 1:27-29)

Examine the emphasis of the activities in your chosen place of worship. Is everything related to the natural world? Is it all about trying to make people feel better or live better through the use of mere activities, programs, words and rules? If so, it is the reason why there are so few of God’s called-out people finding life in the heavenly realms.

Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the traditions of men, *according to the basic principles of the world*, and not according to Christ. For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead {the life of the Trinity} bodily; and you are complete in Him {by sharing with Him in the same life}, who is the head of all principality and power. (Col. 2:8-9)

The emphasis of earthly religions will be on the words and thoughts and programs that are used to hold these organizations together. Because self-exaltation is important to earthly minded people, this “means” is used as the primary motivator. Even though the teachings may include holiness standards equaling that of the Pharisees, and people are being motivated to work for God, you will find that “self” remains at the center of what is being done. It is the reason why envy and contentions can still be found in these human organizations.

They mouth great swelling words, *flattering people to gain advantage*... These are sensual persons {who are basically seeking to please themselves}, who cause division {separating people from the “mind” that Jesus revealed}, not having the Spirit. But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your *most holy faith*, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves *in the love of God* {by living through His Spirit}...hating even the garment defiled by the {self-originated works of the} flesh. (Jude 16-22)

Yes, “the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” (1 Cor. 1:18) It will be necessary to die to the wisdom of this world before there can be the kind of faith that makes it possible to be lifted into Christ’s life in the heavenly realms by the power of God.

For it is written: “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.” Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? (1 Cor. 1:19-20 NIV)

The wise men of this world, the scholars and the philosophers were not being brought into the church by the Spirit when the true wisdom of God was being preached. But things have changed. Much of the church today is depending on the scholars and the wise businessmen of this world to keep it operating. But is it of God? In truth, this is what has kept the church on the natural plane. And God cannot honor it with His power while it continues to operate on this wrong foundation. (John 12:24-26)

While these earthly church organizations are able to grow very large, and become as well structured as any successful corporation, the members remain spiritually weak and open to various forms of spiritual disease. It has left the body of Christ anemic and prone to awful infections. We therefore find various carnal traits, such as pride, selfishness, temper, resentment and bitterness, spreading from one member to the next. It has prevented Christ's "light of life" from being displayed to the world.

For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? (1 Cor. 3:3)

But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, *as the truth is in Jesus*: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. (Eph. 4:20-24)

Living Above the World

There can be no spiritual progress in the life of heaven while Christians are still living by the ways of this world. The Kingdom of God and the kingdoms of this world are diametrically opposed to each other. Even though Christians remain in the world to spread the gospel of the kingdom of God, they are not of this world. Those who follow the ways of this world are literally making themselves an “enemy of God.”

Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?

Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. (Jam. 4:4-5)

The words of God are often drastic and severe. There is an irrevocable finality in what He says about being a friend of this world. This fact provides a real reason for being fearful of worldly behavior. We cannot afford to be deceived. The only hope we have of entering into the heavenly realm is to learn what He means by this truth.

Worldly behavior does not appear to the multitude to be wrong. But the apostle Paul has provided a list of the kinds of behavior that must be avoided. You may want to write them down. You cannot be lifted into the spiritual life of heaven while doing these things.

But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud... headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God {and His way of the cross}, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! (2 Tim. 3:1-5)

It is not our intent to condemn. Our heart is with the apostle Paul. He “wept” over souls when he observed how they were being led “to destruction” because their minds remained on “earthly things.” (Phil. 3:18-19) Our purpose is to help expose the deceitful ways of the devil. We believe it is the duty of every spiritual leader to follow Paul’s example by revealing the whole counsel of God.

For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God... For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock... Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears... So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance {in the heavenly realms} among all those who are sanctified. (Acts 20:27-32)

What, then, should be the Christian’s relationship to the world? The answer is found in his relationship to Christ. Christians are expected to be joined together with Christ in the heavenly realms. “But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.” (1 Cor. 7:17) It is the picture of marriage. And you cannot be “one spirit” with Christ in the heavenly realms while you are committing spiritual adultery with the world.

God has provided sufficient light in His word to reveal what it means to be a lover of the world and its ways. And those who truly submit to the leading of the Spirit can depend on Him to separate them from it. Christ’s disciples are not of this world.

I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because *they are not of the world*. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one {the self-seeking and self-exalting spirit of the world}. *They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world...* (John 17:14-16)

We know that we are of God {because we have overcome the world}, and *the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one*. {The world is living under the sway of Satan's "save thyself" maxim.} (1 John 5:19)

And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me {into the heavenly realms} cannot be My disciple... So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has {from his earthly form of life} cannot be My disciple. (Luke 14:27, 33)

Is there any wonder why God says that friendship with the world causes people to become His enemy? They are living by the self-seeking and self-exalting principles that were originated by the devil. "This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there." (Jam. 3:15-16) It is a wisdom that destroys the soul.

Living for the pleasures of this world, entering into a partnership with its pursuits, or fashioning one's life by its principles, is a rejection of the form of life that God planned for His children. Because these activities do not come from above, but come from the natural and earthly plane, it prevents individuals from sharing with Christ in His heavenly life on the highest plane. Thus, the only way into heaven is to completely "overcome" the world. "Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth."

A Simple Definition of Worldliness

Perhaps some reader is still in the dark as to the real meaning of being worldly. We can find the answer in 1 John 2:16. We are told that it is everything "not of the Father." Worldliness refers to a life that does not have its source in God. It is self-originated. You can recognize these works by the way that people look to be honored for what they have done with their own hands.

Their land is also full of idols; They worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made. (Isa. 2:8)

Jesus did not do anything out from Himself. He did not live from His own resources, as the devil does, because He was not looking to have His own honor and glory. He remained free from sin by never seeking to have an independent will. He had no desire to seek honor for Himself because everything He did had its source in the Father.

Yes, Jesus could have yielded to the temptations of the devil and turned to the self-seeking and self-exalting ways of this world. He could have used His own powers as God to acquire its greatest kingdoms. And while it would have provided great comfort and considerable earthly honor, it would not have been "of the Father." It would have been worldly because the action would have originated in the world.

The Son specifically came as the Second Adam to reveal how God intended for man to live. He lived fully as a man. And He knew that men were required to live by the Spirit. It entails receiving everything from above. "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven." (John 3:27)

The choice to live independently of God in self-sufficiency is the essence of sin. It is in this sense that the self-originated form of life is the real meaning of worldliness.

For all that is in the world {the works that originate in man}...*is not of the Father but is of the world.* (1 John 2:16)

Simply stated, the only way to avoid being worldly is to live by the Spirit. The people “of the world” direct their own steps and seek those things that please themselves. They can be as religious as the most holy Pharisee, but their minds are still on earthly things and they remain “self-indulgent.” (Matt. 23:25) It is a way of life that is in direct conflict with the “light” that Jesus revealed.

We are not implying that God’s children do not, or cannot, enjoy “things” in His natural creation. God has provided all things for us to enjoy. But He does insist that we live by His Spirit rather than by the desires of the flesh. By walking in the Spirit we can receive our life directly from God. We are then enabled to consistently share with Him in His righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. “Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst.” (John 4:14) Those who find this heavenly life have found the secret for being content in every situation. They can walk in the world in good times and bad times without looking to it for their source of spiritual fulfillment. As the Father continued to live in the Son, never leaving Him alone, the Son continues to live in these heavenly-minded Christians with His eternal life. (Col. 3:1-3)

I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength. (Phil 4:11-13 NIV)

{This is} the mystery which has been hidden from ages and generations...which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. (Col. 1:26-28)

A person who is still trying to find life from the temporal realm will not understand this heavenly secret. Fallen man’s spiritual state is dependent upon his circumstances. His focus will be on trying to make his life enjoyable through the use of temporal things. It will be expressed in one’s conversation, in how one dresses, in the company one keeps, in the pleasures one enjoys, in the books one reads, in the appetites one indulges, in the things one buys, in the ambitions by which one is ruled, and in the activities in which one engages. The common ground is that it is self-focused. Even when it tries to be highly religious, it remains self-seeking and self-exalting. (Matt. 23:25)

Sadly, we often hear preachers telling people from their pulpits that everyone must expect to periodically go through periods of despondency, despair and a sense of spiritual defeat. And they try to leave the impression that their “wisdom” is confirmed in God’s Word. But they attempt to prove their point by using an earthly-minded perspective. An examination of their life will inevitably reveal how they are still trying to improve their spiritual state by depending on temporal things. They will be found working to build their own little kingdoms in this world so they may have a pleasant environment to support their spiritual life. But this storing of their treasures on earth is what separates them from the heavenly life of God. It is the reason they do not experience the ever-flowing “rivers” of heavenly life that are now flowing from under the throne of Christ.

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single {focused singly on God and His way of life}, thy whole body shall be full of light {the heavenly life of Christ}. But if thine eye be evil {where it is still motivated in some manner by self-seeking}, thy whole body shall be full of darkness... No man can serve two masters... (Matt. 6:21-24 KJV)

Anything that leads to a feeding or pampering of the flesh, which is the lower nature of man, whether it results in gross sensuality or simply leads to self-indulgence and living for personal pleasures, is worldliness. It is the “lust of the flesh,” and it will separate the soul from the heavenly life of Christ.

Anything that caters merely to the fashions of this world, that stimulates a desire to possess things, that aims to please men and gain their approval, that draws the eyes to the things that are seen rather than toward the unseen, is worldly. It is “the lust of the eyes,” and it will put a cloud between the heart and the life of Christ.

Anything that exalts self, that fosters pomp and display, that sets the affections upon the praise and honor that comes from man, rather than on the honor that God gives to the humble, is worldly. It is “the pride of life,” and it will keep the mind groveling in the dust of this earth rather than soaring heavenward.

Is there any wonder why people who are living on this natural plane of life still find themselves becoming upset when things do not go their way? Or, they fall into periods of despondency when their little world falls apart? It simply reveals how they are still under the sway of the devil’s wisdom. They are trying to find life from this world. It continues to separate them from Christ’s heavenly life.

Do you still find yourself, in spite of everything you do to keep yourself lifted up, being weighed down by the oppressive spirit of this world? If so, you need to take your mind off earthly things and begin looking into the heavenly realms for your spiritual life. The resurrection power of the Holy Spirit has the capacity to consistently raise your spirit above the oppressive darkness that surrounds this fallen world.

Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary... {And you now have access to His everlasting life—the life that never fails.} He gives power to the weak {to those who have truly learned to live by a dependent and trusting faith}, and to those who have no might {to those who no longer live in the strength of the flesh} He increases strength {through the resurrection power of the Holy Spirit}. Even the youths {who live on the natural plane} shall faint and be weary, and the young men {who think they are strong in themselves} shall utterly fall, but those who wait on the Lord {by looking to Him in the heavenly realms to be the source of their life and works} shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. (Isa. 40:28-31)

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is {in the power of His endless life}... Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. (Col. 3:1-2)

There can be no harmony between the life that has its source in this world and the life that has its source in the eternal world. The slightest turning to the earthly realm cuts the

heart off from Christ's ever-flowing "rivers" of Living Water. (Jer. 2:11-13) And we must realize that this Living Water is the real source of our Christian life. It is not our standards, but Christ's heavenly life of holy love consistently flowing through our soul that will manifest God's Glory—His righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. And the only way to find the Lord in the power of His endless life is by following Him through the cross. We must turn from the world and look for life in the heavenly realms.

But My people have changed their Glory {the eternal life that comes directly from God} for what does not profit. Be astonished, O heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid {of what it leads to}; Be very desolate," says the Lord. "For My {called-out} people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewn themselves cisterns {by looking to this temporal world for their pleasures}—broken cisterns that can hold no water. (Jer. 2:11-13)

But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. (Gal. 6:14)

Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord {to know His indwelling life}, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things {the things that originate on the natural plane}, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ...that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection... (Phil. 3:7-10)

Today is the day to be converted. It will entail completely turning the mind away from the self-seeking and self-exalting ways of this world, becoming like dependent little children, and entrusting everything to the Sovereign God of the universe. Only in this way is it possible to be lifted into His eternal Kingdom-life. (Matt. 18:3; Luke 12:29-34)

Is it necessary to say anything more to reveal the foolishness of remaining on the natural plane in a worldly form of life? If you have been convicted of infidelity, turn to God. If you will yield to "all truth," the Spirit will lead you into the wonderful liberty of life on the highest plane. Yes, today is the day to begin sharing in the life of the Trinity!

If anyone desires to come after Me {into the heavenly realms}, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For...whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. (Matt. 16:24-25)

If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word {by taking this way of the cross}; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. (John 14:23)

At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you {sharing in the life of the Trinity}. (John 14:20)

Living as Witnesses of the Resurrection Life

The lives of the early Christians were supercharged with a joyous consciousness of the Presence of their living Lord. Because He was so real to them, all their thoughts and affections rested in Him. Has this spiritual Presence of the living Lord become a reality to you? Are you completely occupied with the indwelling life of Christ? Are you truly satisfied in Him, or do you keep turning back to the natural world for your source of spiritual sustenance?

The life of holy love that Christ shares with His spiritual disciples is appealing to others. It reveals the holy calm of God mirrored in the face, the holy quietness of God manifested in the voice and the holy graciousness of God expressed in the manner. It is God so inhabiting His temple that He reveals Himself through human personality.

To have Christ abiding in us with the abundant fullness of His life is to have every need supplied, every desire fulfilled, every thirst quenched. “But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will *never thirst*.” It is to have our whole life perpetually refreshed and replete in Him. Such a realization of His indwelling Presence is one of the rich rewards of a Spirit-filled life. Unfortunately, some who were once “filled” have lost this divine Presence because they have begun to live by the wisdom of this world.

A study of the book of Acts reveals the sufficiency of a Spirit-filled life. These early disciples received sufficient power to suffer and to sacrifice, to teach and to preach, to witness and to work. Thousands of souls were born into the Kingdom of God and blessed through their Spirit-empowered ministry. While the wise men of this world condemned their lack of social status and their inadequate education, it did not prevent them from furthering the true kingdom of God. They had become living witnesses of Christ’s resurrection life. And so the opinions of worldly-minded people did not influence them. As they lived in the firstfruits of the life of heaven, they continued to draw others into the same “light of life.”

Once again we need to say with emphasize that this work was not wrought through human energy, education, zeal, wisdom or eloquence. They would have been complete failures if they had attempted to further the Son’s eternal Kingdom-life by trying to use the wisdom of this world. These so-called “ignorant” men help us to see how God has truly chosen to use those “who are not.” (1 Cor. 1:27-29) It also helps us to see what it means to have the power of the ascended Lord poured forth through Spirit-filled lives.

In contrast, we have tended to fill our pulpits today with “wise and learned” preachers. It has left the church powerless in comparison to these early years. The sufficiency is now coming from the wrong source. We now have men running the church in the strength of the flesh rather than through the power of Christ’s Spirit.

Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God. (2 Cor. 3:5)

For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit {live through the Spirit}, rejoice in Christ Jesus {for what He is doing}, and have no confidence in the flesh. (Phil. 3:3)

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. (2 Cor. 9:8)

While we write to the whole church, we also know that these truths will not be fully understood by all. Paul realized that even earnest Christians would not be able to understand his words while they were still living on the natural plane. But we encourage every reader to turn to God and ask for understanding. Those who truly seek out light, without doubting, can depend on Him to lead them into all truth. (Jam. 1:5-7)

The whole body of Christ will need to come to an understanding of this “spiritual wisdom” if the church is to “come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” (Eph. 4:13). This is the heritage of the true Christian church.

Your Choice—The Flesh or The Spirit

Jesus said to the rich young ruler, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.” (Mark 10:18) This statement was not addressing whether or not Jesus was God. The young ruler came to find out how to enter into the “good life” that he was able to see in Jesus. He therefore asked what he might do to achieve the goal. The Lord’s response reveals a fundamental truth that will need to be understood by everyone who is seeking “eternal life.” Jesus refers to God as the only source of true goodness. If man is to be truly good he will need to receive the one eternal life that has its source in God.

In the original creation God was the source of everything. Man was created to be the highest means for God to reveal His life and glory. God, who is Spirit, intended to live and make Himself known through Adam and his lineage. While Adam was still walking by the Spirit he revealed the “light of life” from heaven in everything he did. There was no darkness in him until he chose to live out from himself by “the flesh.”

Even man’s best efforts to live a moral life will always fall short of God’s glory. In other words, “the flesh profits nothing.” (John 6:63) Man simply cannot be good in God’s sight without walking in His Spirit and bearing His divine fruit. “It is the Spirit who gives life.” (v. 63)

The fruit of the Spirit {which reveals God’s light of life} is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no {need for} law. (Gal. 5:22-23)

Adam did not need a Bible with laws to instruct him how to live when he was filled with God’s Spirit and manifesting His heavenly fruit. He then did by nature what God’s written laws require of man. Because he lived as a vessel of the life of God, as the Second Adam did, he lived as a manifestation of the Eternal and Living Word.

God provided the law because man began living out from himself on the natural plane of life. The purpose of the law is to constrain the flesh-life that has developed because of the missing presence of God’s eternal life. It is in this sense that those who are filled with God’s Spirit and are sharing with Him in His eternal life no longer need law to teach them how to act right. In the heavenly realms everyone remains “perfect in one” as they share in the same life of holy love. (John 17:22-23)

But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing {the indwelling life from heaven} teaches you concerning all things, and is true...and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him {live through the Son’s Spirit}. (1 John 2:27)

In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him... Love has been perfected among us in this...because as He is, so are we in this world. (1 John 4:9, 17)

It was Adam’s choice to live by the flesh rather than by the Spirit that resulted in a “body of sin.” Adam did not commit what we might call a “gross sin,” even though it was terrible in God’s sight. He died spiritually for simply doing something on his own. Choosing to live by self-will results in the fatal choice of turning from a Spirit-directed

way of life. You cannot serve two masters. Man cannot walk by his own will in the flesh and also be led by the Spirit. He cannot have a self-originated form of life and also have a life that has its source in God—the One source of all goodness. He must make a choice.

It was this turning to a self-directed way of life, known as walking by the flesh, that separated Adam from the life of God. At that point, because he no longer had the Spirit of God filling his inner being and satisfying his soul, he naturally became earthly-minded. The experience of this void within his eternal soul led to a self-seeking and self-exalting form of life. He then began to expend his time living for self in an attempt to develop an earthly form of spiritual fulfillment.

This should help to explain the biblical doctrine of man's depravity. It relates to this matter of being depraved of the spiritual life of God. This depravity cannot help but lead to a self-directed way of life, which is the essence of evil. It is a form of life that is in direct conflict with the life of holy love that was revealed by Jesus. All the carnal darkness now being spread throughout the world comes from living by the flesh according to the desires of this self-seeking and self-exalting nature.

This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic {of the devil}. For where envy {with its source in self-exaltation} and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. (Jam. 3:15-16)

The Son was sent into the world to save man from this fallen state. As the Second Adam, He lived according to God's original plan for man. Everything He did had its source in the Father. Jesus said, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father." (John 14:9) He permitted the goodness of the eternal life within the Father to be displayed through Him by consistently choosing to walk by the Spirit. And after He had reestablished this God-ordained form of life, He became the Giver of this eternal life—the source of all goodness—to those who will choose to walk by the Holy Spirit as He did.

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life... (John 10:27-28)

And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life {the source of true goodness}, and this life is in His Son. (1 John 5:11)

This was the lesson that Jesus began teaching to the rich young ruler when he came to ask about obtaining eternal life. If he wanted to be truly "good" by sharing with God in the eternal life, he would need to follow Jesus in a Spirit-directed way of life. But this young man, like many today, chose to remain on the natural plane by walking in the flesh. While it is common to think that his problem was his love for possessions, the real issue was the basic choice between walking by the flesh and walking by the Spirit. He preferred to live out from himself so that he could control his own life and do his own work—making it possible to have his own glory. We therefore find him going back to his old self-directed form of life. And even though he was able to develop a moral life by obeying many of God's commands, he lost all hope of finding the Son's eternal life when he refused to enter into Christ's Spirit-directed way of life.

You search the Scriptures {and use them to help make yourself right}, for in them you think you have eternal life {the life of God}; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me {through the cross and into the heavenly realms} that you may have life. (John 5:39-40)

For if you live according to the flesh you will die... For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. (Rom. 8:13-14)

W. B. Godbey, in his book *Victory*, speaks of how the church in general has not been directing individuals to the true salvation of the Lord. He explains how Christ came to save people from the old way of living by the flesh so we may live in true harmony with God. Today is the day when we need to be prepared to enter the kingdom of heaven where there is no disposition to live independently of God. Even though the following statements were separated from the surrounding context, having been taken from several chapters of his book, this truth reflects his overall premise. It reveals the importance of coming into harmony with the Spirit of God in this world.

So they [many of those in the church] play the children's game, out and in, up and down. We are presuming these people have good moral and churchly characters, perhaps very active in the Sunday-school and temporal interests of the church. They are like the "rich man" in Luke 16, who was an honorable church member; they need nothing but religion...

Popular churchanity postpones nearly all the promises of God to the future state. God says, "Be holy, be perfect, be filled with the Spirit." Popular religion says you can't be holy till you get to heaven... We must take God's Bible as it is and come into harmony with it, or we will never get to heaven. Have you a New Testament experience? If so, you are emptied of sin and filled with the Holy Ghost...

Remember Christ came to prepare us for heaven. In heaven there are no peace officers, as nobody there has any disposition to break the peace. Hence we must get rid of every disturber before we leave this world. Does the peace of God, "which passeth all understanding," reign in your heart without rival?... When you get rid of Adam the First, then you are no longer under the law, consequently, you will be just as free as if there was no law... So when you get everything out of your heart which antagonizes God's law, then you sit down with God on His throne and cooperate with Him in His administration...

"If the Son shall make you free you shall be free indeed." (John 8:36)... If you have a clean heart; i.e., have no disposition to commit sin, you are free from the law. Glorious freedom! It is heaven on earth! Thus we become "kings and priests unto God," and reign jointly with Christ upon His throne.

Living by the Spirit

In the plan that God originally had for man there was absolute unity and harmony in the human personality. The Spirit of God and the spirit of man were one with each other, as the Father and Son are one with each other. (John 17:22-23) The human spirit, as it remained under the dominion and direction of the Holy Spirit, was supreme in authority over the soul and the body. The soul and body were receptive. They did not control the activities of man. Thus, the Holy Spirit through the channel of the human spirit made and kept the whole being in a spiritual union with God.

But man, with his free will, is able to reject this dominion of God's Spirit over his activities. And so when Adam and Eve chose to live by their own will, which resulted in

the departure of the Holy Spirit, their spirit became separated from God. And without this union of the Holy Spirit and the human spirit there was a spiritual death. At that point there was nothing left but the soul and body to control the activities of man. Human desires then began to dominate and dictate what man did. We therefore find fallen man living by the flesh and producing the works of the flesh.

And you He made alive {by giving you the Holy Spirit}, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which *you once walked according to the course of this world...fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind*, and were by nature children of wrath {separated from God because you lived by the desires of the flesh}, just as the others. (Eph. 2:1-3)

We can now see what it means when the Scriptures speak of everyone being born “in sin.” Everyone without the Spirit naturally lives by their own desires. (2 Pet. 1:4) Adam passed this “body of sin” on to his lineage by separating all of mankind from the indwelling Spirit. And since only what the Spirit does through man is “good,” fallen man without the Spirit cannot help but be a sinner, regardless of how moral he chooses to be. Because he is still living by the flesh according to his own earthly desires, he cannot receive the heavenly life that comes from above. The Spirit can only manifest this heavenly life within the temple of our body after we have rejected the flesh-life and have chosen to walk in the Spirit. “If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” (Gal. 5:25)

When the Son came into the world He “condemned sin in the flesh.” (Rom. 8:3) Even though He lived as a man with both a soul and a body, He did not live by His human desires. In contrast to Adam’s lineage, He was born with the Holy Spirit in Him. And by always yielding to the movements of the Holy Spirit, He reestablished the dominion of the human spirit over the body and the soul. Yes, He had natural desires, such as hunger and the need to protect his body. But he never permitted these desires to usurp the leading of the Spirit.

Thus, Jesus condemned sin in the flesh—the self-originated form of life that comes from self-will—by choosing to always be led by the Spirit. He revealed how God had originally intended for man to live. And having reestablished in bodily form the eternal life that Adam lost, He can now give this same overcoming life to those who will choose to walk by the Spirit as He did. (Rom. 5:17)

Once Christ had actually paid the penalty for sin by dying on the cross, He was in a position to breathe the Spirit into His followers. (John 20:21-22) This gift of the indwelling Spirit is what results in the new birth. Only through this means is it possible to overcome the flesh and the world. Those without the Spirit of God cannot help but live on the natural plane. Although they can come under the convicting work of the Holy Spirit, and be moved to straighten out their lives in a certain fashion, they still cannot relate to the supernatural life that comes down from above.

We need to distinguish between the Spirit being “with man” and being “in man.” In reality, the Spirit of God is in everyone, “since He gives to all life, breath, and all things.” (Acts 17:25) Everyone would dry up and return to dust if it was not for God’s Spirit. But Jesus spoke of the Spirit only being “with” His first disciples prior to His death and resurrection. They were able to respond to the convicting work of the Holy Spirit under law. And they conformed fairly well. But, as they revealed over and over again, they

were still dominated by their old self-seeking and self-exalting flesh-life. They were still under the influence of the world and walking as mere men on the natural plane.

This is why Jesus said it would be better for everyone when He went away. Even if the Son of God would have remained with everyone on the natural plane, His outward presence could not help anyone when it comes to revealing the eternal “light of life.” It was not until He went away and became a “life-giving spirit” in the heavenly realms that He could truly become the source of this divine life “within” His disciples. (1 Cor. 15:45) We need to know this indwelling life before we can truly teach others about the true salvation of the Lord. Paul said, “It pleased God...to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles.” (Gal. 1:15-16)

Much of Christianity today, because it is on the natural plane, places a great deal of emphasis on the Spirit of the Lord coming into church services to touch the emotions of the people. But this form of help is similar to what Jesus provided when He was still walking with His disciples in the natural realm. This kind of “presence” provides very little help in the long run. It is the reason why the spiritual life drains out of people so quickly after they leave the church building. Even if Christ was to manifest Himself outwardly, as He did to Paul on the road to Damascus, it would not make His heavenly life of holy love known within the heart.

The earnest seeker of the life of God needs to realize there are various stages in God’s work of salvation. For example, Jesus said that His true followers were reconciled to God even before He breathed the Spirit into them on the day of His resurrection. He said they were already “clean” in God’s sight. (John 13:10) Everyone who is following the Lord and is fully persuaded that He is the One—the Seed—who has come to establish His Kingdom-life within their heart can know they are in a justified state. (John 6:66-69; Rom. 4:20-22) But they must not stop at these first steps in His work of saving their soul.

It will be helpful to look at how the Spirit works in the lives of people in several different ways. As long as they are responding to His current level of work, where they are walking in all revealed light, they can depend on Christ’s shed blood to cover any error in their life. But we must remember that only those who are being led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God. (Rom. 8:14)

The Spirit has always been working on the conscience of people all over the world, telling them to say “no” to ungodliness. (Titus 2:11-12) We therefore find people naturally developing moral religious systems and governments to constrain sin. The Spirit is working on their conscience and telling them to say “no” to everything that is a sin against love. But that does not imply they are sharing with Christ in His life of holy love.

When a believer *chooses to become a Spirit-led follower of Jesus* he receives the gift of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit quickens the believer’s spirit at this new birth. There is then a movement of the Spirit within the heart providing an inward motivation to become like God in His nature of holy love. The Spirit then leads these earnest souls into the wilderness testing period where He begins to work with the individual’s spirit (through their yielded “will”) to gain complete dominion over the fleshly desires of the body and the soul. A real war takes place when the believer begins to fight this “good fight of faith.” Those who go on to fully establish Zion within the heart, where there is a complete dominion over the desires of the flesh and the mind, can expect to go through some difficult battles with the powers of darkness.

Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh {in dying to the old self-originated form of life} has ceased from sin {he has stopped living for his own will}, that he no longer should live for the lusts of men {fleshly human desires}, but for the will of God. (1 Pet. 4:1-2)

But now having been set free from sin {self-will}, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. (Rom. 7:22)

Every enemy that prevents Christ from establishing His undivided rule within the heart must be overcome. And this war with the old flesh-life will go on until either the individual turns away from this Spirit-directed way of life or until the Spirit has gained complete dominion so that every moment is under His control and power. Given the opportunity, the Lord will gain a complete victory.

{He came} To grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies {everything that keeps us from walking by His Spirit alone}, might serve Him without fear {of the old carnal nature}, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life. (Luke 1:74-75)

Moving Beyond the Time of Testing

W.B. Godbey said, "Israel did not leave Egypt for the wilderness, but for Canaan. Before they left Egypt they entered into a positive covenant with God to go directly and possess the 'land flowing with milk and honey.' Even so, when we give up all our sins and enter the covenant of justification, the alpha and omega [the beginning and the end] of that covenant is that we are to be 'holy to the Lord.' Whenever you cease to press forward into holiness [the life of promise] you forfeit your covenant and lose your justification."

We must realize that God sent His Son into the world to restore the relationship that Adam lost. And so we must press into this full salvation, where everyone lives by the Spirit alone, if we hope to find what God has prepared for us.

Jesus, as the Son of Man and our Leader, had to thoroughly reject the ways of the flesh before coming out of His wilderness testing period. He set the course that must be followed. While He fasted physically as a spiritual type, we are to fast spiritually from the temporal things we have used to feed our flesh-life. While it will lead to the experience of a deep sense of need, including real weakness in self, let us not forget the goal of our faith. Once we have been tested and have thoroughly rejected the worldly way of living by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, we can expect to be suddenly strengthened with a divine food that comes from heaven. And then, as we come out of the wilderness in the power of the Spirit and we are living wholly for God's purposes, we can continually feed on this supernatural food that comes from heaven.

My food {the source of true spiritual sustenance} is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. (John 4:34)

As the living Father sent Me, and I live {in the eternal life} because of the Father {by living through the Spirit}, so he who feeds on Me {by living through the Spirit} will live {in the same eternal life} because of Me. This is the bread which came down from heaven... He who eats this bread will live forever. (John 6:57-58)

Jesus could not come out of the wilderness testing period until He had consciously rejected the devil's temptations to live by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. Although He could have lived quite comfortably in the world by choosing to live by the self-seeking and self-exalting ways of the devil, He could not serve self and His Father at the same time.

The devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me. {Everyone who gives way to Satan's self-seeking and self-exalting way of life is worshiping him. Rejecting the way of the cross, they end up bowing down to his "save thyself" maxim for finding life.}

Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and *Him only you shall serve.*' " (Matt. 4:8-10)

The devil is the prince of this world. He has tremendous power in the temporal realm. He encourages Christians to live for themselves during their wilderness testing period. Although he cannot convince them to remain in complete bondage to sin within Egypt, he still comes to these new believers and says, "I will let you go, that you may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness; only you shall not go very far away." (Ex. 8:28) While these called-out children of God should be heading directly toward the life of promise, moving away from Egypt and the world as fast as possible, many of them set up housekeeping where they attempt to live in both worlds. And so the devil helps them to build their own little kingdoms. He knows that it will keep their minds on earthly things and lead to their destruction. (Phil. 3:18-19)

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth...but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven... For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also... No one can serve two masters. {You cannot serve God and self.}... (Matt. 6:19-20, 24)

The Scriptures are constantly contrasting the works of the flesh and the works of the Spirit. Everyone ends up choosing one way or the other, whether they do so consciously or not. Those who choose to keep their mind on earthly things and live by their own personal desires have effectively become the enemies of Christ's way of the cross. They have chosen the way of the flesh rather than the way of the Spirit. And walking by the flesh always leads to spiritual death.

Today is the day to choose between walking by the flesh and walking by the Spirit. While the devil and the "spirit of the world" will tell you that you will not die if you live by your own desires, it is a lie. God has spoken very clearly on this subject. If you go on living by the desires of the flesh you will surely die. We earnestly pray that our readers will be able to hear this message and respond to the will of God before it is too late.

For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. (Rom. 8:13)

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption {and destruction}, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. (Gal. 6:7-9)

Examining Self-Produced Righteousness

Paul, while still living as a Pharisee, was one of the most righteous men of his day. His religious heritage, his training and his zeal for God enabled him to rise to the top of his religious class. Concerning the righteousness that comes from obeying the law, he considered himself as being blameless. (Phil. 3:6) But this righteousness did not come from the life of God. He would need to become like God in His nature of holy love before he could truly be “right.” While a zealous form of religion can be sustained for a season through human emotions and willpower, it is not the “everlasting life.” He eventually discovered his inadequacy once he was fully exposed to Christ’s teachings.

Our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount is the standard of righteousness that God requires of His children in this age of fulfillment. But man does not have the needed power to produce this kind of righteousness on a consistent basis. The heart must be transformed into God’s nature of holy love before these “standards” of righteousness can be truly fulfilled. “Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.”

Even the most earnest Christians will find they are unable to consistently live on the spiritual plane that God requires of His children. Not only do they fall off the higher plane they have tried to achieve, there will be a tendency to periodically sink down into discouragement, unhappiness, joylessness and other signs of a depressed spirit.

There is a reason why the soul keeps finding itself empty, lifeless and incapable of consistently displaying all the righteous requirements taught in the Scriptures. It is a simple matter of not being filled with the Glory of God. Those who are still attempting to live in their own strength will be like a cracked cistern that keeps running dry.

But My people have changed their Glory {the eternal life} for what does not profit... For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters {the one source of everlasting life}, and hewn themselves cisterns {in their own fleshly works}—broken cisterns that can hold no water. (Jer. 2:11, 13)

But the water that I shall give him {through a supernatural work of the Spirit} will become in him a fountain of water springing up into {a consistent display of} everlasting life. (John 4:14)

The Glory of God residing within the temple of the body is the only hope of having a righteousness that never fails. Christ’s “rivers” of Living Water, which flow supernaturally through the power of His Spirit, cannot be cut off by outward circumstances. “As the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” (John 7:38) “For the fruit of the Spirit is in *all goodness, righteousness, and truth.*” (Eph. 5:9) This righteousness that comes from God through faith never fails when we are truly walking in the Spirit.

The flesh is willing to work very hard to put on a covering of righteousness in order to look good in the eyes of men. It is willing to conform to certain high standards if it can be recognized and honored. Most of the religious world is run by men following this course. But living in this self-produced righteousness prevents them from being honored by God. He will never share His eternal life and Glory with the flesh of any man. The righteousness that is built on a foundation of trying to exalt self is actually darkness.

Jesus said of the devil, “he speaks from his own resources.” (John 8:44) Satan wanted to have his own honor and glory. In order to have a basis for being considered someone special he would need to perform his own works independently of God. His works would need to come from “his own resources.” Using this means, he can even make himself appear to be an “angel of light” by mimicking God’s ways. But since this “light” does not have its source in the eternal life of God, but is self-originated, it is still darkness in God’s sight. All self-originated righteousness is like filthy rags in God’s sight. (Isa. 64:6)

The apostle John tells us that the “whole world” is under this same influence of the devil. (1 John 5:19) Everyone starts out under the sway of this spirit of the world. It leads them into the devil’s self-originated form of life. Those who are not living through the power of the Holy Spirit will naturally live out from their “own resources.” And when they choose to be religious, and conform to certain Biblical standards, they too can mimic God’s “light” of righteousness and holiness. They make themselves look like children of God. But putting on this false covering can never change the inner nature into God’s nature of holy love.

For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of...self-indulgence {the old self-seeking and self-exalting nature}. Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean. (Matt. 23:25-26)

Man cannot make his own heart right and begin producing “all goodness, righteousness, and truth.” (Eph. 5:9). The flesh is unable to produce the eternal life of God. “It is the Spirit who gives {divine} life; the flesh profits nothing.” (John 6:63) And yet, most Christians continue to attempt to live by their own strength under law. It is the reason why we still see contentions, jealousies, outbursts of anger and similar temperaments periodically breaking forth from the heart. These carnal traits will continue to be mixed in with the fruit of self-produced righteousness. And the more highly one thinks of himself and his righteousness, the more prevalent these traits will tend to be.

Jesus specifically made Himself of no reputation by never doing anything out from Himself. (Phil 2:5-9) He did not try to live by His own resources, as the devil did, in order to be honored for His works. Instead of seeking the honor that comes from man through human achievement, He sought the honor that comes from God by sinking down to the lowest place in order to live as a mere vessel of His Father’s life and Glory. There was no opportunity to be honored for either His words or His works because they were not self-originated.

I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear {from the Spirit}, I judge {make decisions}; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me. (John 5:30)

Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. (John 14:10-11)

I do not receive honor from men {because nothing is done out from self}... How can you believe {claiming to have the mind of Christ}, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God? (John 5:44)

God truly desires to lift each of His children into the heavenly realms where they may share with Him in the Glory that resides within His eternal life. But the only way to be lifted by His power and established in His eternal Kingdom-life is by sinking down into nothingness. The old covering with its self-produced image must be buried in the ground and disintegrate before it is possible to be raised into the heavenly realms and live in the Presence of God. “But God has chosen...the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence.” (1 Cor. 1:27-29) And so it is impossible to be honored by God while living in self-produced righteousness.

Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone {separated from the life of the Trinity}... If anyone serves Me {in the Spirit}, let him follow Me {through the cross and into resurrection life}; and where I am {in the heavenly realms}, there My servant will be also... him {he who surrenders to this wisdom of God} My Father will honor. (John 12:24-26)

The Apostle Paul’s Testimony

The apostle Paul eventually learned this secret of how to be lifted spiritually by the resurrection power of the Holy Spirit. As we have said, he had previously made himself into one of the greatest religious men of his day. Through a disciplined self-effort he was able to conform to the laws found in the Old Testament. But it was only after he had chosen to count “everything” that had its source outside of God “as loss” that he was in a position to be truly honored by the Lord and lifted into the Kingdom-life of promise.

We also need to note how this counting “as loss” even included the “zeal” that he worked up to serve God. The power that comes from human emotions is not everlasting. In exchange for this “loss,” he received the power of an “endless life.” (Heb. 7:16) This everlasting life does not break down in difficult situations, as does the zeal that originates in pumped up human emotions. They could beat him, throw him in prison, and treat him as the offscouring of all things. (1 Cor. 4:11-13) But the righteousness and peace and joy of the Holy Spirit continued to flow through him. Once he had discovered how God’s power is perfected through weakness, he did not become discouraged when everything was falling apart around him. Not only did he know that the Sovereign God of the universe was working out all things for His eternal good, but that He was also sharing with the Son in His everlasting life.

Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come...nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God {His never failing and ever-flowing eternal life of holy love} which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. 8:37-39)

I can do all things *through Christ who strengthens me.* (Phil. 4:13)

Before going further, we need to note how God must come to everyone on the natural plane in the beginning. He uses various means in the natural realm to touch the emotions as He works to turn the heart to Him. But these temporal means have only limited use. As Jesus had to “go away” from His first disciples before they could find His eternal life, we must stop relying on these temporal supports before we can come to the place where we look to God alone for the everlasting life that comes from the heavenly realms. The

earnest seeker will eventually learn how the Spirit takes away even the “good things” that we once relied upon for our spiritual support. God must bring every believer to the point where He becomes “all in all” before He will fill the temple with His Glory.

There is only one sure way to find life on the highest plane. There must be an absolute loss of all hope in temporal supports, including the works of human effort. “Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?” (Gal. 3:3 NIV)

Every called-out child of God will need to make a conscious choice to count everything “as loss” before there will be the kind of weakness in self that permits faith to be perfected. It entails looking to God alone for the righteousness that comes from Him through a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by faith.

For we are the circumcision {those who have had the flesh-life cut off}, who worship God in the Spirit...*and have no confidence in the flesh* {the things that are self-originated}, though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so... But what things were gain to me {the so-called great things that were worked out for God on the natural plane}, *these I have counted loss for Christ*. Yet indeed I also count all things loss *for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord*, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things {everything from the natural realm}, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ {His heavenly life} and be found in Him, *not having my own righteousness, which is from the law* {through human works}, *but that which is through faith in Christ* {imparted by the Spirit}, that I may *know Him* and the power of His resurrection... (Phil. 3:3-10)

It was after Paul had lost hope in everything from the temporal realm, including his personal zeal for God, that he was in a place to know the Lord in the power of His resurrection. Once the eternal Kingdom-life of “righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” was ceaselessly flowing out of his inner being, even in severe hardships, he no longer needed to make periodic journeys to “Mecca,” or some other religious meeting, to work up his zeal. The heavenly life of God remained with Him wherever he went.

The Jews in Paul’s day had a real zeal for serving God. And like those Jews, we sometimes think that God is pleased with our zeal for serving Him. But Paul assures us that zeal without the knowledge of the righteousness that comes from God by faith is meaningless in the end.

What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness {through their efforts to keep the law}, have attained to righteousness, even *the righteousness of faith*; but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. Why? *Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of law...* For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. *For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God*. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. (Rom. 9:30-10:4)

Can you begin to see how there is a life of righteousness that comes directly from God by faith? But it can only be given to those who have “no confidence” in the flesh. In

other words, it is only given to those who have chosen to die to their old self-originated form of life and have agreed to become nothing in themselves. God did not plan for man to have his own righteousness and his own glory. We were created to live as vessels that He would fill with His Glory.

For it is God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face {in the spiritual image} of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels {weak mortal bodies}, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us...that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. (2 Cor. 4:6-7, 10)

Putting the Flesh to the Test

All Christians naturally start out in their spiritual journey with considerable confidence in the flesh. There is a tendency to divide it into the good and the bad. We distrust some things because they cause us trouble. Other things we acknowledge as weak points, but not necessarily bad. And there is even a large portion of this self-produced life that we rate rather high, and in which we place much of our trust. It may be our refined and cultured tastes, or the opinions and judgments which are the product of our educated minds, or our great zeal and noble feelings for doing good, or our high standards of morality, or even our religious heritage. So, like Paul living as a Pharisee, when we look at this cross-section of our self-produced form of life, taking the good and the bad together, it seems in our sight to measure up fairly well. At least we cannot see any reason for a wholesale condemnation of it as God does.

This was King Saul's problem. He did not believe that it was necessary to destroy all of Amalek. He thought there were some good things worth saving. But God, knowing there was "no good thing" in it, insisted that Saul do away with everything. But we find him attempting to save Agag and some of his better resources in order to use these corrupt things to serve God. This is what most Christians are doing today. They want to be followers of Christ without following Him through the cross. Because they have permitted their flesh-life to live on, its carnality can still be heard bleating in the background of their lives. These works of the flesh keep rising out of their hearts. (Gal. 5:19-20) This is why God can never be pleased until Agag, who represents "King Self," is put to death. Those who will agree to have his head cut off, which will entail dying to the wisdom of this world, will then be prepared to enter into the heavenly realms.

Those who have permitted Agag to live are in as much trouble as King Saul. He lost everything because he refused to "fully" obey what God had instructed. Yes, he thought he was serving God in the works that he chose to do. But living out from self in the flesh always results in a form of spiritual life that dies, even when the works are done for the Lord. Do you find your spiritual life continuing to die when things do not go your way? You will need to count "as loss" everything that is self-originated before you can truly walk by the Spirit and share with God in His everlasting life.

While the flesh may perform relatively well in producing some apparent goodness in comparison to what others are doing, it will continue to fall short of the glory of God. It simply does not have the capacity to go on day after day revealing Christ's Kingdom-life of "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."

Consider some of the trials you have recently experienced when something other than Christ's nature of holy love came out of your heart. Where was the Spirit's fruit of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control? Remember, "the fruit of the Spirit is in *all goodness, righteousness, and truth.*" (Eph. 5:9)

We are not saying that spiritual men will never get out of the Spirit. But it is not necessary. We have written testimonies in the Scriptures to show how men like Paul and Silas revealed Christ's "light of life" through the most severe forms of suffering. (Acts 16:16-34) It was because this supernatural life did not "die" or "drain out" of their soul in these miserable conditions that it was so effective in drawing others to Christ.

The early growth of the persecuted church can probably be attributed to how well Christians handled difficult times, including severe physical suffering. Their spiritual life continued to hold up even when the world fell apart around them. Everyone who sees this never-dying form of spiritual life will be attracted to it. Although there will still be "the many" who are unwilling to pay the full price for this heavenly Pearl (they will respond as the rich young ruler did even after seeing the life in Jesus), the church would be more effective if we were displaying Christ's Kingdom-life before the eyes of the world.

With these thoughts in mind, let us put the very best product of the flesh to the test. We will need to take it from the home in which it has made a comfortable place for itself. It will need to be removed from its sweet companionships, its various means of entertainment, the books it has used to stimulate its thoughts, the modern kitchen and the white linen covered table, and from all the conveniences of an affluent society. That is, take away all those things it has used to satisfy its intellectual, social, aesthetic and spiritual desires. Let us then transplant this flesh-life to an interior village on the mission field where it must live in a strange culture, with nothing to rest the eyes upon but mud walls and dirty narrow streets surrounded by foreign voices and unpleasant odors, and a furlough many years away. And then begin to examine this self-originated form of righteousness to see if it is able to consistently manifest Christ's "light of life" and remain "more than a conqueror." More than one missionary has left the field early because they set out to serve the Lord in the strength of the "flesh." The self-life inevitably breaks down under severe trial.

Or let us put the "flesh" to the test without even taking it away from its pleasant environment. Perhaps it thinks it has become like Jesus in love and is manifesting His "light of life" to lost souls. We therefore need to test it with the love described in chapter thirteen of First Corinthians. Is the love that is being revealed one that does not seek its own, does not become upset when treated poorly, keeps no record of being wronged, and is free from all envy and boasting? Is it able to believe all things, hope all things and endure all things with patient confidence in God? Would not the form of love that has its source in the flesh need to blush with shame at its periodic outbreaks of envy, worry, distress, selfishness, impatience, resentments and irritability? Can we begin to see how this self-originated form of life will inevitably fail this divine test and fall short of God's glory?

Someone may find themselves rising up in defense of "the flesh" and insisting they have some rights to act as they do. We suggest that you study more closely the responses of Jesus during His final hours as the sacrificial Lamb on the way to the cross. This is the nature of love that God wants to manifest through each of His children in this world. And it is impossible to display this nature of holy love while living according to the desires of

the flesh. The flesh-life will refuse to put up with being treated so poorly. Its spiritual state is dependent upon being treated well and having pleasant conditions in the natural realm. It is a form of life that deteriorates when things go wrong. It naturally tries to protect its self-centered form of life. And so it cannot reveal the Son's nature of love.

This helps us to better understand why many Christians eventually burn out in their service to God. While they may have earnestly served the Lord for many years through their love for Him, the service still had its source in self. And while the flesh can actually feed on its own work for a while, if these individuals do not receive sufficient appreciation for their efforts, they will eventually run out of energy. Their human zeal eventually burns out.

It is also the reason why preachers need to be appreciated to keep motivated. They become more concerned about pleasing the congregation than preaching truth to please God. It is nothing more than the flesh looking for its support from the temporal realm.

The real objective of the Christian faith is to be honored by God. (John 12:26) He gives His honor by filling the soul with His everlasting life. But the seed must be planted in the ground and die before the spirit can be lifted into this eternal life. (John 12:24)

It is our choice to suffer for Christ's sake that actually magnifies His power through our lives. Paul became powerful in his ministry because he was willing to suffer for the kingdom of God. It was also in this suffering that he was kept in a place where he depended on the Lord to provide him with a constant supply of life from above. Because he was living through divine power, he did not "burn out" or "wear down" his spiritual state. This was the secret, or the mystery, to Paul's spiritual life.

Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in the God who raises the dead. (2 Cor. 1:9)

For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Cor. 12:10)

God has chosen to make known...the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. We proclaim him...so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labor, *struggling with all His energy, which so powerfully works in me.* (Col. 1:27-29 NIV)

It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God... I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain. (Gal. 2:20-21)

In the end, we will all learn that true righteousness comes directly from God by faith. The quicker we can learn this lesson, the greater our opportunity to know Christ in the power of His resurrection. The flesh simply cannot produce the life that has its source in Christ by keeping laws. May we all learn this lesson today!

Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter {living by the written laws} kills, but the Spirit gives life. (2 Cor 3:5-6)

Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life {life from God}, truly righteousness would have been by the law. (Gal. 3:21)

Waiting on the Lord in Childlike Faith

For since the beginning of the world men have not heard nor perceived by the ear, nor has the eye seen any God besides You, Who acts for the one who waits for Him. (Isa. 64:4)

Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as {dependent} little children {where you expect everything from God}, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 18:3)

A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven. (John 3:27)

There are many earnest Christians who read God's word and insist they are doing what it says. And while they may submit to many of His teachings on the natural plane, as God's children did under the Old Testament dispensation, they never follow the truth of the New Testament to its logical conclusion. It is the reason why they do not know what it means to live in the heavenly realms.

God's ways are quite foolish to the wise and prudent of this world. But His truths make perfect sense to the spiritual mind. His ways can be known, and there is a perfect order to them. The only problem is that His wisdom is in direct conflict with the wisdom of this world.

The people of this world are taught from a very young age to become independent and self-sufficient. They set their own goals and work out their own purposes. But this self-originated form of life separates the eternal soul from the heavenly life of God. It is the reason why we must be converted and become as dependent little children before we can enter into the kingdom of heaven. Little children never do anything on their own. They live in a state of dependence where they receive everything from someone else. And this is the principle by which God expects His children to live. Again, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven." (John 3:27) God insists on being the source of everything that takes place in His kingdom.

We know there are independent beings going throughout the earth doing many things on their own. They expend their energy building up their own little kingdoms. Their self-seeking and self-exalting nature enables them to acquire many things that do not come from God. In fact, the devil helps people acquire things in this world when they choose to bow down to His self-seeking and self-exalting way of life. He knows it will keep their mind on earthly things and lead to their destruction. (Phil. 3:18-19)

Paul said that the people of this world walk "according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air {the one who encourages people to live for themselves}, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind." (Eph. 2:2-3) This is a simple description of the self-originated form of life that holds sway over the "whole world." (1 John 5:19)

The wisdom that is loved by the people of this world will never enter the kingdom of heaven. It is of the devil. And so there is a great need of being soundly converted, which entails a complete renewal of the mind. We must follow God's truth to the very end, taking all of His spiritual principles into account. There is order to His wisdom, and it

will lead to a logical conclusion when we accept all His teachings. The only difficulty in relating to God's truth is that it is contrary to how the humanly wise and prudent think.

I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them to babes. (Matt. 11:25)

When Jesus said, "Do not fear, *little flock*, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," he knew how little this flock would be. (Luke 12:32) Not many are willing to let go of everything and become like dependent little children who permit Him to direct all their steps. But here is a place where we need to begin following truth to where it actually leads if we hope to be honored by God and receive His Kingdom-life.

And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. For all these things the nations of the world seek after {because they do not have faith in God and must take care of themselves}, and your Father knows that you need these things. But seek the kingdom of God {seek out life in the heavenly realms}, and all these things shall be added to you. *Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.* {He will give you this life in the heavenly realms where He becomes the source of everything}. Sell what you have and give alms {sell your unneeded possessions and use the resources to lead others into the kingdom of God}; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail... (Luke 12:29-33)

Many have convinced themselves that Christ's instruction to the rich young ruler did not apply to their own life. But here is an instruction that is given to everyone who wants to be a part of His "little flock." There are no exceptions built into this command. Have you been willing to follow Christ's teaching no matter where it leads? While the Lord will insure that we have adequate resources to care for our needs, He never intended for His disciples to begin dipping into His money bag (as Judas did) and use these resources to live for their own pleasures in this world.

The church has become filled with people who are living according to the wisdom of men. They think they are wise in storing up wealth for themselves. And it makes perfectly good sense when living by the wisdom of this world. But again, God's ways are in direct conflict with worldly wisdom. Jesus is still saying to those who are following Satan's "save thyself" way of life, "You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men." (Matt. 16:23) Literally, this is a terrible state of mind to be in.

Living by a Trusting Faith

The childlike characteristics that every believer will need to possess are trust and dependent faith. Little children recognize their absolute need for help from someone else. They do not try to direct their own steps and achieve their own goals. Because they are not in control of their life, and they possess a natural trust and dependent faith, they willingly permit someone else to show them what they should do and to care for their needs. And because they have true faith, they are able to walk in this way without any worry or fear of the future.

In effect, it is this form of childlike faith that Jesus is instructing His disciples to enter into when He says, “And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, *nor have an anxious mind*. For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things.” Have you truly been converted and become like a dependent and trusting little child?

Today is the day to search your heart and discover if you have true faith in God? This faith will grow if you will continue to let go of your old self-sufficient form of life wherever it is exposed. He never puts on anyone more than He has enabled them to bear.

We are now getting down to the real meaning of “absolute surrender.” Is there any wonder why so few are receiving the eternal Kingdom-life from God and living in the heavenly realms?

Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 18:3)

Those who choose to live as God’s children surrender the control center of their heart and permit their All-knowing Father to direct all their steps. Yes, it is a wisdom that sounds absurd to the self-directed people of this world. But it is the real meaning of “walking by faith rather than by sight.” As these little children express this trusting faith in God by consistently yielding to every movement of His Spirit, He not only cares for their needs, He also lifts them spiritually into the Kingdom-life of heaven.

My sheep {the little flock} hear My voice...and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life... (John 10:27-28)

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, *to those who are the called according to His purpose...to be conformed to the image of His Son...* (Rom. 8:28-29)

Do you still find yourself becoming anxious, worried and upset? It can mean only one thing: You are still attempting to control your own life. Rather than dying to the self-directed ways of this world and entrusting yourself to God—the One who is able to work out all things for your eternal good, you are still attempting to be your own god. You will naturally have many things to be worried about as you consider everything that can go wrong in a self-originated form of life. It is also the reason why you still find yourself becoming upset when your will is crossed and your plans are disrupted. You have placed your trust in them and it is distressing when something interferes with your hope.

The only way to find the deep rest of soul that has been promised to every believer is by letting God be God. Nothing can prevent Him from working out His perfect will in the little children who entrust their lives to Him and learn to walk by His Spirit.

F. B. Meyer has pointed out how the Spirit-led child of faith “sees no more second causes; because its range of view is filled by the Great First Cause. It finds the will of God, either permitting or enacting, in every event, however trivial, that crosses its path. Everything becomes the vehicle through which God comes near and speaks...” And so there is never anything to be worried or upset about. It knows, as it lives by faith, that everything comes from the one true God who is perfect in wisdom, love and power.

We all need to examine ourselves to determine if we are truly walking by faith. We have to assume we are still directing our own steps if we keep finding ourselves becoming worried and upset about things. This self-originated form of life becomes the source of all inward conflict. And the only way to get beyond this carnality is to enter the eternal Sabbath-rest of God where everyone “ceases” from their own works. (Heb. 4:9-

10) This is how we come to the place where we are empowered to truly obey God in everything, including being “anxious for nothing.”

Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience... {And remember} all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account. (Heb. 4:12, 13)

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving {with a trusting faith in God}, let your requests be known to God; and the peace of God {the peace that comes from His heavenly life}, which surpasses all understanding {and overcomes all anxiousness}, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (Phil. 4:6-7)

We can see how it is a sin to go on being anxious about anything. Not only does it reflect disobedience to God’s command, it reflects a lack of faith in Him. There is a better way to live. Those who are truly converted and become like trusting little children will find themselves being lifted by the power of God into His heavenly kingdom where everyone remains filled to overflowing with “righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” It is truly a place of everlasting peace.

The Way of Waiting On God

The ways of God will not make sense until we understand the promises that are given to those who look to Him in faith to do what He has purposed to do. “For since the beginning of the world men have not heard nor perceived by the ear, nor has the eye seen any God besides You, Who acts for the one who waits for Him.” (Isa. 64:4) But do you believe it? Are you willing to live by His Spirit and depend on Him to work out everything that is needed in your life? This is the essence of true faith.

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him {as the source of everything that is needed}. (Heb. 11:6)

We have already noted how God has promised to supply the needs of those who stop living for themselves so they may live wholeheartedly for His kingdom and glory. “But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.” These true children of faith take their mind off earthly things and concentrate on the eternal work of God’s kingdom. And as they live in this childlike faith they can depend on Him to make sure their needs are met. “These all wait for You, that You may give them their food in due season. What You give them they gather in; You open Your hand, they are filled with good.” (Ps. 104:27-28) There is never anything to worry about when we are truly walking by the Spirit in the eternal kingdom of God where He is the source of everything.

Christians who are still living on the natural plane of life can expect to find it difficult to understand these truths. And we do not want to leave a wrong impression. We therefore need to state very clearly that God expects His children to work with their hands. He works through us, and uses providence according to His purposes, as we respond to the leading of His Spirit. But the man who chooses not to work is to be treated as a sinner.

But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us... For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. (2 Cor. 3:6, 10-11)

God's children are not to be sluggards. Like the ant, they will always be busy in the work of the Lord. But we should note that the ant never stores up things for himself. He is always working for the good of the whole. Some of God's children, as they diligently work at the things God has given them to do, will produce far more than they need. But those who live in the kingdom of God never hoard these resources for themselves. They live as stewards of God's resources. Because the moneybag belongs to the Lord, they are careful to use the money according to the leading of His Spirit in the work of furthering His eternal kingdom.

For I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened; but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may supply their lack, that their abundance also may supply your lack—that there may be equality. As it is written, “He who gathered much had nothing left over, and he who gathered little had no lack.” (2 Cor 8:13-15)

Although we know very little about the first disciples, we have enough information to know they did not become rich in this world. The apostle Paul, as he followed the example of Christ, has described their way of life. And it is quite obvious that those who truly follow Jesus do not become rich. It is the reason why Paul had to correct the Corinthians because of how they were trying to fill themselves with the things of this world. They were going in a way that was contrary to Christ's example and teachings.

You are already full! You are already rich! You have reigned as kings {earthly kings who build up their own little kingdoms} without us... For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last... You are distinguished, but we are dishonored.... And we labor, working with our hands... (1 Cor. 4:8-12)

Just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ. (1 Cor. 10:33-11:1)

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth... No one can serve two masters... You cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness {His life of holy love}, and all these things shall be added to you. (Matt. 6:19, 24-25, 33)

Although it may not be according to the earthly standards of this world, God has promised to provide the real needs of His children. He acts for those who wait on Him as dependent and trusting little children. He puts His power to work as they walk by faith rather than by the sight of human wisdom.

God has promised to give us the heavenly kingdom where He is the source of everything. The kingdom of God is His salvation. It brings us back into the state where

we can walk in the Spirit as Jesus did. With this thought in mind, let us look at what we can expect if we will truly enter into this life of faith where we wait on God, keeping all our hope and expectation in Him.

Show me Your ways, O Lord; teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; on You I wait all the day. (Ps. 24:4-5)

I would have lost heart {while passing through the difficult times in the wilderness testing period}, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the Lord! {Trust in Him. He knows what He is doing.} (Ps. 27:13-14)

Truly my soul silently waits for God; from Him comes my salvation. {He is our only hope of walking in this full salvation.} (Ps. 62:1)

And now, Lord, what do I wait for? My hope is in You. Deliver me from all my transgressions. (Ps. 39:7-8)

My soul, wait silently for God alone, for my expectation is from Him... In God is my salvation and my glory... (Ps. 62:5-8)

But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength {they exchange their fleshly strength for that of the Spirit}; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. (Isa. 40:31)

Then the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Sovereign Lord, when I show myself holy through you before their eyes... I will save you from all your uncleanness. (Ezk. 36:23, 29 NIV)

Then you will know that I am the Lord, for they shall not be ashamed who wait for Me. (Isa. 49:23)

It is good that one should hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. (Lam. 3:26)

Faith is perfected in our heart when the old self-originated form of life has finally died. We come to that place where we cease from our own works and enter into the heavenly rest where God becomes the source of everything as we live through Christ's Spirit. At that point, we can truly say that we no longer live "out from" ourselves.

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh {in a mortal body} I live by faith in the Son of God. (Gal. 2:20)

Christ was in a place to be raised to the highest position in the heavenly realms once He had reached the place of absolute weakness on the Cross. This place of weakness, where there is nothing coming out from self, is where the way of faith gains access to the greatest power of God. This is an eternal spiritual law that never changes.

God is in full control of everything within His eternal kingdom. All things have their source in Him. He never fails to work out His perfect will in those who are fully submitted to the leadings of His Spirit.

And we have such trust through Christ toward God. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God. (2 Cor. 3:4-5)

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. (2 Cor 9:8)

God lifts us spiritually in direct proportion to how far we sink down into our own nothingness and begin looking to Him in a dependent and trusting faith. It was when Abraham was “as good as dead” that he received the promise. He had to lose all hope in producing the promised life of the son through His own strength before he was in a position to receive the reality of the promise by faith. Similarly, when we have truly died to our old self-originated form of life, which implies uniting with Christ in the grave, we come to that place where we can be raised by the resurrection power of the Holy Spirit and begin sharing with the Son in His ascended and exalted life.

For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection. (Rom. 6:5)

Therefore the Lord will wait {for you to come to the end of yourself and turn to Him with the trusting and dependent faith of a little child} *that He may be gracious to you*; and therefore He will be exalted {because He is the source}, that He may have mercy on you. For the Lord is a God of justice {who consistently works according to His established order}; blessed are all those who wait for Him. (Isa. 30:18)

I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him...in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion... (Eph. 1:18-21 NIV)

The Christian's Work—Believing and Yielding

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. (Eph. 2:10)

There are two basic elements needed in the relationship between Christ and the believer if God's eternal purposes are to be fulfilled: the first is communion and the second is cooperation. There can never be true love in any relationship without both communion and cooperation.

Throughout eternity the Son has shared with His Father in the eternal life within the Trinity—that is communion. And when God initiated His wondrous plan of redemption the Son offered Himself as both the Lamb to be slain and as the Intercessor for man—that is cooperation. Similarly, if we are to live as Jesus did, we must enter into this same shared life where there is both an ongoing communion with God in His heavenly life and an offering of ourselves to be used for His purposes.

We must remember that we were specifically created as vessels that God could use to display His life and works in this world. Our one great role is to choose to cooperate with Him so that we may do the “good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

The spiritual man apprehends this truth and appreciates the significance of it. If he is to be fully trained and become like his Master, he sees the need for permitting the Son to live through him. It involves giving the Spirit of God complete possession of his being so that Christ may have full control and unhindered use.

Only when the temple of the body is entirely set apart for God's purposes—fully consecrated—is it possible to be filled with His Glory. This is what brings the child of God into an experiential knowledge of life in the Trinity, where there is never-ending communion and cooperation with the Lord of Glory.

At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you {with everyone sharing in the same life and will}. (John 14:20)

Those who believe in Jesus will yield to every movement of His Spirit. This is the real meaning of faith. It involves dying to the old self-directed way of life. We must be prepared to be as easily moved as a leaf in an open field by the slightest changes in the wind. We surrender ourselves completely to the life that was in Jesus and look to Him in faith to do through us what He has purposed.

The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes {next}. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit. (John 3:8)

My sheep hear My voice...and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life... (John 10:27-28)

Our work is to yield to Truth and the leading of His Spirit while believing in Him. As the Father did everything through the Son, He is the One who must produce all the good results through our lives. This kind of dependent and trusting faith always receives the reality of what has been promised in the Scriptures.

Then they said to Him, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?” Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.” (John 6:27-29)

Given time, the Lord will manifest His life and works through the members of His body. He waits until we have come to the end of ourselves. His purpose is to bring us to the place where we cease from our own works and begin living by His Spirit alone. It is then that He is able to manifest His life and works in a way that reveals how He is the source of what is being done. He then receives all the glory.

But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God. (John 3:21)

The Spirit Filled Life

The Lord has prepared the way for God’s human children to be filled with His Spirit. He did not withhold anything when it comes to this filling. “You may be filled with all the fullness of God.” (Eph. 3:19) He commands us to remain filled with His Spirit. Those who refuse to submit to the conditions are living in sin. And the wages of sin is death.

Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is...be filled {keep on being filled} with the Spirit. (Eph. 5:17-18)

We will find that the degree to which we are filled with the Spirit is dependent upon the degree to which He controls the things we do. He fully occupies the territory where He has full control. The natural man does not have the Spirit of God, and cannot receive the things of the Spirit, because he wants to remain in control of his own life. The carnal Christian is also limited in what he can receive from the Spirit. In every part of his life where self-will still exists, there is a separation from the Spirit of God. The Spirit cannot fill and occupy that part of the heart. Only when faith is complete, and there has been a real death to the old self-directed way of life (consecration is complete), is it possible to be completely filled with the Spirit of God.

Human beings were created to walk in the fullness of God’s Spirit. Anyone who falls short of this Spirit-filled life where the Spirit is in full control, is falling short of the glory of God. They have not yet entered into the full salvation of the Lord.

The miraculous crossing of the Red Sea represents the point where the called-out children of God receive His Spirit. Because they choose to come out of Egypt to become Spirit-led sons of God, they are given this precious Gift. He then begins to lead them across the wilderness testing period where He uses His providences to expose the remains of the self-life. The intent is to lead these children of faith to the point where their independent and self-sufficient spirit completely dies. He must prepare them to enter the Sabbath-rest where everyone ceases from their own works. (Heb. 4:9-10) Only then, when there is nothing coming out from the flesh, can they truly become a vessel that God is able to use to display His life and works. “For we are the circumcision, who...have no confidence in the flesh.” (Phil. 3:3)

God permitted His people to bring some of their possessions out of Egypt. He let them depend on these things for a while. He never puts more of a burden on someone than He has prepared them to bear. But the Lord could not take the people into the life of promise until these things were all gone. They had to be brought to a place where they lived wholly by faith in Him. Similarly, God will wait until we have lost all hope in every other temporal support before He lifts us into the heavenly life where He is All in All.

Crossing the Jordan River is represented as passing through a real death to self. There is no other way to enter into the life of promise where God “is All” and “does All.” We are told that the Jordan was backed up to “Adam” when the Israelites crossed the river. (Josh. 3:16) It implies that this supernatural work of God within the heart will take us back to where Adam fell from this heavenly life. He lost the eternal life when he stepped into self-will. We enter into the eternal life by dying to the old self-originated form of life that he passed on to his lineage.

After crossing over the Jordan River the Israelites set up a monument using twelve stones taken from the dry riverbed. The number twelve, one of the perfect numbers, was used by God throughout the Old Testament to represent perfect governmental order. He is revealing in this example how He establishes His perfect government within the heart when this crossing of the Jordan takes place.

The heart is purified when it is filled with God’s Spirit of holy love. It is then that His undivided kingdom is established. Christ sets up His throne in the heart and begins to reign without rival. And it is from under this throne that His ever-flowing “rivers” of Living Water begin to well up into a display of His eternal life. (John 4:14; 7:37-38) We can then begin living for Him here on earth with the same submissiveness in which it is done in heaven.

Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
(Matt. 6:10)

The kingdom of God does not come with observation {in the outward world}; nor will they {ever} say, “See here!” or “See there!” For indeed, the kingdom of God is {to be established} within you. (Luke 17:20-21)

It is done! {The eternal Kingdom-life is fully established within the eternal soul.} I am {then} the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. {The One who becomes the source of everything.} I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. He who overcomes {the world and the flesh} shall inherit all things, and I will be his God {becoming his All in All} and he shall be My son. (Rev. 21:6-7)

A Definition of Yielding to God

Yielding to the absolute dominion of God is the key to finding this divine life in the heavenly realms. Yielding is the definite, deliberate, voluntary transference of the control and use of the whole being—spirit, soul and body—from self to Christ, to whom it rightfully belongs by both creation and by purchase. In this complete yielding, Christ is received as the Ruler of our lives. He must become within our life the “Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End.” Everything we do is to have its source in Him.

The vessel of our body belongs to God. Consecration does not confer ownership, it presumes it. It is not in order to be His that we yield the vessel entirely to Him, but because we are His. The purchase that He made with His precious blood gives title; delivery simply gives possession. The question is not, “Do I belong to God?” but “Have I yielded the vessel that already belongs to Him?”

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and *you are not your own*? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s. (1 Cor 6:19-20)

God gives His Spirit to everyone who comes to Him for salvation and agrees to be a Spirit-led son of God. (Rom. 8:14) But there is still an enemy within the heart that seeks to control the vessel. It wants to live for its own purposes. This Usurper will therefore need to die before it is possible to be filled with Christ's Spirit and begin enjoying His eternal life in bodily form. Christ must be permitted to establish His undivided throne within the heart before His endless rivers of Living Water can flow out of the inner being.

On the great Day of Judgment there will be no question about who owned the vessel. God created man for the specific purpose of displaying His own life and glory. Because man turned to self-will and separated himself from God, Christ then had to die in order to buy the vessel back. The vessel is now His both by the right of creation and by the right of purchase. He will therefore judge every individual based on what they have done with His property while walking in this world using their free will.

Many have stolen the vessel from God to use it for their own selfish gain and for their own glory. There could not be a worse form of thief. And so we should not be surprised when these thieves are shut out of heaven.

Do not be deceived. Neither...thieves, nor covetous...will inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Cor. 6:9-10)

Christ has the title deed to your life. The price was paid nearly two thousand years ago. It is His by the right of purchase. He shed His own blood to buy back the vessel. There is only one question that remains: Have you surrendered it fully to Him so that He may use it as He pleases? And let us remind you, He already has plans for its use. (Eph. 2:10) But He cannot fulfill His purposes until you have fully surrendered yourself to be directed by His Spirit in everything you do.

While Christ has the right to take the property back by force, His way is to move individuals by love so they will freely surrender the vessel to Him. He therefore beseeches each one of us by the innumerable mercies of God to yield ourselves to Him without reserve.

The True Meaning of Worship

The only way to worship God "in spirit and truth" is by offering the vessel to Him to be filled with His life and Glory. This becomes quite clear once we can see how Christ is "the way, the truth, and the life." (John 14:6) When we are living through Him, and His Living Word becomes an innate part of our life, we are then able to truly worship Him "in spirit and in truth." This is the kind of worshippers that God is now seeking in this age of fulfillment. "For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit..." (Phil. 3:3) It implies that we live under His control and through His power. There is no other way to truly worship God.

In contrasting two translations of Romans 12:1, we can learn a little more about the meaning of true worship. While each version refers to the same basic truth, we find a little different insight into what is implied.

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—*this is your spiritual act of worship.* (Rom 12:1 NIV)

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. (Rom. 12:1 NKJV)

Simply stated, until you have presented your body to God as a living sacrifice you are not yet truly worshiping Him, regardless of what you do on Sunday. True worship of God begins when you permit Him to manifest His life and works through your body. This presenting of yourself to be used by Him as He pleases is both your “spiritual act of worship” and your “reasonable service.” And until this absolute surrender has taken place, you are still bowing down to and worshiping Satan’s self-directed form of life.

You cannot expect God to be impressed with the praises that may come out of your mouth during Sunday services while you have remained a “squatter” in possession of His property. He will not honor anyone by filling the temple of their body with His Glory until it is fully consecrated to Him. And you will not have a true capacity to worship Him in “spirit and truth,” as the truth was revealed through Jesus, until you are filled.

And the glory which You gave Me I have given them {providing access to the light of life through faith}...that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them. (John 17:22-23, 26)

That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith...that you may be filled with all the fullness of God {filled with His Spirit}. (Eph. 3:17, 19)

The requirement of yielding yourself to God to be filled with His life and Glory should not be considered as something miserable or negative. What you need to realize is that this entire surrender to the Lord provides something that is infinitely greater in worth than the vessel. You will gain an entrance into the infinite riches of the eternal life. And there is no end to where that can take you. Why not give your poor, weary and thirsting soul a break by dying to the world and entering into this life in the heavenly realms?

He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? (Rom. 8:32)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. (Eph. 1:3)

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is... Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (Col. 3:1-3)

What on earth can compare with these promises? And how could anyone go on thinking they are on their way to heaven while refusing to enter into this heavenly life today? May you see with your spiritual eyes what it means to be a child of the living God and grasp with the hand of faith what He has made available to those who love Him!

If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make our home with him. (John 14:23)

God leaves no loopholes in this matter of yielding. He has clearly specified the measure of this required surrender, and it reaches out to include every part of your body. “So now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.” (Rom 6:19) It is all-inclusive. He is speaking about every part of you. Nothing is omitted and nothing is exempt. Every part of your body needs to be set apart as His own personal possession to be used as He pleases. Like the handwriting on the wall, His words become quite clear to those who have “eyes” to see: “Thou art mine.”

This yielding includes your mind, your heart, your affections, your will, your home, your children, your possessions, your occupation, your friendships, your time, your

money and your plans. To hold something back from God is to reject His will for your life. Do you think that you will be in a position to justify yourself on the great Day of Judgment if you have resisted Him in any matter?

For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment... It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Heb. 10:26-27, 31)

It should be a settled matter that there can be no reservations. We cannot set aside any part of our life and earmark it “reserved.” If Christ is to be Lord, He must be Lord of all. We must let Christ begin at the center and go to the circumference of our whole being, so that He may lay hold of it all and bring it all under His dominion. “To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, *dominion and power, both now* {in our lives in this world} *and forever.*” (Jude 25) This is the only way to prepare ourselves to enter into the life of heaven where God is the source of everything and where His will rules over all.

Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God. (Heb. 12:14-15)

It should also be understood that there can be no substitutes offered to the Lord. You cannot buy off God with your money; nor can you bribe Him to accept some of your time, talents and services in lieu of yourself. He insists on having exclusive rights to the vessel so He may use it to manifest His life and works as He pleases. In other words, *your works* will not be acceptable. “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand *that we should walk in them.*”

There remains therefore a rest for the people of God {where they rest from their own works and live through the Spirit}. For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works... Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. (Heb. 4:9-11)

Yielding to Christ is a definite act of the will. It is not a mere expression of a pious desire to be good, but a conscious choice to surrender all to Him. To yield is to die to your own plans so that Christ may gain complete control and have an unhindered use of one’s whole being. Have you by such a definite and decisive act of the will yielded yourself, all that you are, and all that you have, to the Lord Jesus? We pray that you do so before it is too late. You surely do not want to come before Him as someone who had misappropriated His property and used it for their own purposes!

Those who find themselves going back to an altar to resurrender their lives each time they are brought under conviction have never truly transferred ownership entirely to God. It is the reason why God does not honor their consecration and take full possession by filling the vessel with His Spirit of holiness. They “fall short of the grace of God” because their surrender is not yet absolute. (Heb. 12:15) God sees into the heart and He knows precisely when there has been a full surrender of the old self-sufficient and self-directed way of life.

Everything you need for life on the highest plane has already been given to you in Christ. “All things are now ready.” (Luke 14:17) The banquet feast has been prepared. You now have access to every spiritual blessing found in Christ’s heavenly life. But this

life on the highest plane can only be actualized by choosing to present yourself to Him as a living sacrifice and then looking to Him in faith to do what He has promised.

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless... He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it. (1 Thess. 5:23-24)

The Way of Faith

Some may insist they have fully surrendered their life to the Lord without being lifted into this life on the highest plane. And we know there are some earnest souls who have come to an altar to make this complete surrender. The reason that God does not immediately respond is because He still sees the need for removing some of their natural self-sufficiency. This is where patience will need to have its perfect work. He scourges everyone He receives into the heavenly realms for the purpose of removing their natural strength. Every trial is designed to put within your heart a deeper dependence upon His Spirit. And once this dependent faith has been perfected through weakness, where you become like a dependent and trusting little child who looks to God for everything, you will be in a place to be lifted into life on the highest plane where you “lack nothing.” (Jam. 1:2-3)

My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness. (2 Cor. 2:9)

The way of faith will grow within your heart in direct proportion to the dying of your self-sufficient spirit. When you have truly become like a little child—a little one who knows he is unable to do anything on his own—you will be in a place where you can begin living entirely by faith in God. It is then that you can expect Him to begin revealing His life and works through you. As He uses the Spirit to work out “all things” for your good, you will find yourself “lacking nothing.”

Some of the sweetest words of commendation were expressed by Jesus when He observed real faith being displayed. A Roman centurion, having come to the point of recognizing his need for a miraculous work of God, came to appeal to Jesus to heal his servant. Christ responded with a promise to go with him and to do what was needed. But faith answered, “Lord, say the word, and my servant will be healed.” This is the kind of perfected faith that always brought great joy to the heart of Jesus. Thus, we hear Him saying, “I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!” The Lord therefore immediately provided what was needed. Those who already possess this kind of faith will not be required to wait any longer for the promise.

God’s grace and love consistently responds to childlike faith and trust. God would be untrue to the very essence of His nature, which is love, and to the very heart of His work, which is grace, if he failed even once to respond to real trust and faith.

Without any exception, everything in the Christian’s life is a gift received through faith. We say once again with emphasis, “A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven.” Grace gives and faith receives. Someone once said, “Faith is man’s one great activity.” Faith must reach up and lay hold upon the “abundance of grace” that enables us to “reign in life” through Jesus Christ. (Rom. 5:17)

This truth stands crystal clear in the history of the children of Israel. The land of Canaan with its manifold blessings was given to the people of God as an outright gift. It was theirs through promise years before they ever possessed it. God was constantly

speaking about what belonged to them and what He wanted them to possess. And yet it was not actually in their possession until they had enough faith to step out on the flooded river and expect God to open up the way. Faith must rise up and possess the gift already bestowed in promise.

Pass through the camp and command the people, saying, “Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you will cross over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the Lord your God is giving you to possess.” (Josh. 1:11)

There is always a preparation on man’s part. The heavenly Pearl could not be possessed until the man had “sold all.” The temple must be properly prepared according to God’s specifications and fully consecrated before the prayer of faith can bring down the Glory. There are therefore provisions that need to be prepared. But we are absolutely dependent upon God to lift us spiritually into the life of promise on the highest plane. This glorious work requires the resurrection power of the Holy Spirit. And this miracle is provided through faith alone.

That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him...in the heavenly realms. (Eph. 1:19-20 NIV)

We should note that it was not necessary for the children of Israel to wander through a dry and arid land as long as they did. God led them up to the very border of this rich, fertile country flowing with milk and honey quite early in their spiritual journey. But they remained blinded to the glory of what was available to them. As many Christians do today, they chose to turn away because they began to see how the self-originated flesh-life will “surely die” in the Land of Promise. Rather than lose their flesh-life, the Israelites chose to turn back where they suffered forty years of weary wanderings, and ended up dying in the wilderness. Only the two men of faith, Caleb and Joshua, actually possessed the inheritance that was available to them from the very beginning.

Some may think that the spiritual life required of God is too high a standard for the ordinary Christian. They may agree that it’s possible for the minister or the missionary, but they consider it beyond the reach of people who must live and work in a secular world. But this is a wrong assumption. God requires everyone to be filled with His Spirit. The one purpose for our existence is to live as a vessel that He can use to display His life and works. Whatever He has planned to do through our lives He is able to carry out through the fullness of His Spirit.

Let us keep in mind that this glorious life is not to be worked out through our sufficiency. The life we need to reveal comes from Christ Himself. Everyone who is willing to yield in faith to the leading of His Spirit—the One who is able to reveal the truth and the life within the heart—can depend on Him to do what He has promised. So long as God can continue to say, “All things are possible to him who believes,” the fullness of Christ’s Spirit remains available to all.

Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all... (Rom. 4:16)

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory... (Eph. 3:20-21)

We Must Choose the Way of Christ

We often hear Christian's condemning the Jews for choosing Barabbas over Jesus. And we wonder how this could have occurred. It may be helpful to realize that Barabbas represents someone who tried to further God's kingdom through his own efforts. The Son's way is to plant the seed in the ground in death and then to become fruitful in resurrection life. The way of Barabbas is to save self and then live for God through the zeal of human works. When presented with these two different ways, most people choose to save the flesh-life. They will say, "Give us Barabbas." But in the end it always results in the death of the Christ-life. And because it is effectively choosing carnality, this way of Barabbas is still killing others. Many have been turned away from Christ by the words that come out of the carnal hearts of professing Christians. Thus, we find this tragedy of the first century being repeated over and over again in the church today.

Someone once said, "Self is willing to permit the believer to do anything, give anything, sacrifice anything...if it can only live." People do not mind serving God if they can direct their own steps and have some of their own glory. But this is what permits Barabbas and Agag, with their carnal nature, to live.

Again, it has been said, "The Cross can only sever what you consent to part from. The severing of the Cross is not an actual experience, unless the will of the believer desires and consents to the actual separation in fact and practice." God is very gracious. He patiently waits for each individual to make the choice to follow Jesus through the cross. Those who will honestly make the same decision that He did in the Garden of Gethsemane, can depend on the Spirit to then take them through the cross and into resurrection life in due time.

Since the Holy Spirit only works through yielded faith, how can He provide a complete severance from "the old man" and all that pertains to the old creation if you are still making ample provisions for the flesh? "But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh..." (Rom. 13:14) Whatever becomes food to "the flesh" is dry fodder, or the food that perishes, to the Spirit, and vice versa.

"Do not love the world or the things of the world." With the Spirit's guidance, look for the things of the world that you tend to use for your spiritual support. What is it that your flesh insists on having? Examine your habits and routines. What leads you to do what you do? Again, what do you rely on for your spiritual support? While the body does have natural desires that will need to be met, they should never have dominion over the Spirit. Are you being led by the flesh or by the Spirit? Are you still seeking to have some of your own glory through the works of your own hands?

If Christ's "rivers" of Living Water are not yet consistently flowing out of the heart in both good times and bad times, there is something preventing it. There is a need to search the heart with the Spirit and be prepared to surrender the most dearly loved Isaac.

God has provided all things to enjoy. But He did not intend for us to live by the flesh and turn the things into idols. Once we are truly living through the life of Christ in the heavenly realms we are enabled to walk in this world without being dependent upon its things for our spiritual support. Jesus lived in the world, and He was able to enjoy God's creation, but He did not receive His life from the world.

The Son came to dispossess, to displace and to dethrone that old self-life so that God may gain complete possession of the human personality. It will never do to intellectually crown Christ as a puppet King and then live under the rule of Self-desire.

Of self, for self, and by self has remained the threefold principle that governs the lives of countless members of Christ's church. A believer cannot wholeheartedly "set his affections" upon the things above while he is still living for the things of this world. And it is unimaginable to think that someone who has truly been seated with Christ in the heavenly realms, and has begun to share with Him in every spiritual blessing found in His life, could still be hankering for the things of earth and of time and of sense.

Some of our readers may have tasted of the heavenly life at some point in their past. But since that day they have slowly weighted themselves down with the things of this world. It has resulted in a loss of what they once possessed. If this is your case, may God give you the desire to lay aside every weight and once again look unto Jesus for His life in the heavenly realms. "Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God."

The only way to successfully combat the desires of the flesh is to implicitly obey every prompting or motion of the Spirit, be it ever so slight. Whether it be a warning, a check, a leading, or a teaching, all must be followed. Do not permit others to turn you away from truth with their human wisdom and rationalizations. You must listen to the Lord. Those who will yield to the leading of His Spirit in all matters, even though it may result in some difficulties and suffering, can depend on Him to faithfully take them into the life of promise where it is possible to reign with Him over all the works of the flesh.

But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith {so you may fully trust in God}, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life...hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to God our Savior, *Who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now {in the lives of Christians in this world} and forever.* Amen. (Jude 20-25)

In closing, we pray that each of God's called-out children will honestly seek the Lord in faith. There is a life of promise within the heavenly realms, and we need to begin living there today. Every member of the body needs to submit to the work that God has previously planned to work out through their lives. (Eph. 2:10) It is our only means for truly revealing His light of life and drawing other spiritually poor and lost souls out of the darkness of this world and into His heavenly kingdom on the highest plane.

He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things. And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ...from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. (Eph. 4:10-16)

Appendix A

Excerpts from the Book

Bone of His Bone

Written by F. J. Huegel

Revised and Published by The SeedSowers

[We have provided these appendices to strengthen the faith of believers. It is helpful to have God's ways confirmed by various sources. You will find that each of the following writers speak the same language of the Spirit. They too have revealed how to find life on the highest plane.]

“What is impossible to you as an imitator of Christ becomes perfectly natural as a participant of Christ. Christ nullifies the forces of your fallen human life, and then communicates to you a divine life. His indwelling life does the Christian living... The Sermon on the Mount does not cramp this new life—it is the way this heavenly life operates...

“No Christian is called upon to strain as an actor might agonize over his role in a play. The Christian life, in the thought of God, is infinitely more blessed and compelling. ‘We have become partakers of Christ.’ ” (Heb. 3:14)”

“The Holy Spirit works in you a conviction of the sin of a divided heart. He shows you how tragically self-will has thwarted Christ's purpose to bring you into utter union with Himself... You realize that if you fail to sign the death sentence of self, your position as a believer becomes utterly intolerable, the pinnacle of contradictions... You see that unless self is crucified, Christ is...

“God grant you the grace to be clear about one thing: Christ does not come into your life to patch up your “old man.” Here is where unnumbered multitudes of Christians have been ‘hung up.’ They thought it was Christ's mission to make them better... Jesus said that He had no intention of pouring His new wine into old pigskins... He said that unless a man would renounce himself utterly, he could not be His disciple...

“So you must choose. Will you be dominated by self or Christ? Will you pamper self and crucify Christ afresh, or will you die to the self-life (call it what you will, flesh-life, the old life, the carnal—it matters not) and rise up out of that grave to begin to live in the power of Christ's resurrection? This is the great issue which the Cross of Christ raises...

“Which will you have? Will you enter into the divine life which flows as a great river of life from the throne of God and the Lamb? Then you must refuse your fallen life...

“The church...has not realized all the implications of the Cross. She has not been willing to die with her Lord because she has not believed her Lord. [Matt. 16:24-25] She has tried to imitate her Lord, in the energy of the old life, in order to reproduce His way. But she has not been willing to acknowledge her utter inability to do this, or become willing to lay down her life in order to share in His heavenly life.

“A deep eternal union, a grafting of the soul into Christ, a great merging of interests, purposes, aspirations—all to be consummated in this world. This is the gospel. God, in terms so unmistakable that all ages, all races, and all generations may grasp the meaning, has revealed the basis on which this union may be achieved. It is through the cross of Christ.

“Our pleasure-infatuated age will stop its ears and gnash its teeth as did those who stoned Stephen. For these things hurt. But if you have tasted of the Lord, if you pant after the wine of heaven, if you cannot be satisfied with anything short of the fullness of the Spirit, and if your heart is “a furnace of desire” for the deep things of God—then these truths that cut and burn, and blast away the old life, will be welcomed with an unspeakable joy...

“God’s people have never in any age come to the mountain peak of spiritual attainment, the glory of unbroken communion with the Most High, without having the self-life, the flesh-life, brought again and again to the dust of death.”

“Your death to self is but the gateway to a larger, fuller life—the more abundant life. As you sign your death warrant and consign the old life to the grave, it is only to find that you are the recipient of a life infinitely more wonderful—divine life, eternal life...

“Either you must cease to move in the realm of the purely natural...or you must fail as a Christian. To the new life—the life that flows from Christ—the Sermon on the Mount presents no problems; it is all natural, easy, a spontaneous expression of principles already inherent...

“Christ expects nothing from your flesh. However religious its garments, however holy its appearance, however sanctified its undertakings, it still “profits nothing.” It is still only flesh. It is still only the realm of the natural. It is still self...”

“We are made not only partakers of Christ’s death and resurrection, but even of His ascension. As Paul puts it, we were ‘made to sit together in the heavenlies with Christ Jesus.’ (Eph. 2:6) Jesus states the case in His prayer, in these words: ‘I in them, and You in Me...Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be where I am, that they may behold My glory.’...

[Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies it remains alone... If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me {through the cross}; and where I am {in the heavenly realms}, there My servant will be also...him My Father will honor. (John 12:24-26)]

“Believers and Christ are one... For this purpose Christ had come: to graft into Himself a new stock; as Son of Man to constitute Himself head of a new race; as the Second Adam to be federal head of a new humanity...

“He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.” (Eph. 1:3) We do well to look at the tenses of the verbs which the Holy Spirit employs, as F. B. Meyer points out. It is ours now: He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. It is not death (physical dissolution) which will bring us into our heritage in Christ. It is faith. We may now sit with Him in the heavenlies...

“During His earthly ministry Jesus stood in just such relations to the heavenly realms; He could say, ‘No one has ascended to heaven but he who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.’ As to His spirit, Jesus was in heaven even while He

walked on earth and preached by the shores of Galilee. His life flowed in an unceasing stream from the throne.

“Christians are living on starvation rations, when all the time the King would have them so filled, so charged with the life of God, so rooted in divine fullness that, unable to contain themselves, rivers of living water would be bursting forth and flowing out to a perishing world!”

“Because your life now issues from the throne...because, in spirit, you are virtually seated in the heavenlies...and because, as never before, you are one with Christ—as the result of all this you discover working within you a new spirit of love. And the love of Christ constraining you inevitably issues in a greater [capacity for] suffering.

“Do not imagine, therefore, that because of your oneness with Christ in the heavenlies you are brought into some fool’s paradise which exempts you from further suffering. The truth of the matter is that it simply increases your capacity for suffering many thousandfold...

“Nothing touches you without first passing through His hands and being made to serve your highest eternal interests. Why do you bear in your body “the dying of the Lord Jesus?” That the life of Jesus also may be manifested in your body. (2 Cor. 4:10)

[The Lord never requires His disciples to go through more than He has already enabled them to bear. As He takes His spiritual children through very difficult situations He also provides an every-flowing supply of the fruit of His Spirit, which enables others to see the supernatural quality of this life from heaven.]

“How are these ‘rivers of living water’ to flow from your innermost being except the outer self be broken? The grape does not yield its precious juice without the breaking of the outer wall. [The more we permit the grape to be crushed the more juice it produces.]... Christ is glorified in your patience... From your wounds healing streams of life—Christ’s own life—are flowing.”

“The relationship of oneness with Christ...is revolutionary. As never before, ‘old things have passed away and all things become new.’... Your attachment to the true Church, which is the mystical body of Christ, becomes so deep and so real that you feel yourself somewhat detached from the visible church as it has been organized (or perhaps I should say disorganized) by man.

“In dying to your fallen life, you naturally die to all that is nurtured by the old life. This means that the church itself, regarded as a visible organization, simply fails to grip you to whatever extent it is out of line with the Holy Spirit... In this state, the organization does not attract you, as it fails to express the mind of Christ.

“You die to every aspect of walking in the flesh, whether in gatherings of the church or in your simple routines of daily living...

[In Old Testament times, before the Son was able to reveal His eternal life within the soul of man, the Lord permitted His people to rely on special times and seasons, along with ceremony and display, for their spiritual sustenance. These things were provided as a means to keep the people lifted spiritually until the time came when it would be possible to share with Christ in His heavenly life. But in this age of fulfillment, when Christ’s Living Water of divine life is now flowing and is able to truly satisfy the soul,

these temporal things often become heart idols that separate the soul from the life of God.]

“The tie which now binds you to Christ is so strong that you find yourself bound to all those who, regardless of denominational affiliation, are enjoying a like precious faith. You experience a spiritual oneness... It is no longer a question of ecclesiastical procedure, but of the same shared life... [“And the glory which You gave Me I have given them...that they may be made perfect in one...” (John 17:22-23)]

“Our Savior took you with Himself to the Cross to annihilate forever your fallen life and all that might come between Him and you, so that He might unite you to Himself in holy, spiritual wedlock. Dare you offer Him the trappings and withhold the reality?”

“I look upon the years prior to experiencing the power of the Cross as well-nigh wasted... I see now that much of my labor was not only unsatisfactory but positively harmful.

“I preached Christ in the power of a self-originated fervor and consequently mutilated Him (gave Him no chance to reveal His true self). Christ must be preached in the power of a Christ-centered, Christ-possessed, Christ-empowered life. Christ is never truly preached until the *one who bears the message is himself so hidden away with Him in God that it is no longer the messenger who speaks but Christ speaking through him...* Overflowing rivers of living water must accompany the message, for the listener must be flooded by the divine life if he is to be given a chance to appreciate the Christ of God and see Him in His true glory... Only a gospel which, as a result of union with Christ, brings the worker and other believers to the experience of an inner crucifixion and a glorious resurrection can ever do that.

Unless workers as well as other believers experience an inner union with Christ, they may struggle to imitate Him and they may even succeed in glossing over the old man with the veneer of Christian culture; but such a counterfeiting of the Christian life, sincere as it may be, will sooner or later break down under the strain to which it is subjected.

Shall we not give place then to a pure Christianity? Christ cannot possess you and cause the promised rivers of living water to flow forth from your heart with a healing, transforming force, unless you are willing to be dispossessed of your own life.

Appendix B

Excerpts from the Book
Milestone Papers
Written by Daniel Steele
Published by Schmul Publishers

The Fifth Mile-Stone

It is the 17th of November, the anniversary of the spiritual manifestation of Jesus Christ to me as the perfect Savior from all sin—an event transcending all others in my sojourn on the earth...

O, Lord Jesus, often during these five wonderful years have I wearied an unbelieving world and a half-believing Church with my attestations of Thy marvelous power to save. But all my utterances fail to express the greatness and the blessedness of that glorious deliverance. I cannot compass in thought, much less in words, the immensity of Thy love, an ocean without bottom or brim. I cannot tell the story, and I cannot let it alone...

During these cloudless, blissful years—dare I write it—my soul and body have been the abode of the indwelling Christ, consciously “the habitation of God through the Spirit.”...

So far as a page of limping words can compass the mighty theme, I essay the hopeless task of portraying the glory of the indwelling Christ, that His grace may be magnified, and all His people may invite Him unto their hearts as a permanent inhabitant; for I cannot believe that my experience is necessarily exceptional... Results reached by one believer, while trusting the general promises of God’s Word, are possible to all, for there is no respect of persons with Him.

How Jesus, the adorable Savior, has grown in my soul’s estimation during these cloudless years! What glories His heart of love has unfolded!... How has my theology of the Holy Ghost lost its vagueness and taken on clearness and distinctness! His personality and His offices in transfiguring believing souls are no longer dry dogmas, to be accepted on the authority of revelation, but are experimental verities... It has become as evident as the mid-day sun that he who would realize the most perfect transformation of divine love must, through faith, receive its outpouring from the Holy Spirit through Jesus, the appointed channel from the Father’s heart, a shoreless sea of love...

As I have gazed down into this fathomless ocean of truth and love, my soul has exulted in the fulfillment of the promise of Jesus... “My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”

In my previous Christian experience of twenty-eight years there always seemed to be a vacancy unfilled, a spot which the plowshare of the gospel had not touched. My nature had not been thoroughly subsoiled and thrown up to the light and warmth of the Sun of righteousness. I loved Jesus, studied His character with increasing admiration, and preached Him with delight. But there was always a painful sense that my love was fractional... But the heavenly Tenant of my soul has changed all this. He has unlocked

every apartment of my being, and filled and flooded them all with the light of His radiant presence...

What that void within was—what that untouched core of my being, whether it was selfishness, unbelief, original or inbred sin—I leave to the theologians to discuss. I aver that it was something very uncomfortable. Praise the Lord Jesus, it is gone, never to return...

My experience often reminds me of the results of integral calculus, namely: two kinds of quantities, constants and variables. The constants of my spiritual life are:

1. Salvation from doubt. I once walked much amid shadows, having a steak of sunshine sandwiched with streaks of twilight, with occasional darkness that could be felt. How changed is all this now... This magnifies the power of Jesus to save, more than any other aspect of my experience.

2. The death of personal ambition. To all desire of self-promotion and self-aggrandizement, to the glory of God's grace let it be said, I feel as dead as the autumn leaves beneath my feet... It was different once. There was once a desire for the applause of men... It was not inordinate and noticeable by my friends; but it existed as an uneasy tenant of my bosom, the spring of many of my actions, and a motive mingling with all my aspirations to serve God... It is no longer the old nature that lives, but Christ Jesus...

[The Son emptied Himself of His glory to become nothing in self—even submitting to an ignoble death on a cross—so that His Father could be all in all. Those who are truly sharing with Him in the fullness of the life that He perfected in bodily form possess a nature that is opposed to receiving honor from men.]

3. Perfect rest from all apprehension of future ill. Salvation from worry is no small thing, especially in the case of one whose views of life are strongly tinged with indigo. Fear and faith cannot keep house together. When one enters the other departs. I believe that Jesus, who is head over all things to His Church, has the program of my best possible future, which involves these two elements: 1) His highest glory through me. 2) My highest happiness in Him...

4. Oneness with Christ... He is not a capricious dweller in the temple of my heart, present today and absent tomorrow. He abides. Yet I have, as a free agent, the power of sundering that blissful union.

5. Faith is a steady, living principle, in marked contrast with the isolated, spasmodic efforts of my former experience. It is as natural as breathing, and as unconsciously done.

6. Love has been a well of water within, "springing up into everlasting life," instead of an intermittent brooklet, ice-bound in mid-winter, and dried up in mid-summer.

7. Peace, the legacy of Jesus, changes not.

These constants all flow forth from the indwelling Christ. ["He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit." (John 5:5) "The fruit of the Spirit is {a constant flow of} love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." (Gal. 5:22-23)] But the following variables result...

[God designed man with emotions. But rather than being controlled by the temporal world, He planned to have the emotions under the control of His Spirit. Jesus, living as the Second Adam, was an expression of His Father. The sorrow He expressed when He wept over Jerusalem and the anger He expressed when He found the corruption in the temple had its source in the Father. Jesus meant it literally when He said that those who observed Him were seeing the Father. And He has instructed us to follow Him and walk

as He did. By submitting to be vessels of His life and works, we are enabled to rejoice when He rejoices and weep when He weeps. We are also enabled to love others with His sacrificial love regardless of what they do to us. This is what accounts for the response of Paul and Silas after they were severely beaten and locked within the inner prison. We need to come to the place where we can prove to the world that God's Spirit is able to consistently manifest His heavenly fruit through our lives in every situation.]

1. ...The very etymology of emotion indicates that it is always moving, waxing and waning. Still, what St. Paul styles "the joy of faith" is as permanent as faith itself. But above this is an occasional roll of the great tidal waves of ecstatic joy, deluging the soul for days in succession. Under this mighty pressure of the heavenly world upon my poor throbbing heart I often feel that the earthen vessel will break under the strain...

2. Agony of souls. It is a mercy that this is a variable experience... My occasional hours of intense burden and distress for souls are usually followed by the conversion or spiritual emancipation of some one among my people... [You can know that God is about to do a supernatural work when He puts within the heart a deep burden for a soul. He is always looking for people who will permit Him to express His desires within their heart. It is then that it is possible to actually pray in His Name according to His will and expect answers to the prayers.]

3. Temptation. Satan's arrows fly thicker at times, but they strike upon my shield like spent shot, and fall harmless at my feet. As the years roll by their impact is more and more feeble, indicating that...I am receding from his ambushade [rising higher into the heavenly realms], and nearing that sea of glass on which I shall exchange my shield for a harp of victory, forever beyond the range of Satan's fiery darts... The terrific combats of Bunyan's Pilgrim with Satan all occur early in the journey. By and by Christian reaches a land where these have entirely ceased, and "Doubting Castle is clear out of sight."

4. Access in prayer and grasp upon the divine promises is a variable which we have not space to discuss...

5. The openings of the Scriptures under the apparently varying intensity of the Spirit's illumination... But the life of Jesus is no variable...

The Probation for Holiness

An infantile faith may grasp justification, but only an adult faith can seize the prize of entire sanctification. Instead of repining at tests, we are to count it all joy when we fall into manifold temptations, or puttings to the proof, since it is for the trial of our faith...

The trials which make faith perfect should, therefore, be joyfully received. The case of the Syrophencian woman is an admirable illustration of the probation of faith... The first request is met by a chilling silence. But faith, though repulsed, gathers strength, leaps the barrier, and is all the stronger for the efforts. Jesus now sets a higher wall before her: "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." She falters not for a moment, but falls on her knees and cries, "Lord, help me?" and over this wall her heaven-aided faith bears her. With a higher barricade Jesus now hedges himself in, more formidable than an iron picket fence bristling ten feet in height. "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs." That fence will surely stop the impertinent Canaanite asking mercies uncovenanted. But look! She vaults over this barrier at a single bound, clearing its topmost picket, on which she might have been impaled. "Truth, Lord, but the dogs eat of the crumbs." Nobly has she stood her probation. She has developed a

faith sufficient to drive out the biggest demon outside of Pandemonium. What could Jesus withhold from that faith? "Take the key to My omnipotence, and help yourself." Thus the expulsion of the "old man" from the heart is a whole blessing and requires a whole faith. This, not being sufficient at justification, is put to school, is set at wrestling with difficulties and slaying Goliaths in its way. When the last one is laid in the dust, God will deem us competent to guard the priceless pearl of perfect love.

[My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience {a trusting and expectant faith}. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing... Blessed is the man who endures temptation {in the time of trial}; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. (Jam. 1:2-4, 12)]

Moral.: 1. Look not at objections, but beyond them. 2. Surmounted difficulties are the stairway up to the Higher Life. 3. How shall I get faith? Exercise it. 4. When am I prepared to believe fully? When you have fully yielded all to Christ.

[He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me...and I will love him and manifest Myself to him. (John 14:21)]

The Sixth Mile-Stone

On this ever-memorable day, November 17th, 1876, I pass the sixth mile-stone in the highway of holiness... It may interest no one to listen to my thanksgiving anthem, yet I must pour it out into the ear of my adorable Savior whether men will hear or whether they will forbear... Six years ago my soul became the bride of Christ by an inexpressibly blissful union. Was I an enemy of Jesus up to that time? I was during twenty-eight years a servant, a friend, and a son...

Another reason why continued testimonials to the mighty Healer of my soul are demanded is because each successive year demonstrates more and more clearly the completeness and permanency of the cure. Time magnifies the keeping power of Christ. Testimony on this point must be constant, lest silence be misinterpreted...

From this goodly land I have no desire to return to the Sahara from which I have happily escaped; yet I will send to "my comrades in the wilderness" frequent reports of my explorations of this new continent. Everything here is on a magnificent scale...

The soul has its joyful and its sorrowful side: the side turned toward Jesus is a hemisphere of light and warmth; the side which looks out toward the countless procession of the unsaved, tramping ceaselessly down to death, is a hemisphere of shade. "Sorrowful yet always rejoicing."

I wish to testify most emphatically that the love of Christ shed abroad in my heart by the abiding Comforter has wonderfully refined and intensified all lawful pleasures. Jesus drops unspeakable sweetness into every cup of earthly bliss... For six years there has been not only a new heaven above, but a new earth beneath, strewn with flowers, and filled with springs bubbling with the purest of joys.

The Society here is very select. Faith, Hope, Peace, Quietude, Resignation, Victory, and Assurance here make their constant homes, while Joy, Gladness, Rejoicing, and Exultation have their summer residence here, and the summer lasts nearly all the year. The Italian atmosphere of this region is too transparent for Doubt to live in. Guilt and

Fear and Worry and Discontent have never migrated to this cheerful clime. Temptation makes an occasional incursion, but he acts as if he feels that he is an outlaw.

There are old residents of this country who are by no means favorites with me, and I cut their acquaintance as much as possible, such as Ignorance, Forgetfulness, Misjudgment, Error, Inadvertence, Failure, and a large family by the name of Infirmary. In fact, I have repeatedly cast my vote for their exclusion, but they insist that they have a right to remain, since no statute lies against them. They say that they are grossly wronged when confounded with an odious foreigner called Sin, who slightly resembles them in external appearance, but is wholly different in moral character. I must confess that a close observation, extended through several years, demonstrates the justice of this plea. Hence I live in peace with these old citizens, but do not delight in their society.

But I hear some one inquire, "Have you perfect satisfaction? Is every craving of your soul filled?" Yes. No. My present capacity for the love of God is filled, but so precious is the treasure that I am coveting a vessel a thousand times larger...

This must ever be the experience of being capable of progress. In this respect I count myself as well off in my heaven below as I shall be in my heaven above [always growing from glory to glory]...

Especially am I drawn toward the members of the Church of God, multitudes of whom need some one to travail in birth again for them, until Christ be formed within them. Nominal Christians are the greatest obstacle to the advance of the kingdom of heaven. I long to show unto them the beauty of Christ in such a light that they will be drawn into entire devotion to Him. Doubting souls awaken the deepest sympathy in me, having myself long suffered from this cause, until Jesus wrought a complete cure. To such I have a special mission...

"But what is your experience," says one, "respecting the possibility of living year after year without condemnation for sin?"... Is it strange that a soul all aglow with love to the Lawgiver should feel no inclination to violate the law? Perfect love is an infallible cure for sinning. Hence it is a synonym for entire sanctification. "But do you not have many evil thoughts come into your head?" A thousand thoughts of evil come in and go out again. "In all this Job sinned not." The mental conception of an evil act is not sinful. Sin is conceived in the voluntary nature... The will, the capital power of the soul, may be so energized and sanctified as to stand as a flint against sin. In this sublime attitude stood that strongest human will, the will of the Man of Nazareth. Thus victorious may all His followers stand, "kept by the power of God through faith." "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

Sins, Infirmities, and the Atonement

In many minds the perfection of spiritual life required by the Gospel is eclipsed by confounding infirmities and sins. What God has separated...some people are perpetually joining together...

Infirmities are an involuntary outflow from our imperfect moral organization. Sin is always voluntary...

Infirmities have their ground in our physical nature, and they are aggravated by intellectual deficiencies. But sin roots itself in our moral nature, "springing there from the habitual corruption of our hearts, or from the unresisting perversion of our tempers."

Infirmities entail regret and humiliation. Sin always produces guilt.

Infirmities in well-instructed souls do not interrupt communion with God. Sin cuts the telegraphic communication with heaven. The infirmities of unenlightened believers, being regarded as sins, may produce condemnation and sunder communion, by destroying confidence in God...

Notwithstanding the broad distinction between infirmities and sins, in one respect they are alike, they both need the atonement... Though a well-meant mistake does not defile the conscience and bring it into condemnation, nevertheless when discovered it demands a penitent confession...

The Obedience of Faith

To abide in this state of perfect victory and full trust we are to walk by the same rule of “the obedience of faith”... The power of God must be relied upon as much for our abiding in, as for our entering, this state. We are to be “kept by the power of God through faith.” ...

The figure of a “well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14) is explained subsequently by John as the fullness of the Spirit in the heart.” [This heavenly flow of eternal life must be continually received from Christ by walking in child-like dependence and trusting faith.] “He that believeth on Me as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given {in fullness}; because that Jesus was not yet glorified)” (John 7:38-39)...

The fact that genuine faith always includes obedience is a sufficient answer to the skeptic’s objection that salvation is made to hinge upon a bare intellectual fact, without reference to the character of the agent. It is just the opposite. It is an act of submission to the highest authority in the universe... [As we yield to all revealed light based on our faith, Christ is able to continually manifest His heavenly “light of life” within the vessel.] A singular confirmation of the truth of these remarks is found in the Greek Testament, where *apeitheia*, unbelief, is frequently used to signify disobedience...

[And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief {their lack of response}. (Heb. 3:18-19)]

The practical bearing of all this upon those who are seeking to be lifted into the higher regions of Christian experience is, that the faith which is the required condition of such a spiritual uplift is possible only to a soul whose obedience has reached the point of entire surrender to the will of God... [In the eternal kingdom of heaven everyone walks by the Spirit in God’s will alone. And so there needs to be a real death to self-will before the life of heaven can be found.] Then, and then only, will the Christ-life take the place of the old self-life, enabling the believer to adopt St. Paul’s words: “I have been crucified with Christ; alive no longer am I, but alive is Christ within me.” (Meyer)...

[For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death {by dying to self-will}, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection... For the death that He died, He died to sin {self-will} once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin {self-will}, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord... But now having been set free from sin {self-will},

and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. (Rom. 6:5, 10-11, 22)

Says Spurgeon: "There is a point in grace as much above the ordinary Christian as the ordinary Christian is above the worldling." Of such he says: "Their place is with the eagle...high aloft. They are rejoicing Christians, holy and devout men, doing service for the Master all over the world, and everywhere conquerors through Him that loved them."... Thus these mountain-top saints climb up the ascent by the stairway of the gospel promises, with the sunlit summit in full view as a definite aim. Their faith made their obedience spontaneous, free, and gladsome...

The Seventh Mile-Stone

The chief characteristic of the seven past years of my Christian life is soul-rest, running through every day and hour, like a golden thread. "For we which have believed do enter into rest." Since there are many misconceptions respecting this rest, I wish to testify to my own experience in this regard:

1. It is not cessation from Christian activities, and a sitting down with folded arms, enjoying the dreamy ecstasy of a mystical devotion. Instead of this, I find in this soul-rest an amazing stimulus to unremitting effort to glorify Christ in the salvation of all for whom He died, and especially in the perfect restoration of those believers who are only partially healed of the malady of sin.

2. I do not find it an exemption from spiritual conflict and temptation...

3. Nor is this rest a release from the burden of souls unsaved and unsanctified...

4. Nor do I find this perfect rest of a soul in full trust in Christ, an easy-going, lazy optimism...

5. This rest does not exclude the strong feeling of disapprobation where a manifest wrong is done to another or to myself... The unfallen angels and the holy God must be endowed with such a sense of justice, that they instinctively condemn every violation of the moral law...

After this negative view we turn the leaf, and read the positive side.

1. It is a deliverance from unsatisfied cravings... If man is in the image of his Creator, there must be a capacity in his nature which only the Infinite can fill. When filled with all the fullness of God, the soul for the first time experiences rest from unsatisfied desire. But only so long as we continue to drink from this overflowing fountain shall we be satisfied. "He that believeth (perpetually—see the Greek) on me shall (by no means—strengthened negative) never thirst." It is the instinctive feeling that soul-thirst will follow, if we cease drinking. [We cut ourselves off from the Fountain of Living Water when we turn to other sources for our spiritual support. (Jer. 2:11-13) God expects to be our only source of spiritual sustenance. Many have been prevented from entering into the heavenly realms because they still have some other idol in their heart.]

2. Release from that irksomeness of Christian service which characterizes a subtle legalism...

"There is rest beyond the river." May a new order of anointed poets arise, who will bring back to mortals on this side the river the good things which by a sad mistake have been transported to the other shore! May the revisers of the Bible correctly put a comma instead of a period between the ninth and the tenth verses of the second chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians: "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered

into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him, but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit,” so that the English reader may no longer be led astray from the true meaning of the Spirit, the description of the believer’s heaven on earth, when Christ is spiritually manifested to the soul in all the fullness of His love...

3. Rest from the original tendency to sin inherent in fallen humanity. This is our testimony, not our mere theory. We no longer read with incredulous wonder, the definition of the full assurance of faith written by the German, Arvid Gradin, at the request of John Wesley: “Repose in the blood of Christ; a firm confidence toward God, and persuasion of His favor; the highest tranquility, serenity, and peace of mind, with a deliverance from every fleshly desire, and a cessation of all, even inward sins.”

4. Salvation from doubt, the disturber of the soul’s peace. This is an element of the uninterrupted Sabbath of love made perfect, and it differs from the ordinary witness of the Spirit in two particulars—it is abiding and not intermittent; and it attests purity...

5. Rest from worry and fear of future ill... “Casting all your care on Him.” Alford’s comment is precious, because by his critical scholarship he brings out an idea not expressed in the English version: “Casting (once for all, by an act which includes the life) all your anxiety, the whole of it, not every anxiety as it arises; for none will arise if this transference has been effectually made.” This is what I term rest from worry, rest attained, by a single act of trust, and retained, not by spasms of faith, but by a habit of reliance on the Son of God, the King of Glory.

The reader will fall into great error if he infers that I have not had tribulation and bitter cups during these Sabbatic years. Jesus was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, arising from the sins of men... The disciple is as his Lord. St. Paul was cast down, but not cast away; sorrowful, yet always rejoicing. Thus the hemisphere of my soul which has been turned toward Christ, has been filled with perpetual sunlight, but that which is turned toward sinners has been in the shade. Thanks be unto God, the joy of heaven will not be hemispherical, but spherical and full-orbed...

Ten Years in Canaan

A decade in the land which floweth with milk and honey is completed this day. Greater indeed than my spiritual birthday is this anniversary of my emancipation...when, in the words of Francis Ridley Havergal, “My whole life was lifted into the sunshine, of which all I had previously experienced was but as pale and passing April gleams, compared with the fullness of summer glory.”... It is not the transient glory of Moses’ countenance, but rather the perpetually-abiding, and hence, rather glorious ministrations of the Spirit. My summer does last all the year. My joy in Christ has waxed, not waned, during these ten blissful years. As if to prove that this is not mere animal feeling, the result of favorable bodily conditions and an agreeable environment, God has been pleased to put forth His hand and touch my body, taking away my strength, which gave me no exemption from what men call troubles, crosses and disappointments; yet none of these things move me. The storms which rudely sweep the earth’s surface produce not even a ripple on the face of the water... “And your joy no man taketh from you;” nor do life’s changes and reverses...

How emphatically does my experience confirm Tholuck’s comment on John 4:14: “But the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” “The figure means this water will once for all be received into the inner

nature, will be immanent in man and will attend him through every stage of his being, even to eternity. The water of life which Christ gives will be a self-dependent spring within the heart.”...

I cannot close without a word of caution. The experience of love made perfect is an impulse to incessant work; not as some vainly say, an inclination to the lounge and the rocking chair... But there is a medium between extremes. It is the business of sanctified common sense to find this middle ground and walk therein... There is a limit to our physical powers. It is desirable to work nearly up to this limit; it is perilous to over-step it... The Christian warrior should fight valiantly, and yet retain his power as long as possible. Let no man be eager in fighting to grasp a martyr's crown, but if God selects you for a martyr, flinch not at the flames.

Seeking and Not Finding

There are many who seek but do not find the rest of faith or love made perfect... As in the case of the penitent sinner a certain state of mind is requisite to the faith that saves, so in the case of the Christian believer seeking purity of heart, before he can exercise perfect trust he must reach a certain state. That state is a sense of nothingness. Hence Charles Wesley sings—“Now let me gain perfection's height! Now let me into nothing fall! ...And feel that Christ is all in all.”

To the same point does Theodore Monod come, in that beautiful little hymn, “The Altered Motto”...the last line of each of the...verses expressing the gradual approach of the believer, struggling towards the point of nothingness—“All of self, and none of Thee!”; “Some of self, and some of Thee!”; “Less of self, and more of Thee!” “None of self, and all of Thee!”

Many, indeed, are the professed Christians who get no farther than the first verse. A large number of accepted souls live in that mixed state expressed by the second. Too many aim at nothing more than the state aspired to in the third. Happy indeed are the few who can shout over the accomplished fact in their experience—“None of self, and all of Thee!”

Those lights of the dark ages, stigmatized as mystics, Bernard, Hugo, Eckhart, and Tauler, heroic souls of whom their age was not worthy, however great their theoretical errors, were certainly right in their central doctrine of the perfect abnegation of self as a prerequisite to entire devotion to God.

But now comes the practical question, How may I reach the state of nothingness? Is it a gift of God, or is it attainable by my own exertions? In a sense it is both. Every step Christward is of grace, and grace is of God. But this grace assists our efforts, and is ineffectual without them. [We are instructed to follow Jesus by denying ourselves and choosing to lose our old form of life. The goal is not the self-denial and this shrinking to nothingness, but being in a position to be lifted into the heavenly realms where we share with Christ in His heavenly life. (Matt. 16:24-25)]

We are to remember the divine command, “Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God,” as implying that our wills are to be active in sinking out of self into God. [Only then is He able to use the resurrection power of His Spirit to lift us up into the heavenly realms in “due time.” (1 Pet. 5:6)]...

The hostility of the self-life to this sudden violent extinction is the chief hindrance to faith. “How can ye believe who receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that

cometh from God only?" Jesus indicates that the self-life finds its chief nutriment in the esteem and applause of our fellow-men...

Christ has set reproach and persecution as two cherubim at the gate of the Eden of perfect love, to test the consecration, courage, and confidence of all who seek to enter. They who lack any one of these qualities must be excluded from this paradise. Dear seeker of soul-rest, are you willing to have your name cast out as evil...to be accounted as the filth and off-scouring of all things for your testimony to Christ as a perfect Savior, able to save unto the uttermost?...

Jesus wishes that all who propose to follow Him fully should count the cost, and not shrink back in disappointment when they find that He has not where, in worldly honors, to lay His head. Hence total and irreversible self-abandonment is the indispensable condition of that oneness with Christ, that harmony with God, which, in scriptural phrase, is called perfect love...

When the will gladly makes this unconditional consecration, it is easy to trust unwaveringly in Christ as the uttermost Savior. In fact, when the self-life expires, the fullness of the Spirit comes in as naturally as the air rushes into a vacuum. Faith then becomes as natural as breathing. We create the vacuum by dethroning our idols.

The whole question relating to the faith that leads the believer into full salvation is simply whether he will sell all to buy this pearl of great price. Nearly all the delay, difficulty, and danger lies at this point, a reluctance to part with all things...

Unsuccessful seeker, look within, for the hindrances to your faith—in that small idol, so small as almost to need a microscope to see it; in that indulgence, which you know wars against your highest spirituality; in that other gratification, of which you stand in doubt, and yet give self and not God the benefit of the doubt; in that slight omission, of which conscience once spoke quite clearly, but now with a lessening emphasis. Appear before God with a perfect willingness to do His will, and you will find faith springing up spontaneously in your heart.

Religious unbelief, in all its forms, has not an intellectual, but a moral, cause. The difficulty is not with our faculties, nor with the evidences, but with our moral state, our wills, our disposition to follow unhesitatingly wherever the truth leads...

Let Go and Trust

It is an inspiring thought, that we are addressing a multitude of readers who would know more of Christ. A languid desire is not sufficient. You must desire Jesus with an intensity which will make your soul a glowing furnace. You must reach the point where you will be willing to sell all...

There are but two steps down into the pool which makes whole—consecration and trust. Difficulties attend both steps. Some are in doubt whether they surrender all to the disposal of Christ. To such we say, Consecrate all you know, and then all you do not know. This includes all your assets... At this point many fail... What, let Christ become my Lord indeed! Is it safe to give Him complete control over my heart, to be the Sovereign of my will, the Owner of all my property, while I sink down to a mere stewardship under Him...

Very likely He will honor you by entrusting to you some difficult labor. If you go into partnership with Him, you must share all the reproach which comes upon the firm. You are advised beforehand that Jesus is an unpopular character in what is called the best of

society. “If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of His household?” “The world will hate you, because it hateth Me: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” Hence there can be no perfect consecration without an accompanying perfect trust.

Just here let us whisper in your ear, that perfect reliance on Christ is impossible so long as you are cherishing your good name... Reader, your reputation is not too good to give to the Lord Jesus. Paul’s self-surrender included his popularity. “If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.”...

We can never surrender to a person whom we do not trust. So that faith, simple faith, lies at the bottom of every step Godward...

Keep on believing the promise, and insisting that God is true. He may delay for days and weeks the declaration of your complete acceptance, in order to develop and test your faith. The longer the delay, if you trust unwaveringly, the more marvelous the manifestation of Christ to your soul as our complete Savior, when the Comforter takes the things of Christ and shows them unto you. The Syrophenician woman lost nothing by pressing her suit against chilling discouragements. Flint not. Just here thousands have failed. They did not grasp the prize because they did not persistently believe.

Others fail through a subtle legality. They trust in their consecration, and not in Jesus only. They take a commercial view of the matter, and present the offering of their hearts as the meritorious ground of receiving the fullness of the Spirit. This is a piece of folly and presumption...

After you have laid your gift upon the altar, look away from the gift, that is now God’s, toward the skies, whence the fire will come down to consume your sacrifice, in token of its acceptance. Thus in all our approaches to God there are three requisitions—Belief, Faith, Trust. “For he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.”

Others fail because of their seeking the gift, and not the Giver. You must desire Jesus only. You must pray this prayer: “Lord Jesus, glorify Thyself in me.” When you are seeking for some delicious ecstasy you are not fully seeking to glorify Christ... There must be an absolute resignation of self and selfish desires in order to be a perfect believer...

The Executive of the Godhead

“The Holy Ghost is the Executive of the Godhead.”... We now see how a person may honor the Father, and in a measure the Son, and yet fail of obtaining the highest spiritual grace through a failure to honor the Holy Ghost...

We must believe in the Holy Ghost as the indispensable agent in the production of spiritual life, both in its incipency and in its fullness. There is a sense in which He is now the most important active factor in the production of Christian character...

We suspect that much of the repugnance among good Christian people to an instantaneous sanctification comes from a sort of naturalistic view of the kingdom of grace left to the operation of fixed laws in the absence of the King. They forget that the King has left in His stead a personal successor and vice-regent, clothed with omnipotent power. “The day of Pentecost was a pattern day. All the days of this dispensation should have been like it, or should have exceeded it. But alas! the Church has fallen down to the

state in which it was before this blessing had been bestowed, and it is necessary for us to ask Christ to begin over again.

We, of course, in respect to...intellectual knowledge of spiritual things—are far in advance of the point where the disciples were before Pentecost. But it should be borne in mind that when truths have once been fully revealed and made a part of orthodoxy, the holding of them does not necessarily imply any operation of the Spirit of God. We deceive ourselves, doubtless, in this way, imagining that because we have the whole Scriptures, and are conversant with all its great truths, the Spirit of God is necessarily working in us... That was not a mere dash of rhetoric which fell from the pen of John Fletcher, when he spoke of the Pentecost as the opening of “the kingdom of the Holy Ghost.”... He works miracles in the realm of the spirit, as did Immanuel in the realm of matter...

There must be more faith in the Holy Spirit as “the greatest gift that man can wish, or that heaven can send.” We belie His presence when in our fruitless lives we present Him as a barren tree, with no golden fruit to attract and feed hungry souls. This poor, blind world, which apprehends only sensible things, physical causes and effects, must be lifted up by the lever of sanctified character from the low plane of naturalism, to apprehend the presence of the supernatural on earth, the standing miracle of Christianity...

“But ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you and shall be in you.” (John 14:17) Then and not till then will Jesus, the glorified Bridegroom, have the entire heart of His bride, for then will the Spirit, the Bridegroom’s looking glass, fully unveil His loveliness... “He shall glorify Me; for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you.” How cheering the thought that this period of intense spiritual illumination and power is not fixed by the decree of God in the distant future, but that it may be inaugurated in our own day by a simple, all-surrendering faith in Christ’s promise...

The eastern sky has streaks of light betokening the sunrise of a day power. Christians of every name, lone watchers on the mountain-tops, now see the edge of the ascending disc, and are shouting to the inhabitants of the dark valleys below to awake and arise, and behold the splendors of the King of day.

Reader, the perfect restoration of the reign of the Spirit over the Church involves your personal cooperation, and the entire consecration of your heart; your victory over the world, your crucifixion with Christ, the entire cleansing of your heart, and the transformation of your body into “the temple of the Holy Ghost,”—“an habitation of God through the Spirit.” Are you ready to be nailed to the Cross? By the “you” I mean the old self-life.

Victory in Temptation

The period of Christian life before this new taste for spiritual joys has become completely dominant and controlling is the period of the greatest peril. It was before a relish for the manna had become fixed in the Israelites that they “fell a-lusting” for the flesh pots of Egypt. Visions of “leeks, and onions, and garlic” made their mouths water from intense longing. During the critical period in which Jehovah was attempting the transformation of this servile gang of brick-makers into a nation of free men, they fell before the power of their uneradicated Egyptian appetites. Let every unsanctified Christian remember that these things are written down as examples of the shipwreck to which he is especially exposed... The only safety is in the opening of a new fountain of

joys within the heart, so sweet, so full and so lasting as to extinguish utterly all base delights...

“The joy of the Lord is your strength” to resist sin as well as to endure toil. Fullness of joy is the Christian’s impervious shield. Christ has such a shield for every believer. “Ask and receive, that your joy may be full.” Some people, by affecting contempt for joy, proclaim themselves wiser than the Master. The truth is that no soul is entrenched in its bomb-proof till it is filled with God, with love, with joy. For these three are a trinity in unity. Every soul having the fullness of God has the fullness of joy...a high serene tranquility often bursting out into exultation because of the gladsome emotions actually realized.

The kingdom of God is not fully set up in the soul till the joy of the Holy Ghost crowns both righteousness and peace. “For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” (Rom. 14:17) Hence, every young convert should be urged to advance immediately and rapidly beyond the point of irksomeness of service, into the region of unutterable gladness in Jesus. This is the region of perfect consecration, full trust, entire sanctification, and the fullness of the Spirit abiding within the soul.

The question why so many converts backslide is here answered... They flourish only as long as their short-lived, superficial joy continues, and then they wither away...

Gladness in Jesus has an important place in the economy of salvation. It conserves fidelity and conquers Satan... In conclusion, while we urge all to a joyful experience, we caution all against seeking temporal joy instead of Jesus, the Joy-Giver.

Twelve Years from Glory to Glory

While that eloquent preacher and voluminous writer, Thomas Aquinas, “the Angelical Doctor,” was composing his “*Summa Theologiae*,” he left off to celebrate the Lord’s Supper, in which he was over-whelmed with the revelation of Christ’s love, and filled with the raptures of the Holy Spirit. After this he could be persuaded neither to resume his pen nor dictate anything for the completion of the work in hand, which was then almost completed. His attendant urged him to finish the volume. He replied, “I cannot, for everything I have written seems to me worthless compared with what has been revealed to me.” [One learns that true Christianity is not so much in the theology one believes, but in the supernatural life that is revealed within the soul by the Spirit. This life of love “passes knowledge.” (Eph. 3:19) It can be known in personal experience, but it cannot be expressed through human words.]

As chisel in hand I approach my Twelfth Mile-stone in the way of holiness, to inscribe my “*Gloria Patri*,” I find myself in deep sympathy with this great Christian philosopher. In my former writings I have exhausted all the English superlatives in portraying the loveliness of Jesus in His spiritual manifestations to my heart. Hence I hesitate to speak in weaker phrase of a still more excellent glory. But I attempt the task not with the hope of success, but lest my silence may be construed as the effect of a fading away of the brightness of the Shekinah within.

Waning is not characteristic of the dispensation of the Comforter, though it was true of the glory on the face of Moses. The Revision brings out the fact that the veil was put on, that the people might not see the glory fade away from his face, typical of the transitoriness of his dispensation, and hold him in less respect in consequence. But we do

not need any veil, for the glory on our faces is undying. Says Paul: “but we all, with unveiled face, reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord, the Spirit.” Thanks to the great Apostle and to the Spirit of inspiration for that word ALL. It answers those who write to me saying that my experience is exceptional and extraordinary. “We all” means all who insist on receiving, at any cost, their full heritage in Christ.

Again, Paul’s portraiture of experience common to all in the Pentecostal era, is not that the resplendence is waning, or stationary, but increasing “from glory to glory,” year by year, and day by day, evermore...

The aim of the Gospel is to make men perfectly holy in this life. The element in which this purity exists is love. Perfect love is always accompanied by fullness of joy; or, in Peter’s words, “joy unspeakable and full of glory.” This is certainly a general promise to all believers, without one exception, down to the end of time. “Ask and ye shall receive that your joy may be full.”

The repetition of his promise in varied forms strengthens our belief that it is God’s desire to fill to the brim every soul on the earth, and keep them all full forever. “These things have I spoken unto you that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.” Twice does John take up his pen to write his epistles—one of them a general epistle—with this sole purpose, “that your joy may be full.”

Paul goes a step further and insists that joy is a duty. He uses the imperative mood: “Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice.” [Every requirement of the Gospel can now be fulfilled within us by the Spirit when the covenant conditions are met. Those who truly walk by the Spirit remained filled to overflowing with His love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.]... In fact, the dispensation of the Paraclete is a joyful dispensation.

The reason why all Christians are not overflowing with joy is because they have not mounted up into the third story of God’s kingdom; for that kingdom is a three-storied palace, “Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost,” the Rock of Ages being the foundation. In the basement dwell those chronic penitents who fear God and work righteousness in the spirit of servility and not of sonship. In this cellar-experience, in much unrest and longing for a better state, during his early years, John Wesley wrought sorrowfully “as servant,” till that good Moravian minister, Peter Bohler, was sent by God to tell him that it was his privilege to climb the stairway of justifying faith leading into the apartment of Peace, where the Spirit of Adoption makes His occasional visits to the sons of Peace. [These Spirit-led children of God receive periodic wells of refreshment from the Lord while passing through an arid land.] A sunny and cheerful place is this in contrast with the gloomy room beneath, where hireling toil. But this joyful place, resounding with the gleeful voices of childhood, is only a nursery where infantile weakness lies in the cradle [where there is still much reliance on human emotions]...

Some of these children, yielding to the Spirit’s guidance, ascend into the third story, the sky-lit parlor, into the gracious presence of the Lord of the mansion, even the Father in His Incarnate Son, manifested through the Comforter. “And we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” A blessed upper chamber this! Here I have dwelt as a permanent home twelve beatific years, so satisfied with “strong meat” and so enraptured with the abiding Comforter, that I have not left it for a moment...

Do you not know that God is composing a grand poem in human history, and that the saints are verses? “ye are His poem.” See the Greek of Eph. 2:10. My supreme ambition is to be a perfectly rhythmic and mellifluous line in the glorious epic of redemption. Many years I was a discord, full of redundant syllables and erroneous quantities. How quickly the great poet brought me into harmony and rhythm when I fully submitted myself to Him! May the angels and archangels, the seraphim and cherubim, find no blemish in my verse when with wonder they read the finished poem!

A Christian friend writes to me asking me whether I am not a Mystic. I reply, Yes. All men are religious Mystics who know God through spiritual intuition, a gift of the Holy Ghost far transcending the Reason and the Understanding. I have a warm side for the Christian Mystics, so utterly misunderstood by that blind generation in which they lived. They dwelt on the mountain-tops in the dark age, and never lost sight of the vision of a glorified Christ. Such a Mystic I would be as Rudolf E. Etier professed to be, when a company at an inn hinted that this reproachful epithet belonged to him, by asking his definition of the term. He replied: “the Mystics were preachers who live as they preached.” Perfect love has worn many an opprobrious name without receiving any detriment. This Rose of Sharon blooming in my heart is just as sweet under any other name...

It seems to me that I never knew what it is to grow in grace till I plunged into the shoreless and fathomless sea of divine Love in 1870. Since that day each new height gained has shown above me Alps on Alps arising, betokening an endless career of progress in the ceaseless cycles of eternity...

Freedom

Thomas à Kempis agrees with Faber when he says, “My son, thou canst not have perfect liberty unless thou wholly renounce thyself. They are but in fetters, all who merely seek their own interest and are lovers of themselves. Keep this short and complete saying: ‘Forsake all, and thou shalt find all...’ ”

Formal freedom is an inherent attribute of man, but real freedom is the gift of Christ, inasmuch as it is the outflow of the new nature, the creation of the Holy Ghost. “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” It is obedience from an inner impulse, spontaneous and free. It is a perfect similarity of feeling with God in all our moral choices and in all the sources of our delight... We keep the law unconsciously, not from dread of its penalties...but by glad assent, as naturally as water runs downhill. In fact, the soul saved to the uttermost, and filled with the Sanctifier, like the body of the risen Jesus, has lost its earthward attraction, and gravitates upward, having passed the center of gravity between sin and holiness, earth and heaven. Col. 3:1-3: “If ye then be risen with Christ seek those thing which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”...

Another instructive fact disclosed in the study of this subject is, that real freedom is often expressed as the most complete enslavement to God. This indicates that freedom from sin [self-will] is at the same time perfect submission to God. Hence the evangelical paradox in 1 Cor. 7:22, where the Lord’s freeman is Christ’s servant, and in 1 Peter 2:16, where the free are exhorted to use their liberty as the servants or slaves of God... The loftiest ideal of liberty is realized when the human will is completely enthralled by the

Divine will. [This is truly the life of heaven on earth. “Your kingdom come {into the heart}. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” (Matt. 6:10)]... Thanks be unto God, “we who have believed do enter into rest,” the glorious rest of a perfect freedom...

This transition can never be reached on the plane of the natural. As an eagle cannot out-soar the atmosphere, so self-will cannot transcend itself. The work is divine. This our adorable Savior plainly declares when He says: “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”... This takes place when the Holy Spirit fills the soul... Duty is transformed to delight... Love knows no burdens in the service of its object...

The true doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints is wrapped up in this idea. It is not founded on the Creator’s act of unconditional election from eternity, but upon the joint election of the creature and his Creator; on the ground of...His everlasting dominion deliberately chosen by man. “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.”... He has passed the point of equal attraction between self and God, and now and for evermore gravitates upward. To him, and him alone, belongs this confident challenge, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?”...

Such a soul has occasion for watchfulness to know the Master’s will, to penetrate the celestial guise in which Satan sometimes appears, and to guard all the innocent sensibilities against excessive action. While all the forces of St. Paul’s soul, fused by the fire of love, were flowing Christward in one molten stream, he kept under his body, lest he should be a castaway. In this respect he counted not himself as already perfect, but he was pressing forward, if by any means he “might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.” But in joyful service, without the least trace of servile feeling, in the fullness of his love toward Christ excluding all antagonistic forces, he say, “let us, as many as be perfect, be thus minded.” (Phil. 3:8-21)...

How beautifully and concisely does St. James state the doctrine of this article in five words, “the perfect law of liberty”... What a change would the Church present, should this feature of the new covenant become the universal experience of the members! All the general rules regulating the life, all the requirements of the Discipline respecting attendance upon the means of grace, would immediately become a dead letter, not through universal neglect, but by reason of an inward spirit of obedience diffused through the entire body of Christ. This is the aim of the so-called higher-life movement: not to engraft something new upon Christianity, but fully to inaugurate the new covenant in the hearts of professed Christians...

Christ our Sentinel

We cannot leave you, dear reader, without warning you against a mistake which is so common as to be almost universal. It is that you are to be kept from yielding to sin by your strong resolutions, fixing your will as a flint against that temptation. This seems to be very reasonable. All the moral philosophies will approve your course, for this is their favorite method of conquering evil. All who know nothing of divine grace and the gift of the Holy Spirit teach salvation [through an attempt to make ourselves right] by good resolutions... The Gospel scheme of keeping men from sinning is so peculiar that it never was conceived or dreamed of by mere human reformers. It is to commit the keeping of your soul wholly to another, even Christ.

The attitude of the watchful soul is to be that of Peter's eyes when he first stepped from the ship upon the waters of the sea—LOOKING UNTO JESUS... Weakness, not strength, comes from a constant survey of the hosts in battle array against you. Power comes into the palsied arm when the eye turns wholly toward the Angel of Jehovah, who encampeth around about the believer. Philosophy says, "Grow strong by a downright grapple with the threatening evil;" but the Gospel of the Old Testament, as well as that of the New, says, "THEY THAT WAIT UPON THE LORD SHALL RENEW THEIR STRENGTH."

The power of Jesus to keep from danger is fitly illustrated by the superintending Providence which guided and protected Noah in the ark. Did you ever notice, in the minute description of that ship, which was built to make a voyage from the old world to the new, bearing the seeds of all precious things with which the new world was to be sown, there is no mention of the rudder? Our modern ship carpenters would laugh at the idea of launching a rudderless ship, just as unbelief sneers at committing one's ways unto the Lord instead of a so-called manly, self-reliant self-guidance. A good type of the fully trusting Christian is good old Noah, sitting serene and unconcerned in his ark, as it floats over the drowned world, confiding in the skill of his invisible Pilot to keep his craft from the rocks, and to land it in safety on some appropriate spot.

How could a man who had been "moved with fear" to build his ark, sail in it, month after month, with no chart, nor compass, nor rudder, and be kept from distressing fears on that long and perilous voyage? There is but one answer—his perfect trust in Him who had commanded the building of the ark... It requires a higher style of faith to be passively borne along under the guidance of our heavenly Father than it does to be active in fulfilling the divine command. Obedience is the soil out of which such faith grows. If Noah had not obeyed Jehovah in building the ark and embarked in it, he could not have trusted Him so unwaveringly...

We are as ignorant of our individual future as was Noah ignorant of his course and destination when he climbed up the side of the ark and the Lord shut him in. If Noah had unwisely taken the guiding of the ark into his own hands he would probably have wrecked it and lost its inestimable cargo. Thus thousands, in their distrust of God, lay their own hand upon the helm, and ship a crew of fears to torment their whole voyage, and run their vessel upon some uncharted reef, and lose all at last, or save themselves with great difficulty, when, through "the rest of faith," they might have had a joyful voyage and an abundant entrance into the haven of eternal life...

The very simplicity of the keeping which Christ exerts over all who "know the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe" renders it impossible to describe it. Blessed, indeed, are they whose grasp upon the divine promises makes their lives a perpetual twenty-third Psalm: "The Lord is my Shepherd."

Other ancient worthies as well as Noah were led into the secret of the Lord, which made their lives cheerful and victorious. How calm and unmoved was good old Elisha, when the Syrian horses and chariots and great host of soldiers came thundering and tramping about the little cities of Dothan where the prophet was. They had come expressly to capture him... Why was he calm and unterrified? He did not look at this noisy army of Syria... He had an eye which saw a mightier army filling all the mountains above them under the command of Jehovah Himself, the celestial Captain, who appeared to Joshua before the gate of Jericho. This host and its General absorbed all his thoughts. He looked at nothing else. Not so Elisha's servant. Arising early in the morning and

going forth, he sees the beleaguering army... With breathless haste and pallid cheek he rushes back into the house, exclaiming, "Alas! my master, how shall we do?"

In our mind's eye we see Elisha sitting on the side of his bed, tying on his sandals. The alarming news produces no tremor in his limbs, no change in his countenance. He coolly replies, "Fear not; for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." But the trembling servant's fears were not allayed. He saw no such friendly army as his master was gazing intently upon. Then Elisha, in pity toward his frightened servant, kindly prayed, "Lord, I pray Thee, open his eyes that he may see." And the Lord opened the young man's eyes, and he saw, and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire, round about Elisha as his bodyguard. The servant trembled no more. He who keepeth Israel, who doth not slumber nor sleep, is at hand to protect all who trust in Him...

"LOOKING UNTO JESUS!"... In this attitude it is easy to "subdue kingdoms, work righteousness, obtain promises, stop the mouths of lions, quench the violence of fire, out of weakness be made strong, wax valiant in fight, and turn to flight the armies of the aliens."

The secret of so much backsliding as we find everywhere is in this, the eye, bewildered by the thousand cross-lights of worldly pleasure, loses sight of Christ. The keeping power of this divine vision is broken. The spell of pleasure has taken the place of the spell of the cross. The downward gravitation of the world has taken the place of the pull of heaven. The soul is in imminent peril: before such, the faithful evangelist, assisted by the Holy Spirit, must hold the lamp of the gospel truth so steadily that the wandering eye may see once more the lost Jesus, the only keeper of the soul...

"I have no cares, O blessed Will!
For all my cares are Thine;
I live in triumph, Lord! for Thou
Has made Thy triumphs mine."

The Twentieth Mile-Stone

"Jesus Christ is to me a bright reality," said the eloquent Punshon on his death bed. In my early Christian experience, a period of twenty-eight years, Christ was only occasionally and by glimpses a distant reality, with long intervals of haze and cloud obscuring my vision. But in 1870 the Comforter led me up the Mount of Transfiguration, and what is still better, He built for me a tabernacle, and, best of all, gave me a life-lease. Here have I dwelt ever since, envying no millionaire his marble palace in the city, nor his seaside cottage, nor his summer villa on the mountain's summit.

Appendix C

Excerpts from the Book
The Key to Triumphant Living
Written by Jack Taylor
Published by The SeedSowers

[All Christians, regardless of denominational background, would be brought into the same unity of life if they all focused on the theological teachings that reveal how to be filled with God's life of holy love. It is by becoming filled with God's glory that we all become one with each other. (John 17:22-23) Although Jack Taylor's Baptist background would lead him to different conclusions about some matters of the faith, there is an agreement in how to find life from above. He has revealed the fundamental teachings that every Christian should have in common.]

Go ahead and admit it! You are your greatest problem. You are your utmost enemy. Of all the four-letter words, SELF is the worst...

Let's go back to the time when the enemy first appeared. God...had made man for fellowship. But to be valid man had to choose to fellowship with God... If he chose to eat of the tree of Life...he would ever be taking of the fruit of the tree of Life, the Life of God, and would always be good as God is good. He would always be living in utter dependence on God.

But man chose the tree of knowledge of good and evil. He would rather develop his life as he saw fit and "do his own thing." He would be self-sufficient and independent...

The path to the tree of life was blocked... He had chosen his own way and he must now bear the consequences...

Another word for self is the "flesh."... "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." (Rom. 8:8)... Christ didn't come to improve self but to replace it. Self has no place in the economy of God...

Self must not be dedicated. How prone we are to try to do that! The accumulated result of the effort to dedicate self to God is a system that operates on selfish motivation and selfish rewards... Self will do anything before it will die. It will pray, work, and tithe. It will teach Sunday School class or become a deacon. It will even preach! It will steep itself in religious tradition to cushion itself against God [and His way of the cross]. But self remains an enemy of God. As long as self and Christ remain in the same heart there will be war...

The course of self is pre-plotted. It will look at everything with an eye as to how it will be affected. It will always magnify itself. It is touchy, sensitive when not recognized, and struggles for the position of honor and praise. It cannot bear to be rebuked or corrected. It is full of self-defense. It pushes its claims of petty notions on other people. It is destructive and deadly...

The Christian is of no use to God until he is dead. He cannot live completely to the God nature [perfect love] as long as he continues to live to his own nature. There is but one cure for self...DEATH!...

Once a person becomes a Christian he is faced with one monstrous dilemma. He is supposed to live, love, walk, and talk like Christ... "Get in there and do your best!" is often our motto... In fact, *our best, as much as we seem to revere it, is our enemy*, in that: (1) It will never accomplish what is needed and is thus a waste of time. (2) If it did work we could take a part of the credit for our victory. (3) And, *as long as we do our best, we disallow God from doing His normal in us!* (This makes "our best" a terrible enemy.)...

There is no evidence in the Scripture to be found that God expects anything of us but total and abject failure. This is the reason for the cross in our salvation and the cross in our inner life. [To know Christ and Him crucified is to know Him at His point of absolute weakness.]... Self can live a life that has some appearances of Christlikeness, but self cannot be Christlike... ["I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me..." (Gal. 2:20)]

Christ in you! That is the only hope of glory. The word "glory" has to do with value. It implies the coming to be what the thing was made to become. [We were created as powerless vessels. But this particular vessel was made to hold the life of God. (2 Cor. 4:7) We become perfect in God's sight when we are living as vessels that He can use to display His life and glory.]

If Christianity were nothing more than a man deciding to worship Jesus and doing his best to imitate Him, there indeed would be little hope. But if Christianity is Jesus coming into an available human body and acting like Himself, then there is abundant hope. In the one, all is based on human strength. In the other, all is based on the dynamic of the indwelling Christ...

I greatly fear that when the final accounting is done, much of the work that we have sought to do for God will not stand. It has been done in the flesh, with fleshly motives, and toward fleshly goals... [Only those things that had their source in the Spirit will pass through the testing fires of Judgment.] Jesus said, "The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." (John 14:10) If Jesus depended on the Father in Him to do the works, how much more should we depend upon Him in us to do the works?...

It is His life in our individual bodies that makes the corporate body, the church, a living and vital spiritual organism. [We cannot expect the church to attain to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ until each member has the Lord's divine life working through them. (Eph. 4:12-13)]... My life becomes what it was made to be...an occasion for Jesus to live again in my world and love and serve that others might be brought to the Father...

How do we function? We were made to contain the life of God. Man was disqualified and lost that inner quality of life in the garden. Christ came to restore all that man had lost... As He is allowed to be the reigning Lord, He exercises His blessed Lordship not only in the deep of man's spirit but in the soul, the domain of the mind, the will, and the emotions. The whole of the body in reality then belongs to Jesus for His use and glory.

For the first time we begin to see how God made the human to function. Man can be impressive without Jesus as Lord but man cannot be miraculous without Jesus as Lord. And in the final accounting we are worth no more than what our lives show the world about God. Do you desire to function as you are made to function? Then turn it over to

Jesus!... [“But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.” (John 3:21)]

A. B. Simpson writes, “The Holy Spirit is the Great Undertaker who finally brings us to the place to which God has assigned us; namely, the sharing of Christ’s tomb. But He cannot bring us to a participation in the crucifixion-life without our consent. We must consent to die.”

Thus consenting to die, we consent to the life of Jesus in us by the Holy Spirit residing and reigning. We can only be alive to Him as we are dead to ourselves. This is the principle of the exchanged life. The life of the old man is reckoned dead that the life of the new man (Christ Jesus) might take its place to give victory... This is the reason why the experience of fullness comes to most within the context of despair...

To choose Him is to choose against self... We must make the choice of death to self... We are to choose death to our plans, ambitions, tastes, friends, securities, wealth, future, reputation, and everything else in order that we might live unto Christ...

“If we die” is a wonderful supposition! Jesus was talking about Himself in John 12:24. He was also talking about us. *If we die to our own identity, we then are free to live to Him.*

Appendix D

Excerpts from the Book
Charles Wesley on Sanctification
Written by John R. Tyson
Published by Schmul Publishing Co.

Restoring the Image of God

Charles Wesley often began his poetic presentations of the doctrine of redemption by first pointing his readers to the dire situation in which they found themselves. Apart from God's grace, they were dead in their trespasses; their sin cut them off from a saving relationship with their God and Father.

Wesley's basic definition of sin was rather traditional; he often described sin by using traditional theological terms such as concupiscence [selfishness] and pride. Both terms refer to that inner sense of rebellion that causes one to make self the center of one's universe, rather than give God His proper glory and place in one's life...

Charles's homily, "the Single Eye," carried this same sort of emphasis. The title-phrase was a euphemism for "singleness of intention," or unmixed and undivided motives about doing God's will... Sanctification meant a radical renovation in the volitional center of a person, and a change of heart and will that unified heart and will so that willful transgression became unthinkable...

Charles believed that salvation means being saved for complete renovation. Salvation in this sense means straining toward "full salvation." It leads directly to the renewal of the *imago Dei* [the image of God] within a person...

Charles's first (surviving) public presentation of his views on sanctification appeared in the early sermon entitled "The One Thing Needful."... It describes the restoration of "the image of God in man" (*imago Dei*) as that "One Thing Needful." The goal of salvation is the undoing of the effects of the Fall into sin: "The likeness of our destroyer...Satan—must be erased and we must be remade "anew after the likeness of our Creator." Creation and redemption are tightly woven together; in one panoramic sweep, Wesley's thought moves from paradisiacal perfection, through the Fall into sin, and back again toward re-creation of that original divine likeness...

It is clear that Charles used this theme of re-creation as the basic structural device for his theology of redemption. He took justification and sanctification together as two moments in God's strategy to counteract the effects of Eden's Fall; and his approach to the theology of redemption bears a striking resemblance to what the Eastern church fathers called "recapitulation."

The concept of recapitulation is generally traced to roots in the writings of Irenaeus (d. 198?) and through him to other important fathers of the Eastern church such as Athanasius, Clement of Alexandria, and John Chrysostom... Like Charles, Irenaeus began his theology of redemption with the need to recreate the righteousness of Adam

through the restoration of the *imago Dei*. This recreation was the goal of Christ's coming into the world...

The Pauline pairing of the first and second Adams may have been Irenaeus's fulcrum, but the force of his theology of redemption was to be found in the restoration of the image of God or the image of Christ within the Christian: "But following the only true and steadfast Teacher, the Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who did, through His transcendent love, become what we are that he might bring us to be what He is Himself." According to this great church father, Christ became a human being to enable people to become what He Himself is. This simple yet daring idea was not lost upon Charles Wesley; it became the centerpole of his theology... His approach was thoroughly anchored in his basic theological concern for the restoration of original righteousness as the "one thing needful" in those who trusted Christ... ["That you put on the new man {the Second Adam} which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness." (Eph. 4:24)]

A second sermon from the 1816 collection, "The Single Eye," returned to this same foundational theme: "If thou aimest at any thing but the one thing needful, namely a recovery of the image of God in thy soul, thy whole body shall be full of darkness."... Charles's replication of the Eastern fathers' conception of sanctification caused him to consider salvation in its fullest context... In his mind, the word salvation implied "full salvation" that was larger than justification or a new relationship with God... Charles's radical insistence upon this "One Thing Needful" brought an emphasis that distinguished Wesleyan theology...

Love Perfected

No one word is more characteristic of Charles Wesley's soteriology than love... Love, in Charles's application of the term, became an apt summation of the Christian gospel... Agape is the New Testament description of that other-directed, selfless love that was in Christ and in His new commandment for Christians (Matt. 5:43-48; Mark 12:30-33; John 15:10-13)... Charles's reading of Philippians 2:7 caused him to place love and "self-emptying" (Gk. *kenosis*) side-by-side as explanations of the Incarnation...

Following the New Testament record, Charles moved easily from the revelation of God's love in Jesus to the affirmation that love describes the divine nature: "Thy nature, and Thy name is Love." Hence, Wesley declared that the impartation of love in Christian redemption is both "incompatible with sin" and synonymous with the formation of a "heavenly principle within"... Following the Johannine dictum that "God is love," Charles Wesley expected to find God—the indwelling Christ—formed within the believer as love...

Since "love is incompatible with sin," just as self-giving is irreconcilable with selfishness (sin as concupiscence), Christ's love enables the Christian to overcome sin in the inward person: "Love excludes the selfish passion, Love destroys the carnal mind"... In Wesley's words, renewal effected by love "conquers this rebellious heart" and allows a Christian to "live in the image of my Lord"...

Charles was not content to hold out perfection [in love] as an empty ideal; rather, he saw Christian perfection as the logical fulfillment of the gospel of love, a fulfillment that Wesley expected here...

The New Testament term for “perfection” is *teleios* or a related term from the *telos* family of words. The basic meaning of *teleios* has to do with enjoying the full benefits, the end goal, or outcome of something... For the Wesleys to speak of perfection in the New Testament sense was not to claim perfect performance or “having arrived” as spotless believers... They referred to a perfection that was complete in the extent of one’s yieldedness before God and the dimensions of God’s love in the life of the inner person. “Completeness” in the sense of *teleios* is not a static conception...

Charles Wesley’s perfectionist language was clearly not based in moral achievement, as though perfection amounted to a perfect score in all one’s deeds. “Perfection” was preeminently the language of inner renewal, a renewal so powerful and pervasive that it touched the totality of one’s existence... Often Charles called this renewal “perfection in love” or “perfect love,” since God is love and God’s love within the believer was deemed to be the source and power of this inner renovation...

One of Charles Wesley’s favorite ways of describing perfect love was to link it with the restoration of the image of Christ. Central to his development of this conception were 2 Peter 1:4 (where Christians are said to be “partakers of the divine nature”) and Romans 8:29 (where we are said to be “conformed to the image of his Son”)...

It is clear that Charles Wesley was not interested in perfection as a lofty, unattainable ideal. The man and his task were far too practical for empty idealism; rather, he sought “True substantial holiness” or “real holiness.” Charles was equally insistent that Christian perfection is “perfection here.” There was no pie-in-the-skyism in his conception; while Wesley longed to live blamelessly in his heavenly Father’s presence, he understood that his translation into the other realm at death would be a continuation of the perfection begun here and not a substitute for it...

The closest that Charles Wesley came to a formal definition of Christian perfection occurred in his journal entry for Monday, September 26, 1740: “utter dominion over sin, constant peace, and love and joy in the Holy Ghost; the full assurance of faith, righteousness, and true holiness.”... Hence, “full salvation” became one of his favorite phrases for the doctrine of sanctification. It meant an undoing of the effects of the Edenic Fall and its corruption of human nature, through an invasion of divine love that healed a divided mind (Gk. *dipsuchos*) and mixed intentions. The Holy Spirit accomplished this transformation by unifying one’s inner life through an infilling of God’s love (*agape*). This love was the “one thing needful” that completed God’s saving intention and brought wholeness to the Christian’s life by casting out fear, selfishness, and sin as the Holy Spirit dwelt in the Christian’s heart and the mind of Christ was formed within...

The Life of God in the Soul

The Life of God in the Soul of Man, by Henry Scougal...was one of the most frequently printed books in the eighteenth century. First appearing in 1677, it was reprinted on the average of once every three years for the next hundred...

Charles was reading Scougal not long after he began the Holy Club. He loaned it to nineteen-year-old George Whitefield, who later recalled: “He let me have another book, entitled, *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*; and though I had fasted, watched and prayed, and received the Sacrament so long, yet I never knew what true religion was, till God sent me that excellent treatise by the hands of my never-to-be-forgotten friend.”

Whitefield's full description of the impact of "that excellent treatise" vibrates with exhilaration: "God soon showed me [the nature of true religion]; for in reading a few lines further, that 'true religion was union of the soul with God, and Christ formed within us,' a ray of Divine light was instantaneously darted in upon my soul, and from that moment, but not till then, did I know that I must be a new creature."

A Scottish Anglican, Scougal distinguished vital, living religion from "all those shadows and false imitations of it"... "They who are acquainted with [true religion] will...disdain all those shadows and fake imitations of it. They know by experience that true religion is a union of the soul with God, a real participation in the Divine nature, the very image of God drawn upon the soul, or, in the Apostle's phrase, it is Christ formed within us. Briefly, I know not how the nature of religion can be more fully expressed than by calling it a Divine Life."...

Scougal considered sanctification to be an indwelling of God, described as a visitation of the Holy Spirit or the formation of Christ within, which produced a "resemblance of the Divine perfections"... The book seemed to possess lasting value for the elder Wesley, since he abridged and published *Life of God* in 1742, and that edition was reprinted at least six times...

Charles's earliest hymns are full of phraseology that describes sanctification as being "filled with God." In a manner not unlike the *theosis* doctrine of the Eastern fathers, Wesley came to describe holiness as the result of an infusion of God or His love into the life of the Christians... The hymn, entitled "The Resignation," is a long lament (twenty-two verses) that bewails the singer's divided heart... "The resignation" refers to the singer's giving up self-will in order to achieve harmony with God's will, the surrender of worldly affections in favor of the love of God. Resignation also describes one's willingness to die in order to purge one's heart from earthbound hindrances to the love of God...

In view of the great love and sacrifice of Christ, the singer of Charles's hymn finds the courage of self-resignation: "To tear my soul from earth away, For Jesus to receive... My one desire is this, Thy only love to know, To seek and taste no other bliss, No other good below."...

This same phraseology was quite prominent in Charles's later (post-1749) hymns. It continued to point to Christian perfection as a result of the life of God in the soul of an individual, "By perfect purity possess'd / For ever fill'd with God"... Hence, the divine image restored through love was synonymous with being filled with God, which Wesley described as "paradise" and "finish'd holiness" here:

Then the whole earth again shall rest,
And see its paradise restored;
Then every soul in Jesus bless'd
Shall bear the image of its Lord,
In finish'd holiness renew'd,
Immeasurably fill'd with God.

Appendix E

Excerpts from the Book

Christ Manifested

Written by John Fletcher

Compiled and Edited by David R. Smith

Published by Christian Literature Crusade

I am convinced that—for purposes which are worthy of His wisdom—our Savior desires to reveal Himself to all of His sincere followers, in a divinely spiritual way, sooner or later. Not only do I believe that this teaching is true, but also I am sure it is scriptural, rational, and of the greatest importance. Because of this, I am sitting down to write on this profound subject at some length. By so doing, I shall give you a fair opportunity of seeing my error (if I am wrong), or encouraging you (if I am right) in seeking that which I esteem to be the most invaluable of all blessings—revelations of Christ to one's personal soul, productive of the experimental knowledge of Him, and the present enjoyment of His salvation...

Nor must you gain the impression that I am writing of good desires, meltings of heart, victories over particular corruptions, a confidence that the Lord can and will save us, power to stay ourselves on some promises, gleams of joy, rays of comfort, enlivened hopes, touches of love; no, not even foretastes of Christian liberty, and the good Word of God. These are delightful drawings of the Father, rather than the powerful revelation of the Son. These, like the star that led the wise men for a time, disappearing then appearing again, are helps and encouragements to come to Christ, and are not a divine union with Him by the revelation of Himself...

This manifestation is, sooner or later and in a higher or lower degree, vouchsafed to every sincere seeker... It may be in a gradual or an instantaneous way that the manifestation comes, according to God's good pleasure. As soon as the veil of unbelief, covering the human heart, is rent by the power of the Holy Spirit; as soon as the soul has struggled into a living belief in the Word of God; as soon as the door of faith is opened—the Lord Jesus Christ comes in and reveals Himself as being full of grace and truth. Only then is the tabernacle of God with man; His kingdom has come with power; righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit are spread through the soul; eternal life has begun; heaven has come upon earth...

Nevertheless, I would—in general—observe that the manner in which the manifestation of the Son of God is vouchsafed, is not the same in all persons... Most commonly, however, the [earnest seeker]—driven out of all of his refuges—feels an aching void in his soul. Unable to satisfy himself any longer, with the husks of empty vanity, dry morality, and speculative Christianity, and tried with the best form of godliness which is not attended with the power of it, he is brought to spiritual famine, and hungers after heavenly food. Convinced of unbelief, he feels the want of the faith of God's operation. He sees that nothing short of an immediate display of the Lord's arm

can bring his soul into the kingdom of God and then fill it with righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost...

Remember that when we are cut off from all outward means, it is our privilege to wait for the direct display of God's arm, in the use of the inward means.

Concerning these inward means, the first is to believe that there will be a performance of the Lord's promise, and that He is both willing and able to manifest Himself to us, in a way that He does not do to the world; this is the very root of prayer, fervency, hope, and expectation! Without the action of this preparatory faith, the soul droops and becomes an easy prey to despondency, vanity, or sloth. Where this talent is buried, the Lord seldom works. "Believest thou, that I am able to do this for you?" is generally the first question He puts to the seeker's heart. If it is answered in the negative, He can do no great miracle, because of this unbelief. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that Paul was blessed with a revelation of the Son of God, without any previous desire or expectation of it. In him and some others it could be said that "I was found by them that sought Me not; I was manifested to them that asked not after me." However, in general—where the gospel is preached—*the Lord will be inquired of by the house of Israel to do this...*

The second inward means by which one may encourage the manifestation of Christ is resignation as to the particular manner, time, and place of it. *Through patience, as well as faith and prayer, we inherit the promised blessing.* Some, trusting in their carnal wisdom and intellect, mark out the way... But the Lord generally disappoints these proud seekers... The Jews expected the Messiah, and in this they were right; but they expected Him in their own way, and there they stumbled and fell. While they looked for a mighty conqueror who would come to make them great, they overlooked the lowly Prince of Peace, who came to make them good; and—finally—they crucified Him as a base imposter... Hence Christ is commonly rejected in the spirit by Christians, as He was in the flesh by the Jews...

Our nature wants us to step up into a throne at once, but Christ offers first to nail us to the tree and crucify our flesh with its affections and lusts; from this, we shrink as from the grave. We expect to be carried at once to the top of Mount Tabor, to see unutterable glory; He leads us to Gethsemane to watch and to pray, or else to Calvary to suffer and to die with Him; at this we recoil, and do not choose to know Him. Our impatience dictates that He shall instantaneously turn our midnight into noon-day; but instead of manifesting Himself quickly like the meridian sun, He may, perhaps, appear only as the morning star. This defeats us; we despise the day of small things and do not consider that so meager an appearance is worthy of our notice and thanks.

If you, reader, ever seek a personal knowledge of Jesus, never stop seeking Him until you witness your sun going down no more. However, in the meantime, never slight the least ray of heavenly light; the least of these may open into the broad day of eternity. Cease from your own false wisdom, and become as a little child, or you will not enter the kingdom of heaven, nor see the King in His beauty.

The third and last inward means that I would recommend, is a tender regard for the reproofs of the Spirit. This means a constant attention to the drawings of the Father, obedience to the calls these have to secret prayer, *together with a fear of depending upon such duties and not solely upon the faithfulness of Jesus.* Whoever follows these directions—according to the grace given to him, will, of course, cease from outward evil

and do—as he can—the little good his hands find to do. This is a better way of waiting for the revelation of Christ, than to lie down in dejection and hopeless unbelief.

All those who sullenly bury their talent, and willfully retain the accursed thing, complain in vain that their Lord makes long tarrying. They obstinately grieve His convincing Spirit and then absurdly clamor (because He does not reward them for it) for the comforts of His heavenly presence. Let us not be so unreasonable. Let us strive to enter in at the strait gate, remembering that many shall seek to enter in, but shall not be able. However let us strive lawfully, not making for ourselves a righteousness of our own seeking by our manner of knocking and striving. The sun does not shine because we deserve it through drawing back our curtains, but because it is in its nature to shine...

Appendix F

Excerpts from the Book

Victory

Written by W. B. Godbey

Published by Schmul Publishing Co.

“Till my conversion at sixteen, the physical predominated. My great delight was in wrestling, foot-racing, ball-playing, etc. Conversion at once destroyed all my appreciation of these physical exercises, and I entered the intellectual period. I took the greatest delight in all sorts of hard study, went through the Collegiate course, ransacked the world for books, delighted in dead languages... Meanwhile, pursuant to an early call, I preached fifteen years with all my might, committing the awful blunder of substituting my education and intellect for the Holy Ghost, as I knew nothing about preaching with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. (1 Pet. 1:12)

After nineteen years sanctification came. Then I entered the spiritual period of my life, which will sweep through the gates of death and continue through all eternity... God came and swept away all the rubbish of science, literature, philosophy, mathematics, and theology and gave me the sweet simple story of Jesus and His love...

In the physical period, I walked in utter darkness, though a church-member with an irreproachable character; in the intellectual, I enjoyed the twilight of salvation; for the last nineteen years I have walked in cloudless day. Hallelujah forever!

“While sinners and backsliders are entirely without spiritual light, justified people clearly recognize daylight, but frequently the clouds and fogs are dense, they scarcely know which way they go, while sanctification brings cloudless day with no night.”

“When you get full salvation, you will soon be astonished and delighted with the sweet and unutterable rest your soul will have in Jesus. It will take all the fire and all the murmur out of you. The very things that used to stir up anger, will arouse love. Temptations to pride will arouse humility, allurements to lust will awaken aversion... There will be nothing in your heart responsive to Satan’s temptations when presented.”

“Sanctification destroys all self-confidence, so you will feel as never before your utter incompetency to stand for a moment if left to yourself, not that you have any disposition to sin, for sanctification has taken it all away, but self-confidence is also taken away. So the same perfect surrender that left it all with Jesus the moment you got sanctified keeps it all with Jesus forever.

“[But you say] ‘It will require much attention to exercise faith every moment.’ You are mistaken. When once you get fully saved you will, if steadfast, soon become so established in holiness that your faith will become as natural as breathing. The angels are unconscious of an effort to trust God. Their faith is spontaneous. So will ours be when all evil [independence, self-sufficiency and self-will] is eradicated from the heart.”

“Only give the Sun of Righteousness a chance and every cloud will take its flight.
Perfect submission, all is at rest.
I in my Savior am happy and blest;
Watching and waiting, looking above,
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.

Eden

“When God created the human race, he called them very good; i.e., perfect, because He gave them His own image and likeness; i.e., righteousness and true holiness. (Eph. 4:24) This holiness, which is the divine nature, was lost by the fall, and the human spirit was left in utter chaos.

“The Bible was never given to unfallen Adam, neither is it for the glorified; but it was given to fallen Adam to restore him back to the paradise he lost. The word of God positively and explicitly everywhere affirms that Christ came “to destroy the works of the devil.” (1 John 3:8) And not only to undo all the devil did, but by the paradoxical and transcendent dynamite of His omnipotent grace, to so triumph over the devil as to even make the fall an ultimate blessing to us...

[For if by the one man’s offense death reigned through the one {Adam}, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. {They reign with the same overcoming life that is in Christ.} (Rom. 5:17)]

“In Genesis 2, we have a description of the garden (it should read a park or paradise), which, under the restorative spiritual dispensation in which the Bible was given, is transferred to the human heart. We have full spiritual restitution here, mental restoration when this mortal body shall put on immortality, and physical restitution on the resurrection morn...

“When you consecrate all and trust implicitly for entire sanctification, you will (as you persevere), find your soul flooded with the perfect love of God... The river of your former justified experience, which was often low and nearly dry, will receive a wonderful influx, overflowing its banks and sweeping out like an inundating sea...

“Now, reader, have you the Eden experience? Eden is typical of Heaven... So you must be restored back to Eden, as that is the only point of departure from earth to heaven.

“The Eden experience is the heavenly state, into which all must come before we can enter Heaven...

“Go read about the beautiful crystal river in the last chapter of the Bible. Why does the Bible thus wind up? It is the history of redemption. When a ship has completed its voyage, it rounds into the harbor whence it was launched. The Bible starts out from the Garden of Eden, with its beautiful and majestic rivers. It winds up amid the same heavenly rivers. Thus it has finished its work, and returns back whence it started... O soul, hasten back to the Eden you lost, and there abide till He comes... Are you in Eden waiting His coming? Glory to God! I regained my happy Eden home nineteen years ago...

Remember, when you were converted, you forsook all your sins and took up your cross. What use did you have for that cross? To be crucified on it. Are you not weary of bearing that cross? Oh! stop, and let the Holy Ghost nail you to it and crucify you on it. Then you will carry it no more, but the cross will carry you. Then ‘you will mount up on your wings like eagles.’ Then all the clouds and storms will be beneath your feet, and you will abide amid the azure beauty of the Sun of Righteousness forever. Away with all your bogus creeds about Christianity...

O pilgrim, encumbered with that heavy cross, stop this moment and let the Holy Ghost nail thee to it... Though the soul-agony be excruciating, let Adam die that Christ may live... Let Adam the First groan and die, that Adam the Second may live forever. You left your evil habits when you took up your cross to follow the Savior. Now let your evil nature be crucified, and you can raise the shout of Victory, which will ring on through all eternity...

O soul, get crucified, and you will have a heaven in which to go to Heaven... Don’t be deceived at this vital point. You are surrounded by millions who call themselves Christians who are utterly destitute of Christian character and woefully ignorant of Bible Christianity.

“ ‘Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.’

“ ‘Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing... Ye shall know them by their fruits...’” (Matt. 7:13-16)

Appendix G

Excerpts from the Book
The Practice of the Presence of God
By Nicholas Herman (a.k.a.) Brother Lawrence
Published by Baker Book House

This record of the thoughts of Brother Lawrence (1605-1691) was compiled from his letters and from notes that were taken during conversations with him. The book has become one of the most widely read of the Christian classics. The fact that millions of copies have been printed helps us to see how many earnest souls have been hungry to find the life of God.

The message expresses a wisdom that has its source in God. Brother Lawrence had very little formal education. But as he lived by childlike faith he could be taught of the ways of God by the Spirit. This dishwasher in a monastery reveals how those who truly listen to God and enter into an experiential knowledge of Christ's heavenly life naturally speak the common language of heaven. Regardless of their religious background, these God-possessed people cease to dispute about varying doctrines and begin to emphasize the simplicity of living through Christ.

Brother Lawrence lived for the last thirty years of his life with his soul so filled with the presence of the Lord that, at times, he said it was necessary to use means to keep the overflowing joy from interfering with his daily work. He expresses his concern for the blindness of most Christians. He felt sorry for those who content themselves with little visits from Jesus. God, he said, has infinite treasure to bestow, and we take up with a little sensible devotion, which passes in a moment. We also learn from Brother Lawrence that it is possible to find this life from heaven even when we are surrounded by others still living by doctrines that are contrary to the Spirit of God.

The following lessons were given by Brother Lawrence. We have changed the wording for clarification and easier reading, but the basic message is the same. It again reveals the common spiritual language that is spoken by those who share with God in His heavenly life.

.....

Spiritual Maxims

As for what passes in me at present, I cannot express it. I have no pain or difficulty about my state, *because I have no will but God's will, which I seek to accomplish in all things*, and to which I am so resigned that I would not take up a straw from the ground against His order. I have abandoned myself in His hands *that He may do what he pleases with me*. The King, full of mercy and goodness, embraces me with love, makes me eat at His table, serves me with His own hands, and gives me the key of His treasures; He converses and delights Himself with me incessantly, in a thousand ways, and treats me in all respect as His favorite.

Let us think often that our only business in life is to please God, and that all besides is but folly and vanity. *I know that for the right practice of the Christian life, the heart must be empty of all other things. God will only possess the heart when He has it all to Himself.*

I do not pray that you may be delivered from your pains, but I earnestly pray that God would give you the strength and patience to bear them as long as He is pleased to allow them to go on. Comfort yourself with Him who holds you fastened to the cross. *He will take you beyond it when He sees fit.* Happy are those who suffer with Him. Accustom yourself to suffer in that manner, and seek from Him the strength to endure as much, and as long, as he shall judge to be necessary for you.

The men of the world do not comprehend these truths, nor is it to be wondered at, since they suffer as all people who live on the natural plane and attempt to improve their life through their present circumstances. They consider hardships and sickness as evil because they are dependent upon the temporal world for life, and so they do not see them as a favor from God. Since they have only this limited view, they find nothing in their suffering but grief and distress. But those who can see everything as coming from the loving and merciful hand of their Sovereign God for their purification are able to find consolation in their suffering. They know that “afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.” (Heb. 12:11)

Those who will put all their trust in God and begin to walk by His Spirit shall often find that He brings about a quick recovery. Whatever remedies you try to use will succeed only so far as He permits. When pains come from God to turn you from your own strength and sufficiency, he alone will take them away. He often sends diseases of the body to cure those of the soul. He can only save your soul by removing everything that exalts self. Comfort yourself therefore with the Sovereign Physician of both the soul and body.

I am not concerned about what God does with me. I am always happy. The whole world is under God’s curse of suffering; and yet I feel joy so continual and so great that I can scarce contain it. I know that everyone goes through a very difficult beginning to arrive at this state.

Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you. (John 16:22)

If we love Him alone, are we not rude, and do we not deserve blame, if we busy ourselves about trifles which do not please Him? *It is to be feared these trifles will one day cost us dearly. Let us cast everything out of the heart. He expects to possess it alone.* Beg this favor of Him. If we do what we can on our part by responding to the convicting work of the Holy Spirit, we shall soon see that change wrought in us which we aspire after.

In this actual union the soul is intensely active. It is a state of the soul which is deeply spiritual, and yet very simple, which fills us with a peace and joy that brings deep calm to the soul, and with love that is very humble and reverent. It lifts the soul aloft to heights that experience alone can teach us to understand.

Let us mark well, however, that this communion with God is held in the depths of our inner being and not through the intellect of the mind. It does not come through a mere belief in certain doctrine. It is in the depths of the soul that God communicates His eternal life through the power of the Holy Spirit, heart to heart. The soul in this communion experiences great and profound peace and joy.

God, who seems to be so delighted in this union, begins to bestow inward favors past numbering; and as if He dreaded lest the soul should turn again to the things of the earth, He provides for it abundantly, so that the soul finds in this life a divine nourishment and a joy that has no measure. It is a life beyond our uttermost thought and desire; and He does it without any works on our part other than our desire for him to be our all in all.

“No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him”—but God has revealed it to us {within our inner being} by his Spirit. (1 Cor. 2:9-10 NIV)

The indwelling Presence of God is thus the life and nourishment of the soul. To attain to this state, we must mortify the senses and die to the ways of the flesh. Because no soul, if it finds its spiritual sustenance from earthly things, will have an opportunity to find divine joy in the Presence of God. In order to enter into this union with Him in the heavenly realms we must leave behind the fleshly creature.

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (Col. 3:1-3)

This Holy Presence is the mystery that has remained hidden to many throughout the ages. Christ in you is what enables the soul to find a beauty beyond compare, surpassing infinitely all that the world has to offer. His Presence breathes into the will a distrust of the things seen, and sets it aflame with an inward fire of divine love. God’s love is in very truth a consuming fire that burns up all traces of the self-life, burning to ashes all that is contrary to His will. A soul that has been kindled with this heavenly love no longer wants to live except in the Presence of God. And His Presence works within the heart a consecrated zeal, a holy ardor, an extreme passion to see Him known and loved, served and worshipped by all His creatures.

Notes on the Character of Brother Lawrence

His conversation sprung from a high notion, which he conceived of the power and wisdom of God. Faith in what God promised to do was the one light that he took for his path. “He alone can reveal Himself to us; we toil and exercise our mind in reason, forgetting that therein we can see only a copy. In the depths of our soul God is able to reveal Himself, could we but believe it. *But rather than looking to Him in faith, we leave Him to spend our time in the fooleries of human wisdom.*” We eat from the tree of knowledge rather than from the Tree of Life.

He once said: “For me the time of action does not differ from the time of prayer, and in the noise and clatter of the kitchen, while several persons are together calling for

different things, I possess God in as great a tranquility as when upon my knees at the Blessed Sacrament.”

Brother Lawrence only attained to the perfection of God’s love because from the very outset he had laid stern discipline upon himself to do nothing which might be displeasing to God. Forgetting self, he had renounced all for the Lord’s sake.

He said that in his soul he had found that love for the will of God had taken the place of that which a man ordinarily has for his own will. In all the events of life he saw plainly the workings of the Divine Will, and this kept him in perfect peace, because his mind was stayed on God.

Once when Brother Lawrence was very ill, a man of great sanctity of life (Fenelon) came to visit him, and asked him which he would choose, if God permitted him, whether to live a little longer or to receive him at once into heaven. The good brother never hesitated; he replied that he would leave the choice to God; that as for himself he had nothing else to do but to wait in peace, till God should do with him as He pleased.

This disposition of not having an independent will of his own brought him to so great an indifference about everything, and to such perfect peace and freedom, that it was very like the freedom of the Blessed. He had no bias, no personal opinions to press onto others; not a trace of self could one discover in his character, nor of any prejudice arising from those attachments to self which men commonly possess.

Such a one prays every place, at every moment, not indeed using many words, but in the secret depths of his soul, while walking and conversing with his fellow-men, or reading, at the table eating, when at work. Continual fellowship through an inward communion makes him meek, gentle, patient, while strong as iron to battle with temptation. In this condition he gives no hold to the world, which the devil holds sway over—either to pleasure or suffering.

The joy of communing with God on which he feeds unceasingly, renders him insensible to all empty pleasures. He dwells in the life of God, and having seen the Light of Lights, he has no taste for what the world can offer.

He has no ground for fear, inasmuch as nothing in this world can hurt him, nor separate him from God’s life of love. As the martyrs have proven, “There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear.” He has no need to school his spirit into calmness, seeing that his mind has already found perfect rest in God’s life of love. Nothing perturbs him. Jealousy can gain no entrance, inasmuch as he lacks nothing. He loves his fellow men with no mere human fondness, but as the objects of the divine love of the Father. His spirit is steadfast and unchangeable, for he has committed all his ways unto God and rests in Him alone.

Appendix H

Excerpts from the Book

The Spirit of Christ

Written by Andrew Murray

Published by Christian Literature Crusade

Preface

...Some feel that their own life is not what it should and might be. Many of them can look back to some special season of spiritual revival, when their whole life was lifted to a higher level. The experience of the joy and strength of the Savior's presence...was, for a time, most real and blessed. But it did not last; there was a very gradual decline to a lower stage... There can be little doubt that the answer must be this: they did not know how to honor the Indwelling Spirit as the strength of their life...

God's Holy Spirit can dwell in, can fill, can make into a holy and beautiful temple of God, the heart of His child, making Christ reign there as an ever-present and almighty Savior...

Of theology...we have no lack. But it is as if, with all our writing, and preaching, and working, there is something wanting... If we give ourselves entirely into His power, as our life, ruling within us, He will give Himself to us in taking a more complete possession, to work through us...

The Holy Spirit only demands vessels entirely set apart to Him. He will delight to manifest the glory of Christ our Lord...

A New Spirit, and God's Spirit

The distinctive glory of the dispensation of the Spirit is His Divine personal indwelling in the heart of the believer, there to reveal the Father and the Son... Of what the Baptism of the Spirit meant, Jesus Himself was to be the type: He would only give what He Himself had received...

It is of great consequence that at the outset we should not allow ourselves to be occupied with points...of minor importance, but fix our whole hearts on the great spiritual lessons that God would have us learn from the preaching of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. These are specially two:

The one is, that this baptism of the Holy Spirit is the crown and glory of Jesus' work, that we need it, and must know that we have it, if we are to live the true Christian life... It is the Personal Spirit of Christ making Him present within us, always abiding in the heart in the power of His glorified nature, as He is exalted above every enemy. It is the Spirit of the Life of Christ Jesus making us free from the law of sin and death, and bringing us, as a personal experience, into the liberty from sin to which Christ redeemed us...

And then there is the other lesson: It is Jesus who thus baptizeth... "He that believeth in me," Jesus said, "out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." The one thing we need is living faith in the indwelling Jesus: the living water will surely freely flow...

Let us specially remember one thing: only he that is faithful in the least will be made ruler over much... Regard thyself with deep reverence as God's holy temple. Wait for

and listen to the gentlest whispering of God's Spirit within thee. Listen especially to the conscience, which has been cleansed in the blood. Keep that conscience very clean by simple childlike obedience...

Yield to the reproofs of conscience when thou failest; but come again, have hope in God, and renew the vow: What I know God wants me to do, I will do... Jesus had His disciples three years in His baptism class, and then the blessing came. Be His loving, obedient disciples...and thou too shalt be prepared for the fullness of the blessing... *All Divine giving and working is in the power of this endless life...*

Worship in the Spirit

When God created man a living soul, that soul, as the seat and organ of his personality and consciousness, was linked, on the one side, through the body, with the outer visible world, on the other side, through the spirit, with the unseen and the Divine. The soul had to decide whether it would yield itself to the spirit, by it to be linked with God and His will, or to the body and the solicitations of the visible. *In the fall, the soul refused the rule of the spirit, and became the slave of the body with its appetites.* Man became flesh; the spirit lost its destined place of rule, and became...dormant...

Because the soul is under the power of the flesh, man is spoken of as having become flesh, as being flesh... The Scripture speaks of all the attributes of the soul as belonging to the flesh, and being under its power. So it contrasts, in reference to religion and worship, the two principles from which they may proceed. There is a fleshly wisdom and spiritual wisdom (1 Cor. 2:12; Col. 1:9) There is a service to God trusting in the flesh and glorying in the flesh, and a service to God by the Spirit (Phil. 3:3-4; Gal. 6:13)... There is a worship which is satisfying to the flesh, because it is the power of what flesh can do (Col. 2:18, 23), and a worship of God which is in the Spirit. It is this worship in the Spirit that Jesus came to make possible...

[But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth {by walking in the Holy Spirit}. (John 4:23,24)]

In all the worship of the Old Testament saints, they knew that God sought Truth in the inward parts. While they sought Him with their whole hearts, and most uprightly—they attained not to this worship in Spirit and Truth, which Jesus brought us... If we take truth as opposed to falsehood, the law of Moses was just as true as the Gospel of Jesus; they both came from God. But if we understand what it means, that the law gave only a shadow of “good things to come,” and that Christ brought the things themselves, their very substance, we see how He was full of light and truth, because He was Himself the Truth, the reality, the very Life and Love and Power of God imparting itself to us. We then also see how it is only a worship in Spirit that can be a worship in Truth, in the actual enjoyment of that Divine Power, which is Christ's own life and fellowship with the Father, revealed and maintained within us by the Holy Spirit...

[For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit {live by the Spirit} rejoice in Christ Jesus {for what He is doing through our lives}, and have no confidence in the flesh. (Phil. 3:3)]

All worshippers of God are not true worshippers. There may be a great deal of earnest, honest worship without it being a worship in Spirit and in Truth... There may be

great attachment to Bible truth, and yet through the predominating activity of that which cometh not from God's working, but from man's efforts in the flesh, it may not be the Christ-given, Spirit-breathed worship, which God seeks...

[He {the Spirit} will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine {the shared life in the Trinity} and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you. (John 16:14-15 NIV)]

We need the Holy Spirit's indwelling presence for life and worship alike. And to receive this we need first of all to have the flesh silenced... Our own limited thoughts of Divine things, our own efforts to waken or work up the right feelings must be brought down and laid low [all things must be counted "as loss" if we are to know the indwelling life of Christ], and every approach to God must take place under a very distinct and very quiet surrender to the Holy Spirit...

How much worship there is, even among believers, that is not in the Spirit! In private, family, and public worship, how much hasty entering into God's presence in the power of the flesh, with little or no waiting for the Spirit to lift us heavenward! It is only the Presence and Power of the Holy Spirit that fits for acceptable worship.

The great hindrance to the Spirit is the flesh. The secret of spiritual worship is the death of the flesh; a giving up to the accursed death of the cross, and in great fear of its works, humbly and trustfully to wait for the Spirit's life and power to take the place of the life and strength of self. As our life is, so will our worship be...

[Yet indeed I also count all things loss {the things that are related to a religious life in the strength of the flesh} for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him...that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection... (Phil. 3:8-10)]

The Spirit of the Glorified Jesus

Our Lord promises here [John 7:38-39], that those who come unto Him and drink, who believe in Him, will not only never thirst, but will themselves become fountains, from where streams of living water, of life and blessing, will flow forth. In recording the words, John explained that the promise was a prospective one...the Holy Spirit *was not yet*; because *Jesus was not yet glorified*...

Christ came not only to deliver man from the law and its curse, but to bring human nature itself again into the fellowship of the Divine Life, to make us partakers of the Divine nature... And in virtue of His having perfected in Himself a new holy human nature on our behalf, He could now communicate...a life at once human and Divine. From henceforth the Spirit, just as He was the personal Divine life, could also become the personal life of men...

For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity {the shared life of the Trinity} lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. (Col. 2:9-10 NIV)

But now, Blessed be God! Jesus has been glorified; there is now the Spirit of the glorified Jesus; the promise can now be fulfilled: "He that believeth on me, out of him shall flow rivers of living water."

We must not simply rest content with the faith that trusts in the cross and its pardon; we must seek to know the New Life, the Life of Glory and Power Divine in human nature, of which the Spirit of the glorified Jesus is meant to be the Witness and the Bearer. This is the mystery which was hid from ages and generations, but is now made known by the Holy Spirit, Christ in us; how He really can live His Divine life in us who are in the flesh...

[It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me... I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain. (Gal. 2:20-21)]

Jesus says that whoso believeth in Him shall never thirst, but shall have rivers of water flowing out of him. This alone it is that satisfies the soul's thirst, and makes it a fountain to quicken others; the Personal Indwelling of the Holy Spirit, revealing the Presence of the glorified Jesus... Here we have once again the blessed key of all God's treasures: *He that believeth on me...*

Believing is that power of the renewed nature which, forsaking self and dying to it, makes room...for the glorified Christ to come and take possession and do His work. Faith in Jesus bows in lowly stillness and poverty of spirit, to realize that self has nothing, and that Another, the unseen Spirit of Christ, has now come in to be its leader, its strength, and its Life. Faith in Jesus bows in the stillness of a quiet surrender before Him, fully assured that as it waits on Him, He will cause the rivers to flow...

The Indwelling Spirit

Our Father has given us a twofold revelation of Himself. In His Son He reveals His Holy Image, and setting Him before men invites them to become like Him by receiving Him into their heart and life. In His Spirit He sends forth His Divine Power, to enter into us, and from within prepare us for receiving the Son and the Father.

[If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. (John 14:23)]

The dispensation of the Spirit is the dispensation of the inner life... The *Eternal Life* was to become the very life of man, hiding itself within his very being and consciousness, and clothing itself in the forms of a human will and life...

[And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. (1 John 5:11)]

This is the teaching the Church of Christ needs in our days. I am deeply persuaded that very few of us realize aright to what extent believers are ignorant of this aspect of the truth concerning the Holy Spirit... God wants entire possession of His temple. Jesus wants His home all to Himself. He cannot do His work there, He cannot rule and reveal Himself and His love as He would, unless the whole home, the whole inner being, be possessed and filled by the Holy Spirit. Let us consent to this...

[Saphir, in *The Lord's Prayer*, says] "If we review the history of the Church, we notice how many important truths clearly revealed in Scripture, have been allowed to lie dormant for centuries, unknown and unappreciated except by a few isolated Christians, until it pleased God to enlighten the Church by chosen witnesses, and to bestow on His children the knowledge of hidden and forgotten treasures."

The Spirit Given to the Obedient

It is only as they yield obedience to this...elementary work, the keeping of Christ's commandments, that they will be promoted to *the higher experience of His conscious indwelling*, as the Representative and Revealer of Jesus in His glory... The lesson is one we cannot study too attentively... In the entire giving up of the will to be possessed and used as He pleases, we are fitted for entering the Divine Presence...

[He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me...and I will love him and manifest Myself to him. (John 14:21)]

When God commanded Israel to build Him a holy place, that He might dwell among them, He said to Moses, "According to all I show thee, the pattern of the dwelling, even so shall ye make it." And so we find in the last two chapters of Exodus, eighteen times the expression that all had been made "as the Lord commanded." It was in a house thus built after God's pattern...that God came to dwell. In the will of God, carried out by man, God finds a Home. God comes down to dwell in the obedience of His people...

[J. M. Hames has provided additional comments on this theme in his book *Deeper Things*: "In Exodus, the fortieth chapter, we read that when the tabernacle was complete, every article of furniture in its place, every curtain hung, that it was dedicated to the Lord, anointed with oil. Immediately the pillar of cloud and fire began to descend, and entered the holy of holies... The glowing Shekinah took up His abode. Friends, this is the climax of the atonement. There is nothing sweeter, higher, nor deeper than God enthroned in a human heart. This is the Christian perfection, sanctification, soul-rest—the fullness of the blessing, perfect love! It is Heaven on earth."]

Before God came down to dwell, it cost Israel time and sacrifice to prepare a house for Him. Believer, who prayest for the inward revelation of Jesus, turn inward, and see if thy heart be prepared as His temple. Does conscience testify that thou seekest with thy whole heart to know and do the will of thy Lord? If you would know the indwelling of the Spirit as a blessed reality, let conscience be kept very pure...

Knowing the Spirit

Believer! for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus Paul counted all things but loss. Shall we not do so too? Shall we not, to know the glorified Christ through the Spirit, give up everything? Oh, let us think of it! the Father hath sent the Spirit that we might fully share in the glory of the glorified Christ! Shall we not give ourselves up to have Him in us, to let Him have all in us, that we may fully know Him, through whom alone we can know the Son and the Father?...

[And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one...that the love with which you loved Me {perfect love} may be in them, and I in them. (John 17:22-23, 26)]

At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. (John 14:20)]

The Spirit of Truth

In His promise to send the Spirit of Truth...our Lord very definitely tells us what His principle works would be. "He shall be witness of Me." He had just before said, "I am the

Truth.” The Spirit of Truth can have no work but to reveal and impart the fullness of Grace and Truth that there are in Christ Jesus...

[“And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given through Moses {the way of obedience through the written word}, but grace and truth {the reality of divine life} came through Jesus Christ. (John 1:16)

Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law... Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ... (Gal. 3:21, 24)]

There are Christians who are afraid that our thinking of the Spirit’s presence within us will lead away from the Savior above us... However, the Spirit within us will only lead to a fuller, a more true and spiritual apprehension that Christ alone is indeed all in all. “He shall bear witness of me.” “He shall glorify me.”...

The tempter of Paradise still moves about among men. Knowledge is still his great temptation. How many Christians there are who could confess that their knowledge of Divine Truth does little for them... They know little of the light and the liberty, the strength and the joy that the Spirit of Truth was meant to bring. *It is because they take to themselves God’s truth in the power of human wisdom and human thought... Most earnest efforts to abide in Christ, to walk like Christ, have failed because their faith stood more in the wisdom of man than in the power of God...*

[No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared {in the heavenly realms} for those who love him—but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. (1 Cor. 2:9-10 NIV)

But God...made us alive together with Christ...and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus... (Eph. 2:4-6)]

These thoughts suggest the great need of the Christian life. Jesus said, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and follow me.” Many a one follows Jesus without denying himself. *And there is nothing that more needs denying than our own wisdom, the energy of the fleshly mind, as it exerts itself in the things of God...*

[But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ...that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection... (Phil. 3:7, 10)

This is the meaning of the call to be silent before God, and in quiet to wait on Him; to hush the rush of thoughts and words in God’s presence, and in deep humility and stillness to wait... *He will prove Himself the Divine Enlightener: the Life is the Light.* Let the confession that we have no life or goodness of our own be accompanied by the confession that we have no wisdom either; the deeper our sense of this, the more precious will the promise of the Spirit’s guidance become... [“Lean not on your own understanding... Do not be wise in your own eyes...” (Prov. 3:5, 7)]

The Expediency of the Spirit’s Coming

“I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away.” As our Lord is leaving this world, He promises the disciples here that *His departure will be their gain...* They were to be far happier and safer and stronger with Jesus in heaven, than they ever could

have been with Him on earth... The indwelling of the Spirit was meant to restore Christ's most personal intercourse and guidance...

[Most Christians think it would be better to have Jesus walking with them in the flesh as He walked with the first disciples. They have a very limited concept of what Christ has come to do. The first disciples could not walk as Jesus did until after He was glorified. Only then was He able to come back to each individual to manifest His Kingdom-life within their inner being. We are here to be witnesses to the fact that Christ is now able to live through each member of His body in His resurrection life.]

God wants to educate us, indeed, to a perfect manhood, not ruled by an outward law, but by the inner Life. As long as Jesus was with the disciples on earth, He had to work from without, inward [using the outward principles of law], and yet could never effectually reach or master the inmost parts. When He went away He sent the Spirit to be in them... They could then become like Himself... Oh, if Christians could only see the more excellent way of living a holy life! Every believer needs the indwelling Spirit of Christ Himself dwelling within them, revealing and maintaining the Presence of their Lord in power.

[That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith...that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Eph. 3:17, 19)]

The Spirit Glorifying Christ

I am persuaded that just here is the point at which very many of God's dear children need the teaching, "It is expedient that I go away." Like His disciples, they have believed in Jesus; they love and obey Him; they have experienced much of the inward blessedness of knowing and following Him. And yet they feel that the deep rest and joy, the holy light and the Divine power of His abiding indwelling, as they see it in Holy Scripture, is not yet theirs... They see something still before them, promises not perfectly fulfilled, wants not fully satisfied. The only reason can be this: they have not yet fully inherited the promise: "The Spirit shall glorify Me."...

"Knowing Christ after the flesh"...must come to an end, must make way for knowing Him in the power of the Spirit. *After the flesh: that means, in the power of the external, of words and thoughts, of efforts and feelings, of influences and aids coming...from men and means.* The believer...to a great extent, has confidence in the flesh. Admitting that he can do nothing without the Spirit, he still labors and struggles vainly to believe and live as he knows he should...

[I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father {to share in the eternal life found in the Trinity} except through Me. (John 14:6)]

I am the vine, you are the branches...for without Me you can do nothing. (John 5:5)]

There has indeed been a revelation of Christ...the Abiding Friend, but that revelation has been, in part, taken hold of by the flesh and the fleshly mind. This has made it powerless. Christ, the Christ of glory, the doctrine of the Indwelling Christ, has been received into the mixed life, partly flesh and partly spirit... We must give up and cast away the old way of knowing and believing and having Christ. We must know Christ no more after the flesh. "The Spirit shall glorify Me."

[Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? Have you suffered so many things {to break your self-sufficient spirit} in vain—if indeed it was in vain? (Gal. 3:3-4)]

But what does it mean that the Spirit glorifies Christ?... “He shall glorify Me, for He shall take of mine. All things, whatsoever the Father hath, are mine; therefore, said I, that He taketh of mine, and shall declare {reveal} it unto you.”... When the Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus in us, He reveals Him to us... When the Holy Spirit does His perfect work, and reveals the Glorified Lord, the Throne of His Glory is set up in the heart, and He rules over every enemy. Every power is brought into subjection, every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. Through the whole of the renewed nature there rises the song, “Glory to Him that sitteth on the Throne.”

Though the confession holds true to the end, “In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing,” the Holy Presence of Christ as Ruler and Governor so fills the heart and life that His Dominion rules over all. Sin has no dominion: the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death...

When the fullness of time is come, and faith is perfected, the Spirit of the Glorified One enters in power, and Christ dwells in the heart. Yea, the history of Christ Himself repeats itself in the soul... The believer who longs to have Jesus glorified within by the Spirit, must, however blessed his life has been in the knowledge and service of his Lord, learn that there is something better. In him, too, the veil of the flesh must be rent; he must enter into this special part of Christ’s work through the new and living way into the Holiest of All...

Oh that God may teach us this lesson, that *the one great work of the Spirit*, as the Spirit of Christ, *is to make the Glorified Christ always present in us*, not in thoughts or memory only, but within us, in our inmost parts, in our life and experience. Can it be? Jesus, the glorified One, always present with us, dwelling in us? It can be. The Holy Spirit has been given by the Father for this one work... “Said I not unto thee, that, if thou believest, thou shouldst see the glory of God?”

Waiting on the Revelation of Christ

“In the life of the Old Testament saints, waiting was one of the loved words in which they expressed the posture of their souls towards God. They waited for God, and waited upon God... Frequently it is an injunction... “Wait on the Lord; wait, I say, on the Lord.” “Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him.” And then again there is the testimony to the blessedness of the exercise: “Blessed are they that wait upon Him.” “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.”...

The Holy Spirit is not given to us as a possession of which we have the charge and mastery, and which we can use at our discretion. No. The Holy Spirit is given to us to be our Master, and to have charge of us. It is not we who are to use Him; He must use us. He is indeed ours; but ours as God, and our position towards Him is that of deep and entire dependence on One who giveth to every one “even as He will.”...

When God gives His Spirit [in fullness to reveal Christ’s heavenly Life within the soul], He gives His inmost Self. He gives with a Divine giving, that is, *in the power of the eternal life*, continuous, uninterrupted, and never-ceasing.

When Jesus gave to those who believed in Him the promise of an ever-springing fountain of ever-flowing streams, he spake not of a single act of faith that was once for all

to make them the independent possessors of the blessing, but of a life of faith that, in never-ceasing receptivity, would always and only possess His gifts in living union with Himself. And so this precious word wait—"He charged them to wait"—with all its blessed meaning from the past, is woven into the very web of the new Spirit dispensation...

The multitude of words and the fervency of feelings in prayer have often been more hindrance than help. God's work in you must become deeper, more spiritual, more directly wrought of God Himself. Wait for the promise in all its fullness... "Wait, I say, on the Lord." "Blessed are all they that wait for Him."...

Waiting! It includes the denial of self, its wisdom or strength; separation from all else; surrender and preparedness for all the Spirit would claim; joyful faith in what Christ is, and confident expectation of what he is going to do. Wait! Tarry! The one final condition imposed by the ascending Lord for the fulfillment of the Promise...

The Spirit of Power

The Holy Spirit is the power from on high for carrying on the work for which Jesus sacrificed His Throne and His Life. The essential condition for receiving that power is that we be found ready and fit for doing the work the Spirit has come to accomplish.

"My Witnesses": these two words do indeed contain, in Divine and inexhaustible wealth of meaning, the most perfect description of the Spirit's work and our work... [We are to be a living witness of our Lord's eternal Kingdom-life. We are to reveal this heavenly life and bear witness to how our resurrected Lord is able to live through everyone who believes in Him.]...

There is nothing so effective as an honest witness. The learned eloquence of a lawyer presenting his case on what he has heard from others must give way to it. There is nothing so simple: just telling what we have come to see and know, or, perhaps in silence, witnessing through our radiance to what has been done in us...

To make us witnesses of Jesus is what the Almighty power of the Spirit is needed for, and what He was sent to work. If we are, in the power of the eternal Life, in heavenly power, to witness of Jesus as he reigns in heaven [in His Kingdom-life], we need nothing less than the Divine power of the heavenly life to animate the testimony of our lips and life...

Walk very humbly in holy fear, lest in anything thou shouldst fail in knowing or doing His holy will. Live as one given up to a Power that has the entire mastery over thee, that has complete possession of thy inmost being...

The perishing millions are crying for deliverance, and the Power of God is waiting to work it. Let us not be content with the prayer for God to visit and to bless them, or with the effort to do the best we can for them. Let us give up ourselves, each individual believer, wholly and undividedly, to live as witnesses for Jesus. Let us plead with God to show His people what it means that they are Christ's representatives just as He was the Father's representative.

This "clothing with power from on high," this "receiving the power of the Holy Ghost," takes place in a way quite contrary to all our natural expectations. It is a Divine Power working through our weakness. The sense of weakness is not taken away: the power is not given as something we possess. We only have the power working through us as we have the Lord Himself. He exerts the power in and through our weakness.

[J. M. Hanes reports, “Dr. S. A. Keen says the gift of the Holy Ghost, as a Presence, imparts a kind of physical transfiguration to the child of God. It illumines the face, brightens the eye, sweetens the voice, hallows the manner... Those who have the gift are not always conscious that the light of God shines from their faces, but others perceive it. Moses’ face shone when he came from the mount, but Moses ‘wist not that his face shone.’ It was the people who were aware of it.”]

The power of the Church of Christ will be decided by the state of its individual members. The Holy Spirit cannot work mightily through the Church of God in the world until the mass of individual believers have given themselves wholly to their Lord to be filled with His Spirit...

The Outpouring of the Spirit

God made man in His own image, and for His likeness, with the distinct objective that he should become like Himself. Man was to be a temple for God to dwell in... The closest and most intimate union, the indwelling of love: this was what the Holy One longed for, and looked forward to...

The Spirit that has dwelt in Jesus Christ...has taken up His human spirit into perfect fellowship and unity with Himself. [That uniting of His human spirit, as the Second Adam, with the Spirit of His Father has made it possible, once again, for God and man to be united together as one. This Second Adam has begun a new lineage of people who have entered into a divine union with God by living through His Spirit.]

As the Man Christ Jesus enters the glory of God and the full fellowship of that Spirit-life in which God dwells, He receives from the Father the right to send forth His Spirit into His disciples, yea, in the Spirit to descend Himself, and dwell in them. In a new power, which hitherto had not been possible, because Jesus had not been crucified or glorified, as the very Spirit of the glorified Jesus, the Spirit comes. The work of the Son, the longing of the Father, receives its fulfillment. Man’s heart is now indeed the home of his God...

[And the glory which You gave Me I have given them...that the love with which You loved Me {holy love} may be in them, and I in them.
(John 17:22, 26)]

Christ had entered the glory with this very purpose, that now, in a Divine way, “He might fill all things,” [bringing all things into harmony with His Kingdom-life in the heavenly realms] He might specially fill the members of His body with Himself and His glory-life. When the Holy Spirit came down to the first disciples, He brought as a personal life within them what had previously only been a Life near them, but yet outside their own. The very Spirit of God’s own Son...was now to become their personal life...

It is not so much the Baptism of Power for our preachers we must seek; it is that every individual member of Christ’s body may know, and possess, and witness to, the Presence of an indwelling Christ through the Holy Spirit. It is this that will draw the attention of the world... [“And the glory which You gave Me I have given them...that the world may know that You have sent Me...” (John 17:22-23)]

It is out of such a church of men and women full of the Holy Ghost that Spirit-led preachers will rise up, bold and free, to point to every believer as a living witness to the truth of their preaching and the Power of their Lord... The healthy action of the Spirit in the Church requires the health of every individual believer. Let us pray and labor for this,

that the Presence of Christ, by the indwelling Spirit in every believer, may be our preparation for the united prayer and service which shall make our seasons of worship one ever-repeated Pentecost...

Note J

I give another note from Professor Beck, on the Spirit and the work He does in the believers and the Church... Anything that helps us to meditate... will help to free us from those very limited ideas we have of... who the Holy Spirit is, and what the blessed work He has come to do in us.

“As concerns the relation of the Spirit to Christ, He is the Witness who takes of what Christ contains and possesses to bring it to us, and thereby reveal and glorify Christ... This action of the Spirit is, however, only mediated for the world by the reconciliation which Jesus Christ has effected, and by His being glorified. Previous to this reconciliation, the Divine Spirit worked... as the Spirit of the Theocracy, with special temporary manifestations for special functions, as in the case of the prophets. *But not in such a way that the Eternal Life*, as it belongs to the Divine nature, and dwells in the Father and the Son, that the Spirit of the Divine personal life *could become the personal life of man*, the property of his inmost nature. In this special aspect the Spirit in the Old Testament was only a promise to be realized in Christ, and therefore bears the name of the Spirit of Promise. In the New Testament Spirit the promise becomes fulfillment, actual bestowment, and possession...”

[And all these {the great saints of the Old Testament dispensation}, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise. God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect {in the Kingdom-life of holy love} apart from us. (Heb. 11:39-40)]

Note K

I must ask my readers to forgive me if I appear to repeat too frequently this one thought. I feel as one who has a message to bring, but is conscious that he stammers, and fears that his message will not be rightly understood. We are all so sure that we believe in the Holy Ghost, and that we understand how indispensable His operation is. It is therefore with difficulty we look on the deep spiritual truth, that our Almighty Lord Jesus is waiting, by His Holy Spirit, to work in every believer, and so through His Church, the greater works He promised. He has come to do something exceedingly abundantly above what we ask or think, according to the power that is working in us. The beginning of the change must be that, in the ordinary ministry of the word, every individual believer must be educated into the full consciousness that to be filled with the Holy Ghost is an absolute necessity for a life truly fruitful and well-pleasing to God...