

# **BIBLE TRUTHS EXPLAINED**

*What God's Word teaches about*

## **SANCTIFICATION**

**Gordon Lyons**

**KJV Edition**

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## Sanctification

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# Sanctification

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## Part 1

### **Synopsis: Sanctification**

Sanctification is that work of the Holy Spirit in the inward life of a believer which progressively changes that person's old sinful manner of life to the new holy manner of life: a life that produces righteous behaviour and good works. Sanctification is the gradual renewal of the whole person after the image of Christ. This involves the changing of that person's character and conduct from one degree of glory to another, until the Holy Spirit perfects him in holiness of life (glorification). Sanctification is a life-long process, and it is never finally completed during this life. When the Lord takes the believer into his presence, then he will finally complete his sanctification. Then, and then only, will the believer experience glorification, and then the Lord will present him faultless and blameless before the throne of God. Sanctification must immediately follow regeneration and justification. No unregenerate and unjustified person can ever benefit from the Spirit's work of sanctification, but all genuinely regenerated and justified children of God must produce the fruit of a sanctified and holy life.

#### **Note 1**

#### **Recreating God's Image in the Believer**

Because of the Fall, Adam and Eve lost much of the image and likeness of God in which the Lord had created them. Our first parents conveyed this loss of original righteousness to all their posterity; i.e. to the entire human race (except Christ). Man's whole nature has become depraved (utterly corrupted) by sin. His heart's desire is to obey and satisfy his sinful nature, instead of obeying and pleasing his Creator. Sanctification—which applies only to those whom God has redeemed through faith in Christ Jesus—is the process of reversing this evil trend. During this process, the Holy Spirit transforms a regenerated and justified person's whole nature, causing him to seek and to obey God's will. The Spirit also begins to recreate within that person the image and likeness of his or her Creator. (Gen. 5:1-3; 6:5; 1 Cor. 15:49; 2 Cor. 3:18; 4:16)

#### **Scripture References**

Genesis 5:1-3

<sup>(1)</sup> This *is* the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; <sup>(2)</sup> Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.

<sup>(3)</sup> And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begot a *son* in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth:

Genesis 6:5

<sup>(5)</sup> And GOD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually. (See vv.1-13; cf. Gen 8:21)

1 Corinthians 15:49

<sup>(49)</sup> And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. (See vv.47-54)

2 Corinthians 3:18

<sup>(18)</sup> But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord.

2 Corinthians 4:16

<sup>(16)</sup> For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day. (See vv.17-18)

## Note 2

### Sanctification is a Life-Long Process

To sanctify means to cleanse, to consecrate and to set apart from common to holy (or hallowed) use. The believer has been redeemed and set apart from the world and from the corruption of sin, and has been consecrated and set apart to God and to holiness of life. Sanctification—which is a gift of God and a work of the Holy Spirit—follows on from justification. However, it differs from justification in this respect: justification is a once-for-all act in which God declares or pronounces a believing sinner to be just or righteous. God reckons the believer just or righteous solely on the grounds of the perfect righteousness of Christ. This righteousness of Christ, which God credits to the sinner's account, is known as *imputed* righteousness. God imputes or reckons this righteousness to a believer immediately the Holy Spirit brings him to faith in Christ. Sanctification, however, is the life-long process of making a believer inwardly righteous: a process that will only be finally completed in glory. This life-long process is known as *imparted* righteousness. The Holy Spirit progressively imparts this righteousness to the believer during his ongoing sanctification. (1 Cor. 6:19-20; 1 Thess. 4:3-8; Heb. 10:10,14)

### Scripture References

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

<sup>(19)</sup> What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? <sup>(20)</sup> For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. (See vv.15-18; cf. 1 Cor. 3:16-17; cf. also 2 Cor. 6:16)

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8

<sup>(3)</sup> For this is the will of God, *even* your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: <sup>(4)</sup> That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; <sup>(5)</sup> Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: <sup>(6)</sup> That no *man* go beyond and defraud his brother in *any* matter: because that the Lord *is* the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. <sup>(7)</sup> For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. <sup>(8)</sup> He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit. (See vv.1-2)

Hebrews 10:10

<sup>(10)</sup> By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*. (See vv.1-9)

Hebrews 10:14

<sup>(14)</sup> For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. (See vv.11-18)

### Note 3

#### Striving Toward Victory

Neither justification nor sanctification results in a person attaining to perfection at any time during this life. Although God has justified the believer, or declared him righteous, the Holy Spirit continues the life-long process of making that person inwardly righteous. By the indwelling and sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, the believer must continually put to death the desires arising from his old sinful nature. In many cases, a child of God can—and must—immediately forsake sinful attitudes and habits. However, no believer will achieve complete victory over all sin during his life on earth. Rather, there will always be a constant spiritual warfare between the evil desires of the old nature and the holy desires of the new nature. (Rom. 7:15-25; Gal. 5:16-17; Phil. 3:12-21; Col. 3:5-11)

#### Scripture References

Romans 7:18-20

<sup>(18)</sup> For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not.

<sup>(19)</sup> For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. <sup>(20)</sup> Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. (See vv.7-17)

Romans 7:21-23

<sup>(21)</sup> I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

<sup>(22)</sup> For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: <sup>(23)</sup> But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. (See vv.24-25)

Galatians 5:16-17

<sup>(16)</sup> *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. <sup>(17)</sup> For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. (See v.18)

Philippians 3:12-14

<sup>(12)</sup> Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. <sup>(13)</sup> Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, <sup>(14)</sup> I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (See vv.7-16)

Philippians 3:20-21

<sup>(20)</sup> For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: <sup>(21)</sup> Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. (See vv.17-19)

Colossians 3:5-10

<sup>(5)</sup> Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: <sup>(6)</sup> For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: <sup>(7)</sup> In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. <sup>(8)</sup> But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. <sup>(9)</sup> Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; <sup>(10)</sup> And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: (See vv.1-14)

## Note 4

### Forsaking Sin and Pursuing Righteousness

No child of God will attain to perfection during this life. Even so, the believer must constantly strive after holiness of life: for, without holiness, no-one will see the Lord. Those who belong to Christ must put on Christ. They must learn to make no provision for the evil desires of the 'flesh' (i.e. the sinful nature). The believer must allow the Spirit of holiness to dominate and control his life. He must not yield to the corrupt desires and passions of his old sinful nature. When, however, a believer does sin, he must repent and confess his sin to God. He must also renounce his sin and endeavour to live by the power of the Spirit of holiness and of sanctification. Those whom the Spirit has converted, and whom he is sanctifying, cannot continue in the deliberate practice of sin. Those who continue in the deliberate practice of sin, call into question the reality of their conversion. (Rom. 13:14; 2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 4:22-24; Heb. 12:14)

### Scripture References

Romans 13:14

<sup>(14)</sup> But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. (See vv.12-13)

2 Corinthians 7:1

<sup>(1)</sup> Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (See 2 Cor. 6:14-18)

Ephesians 4:22-24

<sup>(22)</sup> That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; <sup>(23)</sup> And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; <sup>(24)</sup> And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (See vv.17-32)

Hebrews 12:14

<sup>(14)</sup> Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: (See vv.11-17)

### **Related Bible Truths**

The doctrine of sanctification stands closely related to regeneration, justification, adoption, and good works. There can be no process of sanctification in a person's life if that person has not first been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, justified by God, and adopted into his family. Conversely, no person who is being sanctified can continue to practise a sinful manner of life. Holiness and sin are antithetical.<sup>1</sup>

Again, one of the major fruits of sanctification is good works. Good works are those works that God enjoins or commands. To be acceptable to God, however, good works must come from a heart that has been cleansed through personal faith in the Son of God and his atoning work. These good works or deeds must issue from a life that the Holy Spirit has renewed, and which is productive of such characteristics as love, mercy, compassion, humility, justice and equity. Again, each one of us must perform good works out of genuine love for God, and love for our neighbour.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See further on *Bible Truths Explained: Regeneration; Justification; Adoption*, by the same author.

<sup>2</sup> See further on *Bible Truths Explained: Good Works*, by the same author.



## Part 2

### ***Preliminary Remarks***

#### **Liberty of Conscience**

For the people of God, the Bible is the sole rule (or standard) of faith and duty. It is to this rule—and to this rule alone—that God requires us to conform our lives; in love, trust, and obedience.

In the context of sanctification and good works, we can regard nothing as obligatory on our conscience if the Word of God does not expressly command or forbid it. Alternatively, we can regard as obligatory on our conscience, only those matters that we can deduce from a clearly taught principle of God's Word. Unscriptural, man-made rules, regulations, and codes of conduct form no part of the work of sanctification. Such extra-Biblical teachings have absolutely no authority to bind the conscience of any believer. If we would hold fast to our freedom in Christ, then we must steadfastly uphold the principle that—in *matters of faith and morals*—the people of God are bound by nothing but the Word of God.

We need only remember that our freedom in Christ does not give us the freedom to do as we will, but only the freedom to do as *God* wills. Liberty of conscience is never a licence to lead us into sin. The overruling principle that must govern our actions in all such cases must be that of love for God, and love for our fellow believer.

#### ***Matters of Indifference and Conscience***

Some things are matters of indifference; i.e. matters that are not in themselves wrong (although, under certain circumstances, they may become wrong). So long as no sin is involved, matters of indifference are matters of individual conscience.

A Christian may believe that he is doing right by abstaining from a certain course of action. If so, then he is free to maintain this position so that he may honour God, and satisfy his conscience. However, since it involves a matter of indifference, then that person is not at liberty to impose his personal convictions upon other believers. Again, this believer does not have the right to expect other believers to conform to his personal views. Thus, the apostle Paul says:

Romans 14:4

<sup>(4)</sup> Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand. (See vv.1-3)

Romans 14:10

<sup>(10)</sup> But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at naught thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. (See vv.11-13)

To cite one example from Scripture—the apostle Paul recognised that the eating of meat was not in itself wrong. However, a person could abstain from eating meat if he believed that that particular meat had been associated with pagan worship or idolatrous sacrifice. Again, even although he had fully satisfied himself that the meat had not been offered previously in sacrifice to idols, a person could still ab-

stain from eating it. He might do this, for example, if he thought that—by exercising his liberty to eat on this occasion—he might cause a weaker brother or sister to stumble in the faith.

Thus, God's Word says:

Romans 14:6b-8

<sup>(6b)</sup> ...He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. <sup>(7)</sup> For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. <sup>(8)</sup> For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. (See vv.5-9)

Again, God's Word says:

Romans 14:20-21

<sup>(20)</sup> For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed *are* pure; but *it is* evil for that man who eateth with offence. <sup>(21)</sup> *It is* good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *any thing* whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. (See vv.14-23; see esp. v.23)

To the Corinthians, the apostle Paul said:

1 Corinthians 8:8-11

<sup>(8)</sup> But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.

<sup>(9)</sup> But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak. <sup>(10)</sup> For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; <sup>(11)</sup> And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? (See vv.1-7)

1 Corinthians 8:12-13

<sup>(12)</sup> But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. <sup>(13)</sup> Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

Matters of indifference are matters of conscience. However, the right to exercise our private judgment in these matters must take into account the possible effects our actions might have on the lives of other believers. Ultimately, the individual believer must decide for himself—before a holy and righteous God—when a particular matter is right, and when it is not. No-one else, however, must attempt to impose his own personal views or opinions on that believer.<sup>3</sup>

To this end, the Scripture says:

Galatians 5:1

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<sup>3</sup> See further on *Bible Truths Explained: Divine Inspiration of The Bible*, under *Matters of Conscience*, by the same author.

<sup>(1)</sup> Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. (See vv.2-4)

Colossians 2:16-17

<sup>(16)</sup> Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*: <sup>(17)</sup> Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ. (See vv.18-19)

Colossians 2:20-23

<sup>(20)</sup> Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, <sup>(21)</sup> (Touch not; taste not; handle not; <sup>(22)</sup> Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? <sup>(23)</sup> Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

We have sought to lay down these important principles regarding Christian liberty, individual conscience, the right of private judgment (or discernment), and our responsibilities toward our weaker brethren. Now, we will begin to consider in more detail what the Bible teaches about sanctification.



## Part 3

### **Doctrine of Sanctification**

#### **Meaning of Sanctification**

The verb *to sanctify* (Gk., ἁγιάζω, *hagiazō*) means *to set apart* (from common to sacred use), *to hallow*, or *to treat as holy*.

In the temple of God, certain vessels were set apart from common or ordinary use. These vessels were cleansed and consecrated to holy use. Similarly, God sets apart the believer as holy to himself. The Lord separates his redeemed children from sin and from the world (or from the world, the flesh, and the devil), and he consecrates them to himself. Thus, the apostle Paul says:

Romans 12:1-2

<sup>(1)</sup> I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. <sup>(2)</sup> And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (See vv.3-16)

As an example of what God's Word means by not being conformed to this world (v.2), the following verse clearly illustrates this point:

Romans 13:13

<sup>(13)</sup> Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. (See v.14)

In body and soul, God's Spirit has consecrated us as holy to the Lord. Therefore, we must allow the Holy Spirit to work within us the work of grace and of sanctification. We must allow him to cleanse us from anything and everything that defiles our lives. He must purify us so that we are vessels fit for the Master's use, and ready for any good work.

Thus, the Scripture says:

2 Timothy 2:20-21

<sup>(20)</sup> But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. <sup>(21)</sup> If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, *and* prepared unto every good work. (See vv.14-26)

#### **Meaning of the Word 'Flesh'**

When the apostle Paul speaks of the *deeds of the flesh* (or *the works of the flesh*), he is referring usually to the deeds of the sinful nature; i.e. the corrupt thoughts and practices of the old man or the old nature. These evil thoughts and practices originate from within. Thus, the Lord Jesus teaches that the

things which defile a man, and make him morally unclean, are the things that come from within—from his corrupt or sinful nature.

Thus, it is written:

Mark 7:20-23

<sup>(20)</sup> And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.  
<sup>(21)</sup> For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, <sup>(22)</sup> Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: <sup>(23)</sup> All these evil things come from within, and defile the man. (See vv.14-19; cf. Matt. 15:18-20)

Following the teaching of the Lord Jesus on this subject, the apostle Paul condemns the deeds of the flesh or sinful nature; i.e. all those things that originate from our old corrupt nature. Paul tells us, however, that we are to reckon our old sinful nature as having been crucified with Christ. Therefore, we must no longer yield ourselves to its controlling influence over our lives. As saints of God, we must not yield to the desires of the old sinful nature, nor must we practise them. Rather, we must put off that nature—as though it were a filthy garment. We must reckon our old self dead with Christ. This is one important aspect of sanctification that we will be considering more fully at a later stage.

## Sanctification and Revelation

Sanctification is the imparting of righteousness to the believer through the personal agency and work of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit imparts this righteousness to each child of God by revealing to him the truths of God's holy Word; i.e. the Bible. Hence, in God's Word, the Lord Jesus says:

John 15:3

<sup>(3)</sup> Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. (See vv.1-8)

John 17:17

<sup>(17)</sup> Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. (See vv.14-19)

Ephesians 5:25-27

<sup>(25)</sup> Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; <sup>(26)</sup> That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, <sup>(27)</sup> That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. (See vv.28-32)

Through the Bible, the Spirit reveals to the believer everything that he needs to know for life and godliness. Thus, the apostle Peter says:

2 Peter 1:3-4

<sup>(3)</sup> According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: <sup>(4)</sup> Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. (See vv.5-8)

Taken by itself—i.e., apart from the illuminating and quickening power of the Spirit—God's Word does not produce sanctification, nor does it impart righteousness to the believer. This means that sanctification and righteousness of life does not result from 'moral persuasion' alone. Sanctification and holiness of life result from a work of divine grace within the believer. This ongoing work of grace is effected by the Holy Spirit in conjunction with the Word of God. The indwelling Holy Spirit applies the truths of God's Word to the heart and mind of each believer. Subsequently, the believer reflects the Spirit's work of grace through changes to his character and conduct.

The more thoroughly acquainted we become with God's Word, and with what God requires of us, the more the Holy Spirit will be able to sanctify us. The more we understand and trust God's Word, the more the Spirit is able to impart to us ever-increasing degrees of righteousness. This increasing level of imparted righteousness ought then to lead to even greater consecration of the mind and will to God, and to ever increasing holiness of life.

It is in this way that we are being inwardly renewed in the image and likeness of our Creator; in true righteousness, holiness, and knowledge. Thus, God's Word says:

2 Corinthians 3:18

<sup>(18)</sup> But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord. (See vv.7-17; cf. 1 Cor. 13:12)

2 Corinthians 4:16

<sup>(16)</sup> For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day. (See vv.13-18)

Ephesians 4:23-24

<sup>(23)</sup> And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; <sup>(24)</sup> And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (See vv.17-32)

Colossians 3:9-10

<sup>(9)</sup> Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; <sup>(10)</sup> And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: (See vv.5-15)



## Part 4

### ***Sanctification and Holiness***

#### **The Relationship**

Sanctification, and holiness of life, are inseparably linked terms. The believer's life has been, and is being, emptied and cleansed of all impurities, and set apart from the world to the service of the Lord. However, a cleansed vessel does not remain an empty vessel. It is the Lord's vessel, and the Holy Spirit fills that vessel with his sanctifying presence, power and influence. This cleansed vessel is our lives: the dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Let us refer for a moment to an Old Testament incident concerning God's people during their Babylonian captivity. Among these people were selected individuals who were responsible for carrying back to Jerusalem the sanctified vessels of the temple. In this connection, God's Word says:

Isaiah 52:11

- <sup>(11)</sup> Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean *thing*; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD. (See vv.1-12)

Referring to this passage, the apostle Paul says:

2 Corinthians 6:16-18

- <sup>(16)</sup> And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. {*Lev. 26:12; Jer. 32:38; Ezek. 37:27*}
- <sup>(17)</sup> Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you. {*Isaiah 52:11; Ezek. 20:34,41*}
- <sup>(18)</sup> And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. {*2 Samuel 7:14; 7:8; Isaiah 43:6-7*} (See 2 Cor. 6:14-15)

2 Corinthians 7:1

- <sup>(1)</sup> Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Our lives are the dwelling place of God. For this reason, our lives ought to be sanctified to the Lord. For the Lord whose glory fills the temple, fills the temple of our lives—and the temple of the Lord is holy.

Thus, the Scripture says:

Ezekiel 10:4

- <sup>(4)</sup> Then the glory of the LORD went up from the cherub, *and stood* over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the LORD'S glory. (See vv.1-3; cf. Exod. 40:34-35)

Habakkuk 2:20

- <sup>(20)</sup> But the LORD *is* in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him. (See vv. 18-19)

By God's grace and the Spirit's power, we must live our lives in the pursuit of holiness—not in pursuing and gratifying sinful desires. For, without holiness, no-one will see the Lord. (Heb. 12:14) Holiness of life, therefore, is of the essence of sanctification. It is the purpose for which God has called by his grace; that we might be a people set apart as holy to the Lord in all manner of life.

Thus, it is written:

Leviticus 20:7-8

- <sup>(7)</sup> Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I *am* the LORD your God.  
<sup>(8)</sup> And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I *am* the LORD which sanctify you. (See vv.1-6)

Leviticus 20:26

- <sup>(26)</sup> And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD *am* holy, and have severed you from *other* people, that ye should be mine. (See vv.22-25)

1 Thessalonians 4:7-8

- <sup>(7)</sup> For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. <sup>(8)</sup> He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit. (See vv.1-6; see esp. v.3)

1 Peter 1:14-16

- <sup>(14)</sup> As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: <sup>(15)</sup> But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; <sup>(16)</sup> Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. {Lev. 11:44,45; 19:2; 20:7,26} (See 1 Pet. 1:17-25)

1 Peter 2:9

- <sup>(9)</sup> But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: (See vv.10-12)

## Sinless Perfection

Perfectionism (the teaching that a Christian can attain to sinless perfection in this life) is an erroneous doctrine. It is not the teaching of the Bible; nor was it the experience of any of the people of God whose lives are revealed to us in God's holy Word. On the contrary, the Bible makes it abundantly plain that even the holiest of God's people were not free from sin in their walk with God.

If sinless perfection be attainable in this life, then the penitential Psalms are of little value to the people of God. If sinless perfection be attainable, then the petition in the prayer that the Lord taught to his disciples, 'Forgive us our debts...' cannot apply to all of God's people. (Matt. 6:12.) If sinless perfection be

attainable, then the apostle Paul did not experience it, or he would not have cried out, ‘...Who will rescue me from this body of death?’ (Rom. 7:24.) If sinless perfection be attainable, then the apostle John erred when he wrote, ‘If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar...’ (1 John 1:10.) This, however, would be to imply an error in the inspired and infallible Word of God. Clearly, therefore, John did not err but recorded for us the very truths of God. To this end, God’s Word says:

Psalms 51:1-3

<sup>(1)</sup> To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

<sup>(2)</sup> Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

<sup>(3)</sup> For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin *is* ever before me.  
(See vv.4-19)

Matthew 6:11-12

<sup>(11)</sup> Give us this day our daily bread. <sup>(12)</sup> And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. (See vv.9-15; cf. Luke 11:1-4)

Romans 7:24

<sup>(24)</sup> O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? (See vv.12-25)

1 John 1:10

<sup>(10)</sup> If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. (See vv.6-9)

### ***Who Has Loved God Perfectly?***

While a believer remains in this present mortal body, he never will become so sanctified that he will be free from all sin. Such indeed will be the believer’s experience when he is glorified. Glorification, however, never takes place in this life (except by the appearing of the Lord).

Concerning this present life, we commit sin—not only by what we think, say, and do—but also by what we fail to think, say, and do. Again, we commit sin when we do not love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbour as ourselves. Who, though, among the people of God would claim to have loved God perfectly? If, therefore, we fall far short in this one essential matter, then clearly sinless perfection in this life is an impossibility.

One day, we will experience freedom from all sin. This will happen when the Lord appears in his glory, or when he calls us into his glorious presence. Then, he will fully and finally complete our sanctification by crowning the Spirit’s work with our glorification. Then—and then only—will he present us faultless and blameless before God with rejoicing.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> See further on *Bible Truths Explained: Heaven*, by the same author.



## Part 5

### ***Effects of Sanctification***

In both regeneration and justification, the believer is *passive*; i.e. he cannot assist or co-operate with God in these aspects of his salvation. In sanctification, however, the believer is *active*; i.e. he actively co-operates with the Holy Spirit in putting off the old nature and putting on the new nature.

The Holy Spirit works in every area of the believer's life, fitting him for that day when he will dwell forever in the glorious presence of the Lord. Then, the believer will be free from every remaining vestige of sin and from the corruption associated with this present mortal body.

In what way, however, does sanctification effect changes in our day-to-day lives?

### **Sanctification Transforms our Character**

From the time of his regeneration and justification, and for the remainder of his present life, the believer's whole soul is being constantly (but gradually) changed through the process of sanctification (imparted righteousness). These changes are being effected by the inward work of the Holy Spirit—a work that is unseen, except by its results.

As the work of sanctification progressively changes the believer's character, these inward changes are reflected outwardly by corresponding changes in his conduct. This becomes more evident as the believer grows in grace, and his mind becomes ever more closely aligned with the mind of Christ.

The Holy Spirit effects these changes toward ever-increasing holiness by revealing God's will and way to the believer through God's Word. In the process, the Spirit of God makes the believer conscious of the changes that he must make to conform his life more closely to the image of Christ. In this respect, therefore, the Holy Spirit carries out the work of sanctification in co-operation with the believer, and by means of the Word.

### **Sanctification Transforms our Conduct**

Sanctification not only changes our character (our inward attitudes and dispositions); it also changes our conduct (our outward manner of life). However, for the Spirit of God to work effectively in our lives, we must be willing to yield ourselves wholly to his sanctifying power and influence. This means that—when he makes us aware of sin—then we must confess and forsake these sinful thoughts, words, and deeds; or these sinful attitudes, tendencies, or habits.

Similarly, when the Holy Spirit convicts us of something that is displeasing or dishonouring to God (although, not necessarily sinful in itself), then we must submit to the Spirit of holiness. We must forgo or forsake that which displeases the Lord, and which dishonours the name of Christ our Redeemer. These are examples of changes in our character that should produce corresponding changes in our conduct.

As we have seen, sanctification involves both a negative and a positive element. It is a process of forsaking sin (negative element—but with numerous positive benefits), and of being renewed in character and conduct; or in true righteousness, holiness, and knowledge (positive element—or, the fruit of imparted righteousness).

By the power of the Holy Spirit, we must put off the old sinful nature, and put on the new spiritual nature. We must walk or live by the Spirit, so that we will not fulfil the lusts of the flesh that are still within us. The lusts of the flesh are those excessive, impure, or uncontrolled and sinful desires, longings, or cravings of the mind, which arise from our old fallen nature.

## **Putting Off the Old Nature**

### **Practical Examples**

As has been stated above, part of the work of sanctification consists in putting off the old sinful nature, and putting on the new nature. In Ephesians chapter 4, the apostle Paul summarises some of the acts of the flesh or sinful nature. God's Word requires us to forsake all these evil acts. The sinful acts enumerated by Paul in this passage are considered separately below.

#### **1. Falsehood or Lying**

Ephesians 4:25

<sup>(25)</sup> Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour:  
for we are members one of another.

Falsehood is engaging in deceit, giving false testimony or bearing false witness to the truth. All forms of falsehood (including lies) are sinful. On occasions, however, a person may risk committing a greater sin by revealing the whole truth at a particular time (e.g. by disclosing planned military strategy in war, thereby causing even greater loss of life). In these situations, a believer must act according to his conscience; knowing that—one day—God will hold him accountable for what he says, or fails to say.

#### ***Examples of Falsehood or Lying***

Half-truths; distortions of the truth; exaggerations, and all forms of deceit, are falsehoods. Similarly, to make a deliberately misleading statement is a falsehood. To provide false information (verbally, or in writing) when it is lawfully required of us (e.g. for Inland (Internal) Revenue or other official purposes) is a falsehood. Again, to misrepresent the truth (as, for example, in some forms of commercial advertising) is a falsehood.

Falsehoods can also assume other forms. For instance, hypocrisy is a form of falsehood, since we are deceiving people about the true state of our character. In this situation, we would be living a lie—as were many of the Pharisees. Mental reservation is a form of falsehood; e.g. to say when asked, '*He is not here*' (meaning, he is not in this room), *even although we know that this person is in another nearby room*, is a falsehood. Our answer conceals or mentally reserves part of the truth, and is deliberately intended to mislead. (See the similar example in Acts 5:3-4 of Ananias and Sapphira, quoted below.)

#### **Falsehood or Lying: Scripture References**

Ephesians 4:25

<sup>(25)</sup> Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour:  
for we are members one of another.

Colossians 3:9-10

<sup>(9)</sup> Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; <sup>(10)</sup> And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

Acts 5:3-4

<sup>(3)</sup> But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land? <sup>(4)</sup> While it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

1 John 4:20

<sup>(20)</sup> If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

## 2. Anger

Ephesians 4:26-27

<sup>(26)</sup> Be ye angry, and sin not *{Psalm 4:4}*: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: <sup>(27)</sup> Neither give place to the devil.

We must emphasise clearly that not all anger is sinful. The Bible speaks repeatedly of the righteous anger (or wrath) of God; and the Lord Jesus expressed justified and righteous anger on a number of occasions. The anger to which the apostle Paul refers in the above verses might well have been justified anger (originally, at least). We must not, however, prolong our anger, or harbour in our hearts a resentful or unforgiving attitude.

### ***Anger (of the Lord Jesus)***

Anger is not necessarily sinful. Jesus was angry on several occasions:

1. When he cleansed the temple, the Lord Jesus was angry with the money-changers for abusing God's house of prayer (desecration or sacrilege, by carrying on commercial enterprises within the sacred precincts).

Mark 11:15-18

<sup>(15)</sup> And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves; <sup>(16)</sup> And would not suffer that any man should carry *any* vessel through the temple. <sup>(17)</sup> And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written,

My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? *{Isaiah 56:7}*  
but ye have made it a den of thieves. *{Jer. 7:11}*

<sup>(18)</sup> And the scribes and chief priests heard *it*, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine. (Cf. Matt. 21:12-13; Luke 19:45-48; John 2:13-17)

Jesus was angry with the Pharisees on several different occasions. On one such occasion, these religious leaders had sought to find fault with the Lord and ultimately to discredit, denounce and destroy him because he was about to heal a man on the Sabbath day:

Mark 3:1-5

- <sup>(1)</sup> And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand. <sup>(2)</sup> And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him. <sup>(3)</sup> And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth.
- <sup>(4)</sup> And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace.
- <sup>(5)</sup> And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched *it* out: and his hand was restored whole as the other. (See v.6; cf. Luke 13:10-17)

On several other occasions, the Lord Jesus was angry with the teachers of the law (scribes) and Pharisees for their hypocrisy, and he rebuked them accordingly:

Matthew 23:13-15

- <sup>(13)</sup> But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in *yourselves*, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.
- <sup>(14)</sup> Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.
- <sup>(15)</sup> Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves. (See vv.16-33; see esp. v.33; cf. Luke 11:37-52)

### ***Examples of Sinful Anger***

Unjustified or uncontrolled anger, rage, and the desire for revenge (or vengeance) amount to sin. Similarly, anger resulting from malice, caprice, envy, pride, or any other evil attitude, is sinful. Again, hate, resentment or bitterness (an unforgiving and angry heart) is sinful. To hold a grudge against someone is sinful. Bad temper, ill will, moodiness, and refusing to speak to someone is sinful. Justified anger becomes sinful when we harbour bitterness or resentment against another person. In obedience to God's Word, we must settle our disputes at the earliest opportunity.

### **Anger: Scripture References**

Ephesians 4:26-27

- <sup>(26)</sup> Be ye angry, and sin not *{Psalm 4:4}*: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: <sup>(27)</sup> Neither give place to the devil.

Colossians 3:8

<sup>(8)</sup> But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Romans 12:17-21

<sup>(17)</sup> Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. <sup>(18)</sup> If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. <sup>(19)</sup> Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. {*Deut. 32:35; Heb. 10:30*}

<sup>(20)</sup> Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. {*Prov. 25:21,22*}

<sup>(21)</sup> Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. (See also Matt. 5:43-45)

Hebrews 12:14-15

<sup>(14)</sup> Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: <sup>(15)</sup> Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble *you*, and thereby many be defiled; (See vv.16-17; cf. v.15a with 2 Cor. 6:1; cf. v.15b with Deut. 29:18)

James 1:19-21

<sup>(19)</sup> Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: <sup>(20)</sup> For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. <sup>(21)</sup> Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. (See vv.22-25)

James 4:1-3

<sup>(1)</sup> From whence *come* wars and fightings among you? *come they* not hence, *even* of your lusts that war in your members? <sup>(2)</sup> Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. <sup>(3)</sup> Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts.

James 4:4

<sup>(4)</sup> Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. (See vv.5-12; see esp. vv.11-12; cf. 1 John 2:15-17)

### 3. Giving Place to the Devil

Ephesians 4:27

<sup>(27)</sup> Neither give place to the devil. (Cf. 2 Cor. 2:10-11)

We give the devil a foothold (or we give place to the devil) when we allow him to lead us into temptation, or when we yield to temptation when it comes. Instead of yielding, of course, we should resist the temptation or flee from it.

#### ***Examples of Giving Place to the Devil***

One example of giving the devil a foothold is yielding to temptation. (Temptation can have its source in the world, the flesh, or the devil. The 'flesh' means the old sinful nature.) Another example of giving place to the devil is to put ourselves into a situation where we know we are likely to meet temptation. We must never encourage the devil to tempt us, or make it easy for him to do so. Rather, we must resist him, and we must avoid the very appearance of evil.

#### **Giving Place to the Devil: Scripture References**

Ephesians 4:27

<sup>(27)</sup> Neither give place to the devil. (Cf. 2 Cor. 2:10-11)

Acts 5:3

<sup>(3)</sup> But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land? (See vv.1-10)

Ephesians 6:10-13

<sup>(10)</sup> Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.  
<sup>(11)</sup> Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. <sup>(12)</sup> For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*. <sup>(13)</sup> Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. (See vv.14-18; see esp. vv.16-17; cf. v.12b with 1 John 5:19; contrast v.12 with Eph. 1:19-21)

James 4:7

<sup>(7)</sup> Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (See vv.1-12)

1 Peter 5:8-9

<sup>(8)</sup> Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: <sup>(9)</sup> Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. (See vv.5-7)

1 Peter 5:10-11

<sup>(10)</sup> But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle *you*.

<sup>(11)</sup> To him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

## 4. Theft

Ephesians 4:28

<sup>(28)</sup> Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

To steal is to appropriate to ourselves that which does not belong to us, with no intention of making payment or reparation to the rightful owner.

### **Examples of Theft**

All forms of stealing, fraud, misappropriation of funds, goods, services, and many other forms of dishonesty, are theft. We may also include under the heading of theft, needlessly taking time off work (or being carelessly late for work). These are examples of theft of an employer's time; and, indirectly, his money. Additionally, we might include in this category, taking advantage of the privileges or fringe benefits afforded by employers to their employees. For example, the employee who abuses or misuses his staff privileges to provide goods or services to his friends at reduced prices. Unless previously agreed upon with an employer, this is stealing from an employer by depriving him of his due profit. It is therefore wrong—unless the employer has previously told his employees that they are at liberty to extend their staff privileges or benefits to certain other people as well.

### **Theft: Scripture References**

Ephesians 4:28

<sup>(28)</sup> Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

Luke 19:7-8

<sup>(7)</sup> And when they saw *it*, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. <sup>(8)</sup> And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore *him* fourfold. (See vv.1-10)

Luke 16:10-12

<sup>(10)</sup> He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. <sup>(11)</sup> If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true *riches*? <sup>(12)</sup> And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? (See vv.1-9; cf. v.10 with Matt. 25:21,29-30)

Jeremiah 7:9-11

<sup>(9)</sup> Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; <sup>(10)</sup> And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations? <sup>(11)</sup> Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen *it*, saith the LORD. (See vv.12-15; cf. v.11 with Matt. 21:13)

Romans 2:21

<sup>(21)</sup> Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? (See vv.22-24a)

## 5. Unwholesome Talk or Corrupt Communication

Ephesians 4:29

<sup>(29)</sup> Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. (See also Eph. 5:4)

Unwholesome talk includes any kind of coarse or crude talking or joking, and every kind of impure, filthy, or corrupt speech. Such speech is always sinful. To take part with others in listening to their corrupt talking and joking is also sinful.

### **Examples of Unwholesome Talk**

Foul, coarse, or crude language; unclean remarks; remarks or jokes with an expressed, implied or suggested double meaning; common swearing; cursing; using God's name profanely or in vain, are all examples of this sin. We might also include under unwholesome and sinful talk, any form of doubtful language or expression. Again, we might include under this heading any kind of idle gossip, slander, malicious misinformation, unjust criticism, unkind remarks, or any other form of sinful speech against our neighbour. We must always remember that—in speaking evil of our neighbour—we are implicitly speaking evil of God. For man is made by God, and in God's image and likeness.

### **Unwholesome Talk: Scripture References**

Ephesians 4:29

<sup>(29)</sup> Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

Ephesians 5:4

<sup>(4)</sup> Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. (See vv.3-7)

Colossians 3:8-10

<sup>(8)</sup> But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. <sup>(9)</sup> Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; <sup>(10)</sup> And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: (See vv.5-14; cf. v.10 with Eph. 4:23-24)

Mark 7:20-23

<sup>(20)</sup> And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. <sup>(21)</sup> For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, <sup>(22)</sup> Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: <sup>(23)</sup> All these evil things come from within, and defile the man. (See vv.14-19; cf. Matt. 15:18-20)

Regarding the tongue, James says:

James 3:2

<sup>(2)</sup> For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same *is* a perfect man, *and* able also to bridle the whole body. (See vv.1-4)

James 3:5-6

<sup>(5)</sup> Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! <sup>(6)</sup> And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity; so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

James 3:7-8

<sup>(7)</sup> For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: <sup>(8)</sup> But the tongue can no man tame; *it is* an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

James 3:9-12

<sup>(9)</sup> Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. <sup>(10)</sup> Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. <sup>(11)</sup> Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet *water* and bitter? <sup>(12)</sup> Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so *can* no fountain both yield salt water and fresh. (See also Jas. 4:11-12; cf. Jas. 3:12 with Matt. 7:15-20)

Instead of speaking evil of one another, the Scripture says:

Colossians 3:12-14

<sup>(12)</sup> Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; <sup>(13)</sup> Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye. <sup>(14)</sup> And above all these things *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness. (See vv.15-17)

Too much direct speaking can be like salt on an open wound. Therefore, God's Word says:

Colossians 4:6

<sup>(6)</sup> Let your speech *be* always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

Again, God's Word says:

1 Peter 3:15-16

<sup>(15)</sup> But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: <sup>(16)</sup> Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. (See vv.13-17)

## 6. Grieving The Holy Spirit

Ephesians 4:30

<sup>(30)</sup> And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

Our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. As such, we should consecrate it to God. Anything, therefore, which defiles God's temple grieves the indwelling Holy Spirit. We can grieve the Holy Spirit by the things we think, say, or do.

### ***Examples of Grieving the Holy Spirit***

Misusing or abusing our body or mind grieves the Holy Spirit. Similarly, using our body to express or to fulfil the impure and sinful desires of the mind (as opposed to God-given and God-glorifying natural desires) grieves the Holy Spirit. Again, using any parts of our body, or the faculties of our soul (e.g. intellect, will, emotions) for sinful purposes, grieves the Holy Spirit—for our body is the Spirit's holy dwelling place. We also grieve the Holy Spirit, and sin against him, when we think or speak evil of another person. Similarly, we grieve the Spirit when we do not honour God fully in and with our lives. Our lives belong wholly to God. We should be living to his glory and according to his will for us—not according to our own sinful desires or selfish ambitions.

### **Grieving the Holy Spirit: Scripture References**

Ephesians 4:30

<sup>(30)</sup> And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. (Cf. Isa. 63:7-10; 1 Thess. 5:19)

1 Corinthians 3:16-17

<sup>(16)</sup> Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? <sup>(17)</sup> If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are. (See vv.10-14; cf. 2 Cor. 6:16 - 7:1; Eph. 2:19-22)

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

<sup>(19)</sup> What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? <sup>(20)</sup> For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. (See vv.12-18; cf. 1 Pet. 1:18-19)

1 Thessalonians 4:7-8

<sup>(7)</sup> For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. <sup>(8)</sup> He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit. (See vv.1-6; cf. 1 Pet. 1:14-15)

## 7. Putting Off Every Form of Evil

Ephesians 4:31

<sup>(31)</sup> Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: (Cf. Col. 3:8)

Each of the sins listed above originates in the mind or 'heart'; i.e. in the inward man. As those who are being sanctified, we must put off everything that belongs to the 'flesh' or sinful nature. Like contami-

nated and filthy clothing, we must cast it from us and clothe ourselves instead with the new nature of Christ.

### **Examples of Putting Off Every Form of Evil**

Besides the examples listed in the above verse (bitterness, rage, anger, brawling, slander and malice (NIV)), we should forsake anything and everything that we know to be sinful. We should also forsake anything and everything that tends to arouse our sinful desires or lusts. For example, we must forsake covetousness—for covetousness is greed, and greed is idolatry. This may constitute the sinful desire or lust to possess things that we do not need. Alternatively, we may express covetousness or greed by an inordinate desire to attain to an equal or better level of achievement, or of greater material wealth or possessions, than our neighbour. *Keeping up with the Jones'* is representative of the sins of envy, covetousness, and pride.

### **Putting Off Every Form of Evil: Scripture References**

Ephesians 4:31

<sup>(31)</sup> Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: (Cf. Col. 3:8)

Galatians 5:19-21

<sup>(19)</sup> Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,<sup>5</sup> <sup>(20)</sup> Idolatry, witchcraft,<sup>6</sup> hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,<sup>7</sup> <sup>(21)</sup> Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (See vv.16-18; cf. Col. 3:5-10)

1 Timothy 6:8-11

<sup>(8)</sup> And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. <sup>(9)</sup> But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. <sup>(10)</sup> For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

<sup>(11)</sup> But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. (See vv.3-12)

James 3:13-16

<sup>(13)</sup> Who *is* a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. <sup>(14)</sup> But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. <sup>(15)</sup> This wisdom descendeth not from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, devilish. <sup>(16)</sup> For where envying and strife *is*, there *is* confusion and every evil work. (Cf. v.15 with Jas. 1:5,16-17)

James 3:17-18

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<sup>5</sup> lasciviousness or debauchery; lustful gestures or behaviour [GL]

<sup>6</sup> witchcraft; occultism, spiritualism, demonism [GL]

<sup>7</sup> heresies or factions; false opinions or doctrines [GL]

<sup>(17)</sup> But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, *and* easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. <sup>(18)</sup> And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

There are many other sins that we must forsake during the process of sanctification. We will deal with some of these more fully in the pages that follow.

## Part 6

### ***Sanctification of Body and Soul***

#### **The Body is Not Sinful**

In condemning the works of the flesh, the apostle Paul is not implying that the body is sinful. Although marred by the effects of sin, God originally designed and created the human body as a vessel of signal beauty, dignity, and honour. When cleansed and consecrated to God, the body becomes sacred in his sight. This is especially true since it is the dwelling place of his Holy Spirit.

It is true that the body may be, and often is, used for sinful purposes; (and, in his Word, God condemns all such abuses of the body). Sins that involve the abuse of the body, however, always originate in a person's mind—not in the body itself. It is these evil inclinations and desires of the mind or heart that results in a person abusing or misusing the body that God has created. In the case of the believer, God has also redeemed and set that person apart—in body and soul—for himself. When we use the body as an instrument of sin (in our speech or actions), we are defiling or desecrating God's temple, and sinning against the Holy Spirit.

#### ***Caring for Body and Soul***

It is vitally important for the believer to nourish, sustain, and exercise the soul using the appropriate means (such as Bible study, prayer, praise, worship, and church fellowship). In its own way, it is important for him to nourish, sustain, and exercise the body using the appropriate means (such as food, clothing, and exercise). To neglect the care of the soul would be culpable. Similarly, to neglect the care of the body—which is the temple of the Holy Spirit—would also be culpable. However, while we must honour God by caring for both soul and body, we must also be careful to honour God by avoiding anything that would contaminate or defile body or soul.

#### **Our Body is God's Temple**

Our body is holy in the sight of God, for it is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. Thus, the Scripture says:

1 Corinthians 3:16-17

<sup>(16)</sup> Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? <sup>(17)</sup> If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are. (See vv.9-15)

To do anything that dishonours the body is to defile the temple of God. Again, God's Word says:

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

<sup>(19)</sup> What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? <sup>(20)</sup> For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. (See vv.12-18)

The Holy Spirit sanctifies and hallows our body to the Lord. Hence, we must never use our body for any purpose that does not honour God. That would be to desecrate or wilfully defile God's holy temple. Our body—indeed our whole life—is not our own. We are the purchased possession of the Lord our God, and the dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

## **Our Body is a Living Sacrifice**

The Scripture says:

Romans 12:1-2

<sup>(1)</sup> I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. <sup>(2)</sup> And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (See vv.3-8)

A living sacrifice is a total offering to God. To yield anything less than our whole selves to God is to withhold ourselves from God. Conformity to the world is alienation from—and enmity with—God. We can conform *either* to the world's standards of conduct or behaviour, or to God's standards—but we cannot conform to both. God requires that we be *transformed in mind*—not *conformed in mind* to this present evil age, or to its sinful attitudes and practices. By yielding ourselves wholly to God, we separate ourselves from the world (i.e. from the sinful standards of the world) and consecrate ourselves (in body and soul) to God.

Separation and consecration, however, does not mean total withdrawal and isolation from the world. Although we are not *of* the world, we are *in* the world—and God has placed us in the world for a purpose. While we are in the world, we are the salt of the earth. Salt not only flavours, it also preserves from decay and corruption. Our redeemed and sanctified lives should have a preserving effect on the lives of those around us.

Thus, to his followers, the Lord Jesus said:

Matthew 5:13

<sup>(13)</sup> Ye are the salt of the earth:<sup>8</sup> but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

Again, while we are in the world, we are a light to the world. Without the light of the Gospel, people would remain utterly lost in the darkness of their own sinful minds. By the sovereign grace of God, we have been redeemed and delivered from that darkness. Now, it is our duty and responsibility to shine forth for Christ in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

Thus, the Lord Jesus said:

Matthew 5:14-16

<sup>(14)</sup> Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.  
<sup>(15)</sup> Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. <sup>(16)</sup> Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

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<sup>8</sup> *salt of the earth*: in respect of corrupt doctrine and manners.

Philippians 2:14-16

<sup>(14)</sup> Do all things without murmurings and disputings: <sup>(15)</sup> That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; <sup>(16)</sup> Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. (See vv.12-13)



## Part 7

### ***Dishonouring the Body Sexually***

#### **Sexual Immorality is an Abuse of the Body**

Concerning the abuse of the body sexually, God's Word says:

1 Corinthians 6:13b

<sup>(13b)</sup> ...Now the body *is* not for fornication [sexual immorality], but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.

1 Thessalonians 4:3

<sup>(3)</sup> For this is the will of God, *even* your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

Taken in its restricted sense, fornication is sexual intercourse before or outside of marriage. The Word of God expressly forbids pre-marital and extra-marital sexual relations. Thus, God's Word says:

1 Corinthians 6:18

<sup>(18)</sup> Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. (See vv.12-20; see esp. vv.19-20)

In the Bible, the term *sexual immorality* or *fornication* (Gk., πορνεία *porneuo*) is used to include all forms of sexual uncleanness. For example, adultery is sexual immorality; and so also is a 'one night stand', 'sleeping around', 'living together', and any other kind of casual sexual relations. Again, the term *fornication* or *sexual immorality* may apply to other kinds of sexual impurity. This includes impure thoughts, impure talk, or impure gestures or actions. For example, the man who looks at a woman lustfully is guilty of fornication or sexual immorality (adultery). All forms of sexual immorality are gross and wilful violations of the seventh and tenth commandments.

Fornication or sexual immorality, therefore, covers all forms of impure, excessive or uncontrolled sexual desire or passion—in thought, word, and deed. It does not, however, cover pure, natural and controlled desire. Impure and excessive sexual desire is lust, and lust is sin. Pure, natural, and controlled sexual desire is a gift and a blessing from God.

#### **'The Two Will Become One Flesh'**

In the sight of God, the sexual union within marriage is sacred. It is the uniting of two people into one flesh. Sexual intercourse *before* marriage is utterly abhorrent in God's sight since it fails to recognise the sacred nature of the sexual union, and since it disregards the fact that—by this union—two people become one flesh.

In this regard, the Scripture says:

1 Corinthians 6:15

<sup>(15)</sup> Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make *them* the members of a harlot? God forbid. (Cf. Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:27)

In this context, the word *harlot* or *prostitute* refers to anyone who is willing to provide illicit sexual favours. This includes the practising prostitute. However, it also includes any man and woman who engages in sexual relations outside of marriage. God's Word further says:

1 Corinthians 6:16

<sup>(16)</sup> What? know ye not that he which is joined to a harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. {*Gen. 2:24*} (Cf. Matt. 19:5; Eph. 5:31)

It is because our body becomes one flesh with another person that the Word of God condemns especially sexual immorality. The Lord has redeemed us in body and soul, and both body and soul belong to him. It is his holy temple. All forms of sexual sin or uncleanness defile the temple of the Lord. God has warned, however, that he will destroy that which defiles his holy dwelling place. (1 Cor. 3:16-17) In this context, *to destroy* means *to bring to ruin* or *to lay waste*. It implies severe punishment—possibly even death in some extreme cases—but not loss of salvation. (Cf. 1 Cor. 11:30-32)

Sometimes, our sin—or its effects—may be visited upon our children. For example, David's adulterous relationship with Uriah's wife, Bathsheba, did not result in the loss of David's salvation. However, it *did* result in the loss of his son whom God took from him as a punishment for his sin. (2 Sam. 12:13-14)

Again, the Scripture says:

1 Thessalonians 4:7-8

<sup>(7)</sup> For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. <sup>(8)</sup> He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit. (See vv.3-6; cf. v.8 with Luke 10:16)

Anyone who rejects, despises, or disregards this commandment to forsake uncleanness, and to live a pure and holy life, is rejecting, despising and disregarding God. Whoever despises God, and treats his Holy Spirit with contempt, will be judged accordingly. Therefore, God's Word warns:

Hebrews 13:4

<sup>(4)</sup> Marriage *is* honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

### ***God Forgives the Truly Repentant***

To those, however, who truly repent of their sin, God is abundantly merciful. The Lord Jesus illustrated this truth very clearly in the parable of the lost (or prodigal) son. In that parable, the wayward son forsakes his father's home, and squanders his inheritance in wild living. Upon his repentance, however, this young man is welcomed home by his father. The father proves his intense love for his younger son by showing him great—and undeserved—compassion. Again, the father celebrates his lost son's return from the world and from the 'pleasures' of sin by restoring his younger son to his place within his house and family. Thus, God's Word records:

Luke 15:13

- (13) And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. (See vv.11-16)

Luke 15:20-24

- (20) And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.
- (21) And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.
- (22) But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put *it* on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on *his* feet: (23) And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill *it*; and let us eat, and be merry: (24) For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry. (See vv.17-19)

The elder son, however, demonstrated resentment and anger when he learned that his father had forgiven his younger son, and had welcomed him home with much celebration. To this end, God's Word says:

Luke 15:29-30

- (29) And he answering said to *his* father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends: (30) But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. (See vv.25-28)

Luke 15:31-32

- (31) And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. (32) It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

Similarly, the psalmist David says:

Psalms 32:1-7

- (1) *A Psalm* of David, Maschil.

Blessed *is he* whose transgression *is* forgiven, *whose* sin *is* covered.

(2) Blessed *is* the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit *there is* no guile.

- (3) When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. (4) For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.
- (5) I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.
- (6) For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come

nigh unto him. <sup>(7)</sup> Thou *art* my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah. (See vv.8-11; see also Isa. 1:18; Micah 7:18-19)

## Part 8

### ***Honouring the Body Sexually***

#### **Sexual Union in Marriage is Sacred**

At the creation, God made mankind male and female so that the descendants of Adam and Eve might leave their father and mother and cleave to their husband or wife. God holds the sexual union particularly sacred because it is the bonding of two people into one [flesh]. They are no longer two. In God's sight, they have been bound together as one. This bond, of course, is not only a physical bond. It is also a spiritual, emotional and psychological bond. It is a complete oneness—yet, without the loss of each partner's distinct individuality or personality. God intends that the sexual union be preserved absolutely pure and inviolate. Hence the reason why God's Word so firmly condemns all forms of sexual immorality or uncleanness—not only in deed, but also in thought and speech.

Husbands and wives must consider the privilege and blessing of sharing and enjoying sexual union with their marriage partner as a precious gift from God. They ought never to abuse, misuse or disparage this gift. Similarly, they must not neglect nor refuse to provide for their partner's needs. In marriage, our body is not ours alone. Our marriage partner has full rights over our body—just as though it was his or her own. To deny sexual relations to our husband or wife, or to neglect these relations, is sin. It is sin against God, against our marriage partner—with whom God has made us one [flesh]—and against our own body. Our body, we must remember, is the temple of God's Holy Spirit. Thus, God's Word says:

1 Corinthians 7:1-7

<sup>(1)</sup> Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: *It is good* for a man not to touch a woman. <sup>(2)</sup> Nevertheless, *to avoid* fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. <sup>(3)</sup> Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. <sup>(4)</sup> The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. <sup>(5)</sup> Defraud ye not one the other, except *it be* with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency. <sup>(6)</sup> But I speak this by permission, *and* not of commandment. <sup>(7)</sup> For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that. (See vv.8-40; see also Matt. 19:1-12; 1 Thess. 4:3-8)

Within marriage, a husband and his wife are to participate in natural sexual relations, with thanksgiving to God their Creator. Again, both partners are to enjoy these relations; for—under these circumstances—God commends and blesses this union. Thus, God's Word says:

Genesis 2:24-25

<sup>(24)</sup> Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

<sup>(25)</sup> And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. (See vv.18-23; see also Gen. 1:26-28)

Hebrews 13:4

<sup>(4)</sup> Marriage *is* honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

## Part 9

### ***Acts of the Sinful Nature***

Sanctification involves putting to death the acts of the old sinful nature that is still within us. What, however, are these acts? God's Word declares:

Galatians 5:19-21

<sup>(19)</sup> Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, <sup>(20)</sup> Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, <sup>(21)</sup> Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (See vv.16-18)

Again, God's Word warns:

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

<sup>(9)</sup> Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, <sup>(10)</sup> Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>(11)</sup> And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. (See vv.1-8)

We cannot mistake the teaching of God's Word. Those who continue to practise any of the sins listed above will not inherit God's kingdom.

### **Sins of the Flesh**

Sometimes, we tend to place undue emphasis on *the sins of the body* to the virtual neglect of *the sins of the mind*. However, we must remember that the Scriptures do not usually make a distinction between these two categories. When the Bible speaks of, and condemns, the sins of the flesh, it is speaking comprehensively of, and condemning, all the sins which issue from our depraved or fallen nature.

*Sins of the flesh* are not sins of the body as such. They are, primarily, sins of the mind (or 'heart'); i.e. the inner man. However, it is certainly true that many sins originating in the mind find outward expression through the members of the body. In these cases, the body is being used as the vehicle or instrument of evil. This is true of all those evil practices or sins that we may commit through the abuse, misuse, or neglect of the body.

We have discussed some of these sins earlier, so we will not further elaborate on them here. We must remember, however, that we can use any part of the body for sinful purposes. For example, the person who engages in idle gossip, tale bearing, malicious talk, or slander, is misusing a member of his body (the tongue). By thus misusing his body, that person is sinning against the Lord and against his body (the Lord's temple).

Sins of the flesh also include the harbouring of evil thoughts secretly in our minds; or the evil tendencies, inclinations, attitudes, or dispositions within our hearts or minds.

### **Sins of the Mind (or Heart)**

The Lord Jesus always emphasised the true source of our sinful thoughts and acts—namely, our evil heart (or mind). All sin originates from within, and it is this evil disposition or inclination toward sin that defiles a man and makes him unclean.

Mark 7:20-23

<sup>(20)</sup> And he [Jesus] said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. <sup>(21)</sup> For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, <sup>(22)</sup> Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: <sup>(23)</sup> All these evil things come from within, and defile the man. (See vv. 14-19; cf. Matt. 15:18-20)

### **Explanation of Terms (Mark 7:21-22)**

<b>Evil thoughts</b>  (NIV, <i>evil thoughts</i> )	Evil deliberations; wicked schemes; sinful reasoning, calculations, plans or purposes.
<b>Adulteries</b>  (NIV, <i>adultery</i> )	Violations of the marriage vow and covenant.
<b>Fornications</b>  (NIV, <i>sexual immorality</i> )	Violations of chastity (sexual purity), by either married or unmarried persons—in thought, word, or deed.
<b>Murders</b>  (NIV, <i>murder</i> )	Unlawful killing; termination of life; hatred (murder of the heart).
<b>Thefts</b>  (NIV, <i>theft</i> )	Stealing (e.g., of goods, services, or time); shop-lifting; house-breaking (burglary); receiving stolen goods; pilfering; embezzlement; fraud; making false statements or submitting false accounts (e.g., for taxation purposes); or false claims (e.g., for insurance purposes), and any other form of dishonesty.
<b>Covetousness</b>  (NIV, <i>greed</i> )	The desire to possess more (or more than others); covetousness or avarice; ambitious arrogance; lust for power, prestige, property, etc.

<b>Wickedness</b> (NIV, <i>malice</i> )	Evil dispositions or tendencies; malevolent attitude [desirous of evil to others]; intense ill-will; spitefulness; vindictiveness.
<b>Deceit</b> (NIV, <i>deceit</i> )	To misrepresent (a situation or a person); e.g. by engaging in craft, cunning, guile, subtlety, underhand tactics, lies, etc.
<b>Lasciviousness</b> (NIV, <i>lewdness</i> )	Unchaste or obscene attitudes, speech, or behaviour; unbridled lust; wanton or licentious behaviour; grossly impure thoughts, words, or deeds.
<b>An evil eye</b> (NIV, <i>envy</i> )	(Lust of the eyes.) [Resentful or thoughtfully admiring of those more fortunate (in position or possessions) than ourselves.]  Jealousy; a grudging attitude toward others; green with envy; sour grapes, bitterness), etc.
<b>Blasphemy</b> (NIV, <i>slander</i> )	Proud or spiteful anger resulting in reviling and abusive words or language against God or man.  Slander [false report maliciously uttered to a person's injury (libel, if expressed in writing)];  defamation of character; innuendo; untrue, abusive, and harmful suggestions (or oblique hints) concerning a person; veiled speech; hinted remarks intended to injure or destroy a person's character or reputation.
<b>Pride</b> (NIV, <i>arrogance</i> )	Proud or haughty [toward God or man]; disdainful; showing oneself above others; overbearing; self-assertive; high and mighty; superior; condescending or patronising toward others; conceited, etc.
<b>Foolishness</b> (NIV, <i>folly</i> )	Devoid of reason, common sense, or understanding (especially in regard to moral and spiritual matters); morally deficient;  senseless [lit., unconscious, and therefore incapable of sensation; hence, insensitive to moral issues; i.e. spiritually dead];  wildly foolish behaviour, grossly unwise conduct, etc.

Sin originates in the heart or mind. Therefore, it is our inward life (or character) that we must permit the Holy Spirit to deal with. Our outward life (or conduct) may appear respectable and presentable—but God does not look upon the outward appearance, but upon the heart. Resembling whitewashed sepulchres that belie the corruption buried within, our inward lives still hold the remains of the moral filth attaching to our fallen, sinful nature. It is true, of course, that God has cleared us judicially of all guilt (justification), and is presently cleansing and sanctifying our character by his Holy Spirit.

Although addressed to the self-righteous scribes and Pharisees, the following remarks of the Lord Jesus give some indication of man's inward corruption:

Matthew 23:27-28

<sup>(27)</sup> Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead *men's* bones, and of all uncleanness. <sup>(28)</sup> Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

This corrupt condition is common to all mankind. Even in the regenerate, this condition has not been completely removed. As we have seen, sanctification is the process of cleansing and purifying our souls (including our minds) by the gradual transformation of our inward lives or character. It is essential that we put off those sins normally associated with the *body*. It is also essential that we put off those sins normally associated with the *mind*. Both alike are evidences of our corrupt, sinful nature (or heart).

The sins of the flesh (or the works of the flesh) include such sins as greed or covetousness, selfish ambition, envy, pride, a disagreeable temperament, sulkiness or moodiness, unjustified anger, bitterness, and hatred. Although each of these sins originates in the mind, the Bible refers to them as sins (or works) of the flesh (or sinful nature). During the process of sanctification, we must—by God's grace and the Spirit's power—endeavour to put off all these sins, and every other sin in our lives.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> See also on *Bible Truths Explained: Sin*, under *Protestant Doctrine of Original Sin*, by the same author.

## Part 10

### ***Forsaking Sin—in Thought, Word, and Deed***

Sanctification, then, is not confined to the forsaking of sinful acts or practices alone. Sanctification requires and involves the forsaking of *all* sin—in thought, word, and deed. The person who imagines that he can forsake sinful acts, but still continue to harbour sinful thoughts, indulge in sinful speech, or listen to sinful conversation, is deluding himself. Sinful thoughts and speech arise from the heart. The person who continually dwells on evil thoughts, or who indulges in sinful forms of speech, demonstrates that his heart is not right with God. Thus, God's Word says:

Ephesians 5:3

<sup>(3)</sup> But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; (See vv.1-2)

*'...Let it not be once named among you...'* Or, as the NIV renders it: *'...among you there must not be even a hint...'* Not the least trace of uncleanness, immorality, impurity, or greed should be discernible among God's redeemed and holy people. The Scripture continues:

Ephesians 5:4-5

<sup>(4)</sup> Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. <sup>(5)</sup> For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. (See v.6)

Not even a hint of filthy and unwholesome, immoral or foolish talk; and not even a hint of coarse joking or jesting, should be heard among the people of God. Nor should they listen to such depraved talk or joking. As those who are being sanctified, God's people must separate themselves from all such moral filth. (Jas. 1:21) In his letter to the church at Colosse, the apostle Paul says:

Colossians 3:5-6

<sup>(5)</sup> Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence [intense craving or lust], and covetousness, which is idolatry: <sup>(6)</sup> For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: (See vv.1-4)

God's Word places greed or covetousness in the same category as sexual immorality. All alike are sins of the flesh (the fallen nature), and all alike are examples of immoral behaviour or attitudes of mind. The Word of God continues:

Colossians 3:7-8

<sup>(7)</sup> In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. <sup>(8)</sup> But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

From unjustified anger to filthy language (filthy communication)—together with the unrighteous or unclean thoughts from which they originate—we must utterly forsake all these manifestations of our old fallen nature. Again, God's Word says:

Colossians 3:9-10

<sup>(9)</sup> Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; <sup>(10)</sup> And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: (See v.11; cf. v.10 with Eph. 4:23-24)

We are a new creation in Christ Jesus—created unto a life of true righteousness and holiness. Therefore, we must abandon all forms of deceit and dishonesty. Everyone must speak the truth with his or her neighbour, for we are all members of one body—the church: that body of which Christ is Head. (Eph. 4:15-16; Col. 1:18) As God’s Word says:

Ephesians 4:15

<sup>(15)</sup> But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ:

And:

Ephesians 4:25

<sup>(25)</sup> Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

Whether it be in thought, speech or act, we must forsake all sin and allow the Holy Spirit to sanctify us wholly.

## **We Must Live by The Spirit**

In all respects, we must walk or live by the Spirit of holiness, and not by the spirit of our own self-will: that rebellious spirit arising from our old fallen nature. That nature has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer our old selves that live. Rather, it is Christ who lives within us and who sanctifies us unto God. The Scripture says:

Galatians 5:16

<sup>(16)</sup> *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. (See vv.13-18)

Again, God’s Word says:

Galatians 5:24-26

<sup>(24)</sup> And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. <sup>(25)</sup> If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. <sup>(26)</sup> Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another. (See vv.22-23)

The proof that a person has been regenerated and justified, and that he is being sanctified, is that he *utterly forsakes* the sins in which he formerly engaged. The believer is not perfect, but it must be his heart’s desire to mortify the sinful nature and to walk with the Lord. We cannot, however, walk with the Lord and walk with the world as well. We cannot claim to be led by the Spirit while any part of our lives is not being sanctified by the Spirit of holiness.



## Part 11

### ***God is Not Mocked***

Regarding those who claim to belong to Christ, yet who still live to please their sinful nature, God's Word warns:

Galatians 6:7-8

<sup>(7)</sup> Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. <sup>(8)</sup> For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. (See v.9; cf. 2 Cor. 9:6)

Note what the Scripture teaches here:

Galatians 6:8a

<sup>(8a)</sup> For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption...

Those who sow to please their sinful nature (i.e. who sow to gratify the flesh) will—from that same sinful nature—reap corruption.

### **Sowing to the Flesh Destroys the Man**

If we feed our minds on sinful material (e.g., through the lust of the eyes), then our minds will become increasingly corrupted by that material. Eventually, we will be unable to distinguish clearly between that which is evil and that which is good. This confusing of moral and spiritual values is a direct consequence of feeding the flesh or sinful nature on that which is evil and degrading, and of depriving the soul and new nature of that which is good and wholesome. Thus, a man *reaps in his mind* what he has *sown in his mind*. Similarly, if we indulge our bodies in sinful pleasures, then both body and soul (including our mind) will become corrupted and damaged by the deceitfulness of sin: for sin always pays its wages—in full.

Sin arises from our hearts. For this reason, sinful actions against the body affect us not only in body, but also in mind. The more we expose our mind to corrupting influences, the more we will begin to imagine that sinful pleasures are normal and natural pleasures. This again is an example of reaping in our mind what we have sown in our mind. Thus, again, the Scripture says:

Galatians 6:8a

<sup>(8a)</sup> For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption...

Or, as rendered by the NIV:

<sup>(8a)</sup> The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction... (NIV)

God's Word does not warn in vain, and God is not mocked by those who disbelieve the consequences of disregarding his express warnings. Sowing to the sinful nature destroys the man; and no one can remain at peace with God while he continues to feed and nurture the desires of his old sinful nature.

Rather, he is at enmity with the one who has redeemed him, and who has delivered him from sin's bondage and dominion over him. Such a person is provoking God to act in (punitive) discipline to magnify his righteous and holy Name, and to preserve a rebellious soul from eternal death.

### God Disciplines Those Who Sin

God's Word plainly teaches that the pleasures of sin are corrupt and corrupting. They are evil pleasures; and this is the kind of pleasure that we must utterly forsake. We must never under-estimate the truth of God's Word:

Jeremiah 16:17-18

<sup>(17)</sup> For mine eyes *are* upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes. {*Cf. Prov. 5:21-23; Jer. 32:19*}

<sup>(18)</sup> And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double; because they have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable things. {*Contrast Isa. 40:1-2*} (See Jer. 16:1-21)

Again, God's Word says:

Jeremiah 17:4

<sup>(4)</sup> And thou, even thyself, shalt discontinue from thine heritage that I gave thee; and I will cause thee to serve thine enemies in the land which thou knowest not: for ye have kindled a fire in mine anger, *which* shall burn forever. (See vv.1-10; see esp. vv.9-10; cf. v.4b with Jer. 15:13-14)

The inheritance God gave his people was the land of Canaan. However, because of their stubborn sinfulness, God caused his backsliding people's expulsion from that land, sending them into captivity in Babylon.

That which applies to God's backsliding people of old, applies in principle also to us. We cannot lose our heavenly inheritance, since God has guaranteed this inheritance to us through the merits of, and on the basis of, Christ's redeeming work. However, like Israel (or more particularly, Judah), we can forfeit our earthly blessings—spiritual and material.

We reap what we sow. We reap this harvest not only in the life to come, but also in this present life. For this reason, some of God's backsliding people have brought upon themselves the fruit of the sinful deeds. They disbelieved God's warnings, until it was too late. Now, in their own persons, they are paying the penalty for their contempt of God's holy Word. Thus, the Scripture says:

Jeremiah 4:18

<sup>(18)</sup> Thy way and thy doings have procured these *things* unto thee; this *is* thy wickedness, because it is bitter, because it reacheth unto thine heart. (See vv.14-17; cf. Jer. 2:13-19)

Or, with the NIV:

<sup>(18)</sup> "Your own conduct and actions have brought this upon you. This is your punishment. How bitter it is! How it pierces to the heart!" (NIV;

God still deals with his people through his works of providence. By this means, he still chastises them severely when they stubbornly and wilfully refuse to heed all other forms of correction.<sup>10</sup>

## **Disciplined, But Not Condemned**

Backsliding believers still belong to Christ. The Lord has delivered them from the coming final judgment, and they will not face eternal condemnation along with the world. However, as we have seen, God has not spared them from judgment in this present life (*temporal* judgment). To a greater or lesser extent, they have forfeited God's blessing upon their lives, and are now enduring God's hand of discipline. Yet, although painful for a time, it is the loving discipline of a Father who cares. It is the loving discipline of the one who is preparing his own children to share with him in holiness and in glory<sup>11</sup>

## **Worldliness**

We are not at liberty to describe as worldly, anything that the Scriptures do not condemn, either by precept or by a clearly defined principle. Having said this, there is a vast range of matters that may indeed be described as worldly, or that may tend to lead to worldly attitudes or standards of behaviour. Basically, worldliness consists of anything that causes us to set our hearts or minds on the things of the world, or on the sinful pleasures obtained by gratifying the evil or excessive desires of our fallen nature. Instead, of course, we should be setting our hearts and minds wholly on Christ, and endeavouring by his grace to walk by the Spirit of holiness. (Col. 3:1-2)

Worldly-mindedness stands opposed, totally and irreconcilably, to spiritual-mindedness. We may pursue one or the other, but we cannot pursue both. Friendship with the world (i.e. an inordinate affection for the things of the world, or indulgence in any sinful attitudes or practices) is enmity with God. Thus, God's Word says:

James 4:4

<sup>(4)</sup> Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. (See vv.1-3; cf. 2 Pet. 1:4; 2:20)

Again, God's Word says:

1 John 2:15-17

<sup>(15)</sup> Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

<sup>(16)</sup> For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. {Cf. Rom. 13:13-14; Eph. 2:3; Eccl. 2:4-10; Matt. 20:25-27}

<sup>(17)</sup> And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

## **Worldliness and Legitimate Pastimes**

While we must utterly forsake those things of the world that are sinful, there are many other things of the world that we are not at liberty to describe as sinful. For example, there are legitimate pastimes,

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<sup>10</sup> See further on *Bible Truths Explained: Sovereignty of God; Providence*, by the same author.

<sup>11</sup> See further on *Bible Truths Explained: Adoption*, under *Discipline*, by the same author.

interests, hobbies, sports, or recreational and leisure activities in which a Christian may become involved. The believer is at liberty to engage in any legitimate interest, provided he can do so with a clear conscience in the sight of God. Provided, also, that his involvement does not require him to encroach upon the time he owes to the Lord, or to dishonour the Lord's name, or to desecrate the Lord's Day.

In all matters of indifference and conscience (matters that are not in themselves sinful), one particular believer's idea or opinion about what constitutes worldly attitudes or standards of behaviour must never be made the rule for other believers. The Lord alone is Lord of the conscience. *Man must not forbid what God has not forbidden.*

### ***Sanctification Must be Taken Seriously***

As God's people, we must take seriously the implications of sanctification. We are not our own. The Lord has redeemed us. He has set us apart and consecrated us to God as his holy people. Our body and soul—our whole person and personality—is the possession of God; and our body is the sacred dwelling place or temple of God's Holy Spirit.

We are God's purchased possession—his consecrated people, and his adopted children. We are the children of light or holiness. It is our responsibility, therefore, to yield ourselves wholly to God's sanctifying and life-changing power. We must allow the Spirit of God to cleanse us, and we must be willing to put off the deeds of the old sinful nature and to put on the deeds of the new nature. We must forsake sin and pursue holiness of life or conduct always.

We have already seen what is involved in putting off the old nature. In the next part of this study, we will consider what is involved in putting on the new nature. The new nature is that nature in which God has created anew in Christ Jesus, in true righteousness, holiness and knowledge.

## Part 12

### ***Putting On the New Nature***

#### **Practical Examples**

The new nature is that nature, which we have received at regeneration or the new birth, and which is being moulded after the likeness of Christ in righteousness and true holiness. Everyone who has been truly born again possesses this new nature; and everyone who possesses this new nature must produce in his or her life the fruit of the Spirit.

#### **The Fruit of The Spirit**

God's Word says:

Galatians 5:22-23

<sup>(22)</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, <sup>(23)</sup> Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. (See vv.24-26)

In the pages that follow, the nine distinct elements of the fruit of the Spirit, are set out individually in the left-hand column. In this column, we have used the text of the New International Version. However, we have also shown the corresponding text from the King James Version (KJV) in parenthesis beneath each entry.

#### ***The Fruit of The Spirit Listed***

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| <b>1. Love</b>         | <i>Love to God</i> involves unremitting devotion, loyalty, and faithfulness to God; complete trust in God, and unreserved obedience to all his Word and will in all things. <i>Love to our fellow-believer</i> involves caring for that person as one who is united to us in Christ Jesus. <i>Love to our neighbour</i> involves showing concern for him, and providing assistance where there is need. Love does no wrong to our neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilment of the law. (Rom. 13:8-10; 1 Cor. 13:1-13; Gal. 5:13-15) |
| (KJV, love)            |  |
| Gk. agape              |  |
| Love                   | Romans 13:8-10   |
| (Scripture References) | <sup>(8)</sup> Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellow-man has fulfilled the law. <sup>(9)</sup> The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," <sup>(12)</sup> and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbour as yourself." <sup>(13)</sup> <sup>(10)</sup> Love does no harm to its   |

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<sup>12</sup> Exodus 20:13-15,17; Deut. 5:17-19,21. [NIV footnote to Rom. 13:9]

<sup>13</sup> Lev. 19:18. [NIV footnote to Rom. 13:9]

neighbour. Therefore love is the fulfilment of the law. (NIV)

1 Corinthians 13:1

<sup>(1)</sup> If I speak in the tongues<sup>14</sup> of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. (NIV)

1 Corinthians 13:13

<sup>(13)</sup> And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love. (NIV)

Galatians 5:13-15

<sup>(13)</sup> You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature;<sup>15</sup> rather, serve one another in love. <sup>(14)</sup> The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbour as yourself." <sup>16</sup> <sup>(15)</sup> If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other. (NIV)

## 2. Joy

(KJV, joy)

Gk., chara

Heartfelt joy. This is not the same thing as exuberance. Rather, it is inward, deep, lasting spiritual joy. This joy comes to us as a direct consequence of our salvation in Christ, and of our union with our risen and glorified Redeemer. We associate this spiritual joy with all the blessings that we receive in Christ. However, we also associate this deep inward joy with the sufferings that God calls us to endure for Christ; i.e. for the sake of his name. (Phil. 4:4; 1 Pet. 1:6-8; 4:12-16)

Joy

(Scripture References)

Philippians 4:4-5

<sup>(4)</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! <sup>(5)</sup> Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. (NIV)

1 Peter 1:5-9

<sup>(5)</sup> who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. <sup>(6)</sup> In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. <sup>(7)</sup> These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed. <sup>(8)</sup> Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, <sup>(9)</sup> for you are receiving the goal of

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<sup>14</sup> Or *languages* [NIV footnote to 1 Cor. 13:1]

<sup>15</sup> Or *the flesh* [NIV footnote to Gal. 5:13]

<sup>16</sup> Lev. 19:18 [NIV footnote to Gal. 5:14]

your faith, the salvation of your souls. (NIV)

1 Peter 4:12-16

<sup>(12)</sup> Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. <sup>(13)</sup> But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. <sup>(14)</sup> If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. <sup>(15)</sup> If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. <sup>(16)</sup> However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. (NIV)

### 3. **Peace**

(KJV, peace)

Gk., eirene

Peace with God, and peace with oneself (although not necessarily to the exclusion of all inward conflicts and tensions; especially those that attend spiritual warfare). This inner calmness includes peace or tranquillity in the midst of spiritual strife, and in the everyday conflicts of life. This heart-peace comes from the Lord himself. The Holy Spirit makes this peace fully effective in our lives when we are living in line with God's will for us. This means, of course, that we are fulfilling the desires of the Holy Spirit, and not the desires of our old sinful nature. (John 14:27; Phil. 4:6-7; Col. 3:15)

Peace

(Scripture References)

John 14:27

<sup>(27)</sup> Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. (NIV)

John 16:33

<sup>(33)</sup> "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (NIV)

Philippians 4:6-7

<sup>(6)</sup> Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>(7)</sup> And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (NIV)

Colossians 3:12-15

<sup>(12)</sup> Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. <sup>(13)</sup> Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. <sup>(14)</sup> And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

<sup>(15)</sup> Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace.

And be thankful. (NIV)

**4. Patience**

(KJV, longsuffering)

Gk., makrothumia

A child of God demonstrates patience (an essential element of perseverance) by exhibiting a longsuffering disposition or attitude of mind. Patience of this type prevails even under the most adverse of circumstances or the most severe provocation. The Lord calls upon us to exercise patience (and to persevere) in all the trials and difficulties of our faith. Similarly, he enjoins us to exercise perseverance in our conflict against the powers of evil, and patience or longsuffering in all our dealings with our fellow men and women. Patient endurance and perseverance are virtues required of all the people of God. Patience does not imply passivity or inactivity in the things of God, but rather forbearance united with a steadfast endurance and determination to hold firmly to the course set before us. (Heb. 12:1-3; Jas. 1:2-4, 12-15; 5:10-11)

Patience

Hebrews 12:1-4

(Scripture References)

<sup>(1)</sup> Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. <sup>(2)</sup> Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>(3)</sup> Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

<sup>(4)</sup> In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. (NIV)

James 1:2-4

<sup>(2)</sup> Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, <sup>(3)</sup> because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. <sup>(4)</sup> Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. (NIV)

James 1:12-15

<sup>(12)</sup> Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

<sup>(13)</sup> When tempted, no-one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; <sup>(14)</sup> but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. <sup>(15)</sup> Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. (NIV)

James 5:10-11

<sup>(10)</sup> Brothers, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. <sup>(11)</sup> As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy. (NIV)

**5. Kindness**

(KJV, gentleness)

Gk., chrestotes

Care, thoughtfulness, consideration and generosity toward our fellow-believers, and particularly toward those in need. We exemplify kindness by taking practical measures to alleviate suffering and hardship, or by comforting and supporting the sorrowing in their distress and grief. Kindness does not speak out of turn, or without due thought for the consequences of idle or careless remarks. One wrong word can pierce like a sword. A word fitly spoken can be like a healing balm to a wounded soul. (Prov. 19:17; 25:11; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:12)

Kindness

Proverbs 19:17

(Scripture References)

<sup>(17)</sup> He who is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward him for what he has done. (NIV)

Proverbs 25:11

<sup>(11)</sup> A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver. (NIV)

2 Corinthians 9:6-8

<sup>(6)</sup> Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. <sup>(7)</sup> Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. <sup>(8)</sup> And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. (NIV; see vv.9-15)

Ephesians 4:32

<sup>(32)</sup> Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (NIV)

Colossians 3:12

<sup>(12)</sup> Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. (NIV)

**6. Goodness**

(KJV, goodness)

Gk., agathosune

Goodness includes all manner of good, right, and benevolent attitudes and actions toward our neighbour, and for the sake of Christ's name. True goodness originates spontaneously from a person's heart. A person exemplifies goodness by the good, helpful or beneficial things he does for others in the name of Christ. Inasmuch as we have done it unto one of the least of these, his brethren, we have done it unto Christ. (1 Cor. 10:24; Jas. 4:17; 2 Pet. 1:5-11)

Goodness

1 Corinthians 10:23-24

(Scripture References)

<sup>(23)</sup> "Everything is permissible"—but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible"—but not everything is constructive. <sup>(24)</sup> Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others. (NIV)

James 4:17

<sup>(17)</sup> Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins. (NIV)

2 Peter 1:5-11

<sup>(5)</sup> For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; <sup>(6)</sup> and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; <sup>(7)</sup> and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. <sup>(8)</sup> For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>(9)</sup> But if anyone does not have them, he is short-sighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins.

<sup>(10)</sup> Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, <sup>(11)</sup> and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (NIV)

**7. Faithfulness**

(KJV, faith)

Gk., pistis

Faithfulness is absolute and unwavering love and loyalty to a person. Faithfulness to God must come first, for we are bound to the Lord by covenant loyalty. Faithfulness to God's people (the church) accompanies faithfulness to God. Faithfulness to our husband or wife parallels faithfulness to God, and involves the same kind of love as Christ has for the church. Faithfulness to other members of our family and friends comes next. Then, faithfulness to the wider sphere of man's civil relationships, and to society more generally. This is because God has set civil government in place, together with its lawful institutions. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 20:21-25; Eph. 5:22-33; Rev. 2:10)

Faithfulness

Mark 12:28-31

(Scripture References)

<sup>(28)</sup> One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the com-

mandments, which is the most important?”

<sup>(29)</sup> “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.’<sup>17</sup>

<sup>(30)</sup> Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ {*Deut. 6:4,5*}

<sup>(31)</sup> The second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ {*Lev. 19:18*} There is no commandment greater than these.” (NIV)

Luke 20:21-25

<sup>(21)</sup> So the spies questioned him: “Teacher, we know that you speak and teach what is right, and that you do not show partiality but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth.<sup>(22)</sup> Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

<sup>(23)</sup> He saw through their duplicity and said to them,<sup>(24)</sup> “Show me a denarius. Whose portrait and inscription are on it?”

<sup>(25)</sup> “Caesar’s,” they replied.

He said to them, “Then give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.” (NIV)

Ephesians 5:22-25,28

<sup>(22)</sup> Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.

<sup>(23)</sup> For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour.<sup>(24)</sup> Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

<sup>(25)</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her...<sup>(28)</sup> In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. (NIV; see also v.33)

Revelation 2:10

<sup>(10)</sup> Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life. (NIV)

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<sup>17</sup> Or the Lord our God is one Lord [NIV footnote to Mark 12:29]

**8. Gentleness**

(KJV, meekness)

Gk., praotes

Gentleness (or meekness or humility) is not weakness. It requires great strength of character, and courage, to be gentle in the midst of an antagonistic world. Gentleness is the opposite of a hard, self-ish, arrogant and proud disposition (these attitudes being typical examples of the sins of the flesh). We must stand firmly and uncompromisingly by the principles of our faith. However, in doing so, we must not impose our convictions or principles on other people. Rather, in a Christ-like spirit of love, compassion and tenderness, we must gently instruct those who err. We must exhort those who need encouragement. We must give hope to those in despair, and comfort those who are enduring sorrow or grief. (Eph. 4:2; Phil. 4:5; 1 Pet. 3:15-16)

Gentleness

Ephesians 4:1-3

(Scripture References)

<sup>(1)</sup> As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. <sup>(2)</sup> Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. <sup>(3)</sup> Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. (NIV)

Philippians 4:5

<sup>(5)</sup> Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. (NIV)

1 Peter 3:15-16

<sup>(15)</sup> But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, <sup>(16)</sup> keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behaviour in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. (NIV)

**9. Self-control**

(KJV, temperance)

Gk., egkrateia

Self-control is the exercise of self-discipline or restraint; i.e. the willingness to govern all our attitudes and actions according to the teaching of God's Word. Self-control involves the exercise of moderation in all things; the avoidance of all excesses, and the steadfast refusal to indulge the desires of the sinful nature. We ought to apply self-control to every area of our lives: in thought, speech, and act. (Prov. 16:32; Titus 2:11-14; Jas. 1:26)

Self-control

Proverbs 16:32

(Scripture References)

<sup>(32)</sup> Better a patient man than a warrior, a man who controls his temper than one who takes a city. (NIV)

Titus 2:11-12

<sup>(11)</sup> For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. <sup>(12)</sup> It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, (NIV; see vv.13-14)

James 1:26

<sup>(26)</sup> If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless. (NIV)

The above represents the kind of fruit that we must exhibit in our lives in ever-increasing measure. This fruit is the evidence that we possess a new nature. It is the only tangible proof that a person has been born again by the Spirit of God.

### ***Increasing Fruit is Proof of Spiritual Life***

The production of this fruit in a person's life is evidence that that person belongs to Christ. It demonstrates that the Holy Spirit is sanctifying his inner life. In the process, the Spirit of God is transforming him from one degree of glory to another.

The amount of fruit produced will be in proportion to the spiritual maturity of the believer, and to his growth in grace. To a certain extent also, it will depend on the progress he has made in understanding spiritual truths. Again, the increasing production of spiritual fruit will depend on the degree of his commitment to the Lord. As the believer grows in grace, he will produce an ever-increasing amount of spiritual fruit: fruit of increasingly greater quality. This is further evidence of his new life in Christ. If a person does not produce any spiritual fruit, then this may indicate that this individual is not being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. It, however, a person is not being sanctified, then this suggests strongly that he has not experienced the Holy Spirit's regenerating power. This, in turns, means God has not justified him. There can be no new birth without clear signs of new life.



## Part 13

### ***Forsaking the Way of Holiness***

Concerning those who are not experiencing the sanctifying power of the Spirit in their lives, God's Word says:

Ephesians 4:18

<sup>(18)</sup> Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: (See v.17)

The same Scripture continues:

Ephesians 4:19-20

<sup>(19)</sup> Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

<sup>(20)</sup> But ye have not so learned Christ;

Those who seek to satisfy the lusts of the flesh either have never known Christ, or they have professed conversion and followed the Lord only for a time. Ultimately, however, their manner of life has proved that their 'conversion' experience was not genuine. This is evidenced by the fact that they have no real desire to continue following Christ. They have forsaken the way of righteousness to return to the sinful pleasures of the world. It would indeed have been better for these individuals had they never heard about the Lord Jesus, than—having heard—to have rejected the only way of salvation and life. Thus, the Word of God solemnly warns:

2 Peter 2:20-22

<sup>(20)</sup> For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. <sup>(21)</sup> For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. <sup>(22)</sup> But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog *is* turned to his own vomit again; {*Prov. 26:11*} and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. (See vv.1-19; cf. Jude 4,18-19)

Proverbs 26:11

<sup>(11)</sup> As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly.

All who belong to Christ must depart from iniquity. (2 Tim. 2:19b.) If they do not, then inevitably they will reap what they sow. If they sow to the flesh, then they will *of the flesh* reap a corrupt manner of life.

## Treating God's Spirit with Contempt

The triune God is one God in three divine Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are equal in eternity, power and glory. The infinite power and majestic glory that belongs inherently to the Father, also belongs inherently to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. It is therefore a fearful thing to treat the Holy Spirit of God with contempt. By doing so, a person is treating with contempt the Almighty God himself.

In what way, however, can we treat God with contempt? The God of infinite holiness indwells each believer in the Person of his Spirit. By that Spirit—the Spirit of grace, of glory, and of absolute holiness—the glory of the Lord fills the temple. *That temple is our body.* If we despise the dwelling place of God by degrading the temple of the Lord, then we are treating the Spirit of God—and therefore God himself—with contempt. If we so sin wilfully and repeatedly against the Lord, then we are proving that we do not in fact belong to Christ. Those who are Christ's cannot despise the temple of God. Regarding those who claim to know Christ, yet who deny him by their life and conduct, the Scripture solemnly declares:

Hebrews 10:26-27

<sup>(26)</sup> For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, <sup>(27)</sup> But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

Our body is the temple of God—and the temple of God is holy. We should consecrate it to God as his hallowed dwelling place. God will surely judge those who commit sacrilege by defiling his holy temple.

## Treading Underfoot The Blood of Christ

To tread underfoot the blood of Christ is to treat the blood of the covenant (i.e., the Person and the redeeming work of Christ) as an unholy thing. Those who thus despise the vicarious and atoning work of Christ, or who thus abuse his holy Person, are heaping up God's wrath against themselves for the last day. There will be no escaping the fire and the fury of the wrath of God. All those who have disdained the Son of God; who have despised the blood of the Lamb, and who have neglected or rejected the Lamb of God as their Saviour, face the terrible prospect of judgment and eternal torment. Their Judge will be the same holy Lamb of God. (Cf. Rev. 6:16-17) To this end, God's Word says:

Hebrews 10:28-29

<sup>(28)</sup> He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: <sup>(29)</sup> Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

On the Day of Judgment, people will seek by every conceivable means to hide from the Lamb of God: for his wrath will burn like fire. No one, however, will escape the searching judgment of the all-holy God, and of his Son Jesus Christ. Thus, the Scripture says:

Revelation 6:15-17

<sup>(15)</sup> And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

<sup>(16)</sup> And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: {Cf. Hosea 10:8; Luke 23:30}

<sup>(17)</sup> For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand? {Cf. Zeph. 1:14-18; Ps. 76:7} (See Rev. 6:12-14)

## The Lord Will Judge His People

Judgment, however, will begin at the house of God, and among the people of God. Thus, the apostle Peter says:

1 Peter 4:17-18

<sup>(17)</sup> For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it first begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God? <sup>(18)</sup> And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? {Prov. 11:31} (See 1 Pet. 4:14-19)

Again, God's Word says:

Hebrews 10:30

<sup>(30)</sup> For we know him that hath said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

The same Scripture continues:

Hebrews 10:31

<sup>(31)</sup> *It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Cf. Luke 12:5)

If judgment begins with those who are being sanctified, what will be the outcome for those who have never known the regenerating and sanctifying power of the Spirit of holiness.

## The Test of a Sanctified Life

In this present life, the ultimate test of a sanctified life is the ability to allow the Lord full possession of our body and soul. We ought to permit the Lord unrestricted access to every part of our lives. This is his right as our Sovereign and Redeemer. Does this right of access exist, however? Does the Lord dwell in every part of our lives? Or are there parts of our lives unfit for the hallowed presence of the Lord? Should not the glory of the LORD fill the whole temple?

Our body is the temple of the Lord, and the temple of the Lord is holy. Can we defile God's temple, or refuse him entry to his sanctified dwelling? Let us think carefully on the Scripture that says:

1 Corinthians 3:16-17

<sup>(16)</sup> Know ye not that *ye* are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? <sup>(17)</sup> If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are. (Cf. 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 2 Cor. 6:16)

Those who belong to Christ must walk as Jesus walked. By God's grace, we ought to be making real progress in sanctification—including putting to death the thoughts and acts of our sinful nature. If we are not making progress, then something may be amiss with our spiritual lives.

### ***A Life Acceptable to God***

Let us consider carefully these solemn injunctions from the Word of God:

Romans 12:1-2

<sup>(1)</sup> I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. <sup>(2)</sup> And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (See vv.3-8)

Titus 2:11-14

<sup>(11)</sup> For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, <sup>(12)</sup> Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; <sup>(13)</sup> Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; <sup>(14)</sup> Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Total consecration of body and soul is the only acceptable sacrifice we can yield to God. If we have not yielded *all* to God, then we have not yielded *at all* to God.

