

# THE AUSTRALIAN ANABAPTIST

God's solid foundation stands firm. 2 Tim. 2-19

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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.

Matthew 5:15

From The Editor's Desk.

In the past few months many times the Word of God has spoken to us about the need for holiness and sanctification in our lives and how much we need the direction of the Holy Spirit in all of life. The song "Come Gracious Spirit Heavenly Dove" (No. 155 Church Hymnal) has time and again impressed upon us the need for His presence and direction in this area. We cannot do it on our own. The song contains two verses which make a special mention of this need:

Come gracious Spirit heavenly Dove,  
With light and comfort from above,  
Be Thou our guardian, Thou our guide,  
Over every thought and step preside.

Lead us to holiness the road,  
Which we must take to dwell with God,  
Lead us to Christ the living way  
Nor let us from His pastures stray.

As we ponder these words written by one Simon Browne during his lifetime in 1680-1732 we see that believers then also realised their need for holiness and the direction of the Holy Spirit. It is no different today and it may be even more urgent as the return of Christ is even more imminent than it was in the hymn writer's time that we seek that highway to heaven, the road of holiness that is promised to the people of God. Isaiah 35 gives us a beautiful description of God's goodness and provision for His people. [Isaiah 35:8-9 KJV](#).

*And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called **The way of holiness**; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. Isaiah.....No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there:*

It is our prayer that you may be encouraged to travel that Highway with the Holy Spirit as your guide so that you may realise the promise of [Isaiah 35:10](#). *And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.* *Bro. Joseph.*

MINISTER'S CORNERDISCERNING THE REALM OF DARKNESS*By Brother K.J.*

Considering the Christian life, one ponders the fact that much of it is warfare against Satan and his evil spirits. It is part of the true Christian's vision that through the power of the Holy Spirit he can, in a measure, perceive and understand the tactics of these spirits as they attack us in our walk of life. It is true that we are sometimes taken by surprise or unawares. But one ponders whether it was a result of the fall of man, or is it, at times, because of our affection being placed on self?

There are different aspects of the spirit world that are only understood by the Holy Spirit. Therefore it is important that we be keen to Him and listen to and learn His voice.

Satan's realm is the world. He is the prince of the power of the air ([Ephesians 2:2](#)). Satan was cast out of heaven with one-third of the angels. He has great wrath, and this hatred is also in the evil spirits that serve him. Jesus once cast evil spirits out of a man and they went into a herd of swine. These spirits were called Legion, because they were many ([Mark 5:9](#)). The realization that there are many evil spirits becomes clearer as we are spiritually minded.

Let us consider the realm, order, and tactics of Satan. In [Ephesians 6:12](#), we read, "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." This verse divides Satan's realm. One part we want to consider at this point is "principalities." One meaning of this word is "an order of angels, or spirits." We want to identify the division of evil spirits.

In earthly warfare, there are divisions in the armed forces. Also, within each division there are those who are especially trained for certain important tasks, geographical location, or special operations.

Using this example, let us consider Satan's forces, the evil spirits.

**There are lustful spirits:** pride, worldliness, lust, fornication, adultery, lasciviousness, selfishness, and covetousness.

**There are foreign spirits:** a lying spirit, spirit of untruth, deception, self-righteousness, apostasy, and heresy. These spirits are very subtle and work undercover. They give experiences, but they do not bear witness to the

brotherhood.

**There are malicious spirits:** a spirit of criticalness, envy, jealousy, hate, devouring spirit, offense, emulations (peer pressure), despise, and a divisive spirit. The purpose of these spirits is to destroy our relationship with mankind. They particularly focus on relationships in the brotherhood. Some of them focus on our families, husband and wife relationship, or any form of God-given authority. The ministry is particularly targeted. The spirits of this division are often camouflaged in a guise of concern or emotion. They always cause the individual to be restless and sensitive. When Holy Spirit-led Christians come into the presence of these spirits, they are not comfortable.

**There are accusing spirits:** spirit of doubt, fear, a tormenting spirit, unbelief, questioning, and distrust. These spirits destroy our confidence in the voice of the Holy Spirit.

**There are resistant spirits:** self-will, stubbornness, rebellious resistance, and self-rightness.

As we lead our people, whether in our homes or in the congregations, may we have a living experience that we can share with our people to help them understand these voices. A humble heart, a sincere prayer life, and a trust in the sovereignty of God and His love and care for His children are a proper example for those who follow us.

There is one point that these spirits have in common. They all protect self or its interests. They differ in that some work in silence while others are open and obnoxious.

These are only some of the many that could be mentioned. Much thought and meditation could be given to consider the working of each individual spirit. May the Holy Spirit identify and name the spirits as they tempt us. If we are troubled, may we open up to our brethren.

Let us consider the working of spirits and our responsibility, by the grace of God, to not give them entrance. [James 1:14-15](#) reads, "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." When our self, or the flesh, is not properly crucified daily, we choose to place the affection upon ourselves that should be set upon God. When we do not place our affection upon our Savior, we grieve Him, and He chooses to withdraw grace. Our ears begin to be dull to the voice of the Holy Spirit, and we begin to listen for self. Satan then sends a

spirit that will focus our attention on a past hurt or a circumstance or some desire of the flesh. He may send one or more spirits from different divisions in his army, or they may be of the same one.

Now let us look particularly at how these spirits come. One brother shared some thoughts that I feel fit here.

A spirit first tempts us. If we give ear, then it begins to influence us. This will bring the Christian into a state of confusion or entanglement. In this state, the individual cannot properly understand the Holy Spirit's leading. If at this point, we will humble ourselves, cry out to God, and repent of our misplaced affection and of having listened to this evil spirit, there is deliverance. At this point, there may not be so many evil fruits evident in our lives.

If we do not repent, we begin to go down into a state where that spirit controls us. In this state, we think, discern, and live under the control of this spirit and often feel justified in our feelings and deeds. At what point we make a conscious decision to forsake our Saviour's bidding and His atonement may vary in each individual, but when this is done, the Holy Spirit leaves.

The final state of a spirit is possession. At this point, a spirit drives these people and self gives consent to it, and one never gives it any other consideration.

John wrote in [1 John 4:1-2](#), "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God." As these spirits are sent to tempt we must confess that Jesus' walk of life is our example to follow, both spiritually and materially. This will bring these spirits to the light, and they will flee. Evil spirits will not work in the light. We must be open and honest with our life.

In conclusion, we should be thankful to God for the gift of proving the spirits. This gift is given to the church for the safety and purity of her member, and the body. While it is often more evident in the ministry, it is also among the laity. May we be faithful as the Holy Spirit gives us direction. Let us trust in our Captain, Jesus, and His commander, the Holy Spirit. With them, we will win the fight.



**SNAPSHOTS.**

Brief excerpts from historical publications.

*Religious Toleration*

**Anabaptists** deserve an honourable place in the history of religious freedom, even though their espousal of it was stillborn. Religious toleration, let alone religious liberty, could not be tolerated in the sixteenth century. The Reformers condemned it as an invitation to social chaos, and political rulers rejected it because it would divide political loyalties. When religious liberty finally came it took its rise in seventeenth-century England and eighteenth-century France, and was transplanted from there to the New World. But **Anabaptists** were among the pioneers who first thought of it and who gave words to their convictions by appealing to authorities in church and state to grant liberty of faith.

The first appeal for religious liberty in the sixteenth century came from the eloquent pen of Balthasar Hubmaier. "The heretic," wrote Hubmaier, "is an invention of the devil" This means, not that there cannot be any heretics, but that the word "heretic" conveyed immediately the vision of a flaming stake, invented and ignited by the leaders of the church. "To burn heretics," continued Hubmaier, "is to recognize Christ in appearance, but to deny Him in reality . . ."

Killing people for their faith was seen to be in direct contrast to the spirit of Christ.

An argument often encountered among **Anabaptist** pleas for religious liberty was that faith, in order to be true faith, had to be free. The moving letter of Hans Muller to the clergy and Council of Zürich pleads that they would understand how faith is something that God gives which human beings cannot really account for. Since God gives to whom He will, faith cannot be forced by any human authority. Following Christ, stated Kilian Aurbacher, is a matter of free choice. It cannot be compelled

A sophisticated defence of religious liberty was made by Leopold Scharnshlager in 1534. He drew to the attention of the Protestant leaders in Strassburg their own claim to toleration from the emperor, and that by those rules they ought either to go back to being Catholics or grant liberty to **Anabaptists**. However, persuasive as that logic may be to the twentieth-century Western mind, it was unconvincing in the sixteenth century. For the Strassburg Protestant leaders knew that only they were right and that

both Catholics and Anabaptists were wrong. Hence they could demand toleration on one side and persecute the other.

Menno Simons makes two important observations. The first is that when rulers persecute **Anabaptists** they are actually persecuting Jesus Christ because the church is Christ's physical body. The other is that Menno made room for some regulation of belief in the case of those whom he calls "manifest deceivers".

Thus **Anabaptists** anticipated a pluralistic society, not because faith does not matter and is not worth anyone's attention, but precisely because it is of the highest importance and must be granted the right to express itself.

**Balthasar Hubmaier, "Concerning Heretics and Those who Burn Them," 1524,**

So it follows that the slayers of heretics are the worst heretics all, in that they, contrary to Christ's teaching and practice, condemn heretics to the fire. By pulling up the harvest prematurely they destroy the wheat along with the tares.... A Turk or a heretic cannot be persuaded by us either with the sword or with fire, but with patience and prayer, and so we should wait patiently for the judgment of God....

**Hans Müller to the Council of Zurich. 1530**

Honoured dear sirs, I beg you in all friendliness that you would have fatherly compassion on me as a father has compassion on his children..... So I beg you, you servants of God, that you will give me freedom for my faith.

**Kilian Aurbacher, 1534. (From a translation by H. S. Bender)**

It is never right to compel one in matters of faith, whatever he may believe, be he Jew or Turk. Even if one does not believe uprightly or wants to believe so, i.e., if he does not have or want to have the right understanding of salvation, and does not trust God or submit to Him, but trusts in the creature and loves it, he shall bear his own guilt, no one will stand for him in the judgment .... And thus we conduct ourselves according to the example of Christ and the apostles and proclaim the gospel according to the grace that he has entrusted to us; we compel no one. But whoever is willing and ready, let him follow Him, as Luke shows in Acts. That this then also is an open truth, that Christ's people are free, unforced, and un-compelled people, who receive Christ with desire and a willing heart, of this the Scriptures testify.

**Leopold Scharnschlager, "Appeal for Toleration," 1534.**

My dear Lords, I beg you to ask yourselves how things are with each one of you in the matter of faith. For I do not doubt that each one of you, if he love the truth, wishes to have free access to God, of his own will; indeed, to do God voluntary service, not under constraint, but uncoerced. And if you be urged to accept a faith of which you, and each one of you severally, cannot approve, you would never be able to accept such faith with a quiet conscience and would always wish to be free in the matter. Therefore I sincerely ask you consider and take to heart that the matter stands thus with me and those with me, and must so stand. Nor have we any intention to maintain ourselves and our faith with violence and military defence; but with patience and suffering even to physical death in the power of God for which we pray.

**Menno Simons, "Christian Baptism," 1539.**

Therefore I say, if you find in me or in my teachings which is the Word of God, or among those who are taught by me or by my colleagues any thievery, murder, perjury, sedition, rebellion, or any other criminal act, as were and are found among the corrupt sects—then punish all of us. Yet you should know and acknowledge, O dear noble, illustrious lords, ye judges and officers of the law, that as often as you take, condemn, and put to the sword such people, that you thrust your tyrannical sword into the blessed flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ, that you break the bones of His holy body, for they are flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone. [Ephesians 5:30](#).

**Menno Simons, "Foundation," 1539.**

Therefore, we pray and admonish you; yes, we counsel and request you, to contrast our desire with your desire, our spirit with your spirit, our doctrine with the doctrine of the learned, our conduct with your conduct, our poverty with your abundance, our disgrace and reproach with your selfish ambition, our affliction and sorrow with your ease and luxurious life, our patience with your tyranny, our cruel bonds and shameful death with your merciless fury and fierce cruelty (I speak of the guilty), and if then you should discover that your doctrine, faith, life, ambition, and conduct are in harmony with the Spirit, Word, and life of the Lord, and are better than ours, then instruct us with a fatherly spirit. We desire so fervently to fear and obey; for the truth we desire to obey unto death.

But if you cannot reprove us with Scripture, and acknowledge our doctrine and conduct to be best, then it would be heathenish, yes, ungodly and tyrannical, would it not, to crowd us out of life unto death, from heaven into hell, with the sword and violence! This you will have to acknowledge and confess. But so much decency I fear will not be shown us wretched children: to weigh the matter in the balance of the Holy Word, and to measure it with the standard of Christ.

**Dirk Philips, "The Church of God," 1562.**

True Christians must here be persecuted for the sake of truth and righteousness, but they persecute no one on account of his faith. For Christ sends his disciples as sheep among the wolves. ([Matthew 10:16](#)). However, the sheep does not devour the wolf, but the wolf the sheep. Those who persecute others on account of their faith can nevermore be counted as a church of the Lord. In the first place, God, the heavenly Father, has committed all judgment to Jesus Christ ([John. 5:22](#)), to be a Judge of the souls and consciences of men, and rule in His church with the scepter of His Word forever. Second, it is the office or work of the Holy Spirit to reprove the world of the sin of unbelief ([John 16:8](#)). Now, it is evident that the Holy Spirit did not administer this reproof through the apostles and all pious witnesses of the truth by violence or with the material sword, but by God's Word and power. Third, the Lord Jesus Christ gave his church the power and established the rule to separate from her, avoid and shun the false brethren, disorderly and disobedient, contentious and heretical people, yea, all in the church who are found wicked, as has already been said ([Romans 16:16](#); [1 Corinthians 5:10](#); [1 Thessalonians 5-15](#), [Titus 3:19](#)). What is done over and above this is not Christian, evangelical, nor apostolic. Fourth, the parable of the Lord in the gospel proves clearly to us that he does not permit his servants to pull up the weeds so that thereby the wheat be not pulled up also. They are to let the wheat and the weeds grow together in the world until the Lord shall command his reapers, that is, his angels, to gather the wheat into his barn and throw the weeds into the fire ([Matthew 24:29-31](#)).

From this it is evident that no church may exercise dominion over the consciences of men with the carnal sword, or seek by violence to force unbelievers to believe, nor to kill the false prophets with sword and fire. With the Word of God she must judge and expel those in the church who are found wicked. What is done over and above this is not Christian, nor evan-

gelical, nor apostolic. And if some one ventures to assert that the government has not received the sword in vain ([Romans 13:1](#)), and that God through Moses commanded that the false prophets be put to death ([Deuteronomy 13:5](#)), I will briefly give this answer: the higher power has received the sword or authority from God, not to judge therewith spiritual matters (for these things must be judged by the spiritual, and spiritually, ([1 Corinthians 2:13](#)), but to maintain a proper policy and keep the peace among its subjects, to protect the good and punish the evil. God's command to Moses to put the false prophets to death is a command of the Old, and not the New Testament. By contrast we have received another command from God that we are to take heed of false prophets, that we are not to give ear to them, that we are to shun a heretic, and thereby commit them to the judgment of God ([Matthew 7:15](#), [John 10:5](#) [Titus 3:10](#)).

### **Heinrich Bullinger, Anabaptist Origins, 1561.**

One cannot and should not use force to compel anyone to accept the faith, for faith is a free gift of God.... It is wrong to compel anyone by force or coercion to embrace the faith, or to put to death anyone for the sake of his erring faith. It is an error that in the church any sword other than that of the divine Word should be used.... The secular kingdom should be separated from the church, and no secular ruler should exercise authority in the church.... The Lord has commanded simply to preach the gospel, and not to compel anyone by force to accept it.... It is the work of the great Judge to separate the tares from the good seed. This will be done by Christ at the last day only. For when in the parable of the tares among the wheat the servants came to their master saying, "Wilt thou that we go and gather in the tares?" his reply was, "Nay, lest while you gather up the tares, you root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest; then I will tell the reapers to gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to be burned." And since the field is the world and the tares are the children of the wicked one, or of the evil doctrine, and the Lord has clearly ordered, "Let both grow together," therefore the government should not undertake to destroy the tares by punishment and death.... Paul gives definite instruction regarding the attitude which the church should take toward a heretic, and says "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition, exclude." So Paul instructs the church to exclude a heretic ([Titus 3:10](#)), not to torture, maltreat, or kill him.... The true church of Christ has the charac-

teristic that it suffers or endures persecution but does not inflict persecution upon any one.... To put to death an erring man before he has repented means to destroy his soul. Therefore one should not kill him but wait for his conversion, lest both body and soul be destroyed. Often a man who is in fatal error forsakes it and turns to the truth.



*My God, I feel it is heaven to please Thee, and to be what Thou wouldst have me be. O that I were holy as Thou art holy, pure as Christ is pure, perfect as Thy Spirit is perfect! From Puritan Prayers*

### *Sanctification and Holiness.*

“Be ye holy for I am the Lord your God, I am holy.”

So saith the Scripture and it is a requirement of God under both the Old and New Covenant:

[Leviticus 20:7](#): “Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the Lord your God.” And [1 Peter 1:15-16](#): “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; [16] Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”

A dictionary definition of *holy* gave the following points:

Sacred: relating to, belonging to a divine being. Sainly: devoted to the service of God. Pure: morally and spiritually perfect and of a devoutly religious character. Consecrated: dedicated or set apart for religious purposes. Awe-inspiring: of a unique character, evoking reverence.

As one ponders on those definitions the question arises how can we as human beings with all our faults and failings and our natural carnal nature meet those standards? In our own strength we can do some of the things listed, we can devote ourselves to the service of God, we can set ourselves apart for religious purposes and even our character can be unique but then what about the other things listed? The being perfect morally and spiritually and evoking reverence and all that which is involved in being these things and continuing on in them on a daily basis? Can we do that?

The Scripture expression of holy as God is holy means to be free from ALL defilement and sin, to be absolutely pure as He is in all things. [1 John 1:5](#) says: “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.” The word *light* here in the Greek gives the meaning of fire light, in other words a light that burns everything away. God is likened unto a refiner’s fire in [Malachi 3:2](#) “But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' sope.”

To gain an understanding of this requirement for holiness look first at God’s directions in the Old Testament which were many and varied and to our minds quite complicated and then looking at the New Testament we can truly begin to appreciate the sacrifice of Christ at Calvary in doing away with those requirements of the keeping of the law and ordinances before we could approach God.

When we look at the Old Testament we see a very rigorous system of purification or washing, the division of the tabernacle into the outer court, the holy place, the altar of incense and table of showbread and then the Holy of Holies with the Ark of the Covenant. The division of the people into, dare we say ordinary Israelites and then the Levites, Priests and the High Priest all of whom were permitted different degrees of approaching in nearness to God in the Holy of Holies under strictly defined conditions with penalties attached if those conditions were not met. There was the need for a blood sacrifice as a necessary step in approaching God.

We see God’s direction to Moses in [Exodus 3:5](#) where God said, “Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.” Why was the ground holy? Because God’s presence was there. We have the same instruction to Joshua in [Joshua 5:15](#) and for the same reason.

As we read further in the Old Testament we are told of the various punishments that God visited upon the Israelites because of their lack of reverence for His Holiness. All these were intended to teach, emphasize and burn into the hearts and minds of God’s people the fundamental truth that God is Holy, unapproachably holy one may say without proper preparation.

We see from the Scripture, and it is highlighted in the Old Testament requirements, that the holiness of God is fundamental to His nature, it is unalterable and indisputable, it is a truth taught in the Scripture both in the Old and the New Testaments and yet we are asked, indeed commanded, by God Himself to be Holy as I (God) am holy. One could almost despair in ever meeting such standards were it not for the fulfillment of the promise that One would come to deliver us from the bondage of the law. ([Isaiah 61:1](#), [Galatians 3:19](#)).

God's holiness is unblemished, it is pure even beyond our understanding, His holiness separates us as sinners from God – and as in the Old Testament we need atonement to be offered before we can come into His presence. To approach God whilst in an unrepentant state will manifest itself in rejection by God as both Old and New Testament reveal in so many places. Yes, God will accept us when we repent of our sin whilst we are in this life but the Book of Revelation especially reveals what happens to those who have not repented of their sin when they stand in the final judgment after death.

But all praise to God for His holiness and His love for us ([John 3:16-17](#)) to make available salvation to whomsoever calls on the name of His Son Jesus Christ. ([John 10:9](#), [Acts 2:21](#)).

We need to remember to draw nigh unto God with utmost reverence and holy fear. Even the seraphims (angels) in God's presence showed their utmost reverence. [Isaiah 6:2-3](#). The pure light of God's holiness reveals the blackness of our sin and yet His holiness will save us. He calls us to be holy with and for Him. How wonderful and beyond understanding is God's love for us who offend Him daily. That is the wonder and miracle of God's holiness and love for us.

The question now arises: How can we as sinful creatures become holy and sanctified?

We understand the word *holy* as a state of being and the process of becoming that is called sanctification, it means the ongoing process of setting apart ourselves daily for God and His purposes. Under the Old Covenant that process of sanctification was accomplished through God's prescribed ritual cleansings, animal sacrifices, offerings of goods and the observance

of many rules. We do not have the space to list all of God's requirements for worship and living in the Old Testament but a glimpse can be had in the reading of [Exodus 19](#), [1 Chronicles 15](#) and [2 Chronicles 29](#).

These were all actions that the people had to carry out to attain some form of sanctification before approaching a holy God.

Under the New Covenant established by Jesus Christ ([Hebrews 9:11-15](#)) we are sanctified through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Calvary and not our own works although the process of staying sanctified does require effort on our part. Christ is our mediator, He sanctifies us and separates us from sin and unto God, it is His own work that sets apart "whomsoever" calls on Him, for Himself.

Christ not only sanctifies every one whom calls on His name and there are many scriptures that speak to this in the context of "whomsoever" but further He also sanctifies the Church, the body of believers as is pointed out in [Ephesians 5:26-27](#) of which Matthew Henry makes this observation: "The love of Christ to the church is an example, which is sincere, pure, and constant, notwithstanding her failures. Christ gave himself for the church, that he might sanctify it in this world, and glorify it in the next, that he might bestow on all his members a principle of holiness, and deliver them from the guilt, the pollution, and the dominion of sin, by those influences of the Holy Spirit, of which baptismal water was the outward sign. The church and believers will not be without spot or wrinkle till they come to glory. But those only who are sanctified now, shall be glorified hereafter."

By His sacrifice Christ sets the believers and the Church which they constitute apart for Himself – Christ's sacrifice puts a distinction, a barrier between the Church and the world which is Satan's domain or kingdom. Just as the blood of the Passover lamb put a difference between Israel and the Egyptians ([Exodus 11:7 & 12:12-13](#)) so His blood has put a difference between us and the world if we are prepared to put it on the doorpost of our hearts as the Israelites put it on the doorpost of their dwellings in Egypt. We are sanctified or set apart as His Church because of His blood ([Hebrews 10:9-10](#)). He has by offering of Himself and doing the will of God set apart those that will believe on Him. The cross stands between the world and the believer as a symbol not only of His sacrifice and God's love but also as a reminder of the call to holiness. Be ye holy for I am holy saith the Lord.

As individuals we are sanctified through in by the Holy Spirit. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to separate us unto God.

### 2 Thessalonians 2:13

“But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:”

### 1 Peter 1:2

“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.”

We would like to clarify at this point that we do not subscribe to the idea that these verses indicate that God chose some for salvation and others for damnation. There are numerous references in both Old and New Testament where God offers people a choice to follow Him to be saved, rather these verses indicate we believe that God knew before the creation or at least at the creation whom would choose to elect to follow Him. The Old Testament shows that God chose Israel as His people but it also shows many times that they were given a choice to follow Him or follow their own ways – that is not pre-destination. Similarly in the New Testament one only needs to follow the trail of the expression “whomsoever” in relation to choosing the way of salvation to understand that pre-destination is not being suggested there either.

In the Old Testament the tabernacle, altar and priest were set apart for service to God by anointing with oil, a type or shadow of the Holy Spirit.

### Leviticus 8:10-12

“And Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that *was* therein, and sanctified them. <sup>11</sup>And he sprinkled thereof upon the altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all his vessels, both the laver and his foot, to sanctify them. <sup>12</sup>And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, and anointed him, to sanctify him.”

In the New Testament the believer who is both tabernacle (2 Corinthians 5:1, 4) and priest (1 Peter 2:5, 9) is set apart for God by the anointing of the holy spirit, it is also the Holy Spirit working within our hearts that overcomes the flesh and its defilements and separates us from sin and clothes

us with the divine graces of character and makes us fit to be God's home. (Galatians 5:16-23).

Under the Old Testament blood sacrifices cleansed the people of guilt from offences under the law and set them apart unto God - under the New Testament the blood sacrifice of Christ cleanses us from sin and guilt and thereof. (1 John 1:7-9).

We are also sanctified or set apart unto God through the truth, the word of God. The Word cleanses us from the presence of sin; (Psalm 119:9) separates us from it and sets us apart unto God. Jesus Himself said: "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." John 15:3.

As we bring our lives into daily contact with the Word of God the sins and imperfections of our lives and hearts will be shown to us and we can put them away so that we become more and more separated from the world unto God, out of Satan's kingdom and into God's kingdom and heavenly embrace.

Colossians 1:12-13

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: [13] Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son."

This is separation from sin and separation unto God and it is provided for us in Christ Jesus by appropriating Christ, taking Him into our lives, we obtain the sanctification that He has provided through His blood and His word and I believe that the more we appreciate Christ and His word then the more we will want to be sanctified and grow in Holiness.

Sanctification or being separated unto God or growing in Holiness is something that we must pursue or seek earnestly if we are to obtain it in the fullest measure. Whilst sanctification is God's work we have our part to play. God has given us free choice, He forces nothing on us but offers it as a free gift and we need only to reach out and start the journey with Him.

The scriptures tell us how we should set out becoming sanctified and set apart unto God.

2 Corinthians 6:17-18

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, [18] And will

be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”

### Colossians 1:21-23

“And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled [22] In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: [23] If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven.”

Sanctification or setting a part of progressive and there should be an increase in love fellow pilgrims, an increase or a bounding in a godly walk and in policing God, a continuous groaning in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, are being transformed unto the image of our lord Jesus Christ and glory unto glory and each look at him and his word should make us more like him, are growing up into Christ in all things until such time as we are fully grown unto the measure in stature of the fullness of Christ which is perfection in heaven.

### 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

“And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: [13] To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.”

### 1 Thessalonians 5:23

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

### 1 John 3:2-3

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. [3] And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”

We need to seek sanctification we need to seek to grow in Holiness, we need to continue to separate ourselves from the world unto God and we are reminded in [Hebrews 12:14](#) of how this is to be done: “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.”

Do you seek a godly inheritance for yourself, for your family; do you want to be joint heirs with God's son Jesus Christ? Yes, it is possible the Scripture tells us in [Romans 8:1-17](#).

“*There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. <sup>2</sup>For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. <sup>3</sup>For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: <sup>4</sup>That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. <sup>5</sup>For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. <sup>6</sup>For to be carnally minded *is* death; but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. <sup>7</sup>Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. <sup>8</sup>So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. <sup>9</sup>But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. <sup>10</sup>And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin; but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. <sup>11</sup>But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

<sup>12</sup>Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. <sup>13</sup>For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. <sup>14</sup>For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. <sup>15</sup>For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. <sup>16</sup>The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: <sup>17</sup>And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.”

This passage speaks of receiving the spirit of adoption whereby we can call Him Abba, Father, what a wonderful statement this is and to receive what God has for us. It means a daily living, a daily devotion to Him alone, a daily immersion in the Word of God and frequent Fellowship with like-minded believers. It means dedication, commitment, a zealous attitude or desired to be separated unto God in all things.

Let God's word be our final and permanent reminder of how God looks at us in this area of Holiness and separation:

[Acts 20:32](#)

“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.”

[1 Thessalonians 5:23](#)

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

*Brother Joseph.*



## **Seasoned Speech (Part 6)**

*Brother Matthew S. Garman.*

### **Apples of Gold**

A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" ([Proverbs 25:11](#)).

The visiting preacher was eloquent and preached a powerful sermon. But to two people in his audience, it soon became obvious that he was preaching only part of the truth. They waited quietly until the worship service was over, invited him into their home, and with carefully chosen words, explained to him the missing truths.

This account, found in [Acts 18:24-28](#), illustrates well the effect of "a word fitly spoken." To be fitly spoken, the right words must be spoken at the right time, in the right place, for the right reason, and in the right manner. By asking *What, When, Where, Why, and How* about the words Aquila and Priscilla spoke, we gain a clear picture of the beauty of fitly spoken words.

*What?* Aquila and Priscilla expounded the "way of God" to Apollos. For a word to be fitly spoken, it must be based on God's unchanging truth. We may have our opinions, ideas, and viewpoints, but words of value always point to eternal truth.

*When?* Aquila and Priscilla understood the urgency of fitly spoken words. "When they had heard" tells us they wasted no time. The iron was

hot, so they struck. For words to be effective, they must be spoken when needed. Too often we procrastinate thinking a better opportunity to speak will come. Let us not put off till tomorrow the word someone needs today.

*Where?* While the need was urgent, Aquila and Priscilla waited to speak until "they took him unto them." While a public correction may have benefited other listeners, it also may have humiliated and alienated Apollos. How much more effective it was to instruct Apollos in private and allow him to publicly finish his message! Fitly spoken words are spoken at the right time and at the right place.

*Why?* Words fitly spoken are spoken for the glory of God and the benefit of others. Aquila and Priscilla had no desire for public recognition for their words. When our words are spoken for God, common though they may seem, God can polish them to shine like beautiful golden apples.

*How?* Aquila and Priscilla explained the way of God "more perfectly" to Apollos. This carries the idea of "exactness." They spoke carefully and plainly, yet tactfully enough that Apollos readily accepted the truth. So often we speak right words in a wrong way. A humble demeanor and a loving tone of voice may communicate more than the words themselves. May our speech be "always with grace, seasoned with salt," so others find our words palatable.

"Apples of gold in pictures of silver" not only feast the eyes but also please the taste buds and nourish the body. May our words, likewise, be beautiful, sweet, and edifying.

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## Passionately Seeking Jesus

[Philippians 3:14](#)

"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Passion is a powerful motivator. Its strength lies in the way it rules the heart, pushing out other thoughts. Passion supersedes cold consideration and calculation. The immediate need of the body or spirit becomes para-

mount. It pushes aside any thoughts of what people might think, and calls for action. In these Scripture accounts passion shaped itself into a strong effort to approach Jesus for healing. No search will begin without a keen realization of a need, so a good starting point may well be a prayer for vision to see our needs.

Let us briefly look at two Bible accounts where the passion or the desire to seek Jesus for healing translated into action. Remember that these accounts are of people who had suffered much and for a very long time, one could imagine their desperation as year after year went by with no relief in sight for their affliction and then they met JESUS!

#### Mark 2:1-5

“And again he entered into Capernaum, after *some* days; and it was noised that he was in the house. <sup>2</sup>And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive *them*, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them. <sup>3</sup>And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four. <sup>4</sup>And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken *it* up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. <sup>5</sup>When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, **Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.**”

#### Mark 3:10

“For he had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues.”

In this account the four friends who carried the palsied to Jesus are worthy of mention. Their friend was sick, he had no way to help himself. Was it his urgent unrelenting plea that moved his friends or was it his hopeless apathy that touched their hearts?

These men had heard of Jesus and the reports of the miraculous healings wrought by His hands raised a tumultuous hope in their hearts. Could He, would He, help their sick friend? If the reports were true He was a compassionate man and helped all who came to Him. But how could they get their friend to Him?

Then came the news that Jesus was in Capernaum in a house known to them. Was this the answer to their prayers? They quickly picked up the bed on which their friend lay and started for the house at which they knew people were gathering. But the crowd! They had not counted on the house be-

ing already over filled with people. They could not get close to Jesus. However their fervent desire to help their friend did not allow them to be dismayed. What might they do yet? Was there another door? No, it was already jammed with people. The window? No, it was too small to allow the bed to pass through. The roof? May be! They could uncover a part of the roof and lower their sick friend right to the feet of Jesus.

With considerable effort but even more determination the four men raised the sick man onto the roof, made an opening and lowered him to where Jesus was teaching. Jesus saw the palsied man, looked up and saw his friends, expectant, waiting. Jesus commended their faith and forgave and healed their friend. What a wonderful sense of working together with God they must have had as they repaired the roof!

### Mark 5:21-34

“And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him: and he was nigh unto the sea. <sup>22</sup>And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet, <sup>23</sup>And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: *I pray thee*, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live. <sup>24</sup>And *Jesus* went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him. <sup>25</sup>And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, <sup>26</sup>And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, <sup>27</sup>When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. <sup>28</sup>For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. <sup>29</sup>And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in *her* body that she was healed of that plague. <sup>30</sup>And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, **Who touched my clothes?** <sup>31</sup>And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, **Who touched me?** <sup>32</sup>And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. <sup>33</sup>But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. <sup>34</sup>And he said unto her, **Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.”**

In this passage the chronic disease of the woman had led her on many a quest for healing to physician after physician. She would hear of yet one more doctor whom just might have the answer to the need. He held out hope; she took the medicinal herbs or powders only to have hope turned to despair once more as the bitter aftertaste of the medicine blended with and magnified the bitterness of one more failure!

The sick woman's admirable tenacity led her on and on but finally her resources were gone. Even her hopes were nothing but endless. Hearing of Jesus the Healer, her passion to be well flamed up again and she conceived the plan. "He is not like the physicians. He prescribes no medicine. If reports are to be believed He heals with a touch. If I could but touch Him!" Passionate desire and faith somehow came together in her heart and she believed it could be a reality. Was she surprised when it happened? Even though she trembled when she was called into Jesus' presence her heart must have been filled with a rising anthem of praise.

It takes humility to admit a need. Denial is very natural; self does not want to acknowledge insufficiency. Even in physical sickness our initial reaction may be denial. In spiritual matters we may be even more reluctant to face a problem. After all having a spiritual problem does not reflect well on us. But we should not waste time in self-defeating disavowal. Humbly taking full responsibility for the condition of our spirit opens a door that remains closed as long as we shift the blame away from ourselves.

Hearing a sermon, reading the Bible, or reading inspirational articles may cause us to become aware of a need. Although knowing about the need is a good start it must become a heart matter. As conviction takes hold we no longer try to excuse ourselves. We deeply contemplate our helplessness and our need of Jesus' healing touch.

Just as in the instances of physical needs in these two passages desperation and total helplessness are often the birthplace of faith. Without faith there will be no passionate reaching out. That is why Satan puts forth great efforts to distract people from their spiritual needs. The world is drowning in distractions that are expressly designed to keep the heart far removed from serious thoughts. According to Satan's plan people would never get in soul trouble. The voice of conscience would be forever still if he had his way. Even Christians who have tuned out much of the clamour of the

world may need to set aside as much as possible the everyday distractions so that full attention can be given to addressing a spiritual need.

We read in [Matthew 11:12](#): "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force." Adam Clark in his commentary on this passage says: "He that will take possession of the kingdom of righteousness, peace and spiritual joy must be in earnest: all hell will oppose him in every step he takes; and if a man be not absolutely determined to give up these things and evil companions and have his soul saved at all hazards and at every expense he will surely perish everlastingly. This requires a violent earnestness."

The general softness, insulation and affluence of our times tend to keep us from the "violent earnestness" of real passion. Even though we cannot change the times we live in we can pray for the needed fervency of spirit.

We need to recognise that the connectedness of today's world is a serious threat to spiritual life. The mobile (cell) phone and e-mail culture seems to favour shallow distracted thinking. Having communicated too much on a superficial level people find it hard to go deeper and think seriously. Text and electronic messaging has an inherent lack of accountability that lures people into saying things electronically that they might never say aloud to someone's face. The needs of the soul will not be met if we ignore the spirit's gentle voice prompting us to turn away from distractions and get passionate about seeking Jesus.

**Points to ponder.**

1. What are some things that may keep us from a passionate search for Jesus and His Truth.
2. Are we capable of being passionate for Jesus and His way in this day of comfort and ease?
3. Are we willing to expand physical effort to reach our spiritual goals?



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